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‘The Inlegebill scribling of my Imprompt pen’
The Production and Circulation of Literary Miscellany Manuscripts in Jacobean Scotland, c. 1580-c. 1630

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Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, February 2008
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This thesis investigates the textual culture of early modern Scotland, as evident from three literary miscellany manuscripts produced and circulated in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries. Each of the main three chapters will consider one miscellany manuscript in its complex totality, dealing with questions of provenance, ownership, editorial history, literary analysis, and an assessment of the manuscript in its wider cultural context. Manuscript transcriptions are appended, particularly since the contents of two out of three of the miscellanies discussed here have never been printed.

Chapter One, by way of introduction, considers the current state of manuscript research in Scotland, and the implications for Scottish studies of book-historical methodologies. ‘Histories of the Book’ are currently being written across Europe (and further afield), and Scotland forms no exception. Against this backdrop, Chapter One evaluates recent critical work on early modern Scottish textual culture, and the extent to which book-historical narratives, developed in relation to medieval and renaissance English literature, can be applied to Scottish writing. More specifically, this chapter locates the miscellany manuscript as a prime site of investigation for scribal culture.

The first miscellany under investigation, in Chapter Two, is Edinburgh University Library MS Laing III.447. For the largest part, the content of this manuscript has been printed, as a supplementary volume to the works of Alexander Montgomerie. This print is problematic in many respects, however, since it reorganised the entire content, and removed from its immediate context the longest poem of the manuscript, Montgomerie’s *The Cherrie and the Slae*. The appended transcription restores the original order. Chapter Two will investigate the contributions of the many scribes that were responsible for the manuscript, and examine whether any thematic coherence may be detected.

Chapter Three deals with Cambridge University Library MS Kk.5.30, a hybrid manuscript that contains two sections. Section one (dating to the late-fifteenth, early-sixteenth century) features a transcription of John Lydgate’s Middle English *Troy Book*; section two consists of a later supply (c. 1612) by James Murray of Tibbermuir, containing additions to the *Troy Book* and twenty-seven miscellaneous poems. Though this latter section will be the main focus of the chapter, the manuscript’s other section, and thus its hybridity, will not be ignored.

The third and final miscellany to be discussed is National Library of Scotland MS 15937. Containing approximately 175 items (many of which from English sources), this is the most expansive of the three manuscripts considered here. MS 15937 is textually a problematic source, since it is a nineteenth-century transcript of a lost original, the latter compiled by Margaret Robertson of Lude around 1630. This miscellany is an important witness also in musical terms, since it collects the words to a significant amount of Scottish and English songs, many of them unique to the manuscript.

All chapters will stress the highly idiosyncratic nature of the miscellanies, but also, where possible, establish common ground between them, and connect them to other Scottish and English manuscripts and printed books. In all their complexity, the miscellanies reveal a literary culture whose nature undermines the monolithic and court-centred history that has been so prevalent in literary criticism (though the court, and courtly writing, are important backgrounds to a great deal of the poetry contained in the manuscripts). Finally, as underlined in the concluding Chapter Five, EUL Laing III.447, CUL MS Kk.5.30, and NLS MS 15937 are important collections both for the preservation, and for evidence about the dissemination, of Scottish and English verse.
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Many debts have been incurred since I started work on this thesis, some personal, some professional, and some a pleasant combination of both. By far the greatest debt I owe is to Theo van Heijnsbergen, for his unflagging support of my project, and for what I can only describe as outstanding supervision, often, I felt, far beyond the call of duty.

My debt to the work of Professor Priscilla Bawcutt will be obvious throughout the thesis. I am also extremely grateful to her for putting me in touch with Dr Malcolm Jones of the University of Sheffield (for enlightening source material for the ‘Consider man’ poem), and for her help and generous answers to my questions more generally. Many academics have been very liberal with their time to answer questions about a great deal of subjects: Dr Sally Mapstone, Professor David Parkinson, Dr Malcolm Jones, Dr Kirsteen McCue, Dr Gordon Munro, Dr Martin MacGregor, Professor Alasdair MacDonald, Professor John Corbett, and Professor Jeremy Smith. I am also grateful to Professor Parkinson and Dr Mapstone for permission to quote from their forthcoming publications. Many thanks also to Dr Robert Cummings, who temporarily co-supervised me. Special thanks go to Dr Kate McClune, Dr Pamela Giles, and Dr Jamie Reid Baxter. To Kate, I am grateful for access to her excellent PhD thesis on John Stewart of Baldynneis, and to her unpublished manuscript description of Bodleian MS Douce 148. In the same manner, I wish to thank Pamela for sending me her PhD thesis on Scottish literary women. Many thanks go to Jamie for his boundless enthusiasm for my research, and his extremely generous advice and extensive e-mails, particularly on NLS MS 15937 and the ten sonnets in CUL MS Kk.5.30. Jamie kindly gave me copies of his transcriptions of NLS MS 19.3.6, and accompanying critical discussion, both of which, I hope, will soon appear in print. Finally, a project such as this could not have been undertaken without the help of staff at various libraries and archives. I am grateful in particular to the librarians at the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh University Library, and Cambridge University Library (particularly Jayne Ringrose), and the staff at the National Archives of Scotland.

A note of gratitude goes out to those students at the Department of Scottish Literature that took the ‘Alternative Renaissances’ course in 2006/7. They were the guinea pigs of an experiment, namely that of a critical exercise involving three sonnets in the Tibbermuir manuscript. Their combined efforts to transcribe and discuss the poems have certainly influenced my reading.

On a more personal level, I wish first to thank my family. As any PhD student will know it is impossible to get through the writing process without considerable support from their parents (and, in my case, my sister); they have been exceptional in every way. I also wish to thank my friends, both in Glasgow and at home, and the postgraduate students at the Department of Scottish Literature at Glasgow (particularly Kirsten Matthews). Finally, I owe a great deal to Kirsty Macdonald. Throughout many stages of the thesis, she offered extensive help and suggestions.
note on transcriptions ~

All transcriptions follow the word on the manuscript page as closely as possible. The Appendices are not an edition of the manuscript texts; hence, all scribal mistakes, corrections, and other idiosyncrasies have been reproduced. No editorial punctuation has been introduced. The following letterforms have been modernised: the long ſ to ‘s’; þ to ‘th’; and ð to ‘y’. All other forms, for instance the interchangeable ‘u’, ‘v’, ‘w’, or ‘i’ and ‘j’, are retained. Abbreviations are expanded and represented in italics, e.g. ‘qilik’ is transcribed as ‘quhilk’, ‘q’ as ‘quhair’. Dotted lines represent illegible words or fragments of words. Editorial comments or additions are within square brackets.
**abbreviations ~**

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John Donne to Dr Andrews [c.1612]

To the very learned and very friendly gentleman, Dr. Andrews, Concerning a book which, when he borrowed it, was a printed book, but which was torn to pieces at home by his children, and subsequently restored to its owner written out by hand:

What the printing-presses bring to birth with inky travail we take as it comes; but what is written out by hand is in greater reverence. The Maine has become tributary to the Seine; brought back the captive of your triumph, even Frankfurt passes to the halls of its conqueror. A book which, if it has been baptised merely in the blood of the printing-press, goes to the shelves resigned to moth and dust; let it but come to us written by the pen, and it is received with reverence and wings its way to the high-perched cases which shrine the ancient Fathers. Apollo must tell the manner of its happening – that children smear upon a new book old age and grayness. 'Tis small marvel that children who come of the stock of a physician should have been able to give this new destiny to a new book. If children make old a book that is new, shall not their father by his healing art make me that am old a youth?

Alas, for us miserable old men! Unfeeling eld turns all of us into children, but no one of us into a youth. This power to give back youth thou hast reserved for Thyself, Ancient of Days; beholding Thee, Adam takes life and youth again. Meanwhile: let us beguile life’s dullness with books, and with companionship emulous of heaven.

Among books, that unimportant one which you have restored to me is dearer to me, and more mine, than it was before.¹

John Stewart of Baldynneis, ‘To the Rycht Excellent Rycht Hich and Mychtie Prence Iames the Sext of Scotland’ [c. 1585-87]

Sir, haifing red your maiesties maist prudent Precepts in the deuyn art of poesie, I haif assayit my Sempill spreit to becum your hienes scholler; Not that I am onnyvayis vorthie, Bot to gif vthers occasion (seing My inexpertnes) to publiss thair better leirnyng. I grant In deid I haif meikill errit, Not onlie in electing of ane So small and fectless subiect, As als be  the inept orthographie And Inlegebill scribling of my Imprompt pen, Bot maist of All in pithles and vnplesant framyng of the sam, Quhairin I haif playit the part of ane young and Imperfyt prentes Quho at his first Interprys of scharping takith not in Hand the fynnest stuff Bot rather sum slycht cloth to Susteine the sklents and manks of his cu

Remitting all to the courtassie, correcti on, and protection, of Your maiesties visdome, Not doutting bot your grace Vill accept this my vitles vork of your grayt clementie As my maist gratius Maister and cheifest lod Star.²


chapter one ~

Introduction: ‘The Inlegebill scribling of my Imprompt pen’
The Production and Circulation of Literary Miscellany Manuscripts in Jacobean Scotland, c. 1580-c. 1630

This thesis investigates three Scottish miscellany manuscripts from the period 1580-1630, and the wider cultural environment that produced these manuscripts. Before introducing these miscellanies in more detail, and before discussing recent advances in manuscript studies and the advent of so-called ‘new histories of the book’ in relation to Scotland, it will be helpful briefly to foreground the contemporary status of manuscript and print in early modern culture.

Two epigraphs precede this chapter, one written in England, the other in Scotland, and both meaningfully comment on the business of producing a manuscript book. The first epigraph, John Donne’s *De libro cum mvtaeretur impresso*, is well known; the second, an address to King James VI of Scotland by John Stewart of Baldynneis, far less so, at least outside Scottish literary criticism. Donne’s poem, first of all, tracks the miraculous transformation of printed book to manuscript volume, the first of which ‘goes to the shelves resigned to moth and dust’, but, when turned into a manuscript, ‘is received with reverence and wings its way to the high-perched cases which shrine the ancient Fathers’. According to Donne, the handwritten book is infinitely more valuable, on account, presumably, of its originality and its idiosyncrasy. Whereas Donne’s poem, characterised by his dry wit and detached humour, must be taken with a pinch of salt, its main thesis stands, and is reflective of a more widespread early modern sensitivity regarding the printed word. Donne’s sentiments might appear indicative of what has been described as the ‘stigma of print’ – though this once-pervasive theory has now been questioned, and its validity for English renaissance studies debated.¹ However, the relative merits of manuscript and print have been widely researched, and the virtues of what one contemporary commentator termed ‘private manuscription’ (see below) are well-attested. As an aesthetic object, and perhaps for other reasons undisclosed in Donne’s poem, the manuscript is to be preferred over print.

¹ See, for instance, J.W. Saunders, ‘The Stigma of Print: A Note on the Social Bases of Tudor Poetry’, *Essays in Criticism*, 1:2 (1951), 139-64. The theory was refuted by Steven W. May, ‘Tudor Aristocrats and the Mythical “Stigma of Print”’, *Renaissance Papers* (1980), 11-18. May identified a ‘stigma of verse’ instead. In May’s words, ‘the most significant printing event of a literary nature’ (p. 16) occurred in 1584 in Scotland, with King James’s *Essayes of a Prentise*, followed by *His Majesties Poeticall Exercises* in 1591. This royal endorsement of print leads the way for May to dispel the ‘stigma of print’ myth in England. This observation begs a full-scale enquiry into the culture of print in Scotland, as well as its effects on England while the two countries were still very much separate nations.
The second epigraph, Stewart of Baldynneis’s address to James VI, prefaced to his manuscript presented to the king, is a different work altogether.² Couched in the deeply apologetic ingratiatory discourse customary to literary gifts presented to the monarch,³ it seeks to detract from its obvious quality. Interestingly, Stewart not only discredits his literary achievement and his learning, but also his chosen medium, the manuscript, which displays his ‘inept orthographie And Inlegebill scribling of [his] Imprompt pen’. Stewart comments indirectly, through the sustained metaphor of a ‘prentes’ [apprentice] to the king, on the act of producing a manuscript, and styles himself as an ‘Imperfyt prentes Quho at his first Interprys of schaiping takith not in Hand the fynnest stuff Bot rather sum slycht cloth to Susteine the sklents and manks of his cu

clipping’. This remark seems in the first instance to refer to the (lack of) literary value, but it also comments implicitly on the manuscript as a material object. The poet returns to this image of ‘manks’ (or flaws) in the last lines of the first major poem in the manuscript, Roland Furiovs, as follows: ‘the mateir els all manckit is be me’.⁴ ‘Manckit’ in this instance is glossed by DOST as ‘to mutilate, mangle; of a tailor or the like, to botch in the cutting; to deface or disfigure (any object, as a book)’ (see DOST, under ‘mank’, v. 1, where the line from Roland is quoted). The poet also reminds the reader of the physical act of writing in Roland, where he mentions his ‘plume Imprompt’, i.e. his hesitant, inexpert, quill pen.⁵ Stewart’s manuscript, then, is supposedly made of poor material, and full of ‘sklents and manks’ because of his inexpert handling, or ‘cunningles clipping’. The manuscript is assembled (the poems selected and copied, perhaps, from earlier drafts) as an apprentice tailor would sew together a somewhat ill-fitting garment.

Typical of the modesty topos employed by Stewart (which has a long history in Scottish poetry), the exact opposite of these self-defamatory statements is true, and in between the lines of this preface may be discerned a poet proudly presenting his monarch with a beautiful object, a handwritten book that must have consumed a great deal of time and devotion.⁶ It is uncertain to

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³ Compare, for instance, Thomas Hudson’s preface to his Historie of Judith, likewise presented to James, albeit in printed form: Thomas Hudson’s Historie of Judith, ed. by James Craigie (Edinburgh: STS, 3rd ser. 14, 1941), pp. 3-5.
⁴ NLS Adv. MS 19.2.6, f. 60v; cf. Poems of Stewart, p. 97.
⁵ NLS Adv. MS 19.2.6, f. 29v; cf. Poems of Stewart, p. 43.
⁶ McClune (‘Poetry of Stewart’, pp. 48-53) tentatively suggests that the manuscript was both written and bound by the poet, but this cannot be proven with certainty (unless another specimen of his writing is identified). Unfortunately, the record that was kept of James’s library does not extend beyond 1583, so there is no sign of Stewart’s gift (dating probably to 1585-87). James’s tutor and royal librarian, Peter Young, arranged the binding of fifty-nine of the king’s books by John Gibson, as testified by a bill dated 1580. On the cover of Young’s catalogue, ‘in the centre [of each vellum cover] is stamped a small gilt crown between the initials I R’. Stewart’s manuscript, though in a much richer binding, shows the same initials, [I]acobus [R]ex. See George F. Warner, ‘The Library of James VI, 1573-1583’, in Miscellany of the Scottish History Society, First Volume (Edinburgh: SHS, 1893), pp. xi-lxxv.
what degree the poet himself was involved in the physical production of the manuscript, but it is
expertly written, and luxuriously bound. Unfortunately for Stewart, there is no evidence to suggest
that the manuscript ever ‘winged its way’ up to the ‘high-perched bookcases’ of James VI, or
indeed, whether James read it at all. A point to consider, in light of Donne’s comparison between
manuscript and print, is that Stewart’s gift unquestioningly and, despite its affected tone of
unworthiness, also unapologetically, takes the form of a manuscript.

Generally in early modern Scotland, comments on the perceived differences between
manuscript and print are few and far between. Scotland’s southern neighbours were more explicit
on the subject, for instance John Donne, as discussed above. Another example is the minor
Elizabethan poet Richard Niccols, who mockingly commented on the Earl of Southampton’s
reading habits. Apparently, Southampton disdained ‘verses upon which the vulgar in a Stationers
Shop, hath once breathed as a peecie of infection’; instead, in the Earl’s ‘fine fingers no papers are
holesome, but such, as passe by private manuscription’. 7 When Ben Jonson had his Works
printed for the first time in 1616 he flew against the face of tradition, for, as Mary Hobbs summarises, ‘in
the early years of the [seventeenth] century it was still held that gentlemen, whether of the Court,
the Inns of Court or the universities, ought not to publish’. 8 ‘Publish’ in this context exclusively
means ‘print’, and the distinction is an important one (the concept of scribal publication, or
publication in manuscript, will be dealt with below).

Returning to Scottish reflections on the manuscript book, it is fruitful to compare Stewart’s
words to those of a better-known Scottish manuscript compiler, George Bannatyne, and to consider
the latter’s attitude towards his handwritten book, the Bannatyne manuscript (NLS Adv. MS 1.1.6).
Bannatyne famously commented on the ‘copeis awld mankit and mvtillait’ that he supposedly used
for compilation of his manuscript, and these ‘copeis’ have invited much speculation. 9 The
Bannatyne manuscript will be further discussed below: suffice it to say here, in light of Stewart’s
‘mankit mateir’ and his manuscript full of ‘sklents and manks’, that Bannatyne’s assertions about
his copy texts should perhaps not be taken at face value. The ‘copeis awld mankit and mvtillait’
have generally been understood to refer to his source material, now lost. It is significant, though,
that Bannatyne’s ‘copeis’ are discussed in the framework of a highly apologetic stanza constituting
another modesty topos:

Ye reverend redaris thir workis revolving richt
Gif ye get crymis Correct thame to your micht

7 Quoted in Edwin Haviland Miller, The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England (Cambridge, MA:
8 Mary Hobbs, Early Seventeenth-Century Verse Miscellany Manuscripts (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1992),
p. 9.
9 The Bannatyne Manuscript Writtin in Tyme of Pest 1568, ed. by W. Tod Ritchie, 4 vols (Edinburgh:
STS, 2nd ser. 22, 23, 26, 3rd ser. 5, 1928-34), II, 1; cf. the facsimile edition, The Bannatyne Manuscript:
National Library of Scotland MS 1.1.6, ed. by Denton Fox and William A. Ringler (London: Scolar
Press, 1980), p. 59. For further critical appreciations, see note 49 below.
The Inlegebill scribling of my Imprompt pen

And curs na clark that cunningly thame wrait.
Bot blame me baldly Brocht this buik till licht
In tenderest tyme quhen knawlege was nocht bricht
Bot lait begun to lerne and till translait
My copeis awld mankit and mvtillait
Quhais trewth as standis (yit haif I sympill wicht)
Tryd furth, Thairfoir excuse sumpairt my estait.

Bannatyne’s syntax is ambiguous, and the ‘mankit copeis’ may refer, by extension, not only to his sources but also to the manuscript itself, and to the nature of his transcriptions. Bannatyne thus prefigures Stewart’s demeaning remarks about the quality of the work produced. Yet, both compilers naturally expect the reader to recognise the modesty topoi and, in effect, to read between the lines. Bannatyne and Stewart carefully produced handwritten books, not simply for their own entertainment, but in the hope that the otherwise undisclosed ‘reverend redaris’ (for Bannatyne), or the single intended reader, the king of Scotland (for Stewart), would find something of worth there. Both Scottish scribes, though less explicit than Donne in their adulations, favoured the manuscript book over print. Since lack of evidence precludes any knowledge about why they did not venture into print (perhaps they were motivated simply by practical considerations, or by aesthetic convictions), their actions must speak for themselves.10

The Study of Scottish Literary Manuscripts

The sixteenth century has been labelled ‘the great century for Scottish literary manuscripts’, and indeed it was.11 Yet, this ‘great century’ in Scotland has not yet been complemented by an equally great interest in the cultural history of the manuscript, particularly those dating from the end of the sixteenth and the seventeenth century. That said, the last few decades have certainly seen a growing awareness of how Scottish studies might benefit from investigating this phenomenon. From the perspective of relations between Scotland and England, for instance, Priscilla Bawcutt has argued the following:

The topic of Anglo-Scottish literary relations is both vast and be-devilled by preconceptions. […] But one has to be aware of a preoccupation solely with what we now consider the great names and the literary masterpieces. Obscure and anonymous poems, perhaps surviving only in manuscript, have escaped critical scrutiny, yet have much to tell us about the cultural relations between Scotland and England; others that may today seem dull and tedious were once best-sellers. We have to beware also of erecting mental frontiers as well as geographical ones: verse

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10 The question of print in relation the Bannatyne manuscript is further discussed below, see pp. 20-21.
cannot be wholly dissociated from prose, nor vernacular writings from those in Latin.\textsuperscript{12}

Bawcutt’s suggestions, effectively to open up canon-boundaries and explore little-known manuscript collections, need to be followed up in order to prevent that undesirable build-up of ‘frontiers’. The field of Anglo-Scottish criticism is but one topic that will flourish under a renewed programme of manuscript investigation. Three studies have recently been written, properly overview articles, that may be considered as calls to arms for Scottish literary scholars to breathe new life into this area of research.\textsuperscript{13} Alasdair MacDonald, first of all, makes a persuasive case that virtually the entire corpus of early Scottish lyrical verse is extant in a comparatively small number of manuscripts, and thus implicitly argues for continued study of these collections. MacDonald lists seven, in chronological order: the Selden manuscript (Oxford, Bodleian MS Arch. Selden. B.24), the Asloan manuscript (Edinburgh, NLS MS 16500), the Arundel manuscript (London, BL MS Arundel 285), the Bannatyne draft and main manuscripts (Edinburgh, NLS MS Adv. 1.1.6), the Maitland Folio manuscript (Cambridge, Magdalene College, Pepys Library MS 2553), and, finally, the Maitland Quarto manuscript (Cambridge, Magdalene College, Pepys Library MS 1408). Collectively, these manuscripts date from the end of the fifteenth century, \textit{c.} 1488-1513 (Selden. B.24) to 1586 (Maitland Quarto). Importantly, MacDonald identifies each item as an ‘anthology’: ‘[t]hat is to say, in principle they bring together, within the bounds of a definite and deliberate collection, a particular choice of literary works displaying a perceptible level of authorial, generic and/or thematic awareness’.\textsuperscript{14}

Bawcutt’s study was published after that of MacDonald, though it was presented nearly ten years before its publication, at the 1996 Oxford conference on Medieval and Renaissance Scottish Language and Literature. She presents an expansive list of twenty manuscripts. Bawcutt stresses that although Scotland’s often-acknowledged literary treasure, the Bannatyne manuscript (the focus of MacDonald’s study), deserves all critical attention it has hitherto received, it has to an unfortunate extent eclipsed the study of other miscellany manuscripts. Lesser known miscellanies need to be studied in their own right, for the essential information they contain on Scottish scribal culture, and for the relationship between print and manuscript, between Scotland and its geographical and cultural neighbours, and between the modes of literature and music. The work of


\textsuperscript{14} MacDonald, ‘Cultural Repertory’, p. 62.
many relatively unknown scribes puts into context Bannatyne’s achievements: a great deal of poetry is shared between Bannatyne and the larger corpus of Scottish miscellanies, suggesting wide literary networks of circulation that far outstretch the confines of Bannatyne’s immediate circle. Bawcutt concludes, however, that her findings only scratch the surface:

[t]his essay is essentially a brief introduction to a very large subject. Far more material exists than has been mentioned here, especially from the neglected seventeenth century. What seems a desirable goal for the future is to provide a register of these manuscript miscellanies, and good analytic descriptions of their contents; to accomplish this well, however, is a task in which literary scholars must co-operate with historians and musicologists.15

What is called for is an interdisciplinary, bibliographic and literary-critical assessment of Scotland’s miscellany manuscripts, where their value must be assessed by a wide variety of scholars; unfortunately, to date such a project has not yet been attempted.

The third scholarly contribution to mention here is David Parkinson’s (forthcoming) article, which reaches far into the seventeenth century. Parkinson recognises that, rather than being static, backward-looking, or retentive, miscellany manuscripts also contain a progressive element. Anthologising is a creative process – a great deal of thought and preparation can go into the structuring of a collection (vide the Bannatyne manuscript). Also on a more local level, a scribe’s copying from manuscript or print is not a mechanical exercise: as will be consistently argued in the discussion that follows, each manuscript poem is unique, and in a sense rewritten by the scribe, who may appropriate quasi-authorial powers at varying levels, from the unwitting introduction of small variants, to the addition of several stanzas of wholly new material. Parkinson (as does Bawcutt) makes the essential link between literary and musical manuscripts. Some music books, such as the Margaret Wemyss manuscript (NLS Dep. 314/23) or that of Robert Edward (NLS MS 9450), may usefully be considered as miscellanies, with the inclusion of musical notation. No clear distinction between music and poetry, between song and poem, existed, and the areas of folksong, art music, and poetry often merged.16 A final aspect of the Scottish miscellanies is the degree to which they reveal links with a wider community – be it a family, a royal or aristocratic court, or a community, for instance, of book collectors. ‘Identified by its recurrent emphases on social activities such as song, education, family and local history, convivial pastime, religious devotion and controversy, and affairs of state, the literary anthology becomes an important means by which a widening range of Scottish society gains access to public discourse’.17

What becomes immediately obvious from all three articles is the critical importance for literary manuscript studies of what MacDonald and Parkinson term ‘anthologies’, and what

17 Parkinson, ‘Anthologies’, [forthcoming].
Bawcutt terms ‘miscellanies’. There are no clear-cut distinctions between what these terms mean, and they are interchangeably used by critics, together with ‘commonplace book’, and ‘household book’. A useful description of the distinction between commonplace books and miscellanies can be found in Peter Beal: ‘[i]n what I would venture to call its purest or most classic form, the commonplace book is essentially an educational aid’. Of miscellanies, Beal argues that

[These – I would suggest – were very much associated with the commonplace book mentality and represent, so to speak, the ‘pleasurable’ rather than strictly ‘useful’ side of the genre. Verse miscellanies – what are indeed sometimes loosely called ‘poetical commonplace books’ – were compiled as a means of retaining for future use a large body of witty material – and of what is often called ‘fugitive’ verse – which might otherwise be lost or scattered.]

Yet, Beal’s suggestion that ‘these compilations [verse miscellanies] are not generally arranged in any systematic order’ is not taken as a characteristic of the miscellany here. As will become evident, considerable planning may underlie the compiling of a miscellany, at least the ones discussed here. Manuscript classification may be determined primarily in terms either of content, or of perceived use. Beal labels according to content, whereas Julia Boffey, for instance, finds scope to brand Bodleian Library, MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 (also known as the ‘Kingis Quair’ manuscript) a ‘household book’ according to its use. A household book in its other guise may also contain such varied items as recipes, bills, letters, lists of various things, or medical remedies, all distinctly less glamorous items than poetry by Chaucer or James I. For the purpose of the present argument and the chapters to follow, the manuscripts in question will be referred to as miscellanies. The miscellany will be understood as a manuscript collection produced by one or more scribes, containing predominantly the literary works of various writers. There is also scope to consider a single-author manuscript as a type of miscellany, for instance if, as in the case of the Ker manuscript (EUL MS Drummond De.3.70), it contains the works of one author (Alexander Montgomerie) but was collected posthumously – the Ker manuscript also contains various genres of poetry, for instance sonnets, lyrics, and psalm translations. Clearly, each manuscript is a unique artefact, and cannot always be satisfactorily catalogued under one of the above headings.

20 The Ker scribe in fact included at least one sonnet not originally composed by Montgomerie, but by his friend Henry Constable. Montgomerie’s canon will be discussed in more detail in later chapters.
In the wake of ‘new histories of the book’ (of which more below), and following the example of other national histories, *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland* is now in preparation. Still, the challenge laid down by Macdonald, Bawcutt and Parkinson, to further investigate manuscript culture, and miscellanies in particular, has not been sufficiently taken up. In England, the situation is different: research has spawned a wealth of publications in manuscript studies. Scribal culture, the producers, consumers and transmitters of text, the implications of manuscript variance, and more: all have been extensively discussed and theorised, and a large body of work is now available that generates original insights into renaissance literary culture. In this area of research, of all types of literary manuscripts the miscellany has been singled out as a particularly rich source of information. In the introduction to a facsimile edition of the Stoughton manuscript, Mary Hobbs writes that

early seventeenth-century poets did not as a rule publish their poems. They were circulated in manuscripts, lent to friends, and often by them lent to others, who copied all or some of the poems into their own verse miscellanies. These little volumes, usually vellum-covered quartos, but sometimes calf-bound octavos or
folios, were commonly kept over many years by students, lawyers, and the more literate courtiers and country-gentlemen.24

In a nutshell, Hobbs’s words present the complex process of manuscript circulation, and the special prominence of a miscellany over a single-author manuscript. The key notions coming out of Hobbs’s summary—production and consumption, transmission, issues of publication—all beg further exploration. What needs stressing, from the point of view of this chapter, is that Hobbs’s seventeenth-century poets are English seventeenth-century poets, producing English miscellany manuscripts. ‘Students, lawyers, and the more literate courtiers and country-gentlemen’ are mostly those moving in and around London, Oxford, Cambridge, and the neighbouring country houses: their manuscripts are written in English. What then of Scottish students, lawyers, courtiers and country-gentlemen? Were they equally productive? As of yet, these questions have not properly been answered: in fact, until recently the questions had not even been satisfactorily formulated.25

With notable exceptions, scholarship devoted to the production, consumption and circulation of literary miscellanies in Scotland, especially towards the later period (1580-1700) is virtually non-existent. If the relative paucity of Scottish manuscript material (compared, for instance, to England) is not encouraging, still the material which has in fact survived deserves more attention. Bawcutt lists twenty miscellanies (though this list is, by her own admission, still incomplete), and many of these have never been satisfactorily discussed.

**The Manuscripts — EUL MS Laing III.447; CUL MS Kk.5.30; NLS MS 15937**

Partly in response to the demand of recent critics for thorough and comprehensive accounts of miscellanies, the present project will investigate three Scottish manuscripts that have received but little attention so far: Edinburgh University Library MS Laing III.447 (also known as the Laing manuscript), Cambridge University Library MS Kk.5.30 (the Tibbermuir manuscript), and finally National Library of Scotland MS 15937 (the Robertson manuscript). All three miscellanies belong to the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries. The first manuscript is difficult to date, but appears to belong to the late 1580s or 1590s, or perhaps the first decades of the seventeenth century. The Tibbermuir manuscript is traditionally dated c. 1612 (though it contains an earlier section, c. 1500, see below), and the Robertson manuscript c. 1630.

Of the list of seven manuscripts provided in MacDonald’s article, all have been reproduced at least in diplomatic format, or in facsimile.26 Yet, of Bawcutt’s twenty items only those same

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25 For a very short overview of who the copyists of Scottish manuscripts were, see Bawcutt, ‘Miscellanies’, pp. 194-95.
seven have seen publication, with the modest addition of the Laing manuscript, the Melvill Book of Roundels (Washington, Library of Congress M 1490, M535.A5, c. 1612), and the Commonplace Book of Andrew Melvill (Aberdeen, MS AUL 28, c. 1637).27 Thus, with the exception of the latter three, there are no scholarly editions, facsimiles, or detailed critical discussions of the miscellanies that were compiled after 1586, the date of the Maitland Quarto manuscript. It is for this reason that the present discussion continues there where previous scholarship has ended. The three miscellanies, MS Laing III.447, MS Kk.5.30, and MS 15937, with their approximate chronological scope 1580 to 1630, have been chosen purposefully, in order to build on earlier scholarship, particularly of the Bannatyne and both Maitland manuscripts, but also to further the knowledge of the development and transformation of Scottish manuscript culture as it moved into the next century. Secondly, for all three miscellanies, the history of their production can meaningfully be connected to content. Although such matters are often speculative, enough evidence (such as marks of ownership or marginalia) has survived to explore, for instance, the relevance of a given poem for the manuscript compiler. With some Scottish miscellanies, such as NLS Adv. MS 19.3.6, absolutely nothing is known of the context in which it was compiled, and no owner or scribe can be identified – this leaves frustratingly little scope to assess its significance more widely, for instance in terms of a reading audience. Finally, the three miscellanies together present a rich variety of different modes of poetry: medieval and contemporary, amatory, devotional, allegorical, comic, and moral. Although each miscellany is highly individual, collectively these three miscellanies are indicative of the breadth of Scottish literary culture more generally.

The first miscellany, and topic of Chapter Two, MS Laing III.447, is the only manuscript that has been printed in a modern edition. Yet, the print in question, the Supplementary Volume of the Poems of Alexander Montgomerie, is not without its difficulties.28 For reasons unexplained, the full content has been rearranged, and the manuscript’s central poem, Montgomerie’s ‘Off the cherry and the Slae’, has been placed elsewhere in the volume, thus entirely obscuring the miscellany’s structural and thematic integrity. MS Laing III.447, when restored to its proper order, is the best example of all three miscellanies discussed here of a text with strong thematic unity. Although it has been compiled by around twelve different scribes, an overarching thematic development may nevertheless be detected (if not throughout the entire manuscript, then certainly for a large section of it). Apart from Montgomerie’s long allegorical poem, MS Laing III.447 features amatory lyrics strongly reminiscent of the mid-century poems of, for instance, Alexander

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Scott. In addition, several devotional lyrics balance the amatory repertoire. More typical of the end of the sixteenth century are the many sonnets and an English song, ‘Glad am I glad am I’, perhaps copied from a printed book. That the manuscript saw various types of use, more in line with a commonplace book, is evidenced by several pages of alphabets that were probably writing exercises, and some scraps in French. The Laing manuscript’s ownership history cannot be retrieved entirely, although this is a problem of too much rather than too little information. The manuscript was associated with the Melville family, perhaps with one or several of the various influential sons of Sir John Melville of Raith, for instance William Melville, Commendator of Tungland, or Robert Melville of Murdocairney. The manuscript’s modern editor, George Stevenson, connects MS Laing III.447, through the high-ranking offices of the Melvilles, to the court culture of James VI. However, it cannot be connected to the Melvilles with any certainty until the end of the seventeenth century, when it was acquired for the library of Melville House, at Monimail in Fife. An alternative scenario may be posited: in the manuscript there are many signatures of scribes, readers, owners, or perhaps even poets, whose identities suggest that the manuscript’s conception was in the city of Edinburgh, among the middling classes of cultured burgesses and city councillors. Thus, a different picture emerges, in which the traditional cultural centre of the royal court is replaced with a less familiar setting. The full implications of these important questions of ownership, in relation to the manuscript’s content and thematic integrity, will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

The second manuscript for study is that of James Murray of Tibbermuir, CUL MS Kk.5.30. Murray’s is properly a compound manuscript, or a hybrid: the largest part is taken up by Lydgate’s Middle English Troy Book romance. This first section of the manuscript dates to the late-fifteenth or early-sixteenth century. Probably also in the early-sixteenth century (much like another Troy Book manuscript with Scottish connections, Oxford, Bodleian MS Douce 148) several missing parts in the transcription of Lydgate were supplied by a different Older Scots translation of the Troy Book, and it is these two versions of the Troy Book that make up the first and largest section of CUL MS Kk.5.30. Then, when Murray of Tibbermuir came to own the manuscript, he copied out the final missing fragments of the Troy Book, as well as a further twenty-seven poems that, with some notable exceptions, were much closer to his own day and age. It is these twenty-seven poems in the concluding section of the manuscript that may be regarded as a miscellany proper, and these will be the main subject of Chapter Three. However, strong connections between the Troy Book romance and Murray’s later poems cannot be ignored, as the compiler can be shown to have had a marked interest in both sections of the manuscript, and the Troy Book and the miscellaneous poems form part of a complex, meaningful whole. Not much was hitherto known about Murray, a minor landowner in Perthshire, but new research into his family has revealed fascinating cultural links

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29 Stevenson, pp. xxxvi-xxxvii.
with well-to-do Scottish families (the Murrays of Tullibardine, and the Scrymgeours of Myres) that are known to have taken a strong interest in literary culture and book collecting. As such, Murray’s manuscript may be taken as an example of a subtly expanding network of readers and collectors that ensured the longevity of Scottish (and English) literature in the early-seventeenth century.

The final miscellany to be discussed, in Chapter Four, is NLS MS 15937. In many ways, the Robertson manuscript is textually the most challenging of the three, for obvious reasons: Robertson’s original manuscript, or manuscripts, have been lost, and MS 15937 is an early-nineteenth century transcript of the lost texts (it should be noted that there may be more than one underlying source for MS 15937). New levels of interpretational problems arise, as nothing can be known for certain about Robertson’s compilatory activities. This seems to have been a strong disincentive for critics; yet, the manuscript merits a detailed investigation. Consisting of 215 folios, and containing 175 poems, MS 15937 is by far the largest manuscript under scrutiny here. In terms of its size, it compares favourably to other, better-known Scottish miscellanies, such as the Maitland Folio and Quarto manuscripts (consisting of respectively 183 folios and 182 poems, and 137 folios and 95 poems). Its content, however, is vastly different. In addition to many original poems and songs in Scots, Robertson also collected many English poems and songs from the early seventeenth century, mainly from printed song books, so her miscellany could equally be considered from a musical perspective (although it contains no musical notation). As a sign of its times (as observed also in the other miscellanies discussed in Parkinson’s overview article, such as the Wemyss manuscript), the spheres of music and poetry indiscriminately merge. Incorporating songs that ultimately derived from perhaps as many as seventeen different English song books, and from a variety of other English books, manuscripts and broadsides, the manuscript is a key document in what Bawcutt termed, as quoted above, ‘the topic of Anglo-Scottish literary relations’. As will be explored in Chapter Four, a clear shift in literary taste can be seen to take place between the Scottish miscellanies of the 1580s and 1590s, and that of Robertson, compiled several decades later. Finally, this large amount of English material should not draw attention away from MS 15937’s many unique poems and songs in Scots – some demonstrably dating back to the first half of the sixteenth century. As will be shown, the breadth of material incorporated into MS 15937 is remarkable, and Robertson must have been a compiler who was extremely well connected in order for her to be able to gain access to the multiple sources that furnished her with copy text.

Several other manuscripts might have been selected for study here. One example is NAS RH 13/35 (further mentioned below). This manuscript contains, among much legal documentation, also literary writings in prose and verse, and, as Mapstone states, it ‘is almost entirely unstudied still’. Other examples would be NLS Adv. MS 19.3.4, an ‘exceptionally rich compilation’, or

30 See note 26 for editions of the Folio and Quarto manuscripts.
EUL MS Laing III.436, a miscellany that again seemed to have almost entirely escaped recent critical attention, being unmentioned even by MacDonald, Bawcutt and Parkinson. Yet another example is NLS Adv. MS 19.3.6, a large miscellany containing, among other things, John Burel’s ‘The Passage of the Pilgrimer’, and an early sequence by Robert Ayton, Alexander Craig and William Alexander of so-called ‘dyers’, an amatory verse form enjoying considerable popularity in Scotland from around 1590 onwards. Much work has been done on this last manuscript by Jamie Reid Baxter (he produced a full transcription and critical discussion of the poems, locating many sources) but this is, as yet, unpublished. This miscellany, and EUL MS Laing III.436, will be referred to later on, in the context of more ‘dyers’ in both the Tibbermuir and Robertson manuscripts. Crossing disciplines, a final miscellany of great interest is the commonplace book of Robert Edward (NLS MS 9450). This has already been mined for a significant collection of Scottish songs and music, but the whole manuscript is still not accessible in modern form. Again, there is work in progress here: Katy Cooper is currently producing an edition of the manuscript as a PhD project in Glasgow. Most of the miscellanies mentioned above will play a minor role in the following chapters, there where direct connections can be made.

How, then, to approach the Laing, Tibbermuir and Robertson manuscripts? First of all, to facilitate easy access to their contents, transcriptions of the manuscripts have been provided (see Appendices Two, Three and Four). These transcriptions are instructive for more than one reason. Consider Harold Love’s comments on editorial practice prevalent at least until the 1980s, and to some extent even today:

editors of seventeenth-century poetry have generally shown a quite staggering lack of interest in authorial traditions other than the one in which they were directly engaged. This is hard to understand when, as is so often the case, the most characteristic mode through which verse was circulated to its reader was the miscellany containing work by a number of writers, rather than the manuscript devoted to the work of a single poet.

Indeed, in the Scottish tradition too, as Bawcutt playfully observes, many critics have something of ‘little Jack Horner’ in them, ‘extracting merely the plums’, with the inevitable result that ‘silent selectivity, whether inspired by nationalism or some other motive [...] may lead to distortion and


32 The phrase is Parkinson’s, ‘Anthologies’, [forthcoming].
34 I am extremely grateful to Jamie Reid Baxter for allowing me access to his draft article and transcription of the manuscript.
35 Love, Scribal Publication, p. 5.
falsification, not only of a manuscript’s character but of a society’s literary and musical culture’.\(^{36}\)

In order to avoid, as much as possible, such ‘distortion and falsification’, the transcriptions include all poems and all meaningful marginal annotations, and bear witness to scribal idiosyncrasies, so as to reflect most transparently the manner in which the poems appear on the manuscript pages.\(^{37}\)

The best way to approach a miscellany manuscript is often dictated by its form, and the manner in which it has been compiled. MS Laing III.447 is arranged according to an underlying organisational principle, and displays a progressive, thematic unity. For this reason, it is best explored from beginning to end, in order to highlight how the manuscript accumulates meaning, and how later scribes have consciously built on the contributions of earlier ones. The miscellany of James Murray of Tibbermuir is different from the Laing manuscript in that it does not show any one overarching organisational principle. Rather, poems are added as small groups, with demonstrable integrity within these groups (for instance, a collection of sonnets) but not necessarily between one group and the next. Regarding NLS MS 15937, there is far less certainty about the original lay-out of the manuscript. A strictly linear approach would ignore possible interference from the anonymous nineteenth-century copyist. The Robertson manuscript is also by far the most expansive manuscript to be discussed here, and the present project does not allow for a discussion of every single poem in the manuscript. For that reason, a more selective approach is adopted in Chapter Four, based on the identification of particular groups of poems (for instance on the basis of verse form, or possible shared source).

For all three miscellanies, as far as evidence allows, a full listing of possible source material will be provided, ranging from long poems to the most minute features (such as marginal annotations or moral couplets), in order to reveal the rich connections between these miscellanies and other Scottish and English printed books and manuscripts. A large number of poems will also be assessed on their literary merit, in particular those that have never been discussed before. Some are excellent, and deserve to be better known; other poems are less satisfying, but are interesting in the context in which they appear. In addition, the intelligent juxtapositioning of individual poems reveals important clues as to the reader reception of those poems. A comprehensive account of each miscellany is provided, addressing matters of provenance, ownership, content, source materials, literary merit, and the wider significance of the manuscript for Scottish scribal and literary culture. Only on the basis of such an all-encompassing study can the criticisms of Love and Bawcutt,\(^{36}\)

\(^{36}\) Bawcutt, ‘Miscellanies’, p. 192.

\(^{37}\) The only texts not transcribed, for reasons of limited space, are the long ‘Off the cherry and the Slae’ in the Laing manuscript, Murray of Tibbermuir’s supply to the *Troy Book* (as well as the combined English and Scots *Troy Book* text), and the English songs in the Robertson manuscript that have also been printed by Fellowes. The Laing *Cherrie* is available in Stevenson’s edition; the Scottish *Troy Book* fragments have been printed in *Barbour’s, des schottischen Nationaldichters, Legendensammlung nebst den Fragmenten seines Trojanerkrigies*, ed. by J.C. Horstmann, 2 vols (Henninger: Heilbronn, 1881-82). For the English songs, see *English Madrigal Verse*, ed. by E.H. Fellowes, rev. by Frederick Sternfield and David Greer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981). See Appendices for more details.
Introduction: ‘The Inlegebill scribling of my Imprompt pen’

regarding early modern textual studies more generally, and in the area of Scottish early modern miscellanies in particular, be successfully countered.

New Histories of the Book

In the wake of New Historicism’s insistence to consider a literary text’s contexts (or ‘co-texts’), literary critics, manuscript scholars, bibliographers and theorists have joined forces to develop what might loosely be termed a ‘new history of the book’ (developed since the late 1980s and early 1990s, it is perhaps not so ‘new’ anymore). The fruits of that labour are evident in literary criticism now, used not in the least also to highlight marginalised writing. ‘Marginalised’ literally, as in, ‘written in the margins of existing texts’, but ‘marginalised’ also in the sense of ‘ignored’. Writings by amateur collectors, writings by women, or writings that were ignored simply because they did not conform to a dominant critical mindset, are all increasingly taken into account, either in their own right (for instance women’s poetry in manuscript), or to help investigate (or even subvert) the literary culture shaped by its better-known practitioners. These historians of the book share an overarching concern with the text in its physical manifestation, in print or manuscript. Whereas previously topics such as typography, paleography, or codicology were primarily the hunting grounds of the bibliographer, book historians have joined together the disciplines of bibliography and literary criticism because out of materialist approaches literary meaning can be distilled. As such, histories of the book may be seen to re-assess post-structuralist and deconstructionist theories that attempted to entirely sideline the previously holy figure of the author and his/her authorial intention. Book historians argue for an enlarged space of identifiable agents in the creation of meaning, though this could involve not just the author, but rather any figure that is involved in the physical production of the medium in question (print, manuscript, or a combination of the two): the scribe, illuminator, compositor, printer, proof reader, bookseller, and more. Apart from the spheres of ideology, politics, and religion, which shape discursive practice and cultural identity (and are investigated by New Historicists), book historians attach great importance to the material processes that engender meaning in literary writing. In other words, what a piece of writing comes to mean in any given cultural environment can never be separated from the physical dimensions of the production and consumption of text. Oft-quoted critics who have developed this line of critical


39 See, for instance, MacKenzie, Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts, p. 23: ‘[m]y own view is that no such border [between bibliography and textual criticism on the one hand, and literary criticism and literary history on the other] exists. In the pursuit of historical meanings, we move from the minutest feature of the material form of the book to questions of authorial, literary, and social context. These all bear in turn on the ways in which texts are then re-read, re-edited, re-designed, re-printed, and republished. If a history of readings is made possible only by a comparative history of books, it is equally true that a history of books will have no point if it fails to account for the meanings they later come to make’.
thinking, and applied it successfully to English renaissance studies, are, for instance, Peter Beal, Mary Hobbs, Harold Love, Arthur F. Marotti, H.R. Woudhuysen, and Steven W. May. Their collective efforts are concisely formulated as follows:

Such [book historicist] studies encourage greater concern for the ways that the physical construction of MSS can reveal significant information about the source, state, production, and circulation of texts, fuller awareness of the subtle interplay of manuscript and print, and renewed attempts to recover the work of previously ‘silent’ writers as well as acknowledge the complexity of textual traditions associated with even the most frequently edited writers.40

That ‘complexity of textual traditions’ may be exemplified by the coterie culture surrounding Philip Sidney, or John Donne, by a newly budding industry of handwritten ‘news separates’ that flourished in London from the early seventeenth century onwards, or by a manuscript culture that was particularly accommodating to women writers.41

An important implication of book history for editorial practice is a new realisation of the inherently multivalent nature of the manuscript poem, bearing witness to what Marotti terms ‘textual instability’, or the ‘malleability of texts’.42 Before book history had made an impact, the printed book reigned supreme in the search for authorial intention and the establishment of an ‘ur-text’, followed closely by the autograph, or authorial manuscript. In the absence of either or both of these, authorial intention could to some extent be retrieved by constructing elaborate stemmas, or family trees, of manuscript and print groupings, to determine which text might have been closest to the author’s original – this would then form the basis for an edition, and be reproduced in full. This approach, pioneered by German classicist Karl Lachmann, was supplanted by editing methods advocated in France by Joseph Bédier and in Anglophone studies by R.B. McKerrow and W.W. Greg, who introduced the eclectic text: a final text combining the ‘best’ features of multiple witnesses to produce the ‘best’ possible representation of a lost holograph.43 Both approaches are inherently author-centred, and, as noted above, new book historians have sidelined the holy grail of authorial intention and brought into the equation other producers of text that have equal importance in the creation of literary meaning. Thus, what new book historians take most strongly from New Historicist thinking is the notion that meaning can only be reconstructed in direct conjunction with the cultural and material environment that produced the text in the first place.

41 As discussed, respectively, in Woudhuysen, Sidney; Arthur F. Marotti, John Donne, Coterie Poet (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986); Love, Scribal Publication; Early Modern Women’s Manuscript Poetry, ed. by Jill Seal Millman and Gillian Wright (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).
42 Marotti, Manuscript, Print, pp. 135-47.
In the history of textual editing, the divergence of a later manuscript from an earlier one was typically referred to in terms of ‘corruption’: the corrupted text being less reliable, even at fault, or wrong. Today, this essentially negative preoccupation with corruption might better be replaced with the more positive idea of ‘variance’. Rather than applying strong value judgements, differing manuscript versions of the same poem may be read as equally authoritative, certainly within the social environment that produced it. Bernard Cerquiglini proposes variance to be a text’s decisive feature: ‘medieval writing does not produce variants, it is variance’. He continues that ‘because the variance of a medieval work is its primary characteristic, the concrete otherness of discursive mobility, the figure of a pre-modern written word, editions must give it priority, following it closely’. Cerquiglini’s eulogising – his work is aptly titled In Praise of the Variant: A Critical History of Philology – might not be to the liking of every student of medieval and early modern manuscripts; yet, its basic theoretical premises appear to have fully penetrated the critical consciousness. Consider the words of Ernest Sullivan, again in connection to the miscellany:

Renaissance manuscript miscellanies (and printed texts) contain alternative, authoritative versions of some poems – a fact that challenges the implicit assumption that literary texts are inevitably singular. The forces behind these multiple authoritative versions would seem to include the circumstances of the composition, thus the creation of ‘private’ text versions – texts created in a specific set of circumstances for a specific set of readers or even a single reader. As Marlowe and Shakespeare created different texts of Doctor Faustus and King Lear for different performances, so did other Renaissance authors create private texts for private readings (or ‘performances’) of their texts.

Each manuscript poem needs to be judged according to its complex surroundings; it cannot simply be extracted and, for instance, anthologised, without losing a considerable part of the meaning that it has accumulated from the various circumstances of its transcription, ranging from authorial and scribal intention (if such slippery notions can be said to exist in the first place), to variants that may intentionally or unintentionally have been introduced, to the wider significance of that poem among its neighbours in the manuscript, to marginal annotations and commentaries, and more. The chapters to follow shall bear explicit witness to Sullivan’s ‘private parties’ in Scottish manuscripts. Importantly, in the case of miscellanies, these private texts are created not so much by the author of a given poem, but by the compiler, or copyist, who occupies an essential mediating position between the poet and the reading public.

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New Histories of the Scottish Book

The most active proponents of book history are now occasionally quoted by Scottish medievalist and early modern scholars. A good example of a book-historical study of a Scottish miscellany manuscript is Sally Mapstone’s discussion of *The Thre Prestis of Peblis* in MS RH13/35 (now in the NAS, Edinburgh). The manuscript, belonging to John Cockburn of Ormiston and compiled in the early to mid-1580s, throws new light on the reception of this fifteenth-century poem, its treatment of ecclesiastical appointments being of particular contemporary relevance for the more extreme Protestant factions to which Cockburn belonged. Mapstone’s exposition tantalisingly ends on the family relations between the Cockburns and the Maitlands associated with the Maitland Folio and Quarto manuscripts, suggesting that the compilation of the famous Maitland manuscripts, and the distinctly un-famous MS RH13/35, ‘were not only occurring around the same time but also among a circle of people likely to be well acquainted with each other’.

A more wide-ranging account is Priscilla Bawcutt’s description of the commonplace book of John Maxwell. This small manuscript (EUL MS Laing III.467) is perhaps properly referred to as a commonplace book, rather than a miscellany, since it contains not only verse in Latin and Scots, but also a list of classical gods, puzzles on the compiler’s name, historical and satirical notes, and much more. It is an important collection in that Maxwell appears to have been acquainted with Alexander Montgomerie, as evidenced by an anonymous sonnet addressed to William Mure of Rowallan, a descendant of the ‘maister poet’ Montgomerie. A transcription of the manuscript exists in the archives of DOST in Edinburgh, but has never been published, so its content is available only to the most persevering of scholars. Maxwell’s manuscript will be returned to in due course, since various fragments are shared between this commonplace book and the miscellanies that are under scrutiny here.

The most ambitious project to date based on a single miscellany manuscript is Hughes and Ramson’s book-length critical discussion of the Bannatyne manuscript – one of the very few Scottish miscellanies that has in fact received generous attention (the book also includes about a third of poems in the manuscript, newly edited). The editors’ assessment of previous scholarship reveals the necessity to review miscellanies in their entirety:

49 The only text that rivals the Bannatyne manuscript in terms of critical attention is the earlier Bodleian, MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 (see further Bawcutt, ‘Miscellanies’, p. 191). For work on the Bannatyne manuscript, see Hughes and Ramson, *Poetry of the Stewart Court*; William Ramson, ‘On Bannatyne’s Editing’, in *Bards and Makars*, ed. by Adam J. Aitken, Matthew P. McDiarmaid, and Derick S. Thomson (Glasgow: University of Glasgow Press, 1977), pp. 173-83; Alasdair A. MacDonald, ‘The Printed Book that Never Was: George Bannatyne’s Poetic Anthology (1568)’, in *Boeken in de late Middeleeuwen*, ed. by Jos M.M. Hermans and Klaas van der Hoek (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1994), pp. 101-10; Theo van
The [Bannatyne] Manuscript has been worked as a quarry, its resources used to establish either a sectional interest or the corpus of a known poet, like Henryson or Dunbar; but it has not, as a whole, been subjected to scrutiny; and it is indeed a sorry state of affairs which has allowed Tottel’s Miscellany to acquire the familiarity of a household word amongst students of English literature while the contents of the infinitely richer Bannatyne Manuscript remain, to a very large extent, an esoteric preserve. 50

Poetry of the Stewart Court has been criticised, interestingly, also for reading too much into scribally imposed structures: ‘while it is clear that Bannatyne, at least at times, did make an effort to put similar poems together, I am not convinced that the collection is as carefully arranged, poem by poem, as the authors suggest’. 51 Regardless of this well-founded criticism, the attempt of Hughes and Ramson to capture within one framework Bannatyne’s massive collection is an important achievement, even if their conclusions may not find universal approval (Denton Fox further questions, for instance, Hughes and Ramson’s description of the entire manuscript as ‘courtly’, which, as a whole, it is clearly not).

George Bannatyne’s taxonomic zeal – his collection is divided into five main sections, some further subdivided – has inspired ongoing debate. His gathering of 410 poems in the main manuscript, and 53 in the draft (though mainly doubles) has invited critics to rave hyperbolically (see Walter Scott’s verse about ‘Sage Bannatyne / Who left such a treasure of old Scottish lore / As enables each age to print one volume more’, which apparently was sung ‘by the members at the dinners of the [Bannatyne] club’), or respond more measuredly, for instance that ‘the Bannatyne manuscript is a uniquely informative resource’. 52 This is not the place for a full review of critical perspectives on the Bannatyne manuscript, but one question that has been vigorously debated is of direct relevance here: did Bannatyne ever intend his work to be printed? In the absence of any contemporary evidence, the answer hinges on an understanding of the nature of the manuscript book in Scotland, the level of importance attached to the printed book at the time, and the estimated necessity for the compiler to reach a further audience. These are exactly the type of questions that concern book historians. Partly in response to a well-established space now for ‘scribal publication’, critics increasingly argue that Bannatyne’s manuscript did not have to be printed to reach its desired audience. MacDonald, as an eager advocate for a print scenario, has faced

50 Hughes and Ramson, Poetry of the Stewart Court, p. 24.
52 Scott is quoted in Bannatyne Manuscript, I, p. xxxii; the second observation comes from Hughes and Ramson, Poetry of the Stewart Court, p. vii.
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opposition from Bawcutt, for instance, and from Theo van Heijnsbergen. The latter in particular
has persuasively argued for an intricate family and professional network, or prosopographical
context, of merchants, moneylenders, city councillors, and other influential figures in Edinburgh.
Such a crowd may have constituted a potential audience for Bannatyne’s manuscript. In an active
scribal culture, moreover, print was unnecessary if indeed the scribe wished to circulate his
collection. The Bannatyne manuscript, and wider questions of scribal publication, loom large over
each of the chapters to follow: not so much because it is arguably the most important Scottish
miscellany (critics, notably Bawcutt, have attempted to edge away from this standpoint), but
because its vast content is relevant to each of the three manuscripts discussed here – each contains
one or more poems that also feature in Bannatyne. Also, the literary culture fostered by Bannatyne
and his circle is of extreme importance for the current discussion, as a similar environment is
relevant to the Laing manuscript. A new civic cultural identity was on the rise in Edinburgh, and
one that overlapped with, but was also distinct from, the culture at the royal court. This topic will
be explored in much more detail in Chapter Two.

Out of the works of Love, Woudhuysen, Marotti, and others, a methodology can be
distilled that can be put to good use to remap Scottish renaissance writing. In terms of manuscripts,
and more particularly in terms of literary miscellanies, Randall Anderson summarises what can be
gained from a comprehensive rather than a ‘cherry-picking’ approach, which builds, implicitly, on
Love’s criticism of editorial practice quoted above:

We should also pursue the implications of what is evident about manuscript
miscellanies through the arrangement of their contents: what putative – or authentic
– poet gets placed next to what other supposed poet. The company a poem or poet
keeps in a manuscript miscellany – which therefore demands a larger view of the
manuscript as a whole – is more important than the isolation of individual poems or
poets. The proximity of one poem to another is made all the more compelling, too,
when a block of Sidney’s or Breton’s or Ralegh’s or Dyer’s verse is interrupted by
some scurrilous or bawdy lines, an occasional poem, or unintentionally doggerel
verses by an acquaintance. One characteristic of the artifactual evidence many verse
collections display is their linear nature: collections primarily devoted to poetry (or
other miscellanea) grow by accretion, with each poem building upon its
predecessors, and each new addition changing the tone and character of the whole.
We can assemble the growth (or stagnation) of a compiler’s taste based on the shape
of the collection.53

Anderson’s observations are not applicable to every miscellany: we cannot always make meaning
of growth or stagnation, because this presupposes that every miscellany is elaborately planned. For
the early modern compiler, serendipity played a role in finding his/her copy text. To always look
for compilatory intention misses the point, as in many instances such supposed cumulative meaning

53 Randall Anderson, “‘The Merit of a Manuscript Poem’: The Case for Bodleian MS Rawlinson Poet. 85”,
in Print, Manuscript and Performance: The Changing Relations of the Media in Early Modern England,
127-53 (p. 131).
is accidental. Yet, the ‘company a poem or poet keeps’ is critical for other reasons. One example from the Tibbermuir manuscript is the juxtaposition of Montgomerie’s ‘Heich Architecters wouderous wouttit rounds’ with the anonymous ‘I am the sevint I was the first off twelve’, associated with Julian Ker. These two poems together enable speculation about the relationship between Montgomerie, Ker, and her husband Patrick Hume of Polwarth (Montgomerie’s Flyting adversary) that may have wider implications for an understanding of the poetic culture of the 1580s. Groups of manuscript poems forge links that may be indicative of connections, either between texts or between people, which range far beyond the confines of the manuscript. Miscellanies can function as windows into early modern literary culture – though to what degree any compiler has consciously inscribed his/her manuscript with cumulative meaning is very difficult to determine with certainty. What Anderson’s approach can certainly demonstrate is how to move from ‘a genealogy of texts to a genealogy of tastes’. A genealogy of texts is arranged by whatever is perceived as important literary artefacts – printed books certainly, but also major manuscript collections, from which works of so-called ‘high art’ have been quarried ceaselessly. A genealogy of tastes may be developed if we also take account of the entire content of lesser known manuscripts, and take into consideration the ‘scurrilous or bawdy lines’ and ‘unintentionally doggerel verses’ that would to a significant extent have shaped the reading experiences of a contemporary manuscript audience.

**Literary Circles, the Court, and the Canon**

The question of intellectual networks, and the circulation of literary materials, is very much at the forefront of miscellany research. Implied in the term ‘circulation’ is the notion of a circle, a real or imagined collection of agents to keep manuscripts in motion. In Scotland, as elsewhere, the concept of circles has helped to configure descriptions of the literary climate. The example most relevant to early modern Scotland is the ‘Castalian band’. Popularised by the work of Helena Shire, the notion of this courtly coterie associated with King James VI informed critical writing for several decades. Its reputed members (Alexander Montgomerie, William Fowler, Stewart of Baldyneis, the Hudson brothers, perhaps the more peripheral figures Patrick Hume of Polwarth and Alexander

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55 This is discussed in much more detail below, see Chapter Three, pp. 118-22.


58 Shire developed this notion of the ‘band’ most strongly in her Song, Dance and Poetry.
Hume, and the more shadowy John Murray and John Burel, as well as the later generation poets such as Alexander Craig, William Alexander, and Robert Ayton) supposedly rallied around the king’s banner to partake in a new Scottish programme of renaissance writing fashioned by the king himself, and expressed in his Reulis and Cautelis.59 The perceived social organisation of this band, its alleged members, and its period of activity have recently been probed by Bawcutt, who concludes that the ‘band’ is in fact a critical construct, and that as an interpretative concept it should be treated very circumspectly.60 Scholars seem now generally to have acknowledged Bawcutt’s words of warning, and customarily highlight the potential unreliability of the ‘Castalian band’ as an interpretative tool – though recognising at the same time that, even as an anachronistic label, it may still usefully denote a particular period in literary history, or even a period style. That said, the ‘band’ has very recently been resurrected again by R.D.S. Jack, in his entry for the Oxford National Dictionary of Biography, which is less critical of Shire, and reintroduces her notion of the Scottish ‘writing game’.61

Even though it has been suggested that the ‘band’ was a determinedly inward-looking company of poets and musicians playing to the tune of James’s Reulis and Cautelis, it is striking that relatively few figures associated with that movement consistently resurface in the manuscript miscellanies produced during and after the 1580s and 1590s – particularly since scribal publication was very accommodating to coterie writers.62 Not a single miscellany manuscript surviving from the period 1580-1603 in Scotland can be labelled an exclusively ‘courtly’ manuscript (though many poems display characteristics of ‘courtly’ writing).63 Instead, only descendants of such hypothetical

62 It should also be noted that many Scottish writers did not eschew print. For instance, the king himself printed two volumes of writing, in 1584 and 1591 (see note 1 above). Predating this was Hume of Polwarth’s Promise of 1580, and Fowler’s An Answer to the Calvmnios Letter and Erroneous propositionis of an Apostat Named M. Io. Hamilton in 1581, although the latter was a religious polemic rather than a literary work. Roughly contemporary with James’s first publication was Thomas Hudson’s Historie of Judith (1584). Montgomerie’s Cherrie and the Slae was printed in 1597, within the poet’s lifetime (though it is uncertain how much control Montgomerie exercised over this, and the second edition of the same year). Alexander Hume’s Hymnes and Sacred Songs appeared in 1599. John Burel works were printed, though the exact date is unknown. Alexander Craig’s works were printed in 1604 (Poetical Essayes), 1606 (Amorose Songes), 1609 (Poetical Recreations), 1623 (Poeticall Recreations), and (posthumously) in 1631 (The Pilgrime and Heremite). William Drummond of Hawthornden’s career in print was even more prolific, with works printed in 1613 (Teares on the Death of Meliades), 1616 (Poems), 1617/18 (Forth Feasting), 1623 (Flowers of Sion), and several reprints in his lifetime. The print history of these poets is an integral part of Scottish book history more generally.
63 The concept of ‘courtly’ in Scottish terms is difficult to define, and certainly very different from, for instance, Elizabethan ‘courtly’. A clear distinction needs to be made between ‘courtly’ as a spatial marker (literature produced at, and exclusively for, the court) and ‘courtly’ as a more loosely defined poetic style (literature produced in ‘courtly’ modes, such as the amatory sonnet). See further Chapter Two, pp. 43-44.
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courty manuscripts have survived – such as the miscellanies under scrutiny here. Closest perhaps come the collected papers of William Fowler, who was a courtier to James, and Secretary to Queen Anne, from c. 1582 until his death in 1612. Yet, Fowler’s manuscripts are manifestly personal papers, and although a great deal of poetry by other named and anonymous poets is included, there is too little evidence to consider anything in his collection a courtly miscellany. There is no trace of Fowler’s poetry outside his own substantial collection of manuscripts. John Stewart of Baldynneis, once habitually quoted as a member of the band, might have had one chance-encounter with the king, and, as McClune persuasively argues, his writing was probably situated in a family coterie away from court – perhaps as a result none of Stewart’s known work appears elsewhere than in his own presentation manuscript. From the supposed ‘band’, only Alexander Montgomerie’s writings seem to have found a wider Scottish readership, to the point that David Parkinson identified various Montgomerie canons. Importantly, those include separate (but related) manuscript and print canons. The latter ensured a wide readership (in terms of numbers of books printed) of a limited number of poems. In addition, virtually every miscellany manuscript and musical manuscript produced after 1580 contains one or more Montgomerie poems, most of which were never printed.

Montgomerie is probably the most widely disseminated vernacular poet in manuscript around the turn of the seventeenth century. On the basis of the three miscellanies under review here, other poets can be identified, however, whose works circulated more extensively than was hitherto realised. One example is Alexander Hume. Although at one time involved with courtly writing (which Hume equates to amatory, and thus sinful, poetry), according to his own testimony he broke with the courtly mode to explore devotional poetry. Modern constructions of the late sixteenth-century literary establishment situate Hume’s works in the margins, although the fruits of his labour, his Hymnes and Sacred Songs, were clearly popular with a contemporary audience. This is attested by the two manuscript copies (in NLS MS 19.3.6, and CUL MS Kk.5.30) of his ‘Of the Day Estivall’; in addition, MS Laing III.447 collects another of his poems, ‘The weicht of sin is wonder greit’. Another example is Alexander Craig of Rosecraig, who is not a poet known to have been included in many Scottish miscellanies (though his works were printed post-1603), yet, three of his poems will be identified below in the Tibbermuir and Robertson manuscripts.

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65 McClune, ‘Stewart of Baldynneis’, pp. 165-76.


In relation to Elizabethan canon formation on the basis of manuscript and print publication, Steven May’s observations are instructive:

We can find out, at least to some degree, what poetry ‘did’ at the apogee of Elizabethan society – but this will require a wholesale rewriting of the canon. We must begin to investigate a very different array of authors and works from those that have been studied to date; in addition, scholarly analysis of the transmitting media must shift from print to manuscript.68

May’s words could have far-reaching implications for English renaissance studies, as he proposes to open up canon boundaries to allow entry for a great deal of anonymous verse, often distinctly non-amatory, and disregard what he terms the ‘commercial poets’, such as Drayton, Daniel, Campion, Spenser, or Gascoigne, who are conventionally regarded to have given shape to an Elizabethan courtly aesthetic. In response to May’s call to reconfigure the English courtly canon, Speed Hill remarks that ‘facts can be very disconcerting’ – particularly those facts that demand a radical reorientation of scholarship up to date.69

In the Scottish context, it is to be hoped that miscellany research will shake up the canon, too, but perhaps the odds are unfavourable. Since ‘scholars and critics are nervous in the face of works of uncertain provenance and chronology’,70 anonymous verse in manuscript is traditionally less likely to be included in anthologies or critical discussions. Where May has recourse to a number of manuscripts demonstrably associated with Elizabethan courtiers, in Scotland no such evidence is available. Perhaps the very lack of such exclusively courtly collections is telling in itself. Although allowances must be made for the fact that evidence may simply have disappeared, by a careful consideration of the contents and contexts of those manuscripts that have survived new hypotheses can be formulated. Now that the most pervasive critical conceptualisation of early modern Scottish writing has been challenged (that of Shire, her ‘modern myth’ of the ‘Castalian band’), there is scope to reset the parameters, or to rethink the paradigms.71 A comprehensive study of the miscellanies will provide essential information on ‘what poetry did’ (in May’s words), and what poems and songs – both Scottish and English – were read and performed in the 1580s through to the 1630s.


71 Two critics have recently called for a review of the ‘parameters of culture’ and a search for ‘paradigms lost’, see Alasdair A. MacDonald, ‘Parameters’, and Theo van Heijnsbergen, ‘Paradigms Lost: Sixteenth-Century Scotland’, in Schooling and Scholarship: The Ordering and Reordering of Knowledge in the Western Middle Ages, ed. by Alasdair A. MacDonald and Michael W. Twomey (Louvain: Peeters, 2004), pp. 197-211.
As argued above, and in light of Parkinson’s perspective on compilation as a creative and progressive process, compilers also take account of more recent, or contemporary developments in literary culture that may provide evidence of the direction that Scottish early modern writing took after 1603. The notion that Scottish literature perished after the Reformation, and that its final stale dregs were consumed at the court of James VI, has been sufficiently challenged. But what, then, was it replaced with? Are there any trends to discern in the manuscripts produced after the Union that reveal that literature was in a state more healthy and fit than previously supposed? Can any local cultural centres be identified where business continued as usual, and where compilers and readers were perhaps less reliant on the court as a socio-cultural hub? Questions relating to intellectual networks, circulation, and the construction of a canon on the basis of manuscript evidence, will be extensively dealt with in the chapters that follow, so that the miscellanies are not studied only in their own right, but also as products that are indicative of the wider cultural developments in literary Scotland.

A ‘Degree of Adventurousness’
Derek Pearsall, in an article looking back over a long and illustrious career as a manuscript scholar, lists three distinct, though not mutually exclusive, ‘values’ of manuscript research. The first value is what the manuscript in question might reveal about authorial intention of the texts contained in it; the second reveals the reception history of that text. The third value is the manuscript’s significance for cultural history. These three values are intrinsically linked and often difficult to separate. With regards to the miscellanies discussed here, and quite apart from theoretical issues as to whether it is necessary to retrieve ‘authorial intention’ in the first place, it is generally dangerous to try and extract evidence of authorial intention, since the literary texts have been filtered through an often opaque process of circulation and dissemination that introduced many textual variants. However, the miscellanies contain unrivalled evidence of the reception history of the poems, and of the larger cultural environment that produced these manuscripts. With a view towards the future of manuscript studies, Pearsall strongly advocates ‘a degree of adventurousness’:

There is a view, and it is hardly controvertible, that absolute precision and certainty is what one needs in talking about manuscripts […] It is hard to argue against this view, but I would suggest that it is not without its drawbacks. It can also lead to silence, where we are deprived of the matured opinions of experts who feel that it is better to be silent than to run the risk of publishing something that may turn out to be inaccurate. It can also lead to a compulsory wild abandon, when a scholar who

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strictly refrains from speculation regarding manuscript description will throw caution in the wind when it comes to a matter of literary judgement or interpretation. Or it can lead to a cramped hesitation, when a promising but untested hypothesis is held back for fear that it may betray some ignorance in an associated field: the value of such hypotheses, even if they do prove inadequate, in obliging other scholars to re-examine the sources of their own knowledge and opinions and to produce other and better hypotheses, goes unrecognized.74

This argument can usefully be applied to early modern Scottish criticism. The manuscript miscellanies under scrutiny here, but also others, need to be subjected to ‘promising but untested’ hypotheses. This is not to say that we should apply them with ‘compulsory wild abandon’, but simply to argue that questions without direct evidence are still valid questions to ask. The relatively small amount of critical interest and work done on Scottish late-sixteenth and seventeenth-century miscellanies is entirely disproportionate in relation to what these manuscripts might reveal. The current project will, perhaps inevitably, ‘betray some ignorance in an associated field’, yet this should not detract from the importance of bringing the three miscellany manuscripts to critical attention. To borrow Stewart of Baldynneis’s phrase, and inverting his modesty topos, the next three chapters will investigate the ‘prompt pen’ of a number of Scottish scribes. Each miscellany discussed here, in its unique way, offers invaluable evidence pertaining to Scottish literary and book culture, and to the reception of more than a century of Scottish writing.

74 Pearsall, ‘Value/s’, pp. 175-76.
chapter two ~

‘Johne Nesbet with my hand’

Edinburgh University Library MS Laing III.447

Edinburgh University Library MS Laing III.447 is one of a large number of manuscripts to come to the library from the private collection of David Laing. An edition of the manuscript was published by the Scottish Text Society in 1910, edited by George Stevenson, and entitled *Poems of Alexander Montgomerie, and Other Pieces from Laing MS. No. 447: Supplementary Volume*. This volume was supplementary to James Cranstoun’s *Poems of Alexander Montgomerie* of 1887, also published by the STS. Cranstoun, for his edition, drew primarily on the most important witness of Montgomerie’s lyrical verse, EUL MS De.3.70, also known as the Ker manuscript. In addition, for Montgomerie’s longer poems, *The Cherrie and the Slae* and the jointly authored *Flyting of Montgomerie and Polwart*, Cranstoun relied on early prints. Stevenson’s supplement was of great value for the criticism of Montgomerie’s life and writings, since for the first time it presented in print, in addition to several historical documents detailing the poet’s life, the relevant content of three newly discovered manuscripts: Huntington Library MS HM 105, BL MS Harley 7578, and MS Laing III.447. The first, also known as the Tullibardine manuscript, contains another text of the *Flyting* (entitled *Invectiues Allexander Montgomeree and Pollwart* in the manuscript), and one dedicatory sonnet to King James VI. MS Harley 7578 contains yet another transcription of the *Flyting*, copied from print by John Rutherford, and bound into one volume with other items of prose, verse and drama. The final manuscript, and subject of this chapter, MS Laing III.447 contains thirty-seven miscellaneous poems: one of these is Montgomerie’s ‘Off the cherry and the

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Slae’ (ff. 15r-31v), and two others are his shorter lyrics ‘Nan luffis bott fullis vnhud agane’ (f. 36v) and ‘Peccau pater mesere mei’ (ff. 80r-81r).

Stevenson’s supplementary volume is without a doubt a valuable edition, yet for modern scholars his editing of the complete contents of the Laing manuscript also creates serious difficulties. They are summed up by Priscilla Bawcutt as follows:

Another small verse miscellany (EUL, La. III. 447) has been printed, but the order of items is totally rearranged, for no obvious reason; what is even more misleading is that it is published in the Scottish Text Society’s Montgomerie supplementary volume, although it has only three poems certainly by that poet.5

In other words, there are two main problems. Firstly, Stevenson’s ordering of the poems is loosely thematic and makes impossible any appreciation of the manuscript’s original form, and, secondly, Montgomerie’s association with many of the miscellaneous poems is doubtful at best. Although Bawcutt and others have acknowledged these difficulties, still the balance has never been redressed. For a fresh examination of the manuscript, a study of the original organisation of the poems needs to be the starting point. As discussed in Chapter One, it is essential to try and recover how a miscellany’s contents were collected, and how the manuscript was given shape. Although reservations have been noted in the previous chapter (pp. 21-22) with regard to how, in Anderson’s words ‘[w]e can assemble the growth (or stagnation) of a compiler’s taste based on the shape of the collection’, MS Laing III.447 makes an excellent test case of a collection that seems indeed to have ‘grown by accretion’.6 It is a complex type of accretion, however, as the manuscript features a multitude of different hands: Stevenson suggests the total number of scribes to be ‘over a dozen’.7

In Stevenson’s rearranged edition, it is difficult to track the compilers’ progress, or indeed regress, unless one puzzles it back together on the basis of the folio numbers. In order to accommodate a revaluation of the manuscript, a transcription is appended (see Appendix Two; this is complete with the exception of the long ‘Off the cherry and the Slae’).8 This transcription lacks Stevenson’s editorial punctuation and his silent emendations; furthermore, it takes into account the wealth of marginalia and, most importantly for the present purpose, it presents the poems in the order in which they appear.

7 Stevenson, p. xxxvi.
8 All quotations from the manuscript below represent the text exactly as it appears on the page, but following the transcription conventions as set out in the Note on Transcriptions (see p. v). However, since Stevenson provides many suggestions, fills in obvious gaps, and corrects scribal mistakes, his editorial notes will be added in the margin of my transcription, and marked ‘St’.
Editorial History of MS Laing III.447

It can be inferred that David Laing – prodigious bookseller, antiquary, scholar and editor – acquired MS Laing III.447 sometime after 1821. In that year had appeared his edition of the poems of Montgomerie, yet it makes no mention of this particular manuscript containing a version of *The Cherrie and the Slae* and two shorter poems. According to Stevenson, the undated inscription on this manuscript’s fly-leaf, ‘D. Laing Esq / Mes. Laing & Forbes / Princes Street / Edinburgh / With mr W L melvilles / compliments’, reveals that Laing received the manuscript from William Lock Melville. On the basis of this, Stevenson hypothesises that Laing’s acquisition of the manuscript might have prompted his projected revised edition of Montgomerie’s works, or that the bequest might have reflected a newly roused interest in Montgomerie following Laing’s 1821 edition. Whatever may be the truth of this matter, Laing’s revised text was never produced, and the manuscript quietly passed into the collection of Edinburgh University Library after his death in 1878.

After Stevenson’s edition of 1910, silence ensued again and the manuscript and its contents were not much discussed. Henry Harvey Wood re-issued *The Cherrie and the Slae* in 1937, and Helena Shire edited and published a selection of Montgomerie’s verse in 1960, including some fragments from the *Cherrie*. Shire does not mention MS Laing III.447; Harvey Wood dismisses it on the basis that the manuscript’s transcription of the *Cherrie* ‘bears a genuine resemblance to W2 [Waldegrave’s second print, 1597] but it is much more eccentric and corrupt’. Notwithstanding R.D.S. Jack’s short monograph on Montgomerie in the *Scottish Writers Series*, published in 1985, it appears that the poet’s popularity had waned, heralded perhaps by C.S. Lewis’s damning critique that Montgomerie’s sonnets, for instance, were ‘not, perhaps, opened once in a hundred years by those who read for pleasure’. Though some of the poet’s works fared slightly better under Lewis’s judgement, even when considered as ‘last of the makaris’ or a ‘precursor to Drummond’, Lewis was harsh: ‘unless you are a student you will not read him in either capacity’.

Today, Montgomerie has been reinstated as Scotland’s most accomplished poet of the late sixteenth century, not least due to David Parkinson’s newly edited *Poems* (2000) and Roderick J. Lyall’s recent book-length critical study (2005). In Lyall’s words, ‘Montgomerie is not only the finest Scottish poet of his age’, but ‘one of the most distinctive and innovative poetic voices in

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9 Stevenson, p. xxxv.
10 Stevenson, pp. xxxiv-xxxv.
13 Lewis, p. 112.
early modern Britain’. Parkinson and Lyall both deal only summarily with MS Laing III.447, and, from their point of view, with good reason. Stevenson conjectures that ‘there is at least a strong probability that some of the compositions in question are the work of Montgomerie’; that is, those not easily identified as his because they also occur elsewhere. Jack, however, ventures that ‘but very few can with confidence be assigned to Montgomerie’. Lyall follows Jack, and referring to the dispersion of Montgomerie’s verse in manuscripts other than the Ker manuscript, argues the following:

[I]t is not surprising that other collections – specifically the Bannatyne and Maitland Quarto manuscripts – attribute to Montgomerie poems which are absent from Ker; the materials from which the Ker scribe compiled the manuscript may well have been incomplete, lacking some items of which the poet himself did not keep, or had lost, a copy. It further follows from this that a few genuine poems may lie unattributed in other extant collections, such as EUL MS. Laing III.447, in which two of Montgomerie’s pieces from the Ker manuscript appear without attribution. But we should clearly be very cautious about making additions to the corpus on this basis, especially when the argument is as weak as George Stevenson’s bold assertion that ‘[i]t is hard to believe that this and the following four sonnets could have been written by any other Scottish poet than Montgomerie’. Of the thirty-six miscellaneous poems printed by Stevenson, in addition to the Cherrie only two re-appear in Parkinson’s edition (they are ‘Nan luffis bott fullis vn lud agane’ and ‘Peccau i pater meserere mei’), where their authorship can be corroborated with their occurrence in the Ker manuscript. Parkinson’s corpus consists of the totality of the Ker manuscript, his preferred Tullibardine manuscript text of the Flyting, and two versions of The Cherrie and the Slae, both from prints. A further five ‘other poems’ are added: two from the Maitland Quarto manuscript, and three from the Bannatyne manuscript. Although any other detailed consideration post-dating Stevenson is lacking, it seems that evidence is too scant to attribute anything more to Montgomerie from the Laing manuscript. His signature has thus been permanently removed from the manuscript as a whole. This realisation dramatically changes the way the manuscript is now perceived: whereas at first regarded as a manuscript possibly containing a significant number of previously unknown poems from the hand of Scotland’s ‘maister poet’, MS Laing III.447 is now regarded as a miscellany proper.

**Manuscript Content**

In his introduction to the edition, Stevenson is critical of David Laing’s editorial practice with the Ker manuscript. He condemns in particular Laing’s occasional shortening or lengthening of stanzas by displacing short half-lines. As the later editor further comments,

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14 Lyall, Montgomerie, p. 349.
15 Stevenson, p. xlii.
17 Lyall, Montgomerie, pp. 29-30.
editorial liberties are taken with a number of the minor poems in the [Ker] Manuscript. In these, changes are made (without acknowledgment) in the scribe’s order of the lines, an interference which has the effect of altering the structure of the stanzas. Stevenson provides several examples of how Montgomerie’s carefully crafted stanza forms are distorted. Yet, by rearranging the Laing manuscript’s content, Stevenson is guilty of a crime not dissimilar to Laing’s. The supplementary volume’s organisation of poems is roughly thematic, moving from mostly amatory stanzaic poetry (I to XIX in Stevenson’s edition), to amatory sonnets (XX to XXVIII), and finally to devotional stanzaic verse (XXIX to XXXVI). The ‘miscellaneous poems’ are printed separately from ‘Off the cherry and the Slae’ (ff. 15r-31v), which in Laing appears halfway, a position that may give it particular prominence in the manuscript. The ramifications of this rearrangement are not always so clear to readers of Stevenson’s edition. For instance, in the manuscript there is no unified collection of sonnets separated from stanzaic poems – they appear indiscriminately mixed. Although an argument will be made below for active scribal determination that led to a thematic build-up, nevertheless religious and amatory verse alternate freely. The manuscript does not end, as one might expect from the last poem in Stevenson, with ‘Consider man how tyme do pass’ (f. 71v), a set of proverbial lines expressing ubiquitous sixteenth-century *memento mori* sentiments. Rather, it ends with a sonnet, ‘Thocht Polibus pisander and vith them’ (f. 83v).

The following is a list of the poems by folio number, providing the first line and/or title, the author (when known), and the hand in which the poem appears. It also lists blank and missing leaves, as well as marginal annotations. For ease of cross-referencing, the Roman numerals given to the poems in Stevenson are provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folio</th>
<th>First line / Title and author</th>
<th>Stevenson</th>
<th>Hand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ff. 1-3</td>
<td>[missing]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 4r</td>
<td>[several scribbles in French]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 4v</td>
<td>[blank]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 5r</td>
<td>‘Nevere madame of your mercie me infold’ [anonymous] [several scribbles in French]</td>
<td>XXVIII</td>
<td>Hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 5v</td>
<td>[blank]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 6r</td>
<td>‘As eis ar message to the hairt’ [anonymous]</td>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>Hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 6v-8r</td>
<td>‘Och Luif in langour heir I ly’ [anonymous]</td>
<td>IX</td>
<td>Hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 8r-9r</td>
<td>‘Luif still in hoipe with pacience’</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Hand A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stevenson, p. xxxiii.

Stevenson does not discuss whether the arrangement of the words on the page in the Ker manuscript is editorial or authorial. Later critics accept that the Ker scribe’s exemplars were likely to have been close descendants of Montgomerie’s own papers, or, indeed, the poet’s own papers. See Lyall, *Montgomerie, Montgomerie: Poems*, II, 1-6.
[anonymous] ff. 9v-10r ‘Suiet haire reios in mynd’ II Hand A
[anonymous] ff. 10r-10v ‘Wo worth the fall of fortounis quheill’ III Hand A
[anonymous] f. 10v ‘Suppis I be of simple clan’ XV Hand A
[‘Fallowis the ravisching of Beggis donaldsoun future spouse to Thomas louthian Mercheand’] [anonymous] f. 11v [blank]
[unknown] f. 12r ‘My breist is maid the verray graif of woo’ XX Hand A
[unknown] f. 12v [blank]
[anonymous] ff. 13r-14r ‘Prepotent palme Imperiall’ IV Hand A
[anonymous] f. 14r ‘In somer quhen the feildis ar fair’ XVI Hand A
[anonymous] f. 14v [blank]
[anonymous] ff. 15r-31v ‘Off the cherry and the Slae’ Hand A: sts 1, 3-10
[unknown] Hand C: sts 2, 11-69
[unknown] ff. 32r-33r ‘King cupaid glacles god of glaikes’ V Hand B
[unknown] ff. 33r-33v ‘My freind if thow will credeit me in oucht’ XI Hand B
[unknown] ff. 34r-36r ‘Some men for suddane Joy do weip’ XXIX Hand B
[unknown] f. 36v ‘Nan luffis bott fullis vnluad agane’ VI Hand B
[unknown] ff. 37r-38r ‘O lord my god to the I cray heir my complent’ XXXI Hand B
[unknown] ff. 38v-39r ‘O lord my god sen I am brocht to greitt distres’ XXXII Hand B
[unknown] ff. 39r-41v ‘Quha so dois put thair confidence’ XXXIII Hand B
[unknown] ff. 41v-45r ‘Harken herkene me think ane trompett dois stund’ XXXIV Hand B
[unknown] ff. 45v-48r ‘The weicht of sin is wonder greit’ XXXV Hand D
[unknown] f. 48v [blank]
[unknown] ff. 49-68 [missing]
[unknown] f. 69r ‘Of all wardlie confort trew freindschip is chief’ Hand E
[unknown] f. 69v ‘I wis I wair transfigurat in ane ring’ XVII Hand A [?]
[unknown] f. 70r ‘I dreamit ane dreame o that my dream wer trew’ XXI Hand A [?]
[unknown] ff. 70v-71r [blank]
[unknown] f. 71v ‘Consider man how tyme do pass’ XXXVI Hand E [?]
[unknown] ff. 72r-72v ‘Redolent rois my onlie schois’ X Hand F
| f. 73r | [blank] |
| f. 73v | ‘Your outward gesture form & fassoins fair’ |
| f. 74r | ‘I hoipe to serve sane syne for to deserue’ |
| f. 74v | ‘I serve ane dame moir quheiter than the snaw’ |
| ff. 75r-76r | ‘O fragrant flour fair and formois’ |
| f. 76v-77r | ‘The royll palice off the heichest hewin’ |
| f. 77v | ‘The tender snow of granis soft & quhyt’ |
| f. 78r | [alphabets, and ‘grund the on pacience’ see ff. 76-77r] |
| f. 78v | ‘The tender snow of granis soft & quhyt’ |
| f. 79r | ‘Glade am I glade am I’ |
| f. 79v | ‘first serve syne sute quhiles seme to lichlie luif’ |
| f. 79r | [alphabets and scribbles, see ff. 76-77r] |
| f. 80r-81r | ‘Peccaui pater mesetere mei’ |
| f. 81v | ‘The luif I beare is fixtt on one’ |
| f. 82r-83r | ‘Freshe flureis fair and lusum ladie quhyte’ |
| f. 83v | ‘Thocht Polibus pisander and vith them’ |
| f. 84r-84v | [many scribbles and names] |

The manuscript now holds sixty leaves, but may originally have held anything upwards of eighty-four, since many have been removed. Foliation starts at f. 4, since the first three leaves are now missing. Whereas folio number 46 is missed out, this seems to be a mistake in numbering rather than an indication of another missing leaf, since no obvious stub appears between ff. 45 and 47. Since ff. 49-68 have been removed from the manuscript (as indicated by many stubs), it is now impossible to ascertain how exactly the leaves between ff. 47 and 72 were gathered, and how many quires are missing. As far as can be made out, the sixty extant leaves divide into eleven or more gatherings. The first three are 1 ff. 4-11, 2 ff 12-18 (one leaf cut out between ff. 14-15), and 3 ff. 19-26. The next gatherings are harder to identify as the binding becomes tighter, but it seems that one folded sheet 4 ff. 26-27 is followed by 5 ff. 28-31 (with two leaves cut out after f. 31), 6 ff. 32-41, 7 ff. 42-45, 8 ff. 47-[…] , 9 […]-72, 10 ff. 73-78, 11 ff. 79-84. The manuscript is bound in its original calf-skin, and Stevenson reports that at his direction it was repaired in the early twentieth
century when the binding was coming apart, and several leaves were loose.\textsuperscript{20} It is today in relatively good condition, and the pages are clean, though slightly water-stained in places. Notwithstanding repairs, the binding is still very fragile.

The many different scribes need more attention. Although it is not uncommon for longer works to be written out by different scribes, still the two distinct hands that copied out ‘Off the cherry and the Slae’ raise pertinent questions. In the manuscript as a whole, up to about a dozen different hands can be identified, some responsible for many poems (Hands A and B), or a large part of one poem (Hand C), while other hands transcribed only short sections, one or two short poems at most. Identifying these scribes is no easy task, and the list above should be read as provisional rather than definitive. Whereas it is possible to locate similar types of scripts in the manuscript (sometimes marked out by scribal initials, see below), the letters assigned above to the various scribes function not as absolute identifiers, but rather as approximations. Some hands clearly stand out and are easily identifiable, whereas in other cases it is more difficult to be absolutely certain that two poems are indeed written out by the same scribe.

It is tempting to suppose the Laing manuscript to have been what Mary Hobbs terms a ‘table-book’: a manuscript originally blank, in which verses are inscribed by the owner, but also by his/her friends, relatives, or family, or indeed anybody else with access to the manuscript.\textsuperscript{21} There is evidence that MS Laing III.447 was indeed a blank book, and not a collection of loose sheets later bound together. First of all, the \textit{Cherrie} stretches over three gatherings. Secondly, the group on ff. 32r-45r stretches over two gatherings, with all poems transcribed in the same Hand B. The evidence of different groupings within the manuscript, composed by different scribes, will be discussed below, in the context of the poems themselves.

In terms of its date, the Laing manuscript belongs to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. Montgomerie’s \textit{Cherrie} was not published until 1597, but circulated in manuscript as early as 1584, when James VI quoted several lines from it for his \textit{Reulis and Cauletis}. Alexander Hume’s ‘The weight of sin is wonder greitt’ (f. 45r) was printed in 1599 among his \textit{Hymnes or Sacred Songs}, but part of that collection was written much earlier, as his introductory epistle ‘To the Scottish Youth’ is dated 9 December 1594. His ‘The Triumph of the Lord, after the Manner of Men’, on the defeat of the Armada, is dated 4 October 1589, so Hume was clearly active as a poet throughout the 1580s and 1590s.\textsuperscript{22} ‘My freind if thow will credeitt me in oucht’ (f. 33r) is an English poem, and was written by Jasper Heywood, and printed in the early English miscellany \textit{The Paradise of Dayntie Deuises} of 1576. An even older English poem is ‘Some men for suddane Joy

\textsuperscript{20} Stevenson, p. xxxv.


\textsuperscript{22} \textit{The Poems of Alexander Hume}, ed. by Alexander Lawson (Edinburgh: STS, 1st ser. 48, 1902), pp. 8, 63.
do weip’ (f. 34r), identified by Bawcutt as ‘a ballad associated with the name of John [Careless], a Protestant martyr executed in the reign of Mary Tudor’. She continues that ‘first printed in 1564, it became immensely popular – a snatch is quoted by the Fool in King Lear – and may indeed have been known to Hume’. The only poem that complicates matters considerably, in terms of the manuscript’s dating, is ‘Glade am I glade am I’ (f. 79r). The earliest occurrence in print of this song is not until 1609, in Thomas Ravenscroft’s Deuteromelia. It is possible this is a later addition to the Laing manuscript, but alternatively, since all the lyrics in Ravenscroft’s book are anonymous, the poem might have circulated, orally, or in manuscript, prior to 1609. With the exception of ‘Glade am I’, the datable evidence of MS Laing III.447 leans very heavily towards the second half of the sixteenth century. There is more evidence to consider, as several poems included in the manuscript never appeared in print, but are known from various manuscript collections – this shall be considered below, where the relevant poems are discussed.

Of one poem that occurs several times in the manuscript (first on f. 76v, and then repeated on ff. 77v and 79v) Stevenson maintains that it is ‘written in a later hand’, but he provides no real evidence. The lines run as follows:

grund the on patience blind not thy conscience
do to god reverence thankand him ay
preis the with diligence to put away negligence
Content the with Sufficiency this warlde
will away.

It is certainly possible that later owners, for instance the Melvilles (see below), inscribed further poems in the Laing manuscript; the scribbles in French at the beginning, and the alphabets, may equally be later additions. It can be shown, on the basis of a comparison between several idiosyncratic letter forms (particularly ‘w’ and ‘y’, see for instance ff. 76v-77r), that only one scribe was responsible for the multiple occurrences of the quatrains and alphabets – all of which seem to have been exercises in penmanship. The quatrain is known from elsewhere: ‘Grund the on patience’ is included, first of all, in the Bannatyne manuscript, and in the commonplace book of John Maxwell (EUL MS Laing III.467, f. 19). Furthermore, Walter Cullen transcribed it in the

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23 Bawcutt, ‘Miscellanies’, p. 203. Professor Bawcutt has indicated to the present writer that in her article she names the poet ‘Carewell’, which is a mistake for ‘Careless’. The discussion below will refer to the writer as ‘John Careless’. See further note 90.


margins of his ‘Aberdeen Chronicle’. What this indicates, or rather confirms, is that this type of popular rhyme, if not transmitted orally, must have circulated in the margins of longer poems or other works.

**Ownership and the Cultural Context**

One possible answer as to how the manuscript came into existence, and as to who was responsible for the many different additions, may lie in the wealth of marginalia scattered among the pages. Stevenson was the first to draw attention to the repeated signatures of what appear to have been Edinburgh burgesses active in the last decade of the sixteenth century, but many more readers that have never been commented on left their mark. Several names feature repeatedly: ‘Johnne Nesbet’ (f. 10v; this name appears to be a different hand from Hand A, who compiled the first section of the manuscript), ‘finis amen quod I Nisbit’ (f. 83), and ‘Johne Nesbet vith my hand’ (f. 84v). The final leaf of the manuscript, f. 84, is densely filled with scribbles, including also the inscription ‘to my traist freind Thomas hennrison’ on f. 84r; two names, ‘dauidsoun’ and ‘robertsoun’, appear on f. 84v. A certain ‘James B’ left his mark three times, on ff. 5r, 14r and 28r.

The most puzzling instance of scribal initials occurs on f. 83v. The sonnet on this page appears subscribed with a monogram, perhaps ‘I B’. Directly underneath we find ‘finis amen be me Ihone bane tak ane staf in his’. It is tempting to suppose that this ‘I B’ stands for John Bane, but who this might be remains undetermined. The initials, or monogram, already featured underneath several earlier poems, perhaps on f. 5r (scored out, and difficult to make out), and on ff. 8r and 9r. It is possible that scribe A went by the name of John Bane, although on f. 79r, a sonnet in Hand A is now subscribed ‘B A’ (or perhaps ‘I B A’).

The *Cherrie* is the only poem ascribed to a known author, ‘Finis quod mongomerie’, on f. 31v. Another scribal mark, perhaps a ‘P’, or ‘T’, or a combination of two other letters, appears with Hand C’s transcription of the *Cherrie*, on ff. 15r, 19r, 20r, and finally, much enlarged, underneath the *Cherrie*’s final stanza. One sonnet is subscribed by four different names, ‘Goirg hay’, ‘James Arnot’, ‘Jhone Hay’ and ‘Joannis Arnotis’ (f. 78v). ‘Arnot I’ reoccurs on f. 72v, as does a member of the Hay family: ‘finis quod Hay’, on f. 71v (the name is scored out). One indecipherable initial, or monogram, appears on f. 73v, ‘quod […]’, and another indecipherable name on f. 76r. Finally, on f. 20r we find ‘Melville’, while elsewhere we find, in pencil, ‘L. of Leven’ (f. 4r), and ‘Lady Leven’, ‘Lord Leven’, and ‘Lady Mary’ (f. 69r). Also, a mark of ownership may have been inscribed on f. 84r; it is extremely unfortunate that it has been scored out, possibly by a later owner: except for the first two words, which appear to read ‘this buik’, none of the writing can be retrieved. A final set of marginal inscriptions, several repeated lines in French, appear on ff. 4r and

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27 See pp. 65-66 below.
28 What ‘staf’ here means is difficult to say. *DOST* (under ‘staff’, 13a) records an instance of the word which may refer to a writing implement of some sort.
more French scribbles are repeated on f. 84v. Although the scribbles on ff. 4r-5r are of possible amatory cast, they have no obvious bearing on the content of the miscellany. 29

It is difficult to identify with certainty any of the owners, scribes, readers, or perhaps even poets, that left their marks among the pages. Yet, the group of Edinburgh burgesses identified by Stevenson may provide a plausible backdrop for the creation and consumption of the Laing manuscript. Parkinson develops Stevenson’s suggestion and advances the following reading of the manuscript’s genesis:

Elsewhere [in the manuscript], the names of scribes and readers take precedence: ‘garg hay’ [sic], ‘johne hay’, ‘James Arnot’, ‘Joannis Arnotis’ (f. 78v); ‘John Nesbet’ (f. 10v); these surnames are those of prominent Edinburgh merchant burgesses, a John Arnot being provost from 1587 to 91, his eldest son James dying in 1591, and his brother James being on the Edinburgh town council in 1603-4. This manuscript could thus have been compiled during the 1590s or shortly thereafter, suggesting that at this period the demand for The Cherrie and the Slae was still outstripping the supply of prints. 30

The Arnotts in particular appear frequently in the Edinburgh town council records, and a letter by ‘John Arnote’, provost of Edinburgh, to William Asheby, dated 8 April 1590, still exists, in the provost’s own hand (BL Egerton MS 2598, f. 268). 31 When in September 1611 the city council ‘ordainis the thesaurer to caus big ane schole to Mr Patrik Henrysoun, maister of thair sang schole’, James Arnot (presumably the brother that Parkinson identified) was appointed as one of the overseers of the project. 32 In June 1597 ‘Alexander Henrysoun’ is identified as ‘musiciann’ and ‘maister of thair sang schole’. Since the profession of song-school master ran in the family – Alexander resigned his post in favour of ‘Samuel Henrysoun’, his son, and when Samuel died, he passed on the office to his brother Patrick – then perhaps the inscription ‘to my tryst freind Thomas henrisson’ on f. 84r takes on extra significance, and provides further hints to the cultural environment in which the manuscript circulated. 33

The Nisbet, or Nesbet, family appears frequently in the burgh records as well: a ‘William Nesbet’ sat on the council from 1582-84, whereas ‘Henry Nesbett’ was a bailie in 1583-84, and

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29 For the lines in French see transcription, Appendix Two. In translation, they run as follows: f. 4r, ‘Would you like to write back to me, I would like that very much, I will give you a pen [plume] if you reach me & me, I will give you another of them’, and on f. 5r: ‘Give me my key so that I may go to reach in my trunk [coffre] a book to read on top of it, you will not be able to see without a candle I promise you that it is true’. The scribble on f. 84v is discussed below.
33 Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh 1589 to 1603, ed. by Marguerite Wood and R.K. Hannay (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1927), pp. 191, 309; see also p. xxviii.
again in 1584-85, this time together with ‘William Nesbet’. A ‘Jhonn Nesbett’ appears in the records on 18 February 1596/97, when he received money from the treasurer ‘for his expenssis in ryding to Bervik for defense of James Nesbett, javellour, his suyter to ane day of trewis quhair he wes indyttet for ane wairdour lattin furth at command of [blank]’. When on 9 December 1614 ‘Johnne Nisbet’ accepts his post as collector of kirk rents and annuities, among the list of his cautioners appears ‘James Arnote’. A ‘Mr Johnn Hay’ makes his appearance in the burgh records for the first time on 3 March 1602 when he was appointed deputy clerk to Alexander Guthrie. He then features prominently as a messenger between Edinburgh’s city council and King James VI in London, liaising with the king in 1617 when the latter was travelling north for his royal entry. He was again dispatched to London in 1625 by John Adamson, principal of the city’s College, to buy books.

This group of burgesses can be shown to have interacted also with other known figures, and one in particular that played a major role in the safekeeping of the Bannatyne manuscript. In 1614, when ‘Sir Jhonn Arnott of Bersik, Knight’ was provost, a ‘George Fowlis’ appears as council member, together with ‘James Nesbett’. In 1615 ‘James Nisbet’ reappears on the council, with ‘William Nisbet’ and ‘Johne Arnot, younger’, and again ‘George Foulis’, now styled as ‘goldsmithe’. Then, when in 1616 ‘William Nisbet of the Deyne’ is elected provost, ‘James Nisbett’ is elected as bailie, and on the council sat ‘James Arnot’, and again ‘George Foullis, Master of the Cuniehouse’. Genealogical information in the account book of Sir John Foulis of Ravelston confirms that this George Foulis must be the Master of the King’s Mint, or as Hallen styles him, ‘monetarius regis’, who in 1603 married Jonet Bannatyne, the compiler’s daughter, with whom the Bannatyne manuscript passed into the Foulis family. There are earlier connections too between the Bannatynes and the Nisbets, as Theo van Heijnsbergen has shown:

Henry Nisbet* was a close friend of the Bannatyne family: he married George Bannatyne’s eldest sister Jonet, was a witness to the will drawn up by George Bannatyne’s mother (26 June 1570) and was in 1580 made tutor to the ‘bairns’ of James Bannatyne, younger. During the civil war, his brother William Nisbet* (died 1585), the first husband of George Bannatyne’s wife, had been a leading Queen’s

35 Extracts 1589 to 1603, p. 178.
36 Extracts 1604 to 1626, p. 124.
37 Extracts 1589 to 1603, p. 303; Extracts 1604 to 1626, pp. 158, 290-91. The index (Extracts 1604 to 1626, p. 442) lists at least twenty-five individual instances when Hay either visited London, or returned to Edinburgh bearing letters from the king.
38 Extracts 1604 to 1626, pp. 119, 132-33, 148.
man. Henry, a successful merchant, was already in the mid-1580s an ardent supporter of James VI’s ecclesiastical policies and a firm opponent of the more radical presbyterians. James Nicoll*, Thomas Aikenhead* and Henry Nisbet* were three of the four bailies appointed by the crown to the council of 1583–4, in the royalist backlash which followed the collapse of the Ruthven regime in the summer of 1583. On the same royal leets of 22 and 24 September 1583 is also be found William Nisbet*, Henry’s brother, who was appointed a councillor.40

Van Heijnsbergen traces longstanding relationships between several families of the Edinburgh merchant classes, city councillors, money-lenders, and other well-to-do burgesses, all of whom were part of Edinburgh’s intricate cultural network.

Whereas there is no irrevocable evidence that the names appearing in the pages of MS Laing III.447 belong to the various prominent Edinburgh officials identified above, still the manuscript most likely originated somewhere among this group of the culturally minded middling classes. They consistently appear together in the records,41 and as a group of affluent and influential council members they must have had connections to Edinburgh’s cultural establishment, and relatively easy access to circulating books and manuscripts. Although no such direct connection is necessary since English books were easily available in Edinburgh, John Hay’s frequent visits to London after 1603, his association with James’s court, and his apparent familiarity with the London book trade nevertheless provide a fascinating picture of the varying channels of cultural interaction. Given the Laing manuscript’s relative proximity to the environment in which George Bannatyne compiled and (perhaps) circulated his manuscript, further comparative study between the two collections may prove illuminating. Especially since several poems in MS Laing III.447 can be shown to draw from mid-sixteenth century poetic conventions, it is very tempting to suppose these poems were drawn from the same rich stock that furnished George Bannatyne with his copy texts. It is impossible to point to exact sources since the bulk of them have not survived, but the two miscellanies seem, on the above evidence, to have shared a cultural background.

Notwithstanding the strong evidence that the Laing manuscript was a production linked to prominent Edinburgh citizens, Stevenson offers an alternative theory that is attractive, but less convincingly supported. Nevertheless, it merits brief attention. As stated, MS Laing III.447 was in the possession of the Melville family for some time at least, and, so Stevenson argues, it might also have originated there. From the flyleaf inscription it is clear that the manuscript was acquired by

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40  See van Heijnsbergen, ‘Interaction’, p. 217. The asterisks behind various names indicate the appearance of those names in Bannatyne’s ‘Memoriall Buik’.

41  For early references to members of the Arnott and Nesbit families on the city council, see the ‘list of provosts, bailies, councilors, deacons of crafts, and other office-bearers’, Extracts 1573-1589, pp. 575-80. ‘John Arnott’ and ‘James Nesbett’ were council members together in 1592-93, see Extracts 1589 to 1603, p. 71. ‘James Nesbett’ and ‘James Arnott’ were bailies together in 1606-7, and council members in 1607-8. When ‘Sir Jhonn Arnott of Bersik, Knight’ was provost from 1609 to 1615, ‘James Nesbett’ was a bailie in 1612-13, as was ‘John Arnott’ in 1615-16, while on the council sat ‘James Nisbet’, ‘William Nisbet’, and ‘John Arnott, younger’, see Extracts 1604 to 1626, pp. 23, 33, 54, 65, 80, 88, 107, 132.
David Laing from William Locke Melville. A shelf-mark pasted inside the binding, ‘Earl of Leven / Melville House / H4’ shows it was once in the library of the earl of Leven and Melville at their family seat at Monimail. \(^{42}\) Evidence of ownership is corroborated also by the various names noted above, ‘Lady Leven’, ‘Lord Leven’, and ‘Melville’, but these names appear to be in a later hand.

In relation to the earliest ownership of the manuscript, it should be noted that the Melvilles did not become associated with the earldom of Leven until 1655, when George, Lord Melville, married Catherine Leslie of Leven. His son David, the second Earl of Melville, was declared third Earl of Leven in 1681. The construction of Melville House, at Monimail in Fife, was not begun until 1697, and completed around 1701. \(^{43}\) Thus, the earliest documented appearance of the manuscript in Melville House occurs a century after it was probably compiled. It is possible that the manuscript was kept at Monimail in the old castle, and only moved to the Melville House library when the new mansion was completed. Stevenson proposes two early members of the Melville family in whose households, or under whose auspices, the manuscript might have originated: William Melville, fourth son of Sir John Melville of Raith, or William’s older brother Sir Robert Melville of Murdocairney. \(^{44}\)

The first, Commendator of Tungland and Kilwinning, Stevenson links to Montgomerie through Melville’s appointment as Lord of Session at the time that the poet was a litigant, when Melville ‘must have spent much of his time in Edinburgh, and have come into contact with the court circle of poets’. \(^{45}\) William’s brother Sir Robert Melville was deeply entrenched in politics throughout his life, and frequently acted as ambassador to Elizabeth I. After supporting Mary, Queen of Scots in her final troubled years in Scotland, Melville came close to execution under Morton, but was saved. His fortunes turned and he was readmitted to James VI’s court and knighted in 1581, and was present at court together with Esmé Stewart, whose arrival in Scotland is often taken as influential in stimulating James VI’s literary interests. R.R. Zulager suggests that

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\(^{42}\) The Leven and Melville papers held by the NAS contain three documents relating to books owned by the family, but the Laing manuscript is not described in any of the lists. The first is GD26/6/124, an undated list of approximately 54 titles, headed ‘The Cataloge of the bookes in the over Studie of the east Tower’. The next catalogue is GD26/6/136, dated 1681, and containing nearly 500 titles arranged in 15 genres. An introductory note explains the shelving system, and offers help on where to find a book. The final document is GD26/6/199, a ‘Catalogue of Books at Melville House, alphabetically arranged’, dating to c. 1800. It is here that for the first time we find the cataloguing system of a capital letter followed by a number, similar to the shelf-mark attached to the Laing manuscript, H4. Unfortunately, there appears to be no mention of works in manuscript, and the catalogue, although alphabetised, confusingly lists books at random either by title or by author.

\(^{43}\) For an extensive family history see The Melvilles, Earls of Melville, and the Leslies, Earls of Leven, ed. by William Fraser, 3 vols (Edinburgh: [n.p.], 1890). David Melville’s life is related in I, 245-305; for an account of Melville House see I, pp. xlviii-li.

\(^{44}\) See Fraser, I, 82-124 for Robert Melville of Murdocairney, and I, 168-71 for William Melville, Commendator of Tungland.

\(^{45}\) Stevenson, p. xxxvii.
Esmé’s presence created an atmosphere favourable for Robert to return to court. Of Robert Melville, Stevenson writes that, like his brother William, ‘[h]olding responsible offices of state under James [...] he could scarcely fail to have been familiar with the group of writers, Montgomerie among the rest, whom the king was pleased to have around him’. These ‘offices’ included privy councillor, judge-extraordinary of the court of session, and Lord of Parliament in 1616. It was Robert who established himself at Monimail in Fife, buying from Sir James Balfour in 1592 the lands and castle previously belonging to Cardinal David Beaton. While William Melville took part in the same ambassadorial mission as did the poet William Fowler in 1589, to negotiate the marriage between James and Anne, Robert Melville acted as chancellor in James’s absence when the king sailed for Norway later the same year.

John Melville of Raith had more offspring, however, not considered by Stevenson, who are equally likely candidates if proximity to the court is the deciding feature for possible ownership or creation of MS Laing III.447. Well educated, successful diplomat and memoirist Sir James Melville of Halhill, the third son, moved with ease among the favoured nobles and courtiers of the Jacobean court, and was created gentleman of the bedchamber to Queen Anne, and knighted shortly after. He must, for that reason, have been in close contact with William Fowler (who was Secretary to the queen), and possibly with more of James’s literary friends.

In the specific context of the three miscellanies under investigation here, and drawing attention to the existence of contemporary cultural networks and the circulation of literary materials, a final family member is of interest: Sir Andrew Melville of Garvock. The latter was another of Melville of Raith’s sons, and the Master of Queen Mary’s household while the queen was imprisoned in England. As will be further explored in the next chapter, Melville of Garvock’s daughter Anna married James Murray of Tibbermuir, the owner and compiler of the Tibbermuir manuscript (see pp. 94-96 below).

Hypothesising on the manuscript’s curious compilation, Stevenson offers the following:

It is altogether too airy a speculation, perhaps, to suggest that the manuscript-book in question lay in the house of one or other of these members of the Melville family, by whom from time to time a court versifier was invited to engross an occasional composition; yet in this way might be explained the appearance of so many differing hands in the manuscript.

This reading, whether or not the manuscript originated with the Melvilles, certainly endorses MS Laing III.447’s nature as a ‘table-book’. The implicit suggestion that some of the handwriting

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47 Stevenson, p. xxxvii.
49 Stevenson, p. xxxvii.
represented in the manuscript might belong to the ‘court versifiers’ themselves cannot be substantiated. Bawcutt suggests that compilers were ‘young men; educated, but not highly learned; members of the middle classes rather than great noble families – notaries, ministers, schoolteachers and lairds’.\footnote{Bawcutt, ‘Miscellanies’, p. 194.} Naturally, there are exceptions to this rule, and if the compilation of a volume of poetry by such a prominent family appears unlikely then we need only to remember the strong literary and cultural interests that ran through the Melville family. James Melville of Halhill’s memoirs document Scottish sixteenth-century life and politics, and \textit{Ane Godlie Dreame} by Elizabeth Melville (Halhill’s daughter) was a very popular work indeed. In this context, it is useful to note that Alexander Hume, whose ‘The weight of sin is wondir greit’ (f. 45v) appears in the Laing manuscript, dedicated his printed works, \textit{Hymnes or Sacred Songs}, to Elizabeth Melville. Long-lived and successful careers brought various Melvilles to the forefront of action, and each could conceivably have owned or compiled a volume of poetry composed by members of that court in which they so prominently featured.

On reflection, whereas evidence of the Melvilles as later owners is solid, their involvement as creators of MS Laing III.447 is very unsure. Bawcutt certainly dismisses all of Stevenson’s conjecturing on early ownership and compilation. Asking ‘what can be discovered about the copyists, compilers or owners of these collections [the miscellany manuscripts]’, she concludes that ‘in some cases (EUL, La. III. 447; no. 18) we know nothing’\footnote{Bawcutt, ‘Miscellanies’, p. 194. A small printing error has crept into Bawcutt’s article here. Whereas the manuscript referred to, ‘no. 18’ is indeed the Laing manuscript, her text refers to ‘EUL, La. III. 467’, which is the Maxwell Commonplace Book. This misprint is silently amended in the quote above.}. If Bawcutt’s caution to express anything certain about the Laing manuscript’s circumstances of compilation indicates that all evidence should be treated circumspectly, still the many provocative suggestions in the manuscript should not be ignored. Stevenson’s approach to Melville ownership is indicative of a critical view that is court-centred, whereas the scenario endorsed by Parkinson, featuring the many Edinburgh burgesses, is more in line with recent critical thinking that moves late sixteenth-century literary culture away from the court, finding smaller but related centres of literary activity elsewhere. When considering the Laing manuscript, at least one poem, ‘the ravisching of Beggis donaldsoun future spouse to Thomas louthian Mercheard’ (ff. 10v-11r), can be meaningfully related to a readership of the middling classes; other poems (for instance the amatory sonnets, discussed below) are perhaps more typical of a ‘courtly’ environment. A third and more attractive possibility is that some of the writing that is too easily labelled ‘courtly’ had in fact, at the end of the sixteenth century, permeated the popular imagination and was consumed, and perhaps produced, by a section of society that is only rarely considered. MS Laing III.447 lends credence to the existence of a popular literary culture that appropriated ‘courtly’ modes of writing that may seem to have been the prerogative of inward-looking, exclusivist coteries.
At this point, it is important to recognise that ‘courtly’ in a Scottish context is a slippery term, certainly meaning something different from ‘courtly’ English or, for instance, French literature of the same period. The best way to deal with this problem is to adopt Derek Pearsall’s distinction, as applied to Scottish writing by Sally Mapstone, between ‘courtly’ meaning ‘produced in and for the court’, and a ‘courtly’ literature that reflects the ‘values and sensibilities’ of such an environment.\(^{52}\) It is the second definition that most closely fits the characteristics both of the love lyrics and the sonnets as featured in the Laing manuscript. Both lyric and sonnet originated in a courtly setting, and were produced mainly in and for the court, but by the time the Laing manuscript was compiled, these verse forms were not exclusively for the court anymore. ‘Courtly’, then, describes a set of formal, thematic and aesthetic conventions that may be enjoyed by a wide variety of readers, and does not necessarily imply a social relationship with the royal court or aristocratic circles. There is evidence that Montgomerie’s verse had successfully penetrated various levels of society,\(^{53}\) but we know little about the readership for the many anonymous love lyrics in the manuscript, or, alternatively, about the appeal of the devotional writings by, and in the style of, Alexander Hume. A full investigation of MS Laing III.447’s poems is in order, not only to start relating content to ownership, but also to start to uncovering further details of the circulation of early modern Scottish poetry.

**The Poems, ff. 4r-14r**

Leading up to the more substantial ‘Off the cherry and the Slae’, on ff. 4-14 appear nine love poems that may fruitfully be considered as a group. Among this group also appears the curious ‘Fallowis the ravisching of Beggis donaldsoun future spouse to Thomas louthian Mercheaud’\(^\), which stands out by its subject matter. All poems on ff. 4-14 are in the same Hand A; the same hand, moreover, that also transcribed nine stanzas of the *Cherrie*. Other features unite these poems, too, however. Three are subscribed ‘finis quod nescio’, a fourth ‘finis quod ane luiffar’, and a fifth ‘finis quod Constancie’. These five supposed speakers self-consciously mask authorship and replace it with something altogether more nebulous. The first pen-name, ‘nescio’, short for ‘nomen nescio’, or ‘anonymous’, might simply indicate that the poet responsible for the work was unknown to the scribe. The other two, however, ‘ane luiffar’ and ‘Constancie’, belong to the world of the poem they are here subscribed to, and not, as ‘mongomerie’, to the real world of poets and writers who distance themselves from their speakers and personas. With the author(s) relegated to the wings, the speaking persona, or voice, comes to occupy centre stage.

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\(^{53}\) Lyall’s study of Montgomerie significantly opens with an instance where the poet’s words were adapted for use in the court-room, see *Montgomerie*, pp. 1-2.
The manuscript opens with a heavily rhetorical sonnet, ‘Nevere madame of your mercie me infold’ (f. 5r), composed in the Scottish, or interlaced, rhyme scheme that was so popular among Scottish sonneteers.\(^{54}\) It appears to miss a line (probably line 9), although the scribe gives no indication of this. Every single line provides a permutation on that much-desired concept of ‘mercie’, and the poem is somewhat heavy-handed for this repetition. The sonnet displays stylistic and thematic preoccupations that are very similar to, for instance, the anonymous ‘Haif Hairt in Hairt’ and Alexander Scott’s reply to the same.\(^{55}\) As a Castalian sonnet, ‘Nevere madame’ must perhaps belong to the surge of Scottish Petrarchist writing in the 1580s. The speaker ends on a note of threatening despair, claiming that if mercy is not forthcoming from his paramour, then ‘My awin tua handis but mercie salbe my deid’. The obvious alternative reading of this conclusion (in light of other sexually charged lyrics, discussed below) is to equate the speaker’s ‘deid’ with that of his *petit mort*, at his ‘awin tua handis’, if ‘mercie’ as sexual gratification is not forthcoming from his ‘madame’.

Directly following the sonnet is ‘As eis ar message to the hairt’ (f. 6r), a three-stanza lyric relying on the figure of anadiplosis, or *rime enchainée*. The use of this technique was not uncommon, as Montgomerie used it, for instance in ‘Issobell yong by loving so’.\(^{56}\) It is a more elegant poem than the preceding sonnet, and in the final line of the first stanza it can be seen to respond to the sonnet’s main concern, that of mercy:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{As eis ar message to the hairt} \\
\text{The hairt consultis with the thocht} \\
\text{So thocht and mynd consultis Inwart} \\
\text{To will and quhen that thay haue wrocht} \\
\text{Directis the handis and handis hes brocht} \\
\text{This bill vnto your guidlie heidis} \\
\text{Your guidlie heidis this send hes socht} \\
\text{And socht is mercy and remeid.}
\end{align*}
\]

Step by step, this stanza tracks the progress of the lover’s plight, internalising sensory perceptions from the eyes to the heart, then from the heart to the ‘mynd’ or ‘thocht’, finally guiding the ‘will’ that directs the ‘handis’ to write, presumably, this poem, that shall implore for ‘mercy and remeid’.

The next stanza then picks up on ‘remeid’, and the speaker implores for his ‘mellodie’ to be


\(^{56}\) *Montgomerie: Poems*, 1, 121.
mended, and his ‘medicene’ to be administered. In the third and final stanza, he wishes for an exchange of hearts, in slightly convoluted style:

As at all hour I salbe readie
Quhen ye ar readie to ressauie it
Ressaue it ye ar my Ladie
for ye ar Ladie quha suld haif it
Sen ye suld haif it quha can craif it
Craif it can none bot yow allone
To yow allone now heir I laif it
Now laif ye it my hairt is gone.

The unspecified ‘it’ presumably refers back to his heart. The poem’s insistence on ‘I salbe readie’ brings to mind another sonnet, also appearing in the context of Montgomerie’s work, ‘All reddie as al reddie I have bene’. The latter poem, opening the Tullibardine manuscript which contains a transcription of the *Flyting*, puns elaborately on the heraldic family mottoes ‘tout prest’ and ‘non oublie’, referring to the Murrays of Tullibardine and the Grahams respectively.\(^{57}\) The verbal echoes may well be coincidental, yet it is worth mentioning that, where the sonnet exclaims to ‘forget not me quhois hart is whoillie youris’, the Laing poem concludes the second stanza in similar fashion: ‘Your hert to myne as myne is youris / That youris ower myne may haif impyre / And myne to serve yow at all houris’. An important difference between the two poems, however, is that, although both are couched in the discourse of courtly love, one is addressed to a (fictitious) lady, and the other to the king of Scotland. Stylistically, however, they share certain characteristics. Both poems employ a similar discursive register, which may imply further connections: they may have been composed in a shared scribal community, for a shared readership, or be of roughly similar date (Parkinson dates the Tullibardine manuscript to 1581-83).\(^{58}\)

The third poem, ‘Och luif in langour heir I ly’ (f. 6v), is the first to be subscribed ‘finis quod nescio’, and is a so-called debate, or wooing, poem. Stevenson notes that it is ‘a crude imitation or burlesque’ of Henryson’s *Robene and Makyne*, and ‘a feeble production’, ‘apparently not revised by its author’.\(^{59}\) Stevenson’s comment on revision is interesting, since it foregrounds the possibility that that MS Laing III.447 contains original compositions, and not simply poems copied from one manuscript into another. On f. 6v, substantial revisions appear in a different hand, cancelling and replacing whole lines. In that same hand, too, are added the headings ‘interrogatis’ before the first stanza, and ‘she ansueris’ and ‘ansueris’ at stanzas two and four respectively, to mark the sections of direct speech on the part of the lady. The debate is between a suitor and his object of affection, and as is customary of the genre, all his heated persuasion – or his ‘Ramping rage’, as she terms it – falls on deaf ears, until finally the suitor manages to sway his lady.

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\(^{57}\) This is discussed in more detail by Mapstone, ‘Invective’, p. 25. Stevenson also prints the sonnet with his transcription from the Tullibardine manuscript, see p. 132.

\(^{58}\) *Montgomerie: Poems*, II, 7.

\(^{59}\) Stevenson, p. 357.
However, when she yields, the tables turn, and she is now refused by him on the basis of all her own initial objections. This poem again can be seen to develop images from the previous one. Where in ‘As eis ar message to the hairt’ reciprocated desire is equated to ‘medicene’, in ‘Och luif’ the lady retorts:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ye may gang seik sum medicene} \\
\text{Bot nocht at mee} \\
\text{Sum vther may that man yow deine} \\
\text{your lust to satisfie.}
\end{align*}
\]

Despite Stevenson judging this an ‘inferior’ work, there are traces of refreshing humour in the lady’s reply to her suitor. To his assertions that her language is couched in the ‘fragrant flouris of eloquenc / of femini’, and equating his temperance to that of ‘Ane temperat tree’ that ‘will bear gud frute / Ainis in the yeir / Althocht the branches dois nocht glance / In wemenis eie’, she answers as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{As flagrant flouris of eloquence} & \quad \text{[St: ‘fragrant’ for ‘flagrant’]} \\
\text{I neuer knew} & \quad \text{[St: schew ye plane]} \\
\text{Now as I sie ye man go hence} & \quad \text{[St: Go plant your treis]} \\
\text{and nocht persew} & \\
\text{Nor braik your brane for me in vane} & \\
\text{In ony wais} & \\
\text{For sindrie tymes I schew plane} & \text{[St: schew ye plane]} \\
\text{Thair was na mayis} & \\
\text{To plant your treis quhair euer ye pleis} & \\
\text{and latt me bee} & \\
\text{Ressaue your frute wth mekill eis} & \\
\text{And seik no luif of mee.}
\end{align*}
\]

The lady’s earthy logic deconstructs her suitor’s flowery rhetoric and unmasks his empty promises with simple humour. The idiomatic Scots phrase, to ‘braik your brane’, occurs frequently in other poems of the time. Stevenson finds it in James VI and Montgomerie; earlier on in the century the phrase is used by Alexander Scott. The conversational style surely adds to the attraction of this poem, even though it remains unpolished. The notion of ‘eis’ (see also stanza two, ‘Sueit hairt ye suld be weill content / To eis my paynis’) is a common euphemism for sexual gratification, particularly in tandem with ‘payne’, or desire. The final stanza of the poem makes it very clear that the suitor is looking for sex, not for love: ‘Ye and your freindis thay may go hence / And seik no luif of mee’. As such, this poem connects to the final lines of the opening sonnet (discussed above), but also for instance to the extended analogy of ‘it’ in the above-quoted final stanza of ‘As eis ar

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60 Another example of such a wooing poem appears in Margaret Robertson’s manuscript, on. f. 56.
61 The Poems of James VI of Scotland, ed. by James Craigie, 2 vols (Edinburgh: STS, 3rd ser. 22, 26, 1955-58), II, 126 (‘An Admonition to the maister poete’, l. 101); Montgomerie: Poems, I, 123, (‘His Maistres Name’, l. 9); Poems of Scott, p. 22 (‘Ane Ballat maid to the Derisioun and Scorne of wantoun Wemen’, l. 102).
message to the hairt’, where ‘it’ stands simultaneously for the heart and for sexual gratification. All three poems reveal a marked sexual undertow.

Finally, there is the social aspect of ‘Och luif in langour heir I ly’ that is relevant to other works in this first group in the manuscript. Part of the problem of the lover’s suit, as the lady replies, is his lower social standing, and thus his suitability for marriage:

My freindis will cheis sum vther weicht
For me I say
That of great kin and clan is cummit
To be my maik. (f. 7r)

When at the end the tables are turned, and the lover finally has won her heart but now decides to refuse her advances, he throws back the earlier objection that ‘thy frendis wald nocht consent / Nor gif ye leive’. His final angry retort, ‘Ye and your freindis thay may go hence’ reveals that romance does not come into the equation; instead, marriage is an economic contract regulated by social codes and convention. The presence of this poem so early on in the collection seriously undermines the rhetoric of amatory verse, revealing both speakers’ sufferings to be no more than idle fancies. It deconstructs the amatory cloaking of male desire, and the female pretence at distance: instead, it introduces a refreshing level of realpolitik into the otherwise somewhat stale conventions of courtly love.

‘Luif still in hoipe with pacience’ (f. 8r), the next poem, provides advice for those who ‘in Luifis court […] listis to duell’, extolling both the hope and patience of men that ‘suffer stormes fell’, of ‘captivis demit to deid’, and of ‘men in rageing see’. It extolls also the hope and patience of Jacob, who in the Old Testament narrative laboured for fourteen years to win Rachel, and that of ‘atrides’ and ‘penelope’, thus mixing Biblical with Classical imagery. The poem in the manuscript is seven stanzas long, and after a dividing line following the penultimate stanza (indicating, according to Stevenson, that some stanzas were missing), it ends as follows:

O peirless peirle of pulchritude
O cheif charbucle off chaistitie
O deaisie dear O rubie rude
The fairest flour of feminie
O plicht anker of constancie
Eccept my seruice but offence
Assuring yow that quhill I die
To luif in hope with pacience.

Meditations on hope and patience enjoyed great popularity, as attested by Stevenson, who draws attention to two lines of verse in James VI’s Reulis and Cautelis that have never been identified:

Sen patience I man haue perforce
I liue in hope with patience.\footnote{Stevenson, p. 354; Poems of James VI, I, 74.}

The second line quoted by James here is a near-match with the refrain of ‘Lui’ still in hoipe with pacience’. The rhetorical structure of the meditation of several stanzas on a single refrain is extremely common in pre-Reformation poetry: the device is used by Dunbar, Scott, and a multitude of anonymous Bannatyne poets. James’s lines, and the Laing poem, are further examples of the same phenomenon.

The next two poems explore identical concerns. The first is a light lyric that might well have been a song, ‘Sueitt hairt reios in mynd’ (9v). The second, ‘Wo worth the fall of fourtounis quheill’ (f. 10r), laments the absence of an unnamed ‘yow’ and promises constancy. This second poem references the archetypal ‘Schir Troyalus’ whose pains were not as ‘lamentabill’ as that of the speaker who is waiting for his ‘Cresceid’. Both poems explore respective sides of the same coin – absence and constancy – although the first from the perspective of the loyal lover offering comfort to his ‘bony burde’ while he must ‘ryde or go’, and the second from point of view of a speaker who has been left alone ‘into dispair’.

Somewhat breaking up this otherwise unified group is ‘Suppois I be of simple clan’, entitled ‘the ravisching of Beggis donaldsoun future spous to Thomas Louthian mercheand’ (ff. 10v-11r). The poem is subscribed by ‘Johnne Nesbet’, possibly one of the Edinburgh burgesses identified above. The poem is clearly incomplete. Only three stanzas were copied into the Laing manuscript, but there is space for an extra (introductory) stanza after Nesbet’s signature, and again for three more stanzas on the blank f. 11v. Unfortunately, there is no record of another copy of this work surviving anywhere else. What sets the poem apart is that, as indicated by the title, it appears to be narrated by Beggis Donaldsoun herself, or impersonated in her name. Though love and marriage play a part in Beggis’s narrative, the poem is distinctly non-amatory.

The first stanza runs as follows:

Suppois I be of simple clan
Of small degrie and michtie name
My father is ane welthie man
Howbeit he be of littill fame
To tell the treuth I think nocht schame
for sen I was compellit to flie
I durst nocht duell witti freindis at hame
for feir that folkis suld raveis me.

References to ‘clan’, family, and ‘freindis’ immediately bring to mind the wooing poem, that mentioned ‘great kin and clan’, and places great stress on the importance of ‘my freindis’: thus, both poems share a strong sense of the social. Whereas the first poem appears a fictitious debate,
however, a woman by the name of Beggis Donaldsoun survives in the records as a historical person, not a poetic invention, as Stevenson testifies:

The Beggis (Beatrice?) Donaldsoun of the poem was no doubt the daughter of Robert Donaldsoun, who, according to the above charter, was put to death for sorcery in August 1597. Evidently by this date Beggis had become the wife of Thomas Louthian, hence the royal grant of part of her father’s land to her husband. In the Register of the Privy Council there is an entry on the 6th October 1584 recording the complaint of ‘Beigis Wyise, spouse to William Donaldsoun, burgess of Striviling’, against Lord Robert Semple, ‘prior of Quhitterne’. It is not improbable that this is the same Donaldsoun, although the Christian name is different.\

The ‘charter’ in question is the Register of the Great Seal of Scotland, which records, on 24 September 1597, the grant of Robert Donaldson’s lands to Thomas Lothian, the former having been executed after being found guilty of witchcraft. If Stevenson has located the correct Beggis Donaldsoun (not ‘Beigis Wyise’, who seems unconnected), then perhaps the account of her flight from Falkirk (in stanza 2) is related in some way or other to her father’s conviction in 1597.64 However, what has survived of Beggis’s narrative is retrospective, and refers to her father in the present tense – it remains unclear what compelled Beggis ‘to flie’, and why she was ‘persewit with lad and loun’. Finally, unnoticed by Stevenson is a testament of a certain ‘Geillis Donaldsone’, ‘sumtyme spous to thomas Louthiane merchant burges of edinbourgh’, dated 14 August 1592.65 A scribal error from ‘Geillis’ to ‘Beggis’ is perhaps easily made: the manner in which the Laing scribe identified her, ‘future spous to Thomas Louthian mercheand’ certainly ties in with the testament. If this woman is the subject of our poem, then by 1592 Beggis, or Geillis, was dead.

The fragment breaks off with indications of a violent wife: ‘That marriage he may sair repent / As his schaft-bleid can witnes beir’. Unfortunately, the poem does not record what incited this violence against his ‘shaft-bleid’, or jawbone, but the implication is that Beggis Donaldsoun could look after herself. In short, this fragment raises more questions than it answers, and it is to be hoped that a fuller version of this fascinating poem will resurface. If indeed this is an amatory poem of sorts, it appears to record a relationship gone horribly askew. The appeal of this poem to the compilers of MS Laing III.447, perhaps as a popular ballad or well-known story, may be explained by its explicit references to ‘ane burges wyfe’ and ‘ane mercheant man’; perhaps this was a tale of caution, or source of amusement, for the burgh wives and merchants that feature as the manuscript’s suggested contemporary audience. This fragment and the debate poem discussed

63 Stevenson, pp. 360-61.
above provide a counterpoint against the more formalised amatory approaches, introducing into the
world of love discourse a strong sense of the social. Importantly, both poems feature dramatised
female speaking parts to balance out a genre that is generally male-dominated.

Following ‘the ravishing of Beggis donaldsoun’ is ‘My breist is maid the verray graif of
woo’ (f. 12r), a Scottish Petrarchist sonnet par excellence. The interlaced rhyme scheme is
confidently employed, and technically this is a flawless sonnet, and one that might be termed
‘Castalian’ in terms of style and content (it compares well, for instance, with Fowler’s Tarantula
sonnets). Whereas alliteration is only lightly used, the incremental repetition of the third quatrain
signifies the speaker’s obsessive desire for ‘sum grace’ from ‘my sueit my deirrest and my fair’.
The sonnet is subscribed by a single stanza:

Giffand with all dew reuerance
Peirisit with luif be violence
To yow my hairt in governence
My ladie deir
quhois neue sueit wordis of eloquence
Excell now heir.

So far this fragment is unidentified, but it probably derives from a longer poem. Standing alone
here, it nevertheless connects to previous texts. The lady’s ‘neue sueit wordis of eloquence’ bring
to mind those of the lady in the wooing poem; the ‘hairt’ being offered in ‘reuerance’ has been
encountered multiple times now. The stanza form itself, the ‘standard Habbie’ or ‘Burns stanza’,
made so popular by the eighteenth-century vernacular poets Ramsay, Fergusson, and Burns, was
employed in the sixteenth century, for instance by Alexander Scott, and ultimately derives from
medieval romance and Provençal poetry.66 Montgomerie seems to have used the stanza once, but
attribution of the poem in question is less secure than other items, since it appears as a later
addition to the Bannatyne manuscript and is, in Parkinson’s words, ‘unmarked by Montgomerie’s
characteristic Petrarchism [and it] fits in well in a sequence dominated by Alexander Scott’s
lyrics’.67 With no evidence that this verse form was popular with the poets of the 1580s and 1590s,
the appearance of the fragment in the Laing manuscript suggests a date of composition closer to the
mid-sixteenth century.

66 It takes its name, ‘standard Habbie’, from Robert Sempill of Beltrees’s ‘The Life and Death of Habbie
Simson, the Piper of Kilbarchan’. Scott uses the stanza for instance in ‘A Complaint aganis Cupeid’, and
adapts it in ‘It cumis yow luvaris to be hail’ and ‘Leif, Luve, and lat me leif allone’, Poems of Scott, pp.
36-37, 58-59, 83-84. For an overview of the rise, decline, and rediscovery of the ‘Burns stanza’ see for
instance The Poetry of Robert Burns, ed. by William Ernest Henley and Thomas F. Henderson
(Edinburgh: T.C. and E.C. Jack, 1896), pp. 336-42; see also Janet M. Smith, The French Influence of
Middle Scots Literature (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1934), pp. 156-58; Scottish Literature in English
and Scots, ed. by Douglas Gifford, Sarah M. Dunnigan and Alan McGillivray (Edinburgh: Edinburgh

67 Parkinson, ‘Montgomerie’, p. 500. Lyall agrees that there is ‘some question about the ascription’,
Montgomerie, p. 37.
The most accomplished of this first group of poems, and the final entry before the *Cherrie*, is ‘Prepotent palme Imperiall’ (f. 13r), which starts with the following hyperbolic address:

Prepotent palme Imperiall  
Of perfyte pulchritude preclair  
O lusume Lamp Etheriall  
Quhais beamis bricht hes no compair.

Like the final stanza of ‘Luif still in hoipe with pacience’ quoted above, this is heavily alliterative and aureate verse. Following this, the second stanza expresses the speaker’s anxiety over the ineffectiveness of his speech, his lack of ‘witt’ and ‘knawlege’, leading to the following observation:

O happie war the Rethoriciane  
That with sweit wourdis wald lament it  
Als happie war the gude musiciane  
wald sett and caus it to be prentit  
And in your graces hand presentit  
Sua that ye wald reid and pervsit  
To knaw so soir I am tormentit  
So that my grosnes war excusit.

Jealous of the verbosity of the ‘Rethoriciane’, and envying ‘the gude musiciane’, the speaker denies himself any mode of self-expression. The music ‘to be prentit’ is interesting: no work of secular music was ‘prentit’ in Scotland until *Songs and Fancies* in 1662, yet it seems that in the poet’s mind music and print are naturally associated.68 This hypothetical work of music here replaces the more traditional love gifts, for instance the poem itself, or a heart, to convey the message of the speaker’s ‘constant lufe’.

After three more stanzas of inner turmoil, debating whether to break the silence, the speaker introduces an image that was widely employed by other poets of the time:

Lyke as it is the Lizairtis kynd  
Of mannis face to pray hir fude  
So nature still steris vp my mynd  
To wew your peirles pulchritude. (f. 14r)

The image of the lizard feeding upon man’s face appears twice in Montgomerie, once in James VI, and once in William Alexander’s *Aurora*.69 Cranstoun explains this idea that ‘the affection of the

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68 *Songs and Fancies* will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four, in the context of Margaret Robertson’s manuscript.
lizard for man is frequently mentioned by old writers’, and, quoting the poet Chester, that ‘[t]he lizard is a kind of loving creature / Especially to man he is a friend’.  

The final stanza asks for ‘pitie’, offers service as a vassal, or ‘your bundman’, and advances a similar argument as Henryson’s mouse when captured by the lion:

Quhat vantage hes ane armit knyght
his yield in presoun for to kill
Or be quhat equitie or richt
May he on him his rage fulfill.  

There is no honour in an easy kill, so his lady-as-predator should let justice rule. ‘Prepotent palme Imperiall’ grounds itself strongly in the Scots poetic tradition, anchoring itself by reference to other poetic works that employ similar imagery and similar thematic concerns. In terms of its language and its mastery of form it is the most successful of the opening group of the Laing manuscript. It is subscribed, finally, ‘Finis quod ane luiffar’, again masking authorship, although with this poem too appears the name ‘James B’, indicating the poem must either have been written, copied, or simply read by this elusive character.

On the same page, f. 14r, appears a short fragment, possibly the opening to a longer work, a poem or a song, starting ‘In somer quhen the feildis ar fair’. Nothing else is known about this, but it is possible these are the lost words to a Scottish song. A fragmentary tune entitled ‘In sommer simliest and faire’ survives in Robert Edward’s commonplace book, though without any more words. Kenneth Elliott has printed the tune, and draws attention to the similarities of both incipits; whether this stanza really is the beginning of a song remains uncertain.

To sum up findings regarding the Laing manuscript’s first group of poems, it is striking to what degree words and phrases are echoed throughout: thus ‘My burd so bricht’ (f. 6v) brings to mind the ‘bony burde’ on f. 9v. Where ‘Wo worth the fall of fortounis quheill’ reads ‘For absence of hir fair bewitie’, ‘Prepotent palme Imperiall’ reads ‘Throw absence of your bewte bricht’. In the debating poem, the speaker praises the ‘fragrant flouris of eloquenc / of femini’ (f. 7r), whereas the following poem speaks of ‘The fairest flour of feminie’ (f. 9r). More examples may be found, and other links have been explored above. This evidences how throughout this group the subtle patterning of theme and image constructs a picture larger than the sum of its parts. When considering all poems leading up to the Cherrie, we find that they share a discursive intertextuality

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70 The Poems of Alexander Montgomerie, ed. by James Cranston (Edinburgh: STS, 1st ser. 9, 10, 11, 1887), p. 339
72 For similar types of amatory discourse, see, for instance, several of the mid-century lyrics as selected by John MacQueen (ed.): ‘Flour of all fairheid, gif I sall found thee fra’; ‘Quhen Flora had ourfret the firth’; or ‘Lanterne of lufe and lady fair of hew’. Ballatis of Luve: The Scottish Courtly Love Lyric 1400-1570 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970), pp. 28, 51, 71.
73 Musica Scotia II: Sixteenth-Century Scots Songs for Voice and Lute, ed. by Kenneth Elliott (Glasgow: University of Glasgow Music Department, 1996), pp. 130, 142 (note 45).
worthy of note. They may be the product of a single poet, though this is unlikely: certainly all authors of the Laing poems on ff. 4-14 shared a similar discursive space, or poetic tradition. It may even be possible that some poems in MS Laing III.447’s first group function as ‘answer poems’ to earlier ones, further developing themes and exploring imagery. What this points towards, finally, is an intelligent and thematically sensitive juxtapositioning of individual works by scribe A, with this group instancing a discursive coherence that will become even clearer when taking into account other parts of the manuscript, as discussed below. Importantly, it will have become obvious at this point that a linear transcription of MS Laing III.447 is invaluable to start to appreciate fully the design of this miscellany. As a final point of interest, the amatory poems collectively may be regarded to anticipate those sections in Montgomerie’s Cherrie and the Slae that focus on Cupid, and the dangers of sexual love; this will be discussed more fully below.

‘Off the cherry and the Slae’, ff. 15r-31v
Montgomerie’s long allegorical poem has been extensively discussed and variously interpreted. Critics have highlighted both its strong points and its defects, its curiously medieval outlook combined with its challenging stanza form, and its intriguing print history. Whereas an early version of the poem was known to James VI in the early 1580s (the king quoted from it, again in the Reulis and Cautelis), yet it appears to have been among the last works Montgomerie completed shortly before he died. Although critics have praised its bold and ambitious agenda, it has also been argued that the poem is structurally flawed.

In these critical discussions, the Cherrie has been dealt with extensively on its own terms. It has, however, hardly been discussed as part of the direct context in which it appears in MS Laing III.447. This context is integral to the poem’s complex meaning, and may hold clues as to the contemporary reception of what must have been one of the most popular works of the late sixteenth century, and one that, moreover, enjoyed a wide readership well into the seventeenth century and beyond. As indicated above, several editors have dismissed the Laing manuscript’s transcription of the Cherrie as inferior in terms of its textual value. Whereas Harvey Wood, quoted above, held that the Laing transcription is closely related to the second 1597 print, Stevenson is less certain: ‘The number of important variations in these texts [the Laing manuscript and Waldegrave prints] from one to another makes it clear that they are quite independent copies of the poem’. Parkinson is more careful than Stevenson, and contradicts Harvey Wood: ‘[a]lthough the correspondences are by no means as close or consistent as those in the case of the Flyting, the Laing Manuscript does

75 Stevenson, p. 345.
tend to agree with the first Waldegrave print against the second. If indeed the Laing scribe’s copy text was a 1597 print then the manuscript has a clear terminus a quo.

Not much is known about circulation of this poem before the first print. It certainly seems the case that Montgomerie thoroughly overhauled, and finally completed, the Cherrie in the relatively short time between printing and his death, which must have occurred before 22 August 1598. That the Laing compilers had no access to this completed poem may indicate that the Laing Cherrie was transcribed into the manuscript no later than 1615, the presumed date of printing of the finalised Cherrie by Hart. Finally, it is possible – as is implicitly endorsed by Stevenson – that the Laing scribes had access to a manuscript predating the first print of 1597, so that a date of transcription may belong anywhere between 1584 and 1597.

The relationship between the Laing Cherrie and any printed material remains a contentious issue. When focussing on similarities, kinship indeed seems close, but when considering the variants (some examples are identified by Stevenson, and Parkinson in his edition lists all Laing variants in comparison to the second Waldegrave print) a somewhat different picture emerges. For instance, where both prints read ‘The flouris fair ware flurischit’ (l. 32), the Laing manuscript has ‘The feildis ower all was flureischit’ (f. 15v). Again, where the prints have ‘he can not hald him still’ [or ‘hold his tung’ in the second 1597 print] (l. 654), the manuscript reads ‘for to bahald his cunning’ (f. 26v). In the opening stanza, the ‘melodiousse’ birds in Waldegrave spring ‘with wingis into the skye’, whereas those in the Laing manuscript spring ‘so heich into the skye’ (f. 15r). These are three obvious examples of substantial variants, and none can be explained as careless mistakes on the part of the copyist. Rather, we must consider that the Laing manuscript Cherrie may have derived from an autonomous manuscript tradition, but one, on the evidence of close similarities to both prints, that may have been related to the exemplar that made its way into Waldegrave’s printing shop in 1597. It is possible that the variants are the result of a manuscript tradition post-dating Waldegrave, but there is no proof. King James’s familiarity with the poem proves that manuscripts circulated, yet none survive today. For all its textual problems, the Laing manuscript is a crucial document in the history of transmission of Montgomerie’s verse, and indeed the manuscript could be the tip of a small iceberg of Cherrie manuscripts that circulated prior to

78 On the starting and completion dates of the Cherrie, Lyall (Montgomerie, p. 107) argues as follows: ‘It seems clear that, although he had begun this remarkable, if ultimately unconvincing, allegorical work by late 1584, he did not then complete it, leaving it unfinished until provoked to take it up again by the appearance in print in 1597 of the fragment he had written nearly fifteen years before. We cannot be sure that the whole of this first, incomplete version was composed by the time James quoted an early stanza in his “Reulis and Cautelis”; but on the whole it is likely that the entire 930 lines, or 66-and-a-bit fourteen-line stanzas, were written by the end of 1584’.
79 Stevenson (p. 345) prints a short table of parallel texts featuring the Laing manuscript and both Waldegrave’s prints, to illustrate the relationship between them.
80 For two more examples, compare the following lines from Laing with the facing Waldegrave text in Stevenson: ‘And all away was blawin’ (f. 19r), l. 243, p. 18; ‘quhais cumming sic ane rumour maid / and to the sie It softlie slied / the craig was stay and schoir’ (f. 20r), ll. 294-96, p. 22.
printing. One other strong argument in favour of this scenario is the occurrence of several missing lines or half-lines (on ff. 14r, 18r, 20r, 21r, 24v, 25v, 27v). Whereas some can be explained as careless eye-skips, on ff. 21r, 25v, and 27v the scribe left spaces or a whole blank line, indicating illegible copy text, perhaps because of bad handwriting, or cropped or damaged pages. Although printed books are not immune to this type of decay, scribes more easily run into trouble with handwritten texts.

The circumstances in which the poem has been transcribed raise questions as to the social function of the manuscript. The first stanza appears to be in Hand A, the same as the previous group of poems. Stanza 2, however, is in a different handwriting (Hand C), and subscribed with an initial, perhaps a capital ‘P’ or ‘T’, or a combination of two letters. Hand A then resumes work until stanza 10, under which appears a short dividing line. It appears that Hand C continues from this point and finishes the poem, inscribing the initial ‘P’ or ‘T’ on ff. 19r and 20r, and then again at the end, together with ‘Finis quod mongomerie’. These findings contradict Stevenson, who stated that the *Cherrie* was composed by three scribes, but he provides no further evidence. Hand C is regular and suggests a leisureed pace, and consistently fits two stanzas on a single page. The scribe took the work seriously, as he/she corrected small mistakes (see for instance ff. 21r, 28v, 29v, or 30v, where single words are inserted, or misspelt words cancelled and rewritten), and, as seen above, left blank spaces where the copy text presumably was illegible, perhaps planning to return to it at a later stage. There are no further indications in the manuscript as to why two scribes would share the work of copying out the poem between them. Perhaps they copied out those sections that were available to them, either in print or manuscript, or those sections they had committed to memory – though given the length of the poem it is doubtful the scribes worked from memory alone. A more straightforward explanation would be that compiling the manuscript was not a solitary exercise for its owner; maybe he or she actively invited others to help copy the poems. If this was the case, then this social activity of writing might reflect the nature of the scribal community where the manuscript may have originated. This will be discussed in more detail below, after a consideration of the manuscript in its entirety.

For the *Cherrie* to blend with the other material in MS Laing III.447, or for the other poems to create a suitable context, it is essential to recognise its complex thematic development. In the poem’s first section, after the first seven stanzas have set the scene, the dreamer’s meeting with
Cupid and his ill-fated attempt to fly with wings borrowed from the boy god leaves him wounded, after a failed endeavour with ‘cupiddis bow to shu it’ (f. 17v). This self-inflicted injury sets the dreamer’s heart ablaze: ‘Than feld I currage and dispair / Inflamyng my breist wvncwoth fyr’ (f. 19r). Lyall points out that ‘currage’ is ‘more commonly associated in Older Scots with sexual inclination’, and it is this first section of the poem that most strongly resonates with the other amatory poems in the Laing manuscript. Tormented by the pangs of love, ‘lyk dido’ (f. 19r), the lover’s pains seem a philosophical affliction nonetheless, since no object of affection is present, or even mentioned. It is in this state of mental anguish that the dreamer comes upon the two fruits for the first time:

ane tre thair I sie thair
of scherries in the breyis
belaw to I saw to
ane bus of bitter slayis. (f. 20r)

If at this point in the poem Montgomerie still works in the tradition of erotic allegory, the ‘scherries’ may be seen to symbolise an unattainable love object, and the cause of all-consuming desire. Yet, as the Cherrie develops, this opening is revealed as only an introduction to a much more sophisticated argument, embodied in the psychomachia that takes up over two-thirds of the poem. The dreamer’s personified inclinations take to the field. First, the debate is between Dreid, Danger and Dispair on the one hand, and Curage and Hope on the other, in an attempt to either scale the craig and climb towards the sweet ‘cherrie’, or to settle for the bitter ‘slae’. From stanza 43 (f. 25v) onwards, the emphasis of the argument shifts: with the appearance of Experience, Reassoun, Wit, Skill, Will, and Wisdom, the debaters now argue about the best way to obtain the ‘cherrie’. With the first trio of advocates, ‘thre preichouris to persuad / the poysonit slay to pow’, (f. 25v) out of commission, the ‘slae’ seems all but forgotten. What was initially an amatory poem develops into a lengthy moral debate, which, importantly in the early version in the Laing manuscript (as in the first two prints of the Cherrie in 1597) remains inconclusive. The words of Experience in the last unfinished stanza, ‘we war no barnis to be begyld’ (f. 31v), already suggests that he and his companions Reason, Skill and Wit shall be victorious.

Helena Shire located in the Cherrie a distinct Catholic undertone that betrayed Montgomerie’s confessional persuasions. In fact, the symbolism of the ‘cherrie’ and the ‘slae’ can be variously explained. Montgomerie leaves any reading of the fruits entirely open: indeed, this unresolved ambiguity is one of the poem’s strongest assets. Initially, the ‘cherrie’ and the ‘slae’ may stand for ‘opposed love objects’. As the poem progresses, however, and the qualities of both the ‘cherrie’ and ‘slae’ are hotly debated, a religious dimension unfolds, and a reading may be advanced in which the bitter ‘slae’ represents Protestantism, and the sweet ‘cherrie’ Catholicism.

83 Lyall, Montgomerie, p. 321.
84 Jack, Montgomerie, p. 126.
Although the poet was known to have converted to Catholicism, in all of his verse Montgomerie is careful not to let his confessional identity shine through, not even in his devotional works, and certainly not in the Cherrie. If we take into consideration that the early Cherrie was most likely composed at the court of James VI, and add to that Montgomerie’s fading fortunes later in life when he returned to it, then a political or biographical dimension may be added to the possible readings.

A great many questions surround both the composition and the interpretation of this poem. These questions must remain, to some extent, unanswered, and, as Jack concedes, critics can only ‘study the poem as closely as possible for signs’, and, importantly, ‘note the opinion of commentators nearer in time to the work’. 85 The compilers of MS Laing III.447 are such close commentators, and the manner in which they have juxtaposed the Cherrie with other poems – amatory, moral, and religious – may be read as meaningful. As will be shown below, the devotional material in the manuscript is of obvious Protestant cast, at times even anti-Catholic. It may reasonably be asked, therefore, whether Montgomerie’s Cherrie, if indeed it was a coded pro-Catholic work, would have sat comfortably next to the Calvinist devotional lyrics. When in the later, finished version of the Cherrie, the dreamer has resolved his inner conflict, he climbs easily towards the fruit, which detaches itself from its branch and is delivered without any of the anticipated problems. As Shire, Jack, and Lyall agree, it is difficult not to read this as an act of divine grace. We cannot allow this ending to influence MS Laing III.447’s other poems, but still it is tempting to suppose that a religious interpretation was available to the contemporary audiences of the Laing manuscript. Further consideration of the miscellaneous poems below will consider their resonances with the Cherrie, if any, and explore the manifest interaction between the various sections of the Laing manuscript. Analysis below will show that the Cherrie’s centrality within the manuscript, both physically and thematically, is important, and that it is possible to consider the poems directly preceding and following it to have been, as it were, wrapped around this long and difficult poem, drawing out and commenting on the various thematic strands. If such a reading of the manuscript can be substantiated, then it underlines the significance of Montgomerie’s most ambitious literary project.

**The Poems, ff. 32r-45r**

In light of the Cherrie’s portrayal of the deceitful Cupid, it seems no coincidence that the next poem transcribed after it is ‘King cupaid gracles god of glaikes’ (f. 32r). First in a group of eight poems that are all in Hand B, ‘King cupaid’ is a clear reply to the Cherrie’s Cupid episode. Stevenson points out various correspondences in diction between Montgomerie’s known works and ‘King cupaid’. The most apparent verbal echoes are found in the description of ‘King cupaid’ as

85 Jack, Montgomerie, p. 126.
‘gracles god of glaikes’, and his mother, ‘gwkle tt goddes quene’ (f. 32r). In Montgomerie’s ‘A descriptione of vane Lovers’, also in the Laing manuscript on f. 36v, those that traffic with Cupid are styled as ‘gukitt fulis’ that ‘gangis gukitt gaittis’ – the corresponding line in the Ker manuscript runs ‘Lyk glaikit fools gang gooked gaits’. Further echoes abound. The proverbial ‘For I hawe leirnid to countt my kinch’ in the fourth stanza (f. 32v) is used by Montgomerie later in the second version of the Cherrie; and Stevenson finds a similar construction for ‘Than drocht do att [scribal error for ‘all’] that thow dow’ in the Flyting. In general, ‘King cupaid’ asserts much the same sentiment as that found in Montgomerie’s sonnet ‘Against the God of Love’. Here, the ‘blind brutal Boy’ is named a ‘Fals Tratur, Turk, betrayer vnnder trust’. Again, in the Laing poem he appears as ‘fas tratour vngraitt & periurd’ (f. 32v): ‘periurd’ in this sense means one ‘that is false to an oath or vow’ (see DOST, under ‘perjurit’), in other words, one who has betrayed a bond of trust. None of this proves that the ‘maister poet’ composed ‘King cupaid’, but if he did not, then the Laing manuscript does prove to what degree Montgomerie’s style and diction had suffused amatory writing at the end of the sixteenth century in Scotland – or vice versa, to what degree Montgomerie responded to stock literary imagery.

The anonymous poet’s violent dismissal of Cupid’s power over him ends on a note of sympathy for those that succumbed to the god’s powers:

Yitt sair alas I pittie some  
Thatt hes bene men of knawlege kend  
And yitt with the hes bene owircum  
quhais witt I can na wayis commend  
As for my selff I sell defend  
And cairis nocht by thai feid ane ble  
Dischairging frindschip and so I end  
fair will th a t day I dyne with the. (f. 33r)

Even men of reason, or ‘knawlege’, have been known to be overcome by love. How that reason is defined, how it can be attained, and how it may lead to happiness is explored in the subsequent poem in the manuscript, ‘My freind if thow will credeitt me in ought’ (f. 33r). This English poem was ascribed to Jasper Heywood, and printed in the Paradye of Dainty Devises in 1576. Apart from the obvious scribal error of ‘eir’ for ‘eis’ in the second stanza, the Laing transcription is wholly faithful to the English print (although more Scots in orthography). It is with this poem that the Laing collection breaks out of its amatory mould and offers a contrastive discourse of worldly wisdom that comments unabashedly on matters of love, family, and friendship. Heywood’s first steps towards wisdom are to ‘feir god and knaw thi self in eiche degrie’, and to look inward for guilt, and not to others. In the light of the preceding endorsements of amatory motives in the manuscript, it is significant that Heywood warns not

87 Stevenson, p. 356. 
88 Montgomerie: Poems, I, 135.
The poem finally warns against the affection of women that ‘waggis with wind’, old men, who die before they can ‘requyt’ a debt, and ungrateful children. Indeed, the only thing to trust, in the face of time, is ‘ane faithfull freind’, who ‘sell sumtyme stand the In better steid / than treasure greitt of gould or precious stone’. Friendship poems are a commonplace in miscellanies, and arguably they reflect, at some level, the communal aspect of compilation; another four-line fragment elsewhere in the manuscript, starting ‘Of all warldlie confort trew freindschip is cheif’ (f. 69r, not included by Stevenson) again underlines this theme.

At this point in the manuscript, after several evocations of social surroundings in the debate poem and Beggis Donaldson’s plight discussed above, values of friendship are recast through Heywood’s poem, adding a further layer of depth, offering another, secular model of moral conduct, and one that is deeply suspicious of romantic, or sexual, love. Another reason for this poem’s appeal, in light of the Cherrie, must have been its proverbial quality. As George Hill records, Montgomerie’s poem was once described as a ‘magazine of pithy witt’, from which ‘The Advocates in Edinbrugh [sic] take many Oratorious and Satyricall Apothegems’. Heywood’s poem might have been popular with the Laing manuscript audience for exactly that reason, collecting such pearls of wisdom as ‘Tyme quicklie slipps bewar how thow it spend’, ‘Cutt outt thai cott according to thai claithe’, or indeed:

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quhat thing thow willtt hawe hid to nane declair
in word or deid be wer of had I wist
So spend thai gud that sum thow ever spair
for freindis lyk halkis dois soir frome emptie fist.
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Of the remaining six poems in Hand B, five are religious. Only Montgomerie’s incomplete ‘Nan luffis bott fullis vnuld agane’(f. 36v), entitled ‘A descriptione of vane Lovers’ in the Ker manuscript, as an amatory poem stands out from this otherwise homogeneous group. The first is ‘Some men for suddane Joy do weip’. Stevenson opines this might be Alexander Hume’s, on the basis that another of his poems appears later in the manuscript, and on the basis of the stanza form which is the same as Hume employed in ‘Of the Day Estivall’. Bawcutt proved him wrong, and identified John Careless as its author. Printed first in 1564, in Bishop Coverdale’s Certain most godly, fruitful, and comfortable letters of such true Saintes and holy Martyrs of God [...], the poem later appeared as a broadside, and was very popular – Shakespeare quoted the opening couplet in

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89 George Hill, The Montgomery Manuscripts, 1603-1706 (Belfast: [n.p.], 1869), pp. 400-1.
King Lear, and Thomas Heywood in his Rape of Lucrece. The version in the Laing manuscript, over twenty-eight stanzas, deplores man’s natural propensity towards sin, and in particular that of the speaker:

Som tyme quhen I think to do well
And serue god nicht and day
my wiecket natur dois rebell
and leidis me astray. (f. 34r)

Although it is unlikely that the doctrine of original sin underpinning this poem would still leave any doubts as to the speaker’s confessional identity, a further exclamatory remark clinches all doubt: ‘Bott frome thatt fillthie hour of rome / Lord keip me evir more’. The English broadside tradition of this poem provides an interesting comparison: Hyder Rollins prints the song from the Sloane manuscript, and adds that ‘the MS. copy probably represents closely the ballad as it appeared in printed broadside form’. If this is true, then it is significant that the Sloane manuscript text and perhaps also the broadsides omitted four stanzas, starting ‘But from that filthy whore of Rome’.

This barbed comment may well have been removed when the song was prepared as a more ‘swete and heauenly exercise’ (the phrase is Bishop Coverdale’s, in his introduction to the poem): the fact that the missing four stanzas were included in the first print of 1564, and in the Laing manuscript version, suggest that the Laing scribe’s exemplar derives ultimately from the early print. The Laing poem is certainly very faithful to the print, introducing only some small and insignificant variants.

After ‘Nan luffis bott fullis’, ‘O lord my god to the I cray heir my complent’ on f. 37r underlines the manuscript’s Protestant creed through reference to the doctrines of the elect, predestination, justification by faith (as opposed to good works), and eternal damnation:

If that thow lord did call to mynd our sinis ilkane
than Jüstifief of adame kynd thair sell be nane
Except thow of fre merce saf ws frome deid
We ar all damnett eternalie withoutt remeid

Sen nan can throu his awin desertis be maid perfyt
we the beseik into our hairt grant ws thai spreitt
For nan can come to the excep that thow him draw
As chryst vnto his awin electt dois planlie schaw. (f. 37r)


91 Rollins, Ballads, p. 47.
Part of this poem, or rather song, appears in manuscript elsewhere. Music survives, first of all, in Robert Tait’s music book (c. 1680), with only the first four lines of the first stanza underlaid. Furthermore, the first three stanzas survive in another musical manuscript, significantly older, EUL MS 64, the Dowglas-Fische[ar] part-books, also (misleadingly) known as the Dunkeld part-books. The manuscript contains mostly early sixteenth-century polyphonic masses and motets. Elliott notes how on ff. 43v-45v three stanzas are written out (the third incomplete), starting ‘O Lord my God to the I cry’, but without any music. Yet, the words are written under blank bars, so the scribe might have intended music to be added later. The fragment breaks off mid-sentence, although three more blank, but ruled, pages would have provided ample space to continue.

The part-books’ provenance is traced by Elliott, and has been refined by Glynn Jenkins. On f. 111 appears an inscription: ‘Robert dowglas with my hand at the pen william fische[ar]’. Elliott identified Douglas as the owner, and ‘William Fisher probably catalogued his library at one time: this would explain the form of the inscription’. Elliott traces a reference to Fisher in the Exchequer Rolls of 1583, and suggests that he was a burgess of Edinburgh. Jenkins elaborates on these findings, and suggests instead how the part-books’ copyist is most likely to be William Fisher the elder, father of the William that Elliott identified. Jenkins further suggests that the father may have written the part-books in the middle of the century, c. 1545. Important connections may be made to the cultural context of the Laing manuscript, since William Fisher the elder was a godparent of the Bannatyne family, while both father and son were burgesses and guild brothers of Edinburgh. Both men regularly appear in the records. In the context of the Laing manuscript, these links are of enormous significance: possible connections between the Laing poems and the environment of George Bannatyne in Edinburgh can be strengthened based on this shared poem. As always, these connections are circumstantial, but it is striking to find versions of the same poem in two manuscripts, both linked to the city’s community of cultured burgesses.

Although the music of ‘O lord my god to the I cry’ received some critical attention (from Elliott), the poem itself as it appears in Laing has never been discussed. Jenkins’s suggested transcription date of c. 1545 of the part-book fragment reveals that ‘O lord my god to the I cry’ finds its origin in the pre-Reformation period. Yet, whereas the fragment in the part-books indicate no historic specificity whatsoever, the poem in Laing has been adapted to very particular historical

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94 Elliott, ‘Church Musick’, p. 231.
circumstances (see below). This suggests that the poet of the Laing poem remade an old devotional lyric, one that had been in circulation for several decades and was found suitable for expansion to include topical references. The poem, contrary to ‘Some men for suddane Joy do weip’, is strongly didactic, explanatory, directing its concerns outwards, rather than turning inwards (as do Hume and Montgomerie in later poems in the Laing manuscript). Conforming to the didactic agenda is a long catalogue both of God’s vengeful deeds against his enemies, and his acts of mercy and protection.

After a list of those that are famously saved by God (Lot, Jonah, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Susanna, Daniel), the poet introduces the following, more recent example of God’s protection of his faithful servants:

Amangis thir exemplis all we may imbring
How thow preserwit dauid frome saull and maid him king
And efter that of presone strang thow did relewe
paull the sulderis frome amang that none him greif
quhatt mister I to multiplie examplellis awld
thair restis an wark of thai merci yitt to behald
of James the Sext our nobill king quhome chrys that mocht kep
with dauid thow did him for to bring of dangeris deip

Quhen that hes fois begud to fane and him persewe
Achitophell and absalon thow than overthrew
And thow did dulfullie doun ding thame did thame deir
Chryst grantt him lang over ws to ring in thai trew feir
Nott onlie dois thow defend frome perelis gritt [St: thow thame defend]
bott als oft thai do offend thow dois remeitt [St: als oft als thai]
Thair sinnis ilk ane and dois nocht lay thame to thair chairg
As in the scriptur fund we may the same at large. (f. 38r)

The story of David, and the death of his son Absalom rebelling against his father (helped by Achitophel, Absalom’s advisor) turns into a parable for the life of ‘Iames the Sext’. The scene is carefully set: James’s kingship is blessed by God, as was that of David, and both were kept from ‘dangeris deip’. Significantly juxtaposed with the identification of James as David is the release of St Paul from prison in the same stanza.

The poet’s topical allusion here may be to three historical events: the Ruthven Raid of 1582, the incident with Francis Stewart, Earl of Bothwell in 1591, or the Gowrie Plot of 1600. Concerning the first, from 28 August 1582 James was kept under guard for ten months by William Ruthven, Earl of Gowrie, who was determined to remove the young king from under the influence of the Catholic Esmé Stuart, Duke of Lennox, and his French retinue. In June 1583, James escaped from the Ruthven Raiders and emerged from his minority, asserted his rights as monarch, and later, on 2 May 1584, turned Gowrie into an example by having him executed. Secondly, in 1591 Francis Stewart, Earl of Bothwell confronted James at Holyrood Palace, and again, later the following year at Falkland. After various of the ‘madcap Earl’s’ escapades that James had treated leniently, Bothwell was finally forfeited in 1592 and forced to leave the country – yet he did not leave until
April 1595. The Gowrie Plot, finally, sparked most contemporary reactions in writing. The event is still something of a mystery, but it seems that the ultra-Protestant William Ruthven and his brother Alexander attempted to lure James VI to Gowrie House to murder him, possibly to avenge the execution of William Ruthven. The plot was foiled, and the two brothers were killed on the spot.\(^6\)

The king’s own report was published in Scots and Latin shortly after the incident, and two short sonnet sequences followed it. Jamie Reid Baxter discusses how, although James’s version of events certainly met with resistance, notably by minister Robert Bruce, his escape was lauded by Walter Quinn in a set of six sonnets (published in 1600), and again in a sequence of nine sonnets by Rev. John Dykes, ‘The Nyne Muses’, that survives among the Wodrow manuscripts (NLS Wodrow Quarto XX, ff. 293-94).\(^7\)

If the reference to St Paul’s release from ‘presone strang’ is to be read literally, and is part of the poet’s extended parable, then it is most likely that the anonymous poet reacted to the Ruthven Raid, the only instance where James was physically imprisoned. Another poem supposedly celebrates the king’s escape from his captors: John Stewart of Baldynneis’s ‘To his Maiestie in Fascherie’. Stewart addresses his ‘Precelling Prence’, and in the first two stanzas extols the virtues of wisdom and patience. Then, in the third stanza, he advises James to

\[
\text{Cast on The lord Thy gydment and Thy stay} \\
\text{Repose in Christ, So sall Thy cair decrees,} \\
\text{for soone sall cum that happie Iofull day} \\
\text{Quhan of all dolor Thow sall find redress} \\
\text{Thy Royal hart withdraw frome pansiwennes} \\
\text{And vith king Dauid Lat Thy spreit aspyre} \\
\text{The lord of hosts your foiis vill all suppres} \\
\text{And send yow help Conforme to your desyre.}\]
\(^8\)

Stewart and the anonymous poet strike a very similar chord. As in the Laing text James was brought forth, together with David, from ‘dangeris deip’ (stanza 7), so in Stewart James’s ‘spreit’

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\(^6\) Gordon Donaldson, *Scotland: The Making of the Kingdom, James V to James VII* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1978). For the Ruthven Raid, see pp. 178-81; for Bothwell, pp. 190-93; for the Gowrie Plot, pp. 203-4. There were other minor incidents, outbreaks of violence where the young James was present, that were potentially threatening to the king. One such outbreak, the result of political factioning and power-struggles surrounding the deposition and restoration of the regent James Douglas, Earl of Morton in 1578, saw several men killed in the Great Hall in Stirling Castle. One of the players involved in the brawls was the Earl of Mar, and as Lynch argues, ‘the earl’s career as a juvenile delinquent continued after 1578. He was involved in both the Ruthven Raid of 1582 and the abortive Stirling Raid of 1584, two more attempts to stage a coup by seizing the person of the king’. It is not impossible that these or similar events inspired the poet of ‘O lord my god to the I cray heir my complent’. See Michael Lynch, ‘The Great Hall in the Reigns of Mary, Queen of Scots and James VI’, in *Stirling Castle: The Restoration of the Great Hall*, ed. by Richard Fawcett (York: Historic Scotland, 2001), pp. 15-22 (p. 18).


aspires with that of the biblical king. Similarly, just as the speaker in Laing wishes James a long reign after his foes have finally been struck down, so Stewart implores the ‘gratious Godheed’

Yow [James] to preserwe, And all your fois bait doune
And send yow lang and prosperus Impyre
Vith ofspring, rytches, helth and hich renoune.

For ‘O lord my god to the I cray heir my complent’ we can cautiously advance a date not earlier than the late 1570s, or perhaps after June 1583, when James escaped the Raiders. If its reference is to the Gowrie Plot, it will probably have been composed in 1600.

Apart from echoing the opening lines of the previous poem, ‘O lord my god sen I am brocht to greitt distres’ (f. 38v) also replicates its verse form, an eight-line stanza of rhyming couplets, with a similar internal rhyme scheme. Although it certainly appears to be a companion to the previous poem, it could be much older (if indeed the previous work references James VI), perhaps contemporary with the original song from the Dowglas-Fischer part-books. ‘O lord my god sen I am brocht to greitt distres’ features twice in the Bannatyne manuscript, once in the Draft and once in the Main section. In the Main manuscript, the poem is titled ‘a song of him lying in poynt o[f] deth’, and both the Main and Draft versions of the poem occur in the company of psalm translations: Fox and Ringler offer no other model for the Scots poem, however, or any other witness. ‘O lord my god sen I am brocht to greitt distres’ is a verse prayer meditating on the relationship between the first-person speaker and God, contemplating past sins, (lack of) faith and constancy, and finally death, and the speaker’s wish either to dwell ‘with angellis hie’ or to walk the earth and ‘sing thai prais as lang as I my lest’. The Laing transcription does not differ greatly from either of the Bannatyne texts in terms of wording (although many small variations occur, particularly in the final stanza), but the layout of the stanza form in Bannatyne, separating rhyming half-lines, is not observed.

Similar types of relationships can be discerned between the devotional poems as with the amatory poems earlier in the manuscript. As ‘O lord my god sen I am brocht to greitt distres’ constitutes a plea to God, the following poem, ‘Quha so dois put thair confidence’ (f. 39r) can be read as a response to the insecurities of the former poem’s speaker. The dramatised voice here is God’s word as it transpires from scripture, exploring in fifteen eight-line stanzas how God shall both protect the faithful and punish the wicked. The poem’s refrain, figuring God as a ‘bukler’, points forwards to Hume who employs the same metaphor in ‘The weicht of sin’: ‘thow art my father nocht the les / My bukler & my sur refuge’ (f. 47v). More importantly, ‘Quha so dois put thair confidence’, hitherto thought be to unique to the Laing manuscript (neither Stevenson nor

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99 For another instance of this formulaic opening, see Psalm 141, ‘O Lord, my God, to thee I cry, make haste, and come to mee’ from *The Psalms of King David Translated by King James* (published in 1631 and 1636, and mostly authored by William Alexander, Earl of Stirling).

100 *Bannatyne Manuscript*, I, 10-12, II, 34-35; cf. Fox and Ringler, pp. 7-8, ff. 14v-15r.
Bawcutt has offered any sources), in fact also occurs in another context that sheds light on the type of readership for such devotional works. In what is known as ‘The Chronicle of Aberdeen’, but what is better described as a combined diary and obituary that forms part of the earliest Aberdeen parish registers of baptisms, marriages, and deaths (c. 1492-1595), vicar Walter Cullen collected five poems, one of which is ‘Quho so do pwitt thair confyndense’. It is not the only poem Cullen’s ‘chronicle’ shares with the Laing manuscript, as he also collected the quatrain ‘grund the on patience blind not thy conscience’ (ff. 76v, 77v, 79v; discussed above).

The Laing text expands on Cullen’s version, adding four stanzas. Although no date of composition for this poem is evident, Cullen’s title, ‘Ane Godlie Ballett to all Thayme that is Persecuitt for Godis Word, with Grytt Confortt of thair Deliuerance’, perhaps suggests the troubles of the Reformation. Consider the following stanza:

Now ye that ar myne cheldrene deir
and be with me enteritt in band
ye knaw full oft ye stuid in feir
of tensall baith of lyf and land
For quhen grett king did yow gainstand
and als your preistis that ar so hie
As then I sawitt yow fra thair hand
Sa will I will I yitt your bukler be. (f. 40v)

This stanza’s addressees, ‘ye that […] be with me enteritt in band’, are those perhaps who entered into the Covenant of Grace. In further Protestant spirit, the poet slanders ‘your preistis’, from whose fearful influence God has delivered his flock. Comparison with the Cullen version of this poem is intriguing: for line 6 of the stanza quoted above, his version reads ‘And Sathane with his craftis sley’. Identification of ‘your preistis’ with ‘Sathane’ echoes the earlier anti-Catholic sentiments in John Careless’s poem, and both are typical of the combative Reformation rhetoric so prevalent in the sixteenth century. There is great scope for further research into Cullen’s collection, also in comparison to MS Laing III.447, but in light of the problems outlined (see note 101 below), a

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101 The ‘Chronicle’ has been edited and printed in The Miscellany of the Spalding Club, Volume Second, ed. by John Stuart (Aberdeen: Spalding Club, 1842), pp. xxi-xxxi (preface), 32-70 (text). The following poems have been printed: ‘Wa is the man that wantis […]’, subscribed ‘Finis quod Nicolsoun’, p. xxvii; ‘Ane Godlie Ballett of ane Synnar Cryand on God for Merce in Tyme of Trowbill’, starting ‘O Lord my God, of mercy kynd’, p. 47; ‘Mors certa, incerta dies, incertior hora. Qui sapit, assidue mortem meditetur et horam’, starting ‘This warld our all / Turint as ane ball’ [sic], p. 59; ‘Ane Godlie Ballett to all Thayme that is Persecuitt for Godis Word, with Grytt Confortt of thair Deliuerance’, starting ‘Quho so do pwitt thair confyndense’; ‘Ane meditatioune concernyne th e hewenly kyngdome and this erthly tabernacle of our mortalite, collectit and writtin be me, Walter Cullen, wicar and reder of Aberden, to staynd as my last will and desyr, the fyrst day of October, 1584 yeiris’, starting ‘That kyngdome cristiall cleire’. Cullen’s ‘Chronicle’ is an extremely puzzling source: although some of the registers have been preserved (now in the General Register Office, Edinburgh), other volumes seem to have disappeared, as the Spalding Club editors print more poems that can now be found in the books. Cullen’s entries in the registers follow no system whatsoever, rendering them truly labyrinthine. For conservational purposes, Cullen’s manuscript books are no longer available for consultation; instead, only microfilms or scans can be viewed. The relevant microfilm numbers are NAS OPR 168a (baptisms), OPR 168a/12a (marriages) and OPR 168a/18 (deaths).
reliable text needs first to be established. The occurrence of ‘Quha so dois put thair confidence’ together with ‘grund the on patience’ in two manuscript collections, one from Edinburgh, the other from Aberdeen, begs further enquiry into the circulation of these items.

The final poem in Hand B is the long apocalyptic ‘Harken herkene me thinke ane trompett dois stund’ (f. 41v). In forty-five stanzas of ballad metre the poem disputes the unbelievers of the oncoming Apocalypse:

Bott sowme will say I wein  
and lauche goddis word to scorn  
the warld is now as it hes bene  
sene mankynd first was borne. (f. 42r)

The logic of those believing that the end of the world is nothing but ‘thingis to mak ws feir’ (f. 42r) is dismantled in a long argument touching first on the teachings of St Peter and the apostles, and the testimonies of St James and St John. The poem changes direction, however: ‘now proue we sell by argument / that this same day [the Apocalypse] drawis neir’ (f. 43v). This ‘argument’ is the obvious degeneration of the earth, a loss of ‘strenthe’ and purity in all things, and a pervasive sense of decay:

We have hard tell of gyanttis fell  
that wer in elder tyme  
bot now we be lyk emmettis small  
if we compair to thame

[...]

Religioun trew was anis ferwent  
bott now we sie it cauld  
that is ane certene argument  
this warld is faint and auld. (f. 44r)

Like a diseased human body, the earth will perish. The poem in the end offers up a prayer to God to ‘come quicklie we the pray / and tak ws wp on hie’ (f. 45r). In its penultimate stanza, and similar to ‘O lord mplent’, this poem also addresses ‘king James’, wishing that the

Lord saif him with thai grace  
keip all his subiectis in gud stay  
and all his foes defece. (f. 45r)

This appears almost as an afterthought: if explicit homage to the king was required perhaps by the environment in which the poem was composed, still a panegyric was certainly not on the poet’s mind. It does show that the poet was aware of historic circumstance, however, and the timeless apocalyptic vision is anchored in the speaking and writing present. It is difficult to surmise when
exactly that speaking present would have been, however, since ‘king James’ is not further
identified.

Preceding a large lacuna in the manuscript, another scribe inserted Alexander Hume’s ‘The
weight of sin is wonder greitt’. The poetry of Hume regularly features in manuscript: his ‘Of the
Day Estivall’ appears in CUL MS Kk.5.30 (and is discussed in Chapter Three), whereas another
Scottish miscellany, NLS MS Adv. 19.3.6, contains an almost complete transcription of his printed
poems, with the exception of the title page, list of contents, the epilogue to ‘The Song of the Lords
Souldiours’, and the final poem, entitled ‘The Humiliation of a Sinner’ in the print.102 It is this final
poem that is included in MS Laing III.447, without its title. Only on two occasions does the Laing
manuscript deviate from the 1599 print: ‘Latt faithe and graice In me grow grene’ (f. 47r) runs ‘Let
faith and grace in me be grein’ in the print (l. 47); likewise, ‘Into this feirce & fechting feill’ (f.
47v) runs ‘Into the fellon fechting fell’ (l. 74). It seems the exemplar for this particular poem must
either have been the printed text, or a manuscript that was particularly close to Hume’s circulated
verse. As is the case with all other items copied from print, the scribe’s orthography is markedly
more Scottish. In terms of the Laing manuscript’s thematic integrity, ‘The weight of sin’ fits in
well, resonating both with the preceding group, and with Montgomerie’s equally personal
meditation on f. 80r. It also functions to assuage scribe B’s apocalyptic prophesying in the
preceding poem, as Hume’s poem is essentially positive.

throw him [Christ] I am in happie cais
evin with thai godheid reconseild
to the throw him quhome I Imbraice
Be prais quha hes this Ioyis reweild. (f. 48r)

Hume’s conclusion focuses on Christ’s redeeming powers, and his soul-searching journey ends in
reconciliation.

Alasdair MacDonald provides a prism through which to view most religious verse in
sixteenth-century Scotland, all of which, whether pre- or post-Reformation, may be characterised
either as meditative, celebratory, or argumentative. Many poems fall into more than one
category.103 The more personal meditations of Hume and Montgomerie, and Careless’s ‘Some men
for suddane Joy do weip’, may be termed ‘penitential lyrics’ (after Lyall’s classification of
Montgomerie’s ‘A Godly Prayer’), and fit into MacDonald’s first group.104 ‘Poems of argument’,
MacDonald’s third group, ‘mostly lack the controlled subjectivity of meditation and the loud
exuberance of celebration’. In this group fall ‘articulations of doctrine, recommendations to the life

102 Alexander Hume, Hymnes, or Sacred Songs (Edinburgh: Waldegrave, 1599); cf. Poems of Hume, pp. 64-
103 Alasdair A. MacDonald, ‘Religious Poetry in Middle Scots’, in The History of Scottish Literature, ed. by
R.D.S. Jack (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), pp. 91-104. For another overview article, see
Priscilla Bawcutt, ‘Religious Verse in Medieval Scotland’, in A Companion to Medieval Scottish Poetry,
104 Lyall, Montgomerie, p. 298.
of faith and virtue, confessions of a troubled conscience, and comments on contemporary religious politics’. The remaining devotional poems in Laing fall squarely into MacDonald’s third category. Articulation of doctrine is a marked feature of the Laing poems, as is the paraphrase of scripture, and, by the time that these poems were probably composed, they are the result of several decades of what one might call the ‘vernacularisation’ of scriptural narrative. To the modern critic, it is only in the hands of gifted poets such as Montgomerie, Hume, or, for instance, Stewart of Baldynneis (in his *Ane Schersing ovt of Trew Felicitie*) that this type of poetry is pleasing on an aesthetic level. Yet, these poems, heavily suffused with doctrine, should be approached with the same type of critical caution as the love lyrics: as with many poets’ adaptations of Petrarchist, Ovidian or other amatory models, in the devotional lyrics ‘novelty has no place’; ‘rather, familiar motifs are felicitously recombined in the interests of devotion’. In the context of the Laing manuscript this is most clearly demonstrated by a comparison of ‘O lord my god to the I cray heir my com nstance, the following three examples from Old Testament narratives that feature in both poems:

Thow brocht Iserall throw the reid sie baith saif & sund
and pharaoh with his gritt armie thairin thow drownde (f. 37v)

Thocht Pharoth with his gritt armie
Israel to kill he did Intend
I led thame throw saiflie the sea
And frome his bost did thame defend (f. 39r)

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thow did o lord defend and keip Susana be mane
frome judges fals quhilk did pretend to wirk hir schame (f. 37v)

Quhen susanna was In point of deid
to me scho did boithe cray & call
And me bethocht to mak remeid
and I did heir hir by and by
Thay that accusitt hir wranguslie
ane schamefull deid I gartt thame die (f. 40r)

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And daniell in the lyouns dene thow did preserue
Sic is thai fawore to all thame that do the serue (f. 37v)

Quhen danell wes overthrowin
in presoun deip with lyounes strang
To him they did no thing bot fane
And lickit him with tungis sa lang
Bot quhen his fais come thame amang

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they did thame ryif dispytfulie (f. 40r)

More correspondences may be traced between the two poems. These all too ‘familiar motifs’ feature repeatedly to obtain similar rhetorical, meditative, effects, and to make similar points: those who believe shall be saved by God, but those who disobey God’s instructions will be punished. It is the familiar, repetitive modes of rhetoric that inspire contemplation that stand as moral examples both for the poet and the audience of these lyrics.

Returning to the compilation of MS Laing III.447, Scribe B’s collection of verse (ff. 32r-45r) with the addition of Hume’s ‘The weicht of sin’, can broadly be seen to follow the same thematic pattern as Montgomerie’s Cherrie, starting from amatory (‘King cupaid’), to moral (Heywood), and finally to devotional. If indeed a religious reading of the Cherrie before it was substantially revised and finished is warranted, then it could be argued that Scribe B’s poems on ff. 32r-45r works as balancing counterpoints to the Cherrie (ff. 15r-31v), each section validating the other, and both underlining an implicit hierarchy in modes of poetic expression. This is a similar type of hierarchy, albeit in reverse, as can be witnessed in the Bannatyne manuscript. Much has been made of Bannatyne’s classificatory system, moving from religious poems to moral, comic, and amatory ones, and finally to fables.107 If we disregard the fables and the comic poems, then the Laing manuscript moves its way backwards through three of Bannatyne’s classes of poetry: love poems, moral poems, and religious poems. Clearly, in Laing this division is more a matter of suggestion than clear-cut taxonomic zeal (and a pattern, moreover, that dissolves towards the end of the manuscript, see below), but it is important to recognise that similar patterns of organising verse miscellanies may underlie other manuscripts. This matter will be discussed in some more detail below, in relation to Parkinson’s reading of the Cherrie, and the Ker manuscript.

The Poems, ff. 69r-83v

The remaining poems in the manuscript form a more disparate group, returning to amatory writing, both stanzaic and in sonnet form, but also including a memento mori poem and Montgomerie’s highly personal ‘Peccaui pater meserere mei’ (f. 80r). In this final section of the manuscript appear several pages of alphabets, probably writing exercises, a moralistic quatrain repeated over various pages, and, closing the collection, two pages full of scribbles, names, phrases in Latin and French, and perhaps even a mark of ownership. Although connections between pairs of poems may still be discerned, there is no longer the sense of an organically evolving, or thematically interlinked, collection – rather, the manuscript takes on the qualities almost of a commonplace book. It is possible that whoever started compiling the manuscript (Hand A) lost editorial control over the collection. Yet, he/she remained involved in the production until the very end, since several poems in this final group are transcribed by Hand A (see the table of contents above). There are many

107 See Fox and Ringler, pp. ix-xl.
more hands featured in this final section, and many contributors, readers, or owners identify themselves, either by full name, or by initials or monograms.

It is important to realise that, with ff. 49 to 68 missing, a large gap separates Hume’s ‘The weight of sin’ and the first poem that now follows it, ‘I wis I wair transfigurat in ane ring’ (f. 69v; this does not take into account the friendship poem, a short quatrain, on f. 69r). ‘I wis I wair transfigurat in ane ring’ is a metamorphosis fantasy in which, when the speaker’s imagined mistress takes her ring-cum-lover to bed, she ‘Suld find ane ring transformit in ane man’. With this poem and the following sonnet, ‘I dreamit ane dreame o that my dreame wer trew’, the focus has returned to the amatory. The latter, another erotic reverie, this time disrupted when the speaker awakes, must have been relatively popular, since Margaret Robertson also includes it in her manuscript as the opening piece to a collection of twenty-five sonnets (NLS MS 15937, f. 2; see further Chapter Four). There are many variants between the two versions: in terms of word order, mainly, but Robertson’s orthography is also more anglicised than that of the Laing scribe – in keeping with the fact that MS 15937 was compiled around 1630 – and a comparison suggests that the sonnet must have passed through many hands for these scribal variants to have been gradually introduced.

The next offering in the manuscript, subscribed by ‘finnis quod Hay’, but with the name deleted, represents a stock feature of the miscellany: a memento mori commencing ‘Consider man how tyme do pass’ (f. 71v). Perhaps such verses have little literary value today, but they reveal a great deal about contemporary readerships. Moralist advice to remember death remained in currency well into the seventeenth century, and its almost dogmatic inclusion into manuscripts, printed books and other materials suggests that the beliefs espoused in such rhymes were in fact deeply held. The poem runs as follows:

Consider man how tyme do pass
And lykvayis how all fleche is gairs
As tyme consumes the strongest ark
So daith at last sell straik the strak [St: sell straik the stark]
Thocht luistie youthe dois bewtie beire
Yit youthe be aige In tyme dois weir
And aige at last a deithe dothe bringe
to riche & poure empioure & king
Thairfor liue as thou suldest die
Thay saull to saiv frome lepardie
And as thou waldest be done vnto
So to thai nietbours is alwayis do
The hevinlie joyis at lenthe to sie
Lat faithe In chryst thi anchour be [St: thi anchour be]
A fascinating source for this poem has come to light. Although no versions of it exist in manuscript or print, the poem was part of a series of Elizabethan panel paintings. One version of this painting is described in detail by a letter writer to the Gentleman’s Magazine of 1845, a certain D. House of Gloucestershire, who apparently saw it in ‘an old family mansion in the neighbourhood’. It depicts ‘in the centre, at the top, Time represented as an old man passing rapidly forward’; ‘[o]n the right hand of the centre a young man as a gallant of the time of Elizabeth [...] his right hand placed upon his hips, his left holding a rose, [...] on the left hand a venerable aged man, baldheaded, with a long and ample silver beard [...] his eyes fixed intently upon the young man opposite’. Time is framed by two panels of verse left and right, and the two figures, young and old, have verses inscribed above them. Underneath this scene, finally, lies a corpse, and all three characters are the same person, in youth, old age, and in death. It is between the youth and the old man that the ‘Consider man’ poem is inscribed. Another version of the painting exists, dated c. 1590, where the old and young man have switched places, and with the corpse replaced by a skull; the same poem is inscribed between the two figures.

The Laing manuscript scribe follows the text of the paintings fairly closely (compared to that reproduced in the Sotheby catalogue). Now that a source has been found, Stevenson’s editing can also be improved. Line four, ‘So daith at last sell straik the strak’ is correct, as the English equivalent reads ‘stryke the stroke’; it is not, as Stevenson supposed, a case of metathesis where ‘strak’ should read ‘stark’, or strong. The final line should read ‘anchour’, and not ‘authour’ (though ‘c’ and ‘t’ are extremely similar in the scribe’s hand). The English version clears up ‘gairs’ in line two, which reads ‘grass’ on the painting (‘gars’ is in fact in common usage in Scots in the period, see DOST). The Scots scribe introduced a small variant in line three, where the painting’s ‘strongest oke’ was rendered as the ‘strongest ark’, or arch. Light scotticising of the rhyme-words of the first two couplets obscures the rhymes somewhat: English ‘pass / grass’ and ‘oke / stroke’ work well; Scots ‘pass / gairs’ and ‘ark / strak’ less so. Jones has located three paintings of this type, so they were clearly quite popular; furthermore, he presumes that the verses had as their source a print that has not survived. Whereas some of the shorter verses on the panel originate from Sternhold and Hopkins’s psalm translations, there is no source for the longer poem.


111 Private communication.
It is difficult to surmise to what extent the compilers of the Laing manuscript were aware of the pictorial context of this poem. A tempting scenario arises when we consider the cancelled subscription in the Laing manuscript, ‘finnis quod Hay’. As observed above, a ‘giorg hay’ and ‘Johne Hay’ subscribed another sonnet on f. 78v. We have already seen that, in the context of the Edinburgh burgesses, a Mr John Hay, deputy clerk, appears in the burgh records from 1602 onwards, as messenger between the city council and the London court of James VI and I. It is possible that this John Hay encountered this popular painting in London, and carried the verse back with him to Scotland, and either transcribed it into the manuscript himself, or shared the poem with family and friends. Direct association of the painting with the London court has indeed been suggested: the painting is ‘traditionally stated to have been presented by James I to the poet Endymion Porter on the occasion of the death of Henry, Prince of Wales’. The scenario involving Hay is, of course, entirely hypothetical, but the poem must have travelled to Scotland one way or the other, and the diplomatic route is a very good possibility. In the larger context of verse circulation, finally, it is important to remember that when no written sources are apparent, the visual arts may prove extremely helpful.

In addition to Montgomerie’s ‘Peccau pater mesereve mei’, three more stanzaic poems feature in the final manuscript section, all amatory lyrics, and two of them have complicated rhyme schemes: whereas ‘O fragrant flour fair and formois’ (f. 75r) is relatively straightforward, ‘Redolent rois my onlie schois’ (which follows ‘Consider man’ on f. 72r), and particularly ‘Fresche flureis fair and lusum ladie quhyte’ (f. 82r) display considerable skill. The best way to appreciate these love lyrics is through an understanding of the way in which the ‘game of love’ was played in terms of mid-century Scottish poetics:

There was nothing new to say of the game of love; no poet chose, in so patently ritualised and unnatural a context as that of courtly song and dance, to reveal the ‘quyet secreitis’ of his heart. Rather he strove to dress out his protestations, or the emotions appropriate to his despairing state, in the way best calculated to give to his audience not the pleasure of new discovery but a pleasure in part that of recognition.

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112 Unfortunately, no further evidence is given for this claim, see Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition, p. 148. It is also stated here that the painting is discussed in Disraeli’s Curiosities of Literature, but I have been unable to further trace this reference in this book.

113 For another example, see the discussion of an emblematic sonnet in the Tibbermuir manuscript, Chapter Three, p. 113. There is no space to discuss this topic any further here, but it is becoming increasingly evident that source hunters of poetic manuscripts should consider the visual arts, which may provide a wealth of information where textual sources are lacking. See for instance L.A.J.R. Houwen, ‘Every Picture Tells a Story: The Importance of Images in the Wider Dissemination and Reception of Texts’ in Language and Text: Current Perspectives on English and Germanic Historical Linguistics and Philology, ed. by Andrew James Johnston, Ferdinand von Mengden and Stefan Thim (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2006), pp. 99-113.

114 For a discussion of this lyric, see Lyall, Montgomerie, 298-300, and on Montgomerie’s devotional lyrics more generally, Jack, Montgomerie, pp. 67-76.
and affirmation of convention, in part that associated with the trained appreciation of any artefact, pleasure in its execution and its resultant perfect form.\footnote{115} In light of this, formal perfection and confident stylistic execution should be the bench-mark of a successful lyric. Hughes and Ramson’s assertions may be somewhat moderated: in the hands of the most adept Scottish lyricists from the mid-century onwards, Alexander Scott, and later Alexander Montgomerie (who were building on the heritage of, for instance, Dunbar) content was never entirely sacrificed to form. It is true, however, of the majority of lyrics that have survived, that rhetorical structure reigns supreme, with innovative content following some way behind.\footnote{116} How do the Laing lyrics live up to this ‘expectation’?

The unfinished ‘Redolent rois’ is a Petrarchist lyric dramatising the speaker’s anxiety to disclose his love. He stereotypically paints his paramour as a murderer: ‘To seik my deid yin again an running: ‘quhilk hert as rube in this ring / I do coniur into your cuir / hoiping it sall get conforting’ (f. 72v). There is no indication in the manuscript why the scribe broke off. It is certainly true that the poem’s metrical fireworks start confidently, then increase in complexity, but break down towards the end. The rhyme scheme of the first three stanzas runs as follows (with lower case letters representing internal rhymes, and upper case letters representing end rhymes): aA aB aA aB bB bC bB bC. This scheme then expands to three internal rhymes for each line:

My hairt convert this dairt fra me
my luif remove this ruif of cair
my deir aper that feir my fle
my dow be now my conforter
my bird your word as suord is sair
my breist is persit with uyolence
me saif I craif to haif na mair
bot hert for hert in recompence. (ff. 72r-v)


This new rhyme scheme retains the same patterning of end rhymes, but introduces a great deal more of internal rhymes: aaaB cccD eeeB ff?][D gggD hh?]][I jjjD kk?]I. It is here that the poet lost control somewhat, or perhaps the details of the stanza’s intricacies were lost in transmission. Line six, for instance, may have read ‘my breist is preist’ to retain the rhyme, ‘preist’ either meaning ‘attack’ or ‘assail’, or ‘preist’ formed from ‘peirisit’. Despite these small irregularities, ‘Redolent rois’ is rigidly executed. Due to its demanding rhyme scheme, it loses the more leisurely paced quality of, for instance, ‘O fragrant flour fair and formois’:

Vpoun your persoun quhen I pance
Quhar of your face I gett ane glans
Your bewtie dois my body bind
My panis wald pacefie perchanche
In cais I culd your favour find. (f. 75r)

Here, the speaker allows himself to amble along through his argument at a slower pace, having to meet only the demand of end-rhymes.

The most accomplished lyric is undoubtedly ‘Fresche flureis fair’, a poem that can usefully be discussed to sum up most of the earlier amatory lyrics in the manuscript, and one that provides a bridge to other mid-sixteenth century Scottish lyrics, for instance those from the Bannatyne manuscript. An exhaustive discussion of the modes of self-representation in pre-1580 lyrics is given by Theo van Heijnsbergen. In this study, van Heijnsbergen inventorises the Bannatyne verse epistles, a genre typical of the lyrical exploration of the age, and indicative of the development of medieval ‘more rational and language-based’ constructions of the self to the early modern ‘more epiphanic and author-centred’ discourse.\(^{117}\) The Laing manuscript’s ‘Fresche flureis fair’ fits into this tradition, as it identifies itself as a verse epistle in the first stanza:

Fresche flureis fair and lusum ladie quhyte
off natouris work in erthe the maist perflyte
Gewe eir vnto my wofull hewines
This sedell schorte my sorrowis sall resyite
And bitter greife that dois my bowellis byte
That toung nor tyme nocht trewlie can expres
Bot being drewin throw dolour to distres
Pare doithe me preis this paper to present
In my absence my langour to lament. (f. 82r)

In the physical absence of the speaker (who is, paradoxically, always absent from the moment of utterance or silent recreation of the work, unless the poem is read or sung for an audience), a ‘sedell’, or ‘paper’, eloquently makes his case. In terms of poetic diction, this lyric connects to the earliest poems in Laing, but also to several Bannatyne poems, for instance, ‘To yow that is the

\(^{117}\) van Heijnsbergen, ‘Self-Representation’, p. 316.
harbre of my hairt’, that presents ‘this sedul / Quhilk of my cair may be sum conforting’. In stanza two of ‘Fresche flureis fair’ the speaker states that ‘For as the seik in dainger oft is sene / lang tyme he hoipis for help of medecin’ and concludes that ‘Forceit I am your mercie to Imploir / To be my leiche or dollour me dewoir’. Medical metaphors have been noted above, for instance in ‘As eis ar message to the hairt’, another verse epistle, presenting itself as a ‘bill’. (Whereas ‘Prepotent palme Imperiall’, also in the first section of the Laing manuscript, is no verse epistle, it certainly alludes to presentation, wishing for music being ‘prentit’, and ‘in your graces hand presentit’.) The Bannatyne lyric, too, plays on notions of comfort as medication, hoping for ‘medecyne my melody to amend’. In the Laing Cherrie, finally, Experience addresses the dreamer:

war thow acquentit with skill
he knawis quhat hvmoris dois the ill
quhait throw thy cairris contractis. (f. 30r)

This illness is caused by Cupid’s arrows, but as Experience continues, there is a remedy:

he [Skill] knawis the ground of all thy greif
and recepie for thy releife
all medecinis he makis.

As already witnessed in the first section of the manuscript, the Laing lyrics share a discursive register that for a contemporary audience would have afforded, in the above words of Hughes in Ramson, ‘a pleasure in part that of recognition and affirmation of convention’.

Another typical formal trait of the Bannatyne lyrics is increased internal rhyme to support, rhythmically and aurally, the building intensity, or momentum, of anxiety. In the context of the Laing manuscript, this stylistic feature has already been demonstrated in ‘Redolent rois’. It has also been employed to good effect in ‘Fresche flureis fair’. This is the final stanza:

Suiet thing conding benyng of memorie
my Paneis to lane war wane but remedie
But sen ye ken quhairin the mater standis
my sair despair prepair to pacifie
hawe reithe with trewth let nocht your schiruand [St: schiruandis]
For stownd of wund ar found among your handis
Bot sen ye ken that men ar in your bandis
Crowall at all ye willbe callit awayis
to sla the man that yeldis at your deuyse. (f. 83r)

Three internal rhymes and one end rhyme in each line places considerable strain on the poet’s ‘ingyne’, but it is handled confidently here – although the internal rhyme does break down in the

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118 Bannatyne Manuscript, III, 264-65; cf. Fox and Ringler, ff. 218v-19r. For all the Bannatyne lyrics that contain explicit references to ‘sedulls’, ‘bills’, ‘lettirs’ or ‘papers’, see van Heijnsbergen’s table on pp. 321-22.

119 See for instance ‘To yow that is the harbre of my Hairt’, or ‘Only to yow in erd that I lufe best’, Bannatyne Manuscript, III (1928), 264-65, 321-22; cf. Fox and Ringler, ff. 218v-19r, ff. 237v-38r.
stanza’s fifth and ninth lines (just as it breaks down in the final stanza of ‘Redolent rois’). The intricate overall rhyme scheme, AABAAABBCC, which was maintained until this point, becomes strained here too: ‘awayis’ and ‘deuyse’, although not impossible, are uncomfortable rhymes at best. One wonders, since the rhymes of all previous stanzas are perfect, whether it is scribal interference rather than poetic ineptitude that causes this final stanza to break down. One indication is a missing word at the end of line 5. Stevenson changes ‘your schiruand’ to the plural, presumable to rhyme with ‘standis’. This is certainly wrong, since the metre demands another iamb rhyming with ‘memorie’. Perhaps the word that the scribe has omitted here is ‘die’.

Levels of intertextuality between verse epistles, and between love lyrics more generally, are high: they are characterised by a playful self-referentiality, constantly both reworking and reaffirming generic expectations. The fact that poets could borrow so freely from a large and well-developed genre indicates that the Scottish lyric had properly come of age by the time the Laing poems were composed. Although this is no exact science, the poems can be dated roughly to the decades between 1530 and 1570, the time when the lyrical vernacular voice had gained in confidence, and, in the words of Gregory Kratzmann, changed in aspect ‘from rhetorical to colloquial lyricism’. Kratzmann, commenting on the many verbal echoes he found within the Bannatyne lyrics, continues as follows:

Such self-conscious echoing by one poem of another suggests the existence of a cohesive and confident lyric tradition, and although the time was not congenial to the printing of love poetry, it is unlikely that the troubled political and religious climate of the mid century could have entirely destroyed the taste for this kind of secular verse.120

The Laing manuscript bears witness to a continued taste for mid-century amatory lyricism, one that had originally sprung from a courtly environment, but which, already in the age of George Bannatyne, had been appropriated by Edinburgh’s urban readership. Similar to what Kratzmann (and others) found in the Bannatyne manuscript itself, it is possible to find many correspondences between the Laing lyrics and poems in the Bannatyne manuscript. Some examples have been listed above; another may be found in the anonymous Bannatyne lyric ‘Fresche fragrent flour of bewty souerane’.121 Whereas its first line is very similar to Laing’s ‘Fresche flureis fair’ and ‘O fragrant flour fair and formois’, its observation that ‘wo wer me that it suld be cald ane homicyd’ (Bannatyne f. 220r) links back straight to the unfinished Laing lyric ‘Redolent rois’, that paints the lady as a ‘homicide’. As another example, stanza three of ‘Fresche flureis fair’ (f. 82r) explores the demand for the democratisation of love, imagining a more socially porous society. The same concerns have already been highlighted in the opening poems in Laing, particularly in ‘Och luif in langour heir I ly’. Class differences eventually prevented a love match in

121 Bannatyne Manuscript, III (1928), 266-69; cf. Fox and Ringler, ff. 219v-20r.
the earlier poem; in ‘Fresche flureis fair’, the speaker can be seen to attempt to reason his way out of this predicament:

Your hie estait to myne is na compair
Sum tym I think quhairfoir sould I dispair
sen luiffe is blind & fleis but judgement
Quhair luiffe doith licht sould nane be miscontent. (f. 82r)

Similar strategies can be discerned, for instance, in Bannatyne’s ‘Luve preysis but comparesone’ (an Alexander Scott lyric), that argues that

thocht my lyking wer a leddy
And I no lord, yit nocht the less
Scho suld my serwyce find als reddy
As duke to duches docht him dress.122

At this point in the historical development of the lyric, this anxiety is generally not resolved (but see Scott’s ‘Up Helsum Hairt’ for a poem that celebrates the consummation of a love affair, albeit secretly).123 The Laing lyrics approximate a more relaxed, colloquial lyricism in some instances, for instance in the wooing poem (‘Och luif in langour heir I ly’, ff. 6v-8r). Others are still heavily rhetorical, relying on common phrases and imagery, but skilfully manipulating these into cleverly structured stanzas, such as in ‘Fresche flureis fair’. This latter poem would certainly not be out of place among some of the Bannatyne manuscript’s more accomplished compositions.

The inclusion of these mid-sixteenth century lyrics shapes to a large extent the Laing manuscript’s amatory repertoire. Yet, they are balanced by the sonnets that are indiscriminately mixed with this older verse form. Of the nine sonnets in the manuscript, seven appear in this final section. One has been briefly mentioned already, ‘I dreamit ane dreame’ (f. 70r); it is followed on f. 73v by ‘Your outuard gesture forme & fassoins fair’. This sonnet joins the ranks of many late-sixteenth century sonnets, for instance by Fowler, or Stewart, that seem to have been written for actual, historical persons, but which do not readily yield their secrets to the modern reader.

Your outuard gesture forme & fassoins fair
de cleris the invard secrettis of ingyne
quheid is contenit sic verteuis hed and cair
that al the varld dois se in yow to schyne
resembling weil the verteuis raice & lyne
quhaitrof ye com quhois name to last for ay
is eternissid be yow and mede devyne
in register that never sal decay
quhairyby I hoip mestres hap quhat so mey
for sic revard as lustly I expect
to cum fra hir quhair vertew beiris the sway
quhilke alwayis suld produce the awin effect

123 Poems of Scott, pp. 44-45.
sens as be nature so ye ar inclynde
plece constancie into this verteuis mynde.

This elaborate compliment, perhaps to a noble lady, praises her high birth and virtuous lineage; indeed, in her person become epitomised and ‘eternissid’ all her family’s virtues. The speaker implores her not so much for her love, but for her patronage or loyalty, ‘sic revard as lustly I expect’. ‘Constancie’, then, is not of the amatory type as earlier discussed; instead, it may be understood to refer to financial, social, or political ‘constancie’, something that the ‘mestres’ is in a position to uphold for this speaker, or perhaps even poet. It is unfortunate that whoever signed this sonnet, ‘quod [...]’ cannot now be identified, as the scribe’s or poet’s mark is illegible.

Whereas some sonnets are individual entries, others can again be seen to have been linked to a preceding entry. The following is a fragment on f. 74r:

```
I hoipe to serve sane syne for to deserue
   [St: sane syne to deserue]
Syne never for to suerue from hir that I luif best
Quhair for minerve Imply my pen to serve
for to deserue sum fauour that may lest.
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This quatrain, full of witty internal rhymes, is followed on f. 74r by a sonnet, ‘I serve ane dame moir quheiter than the snaw’. Its octave and sestet division juxtaposes this dame’s lovely countenance on the one hand, and her icy core on the other. Where the speaker offers to ‘serve’ in the opening line, connecting to the preceding quatrain, so does he conclude: ‘Loo this my dame dois work my lesting soir / Yit will I serve althocht I die thairfore’.

Two more sonnets in the same hand (Hand J) appear in succession, ‘The royall palice off the heichest hewin’ (f. 77v), and ‘The tender snow of granis soft & quhyt’ (f. 78v). Whereas the first is unsigned, the second is subscribed by the four above-mentioned Edinburgh burgesses, ‘goirg hay’ ‘James Arnot’ ‘Johne Hay’ and ‘Joannes Arnotis’. Both sonnets, though entirely capable, are very conventional. The first remarks on the mysteries of the heavens, the stars, the planets, and the four elements, and how by ‘science’ we have come to understand ‘the cowrs of natwre & hir mowingis all’. Yet, the mysteries of love have never been penetrated: ‘onlie of this monstwre luif we dout / Quhais craftie cowrs no cwning can find out’. In the second sonnet, ‘The tender snow’, the speaker is ‘Pyneit viith the presence of my lady sueit’, then her ‘absence dois torment’ his ‘werie spreit’, and with all hope banished, he relies only on ‘remembrance’. In the closing couplet all this is neatly wrapped up: ‘Than absence presence remembrance all thre / Torment me for hir saik eternallie’. It is striking that such a traditional (perhaps courtly) piece of writing attracted a great deal of attention from four different readers, all burgesses. It is on f. 78v that the Laing manuscript most clearly witnesses a meeting between ‘court’ and ‘town’, as it were, effectively breaking down these previous critical distinctions. Whereas interest from the middling classes in Beggis Donaldson may be explained by the fact that both subject and readers share a
common social sphere, the subscriptions to ‘The tender snow’ suggests that markers such as ‘courtly’ need to be seriously reviewed.

Another sonnet clearly reacting to its neighbour is ‘first serve syne sute quhiles seme to lichlie luif’ (f. 79r). It is penned directly underneath ‘Glade am I glade am I’, the song that in 1609 appeared in Thomas Ravenscroft’s *Deuteromelia*. This song is also included in David Melvill’s Book of Roundels, a manuscript collection of songs and lyrics completed in 1612. Whereas Melvill’s version appears to have been copied straight out of Ravenscroft, the Laing text seems less reliant on the English version. Consider the two versions, Ravenscroft and Laing:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Glad am I, glad am I} \\
\text{My mother is gone to Henly,} \\
\text{Shut the doore and spare not,} \\
\text{Doe thy worst, I care not.} \\
\text{If I dye vpon the same,} \\
\text{bury, bury, bury me a god’s name.} \\
\text{Glade am I glade am I} \\
\text{my mother is gone to henstlie} \\
\text{steiche the dur & cache me} \\
\text{lay me doun & streche me} \\
\text{ding me & dang me} \\
\text{Ye gif I cry hang me} \\
\text{Ye gif I die of the same} \\
\text{Bury me burie in goddis name. (f. 79r)}
\end{align*}
\]

C.S. Lewis mistakenly assumed this might be one of Montgomerie’s unassigned works, and observes that ‘though its ending is ugly enough’, it ‘begins delightfully’. In fact, the origins of this are unknown. The curious song is expanded in the Scots, and interestingly it is labelled by the scribe ‘Inglis Sonet’. ‘Sonnet’ here clearly means song, but scribe A of the Laing manuscript must have felt compelled to counter this work with ‘ane Scottis sonnet’ instead:

\[
\text{Ane Scottis sonnett}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{first serve syne sute quhiles seme to lichlie luif} \\
\text{gif thow intend to win thy ladyis grace} \\
\text{Serve hir and sche thy constancie sall pruif} \\
\text{gif in hir mynd that modestie haue place} \\
\text{Persewing hir may rander the relaise} \\
\text{Or ellis thow can nocht conqueis hairtis desyre} \\
\text{appeirantlie sumtyme to forgett I gaise} \\
\text{Hes na les force to kendill cupydis fyre} \\
\text{hes thow nocht hard of mony leirant schyre} \\
\text{Thus sayit flie luif and it will fallow the}
\end{align*}
\]

125 Thomas Ravenscroft, *Deuteromelia, or The Second Part of Musick’s Melody [...] and such Delightfull Catches* (London: [n.p.], 1609), song 10; see also Fellowes, *English Madrigal Verse*, p. 224.
126 Lewis, p. 111.
quhilk nawayis commandis the to espyire
Bot wald thow suld nocht perrell libertie
Be trew crave tyme assoyt nocht gif thow can
find sche the dischit thow art ane marterit man.

A mini *ars amatoria*, the poem provides a manual how to ‘win thy ladyis grace’, a calculated
technique of attack and retreat based on the wisdom of ‘mony leirant schyre’. This must be the first
recorded instance where the ‘Castalian’, or ‘Spenserian’, sonnet is clearly identified as a Scottish
verse form. Since its subject matter is universal, the scribe must have had other reasons to label this
sonnet ‘Scottis’, and it is tempting to suppose that its verse form and rhyme scheme make this
sonnet stand out from other types, for instance the Italian or Shakespearean sonnets. In the ongoing
debate between scholars wishing to claim the invention of this rhyme scheme either for Scotland or
for England (through Spenser), the weight of this evidence should be taken into consideration.

All the Laing manuscript sonnets are in the ‘Castalian’, or interlaced rhyme scheme. Thematically, however, they do sometimes hark back to themes that are more representative of
chivalric, or courtly love, discourse, as opposed to the Petrarchist preoccupations, for instance, of
William Fowler. This is evident from the very final poem in the manuscript, ‘Thocht Polibus
pisander and vith them’ (f. 83v), which re-imagines Penelope’s plight, who, while being assailed by
woers, is waiting for ‘vlisses’ to come home. A paragon of loyalty, Penelope is not an obvious
traditional Petrarchist emblem, like Petrarch’s own Laura, or Fowler’s Bellisa. The result of this is
that while the Laing sonnet can be seen as a ‘modern’ verse form, in terms of content it fits in well
with the earlier lyrics discussed above. In the final sonnet, the speaker addresses his ‘most sueit
discreit and mansueit muse’, presumably his own beloved, in the following terms:

Ewin so most sueit discreit and mansueit muse
Remember on your yoldin siriture
Thoill nane your blaseme bweitie to abuse
thocht thai vith leing lippis vald yow allure
Bot sen my lyffe dois on your luife depend
In trew luiff with Penellope contend.

Terms such as ‘siriture’, ‘blaseme bweitie’ (‘blaseme’, or possibly ‘blaseine’ in the manuscript,
meaning either ‘bright’, or ‘blossom-like’ here), and ‘trew luiff’, frame this lady in the
conventional imagery of courtly love, while the theme of chastity in absence is a favourite poetic
occupation. The beloved also traditionally doubles as muse. Yet, the wooing game has been
elaborately explored in earlier Laing poems, and the conventional rhetoric of love was already
successfully deconstructed by the lady’s reply in ‘Och luif in langour heir I ly’ (f. 6v). One
wonders, then, whether the sonnet contains a word of warning, or reproach, not to invoke the muse
in vain, and perhaps by extension a warning also to all those scribes (and poets) who filled page

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127 This debate is usefully summarised and discussed by Katherine McClune, ‘The Poetry of John Stewart
128 See Stevenson’s note, p. 363.
after page of the manuscript. ‘Thai vith leing lippis’, that ‘lang sxtene yeiris dowcht to defyle hir fame’, are suitors armed with sweet rhetoric, and should not be trusted. The message is ironically contained in a sonnet, frequently employed as love gift; yet, this anonymous sonneteer’s offering constitutes an apposite ending to the manuscript. It both confirms and questions amatory discourse, revealing implicit tensions already explored in the earliest poems: as such, with ‘Thocht Polibus’ the manuscript comes full circle.

**Conclusion**

Further research will no doubt reveal further connections between MS Laing III.447 and the wider scribal community. More may be learned, for instance, from the page of scribbles at the very end of the collection, where the following inscription appears: ‘In tyme of welth think on distress’ (f. 84v). Such mottoes are common to many manuscripts and early printed books, and can be found scattered throughout flyleaves and empty margins. In connection to the Maxwell manuscript, Bawcutt traces a similarly popular rhyme, a quatrain that starts ‘In my defence god me defende’ (also the motto of the Scots coat of arms), to the Gray manuscript, a Latin Bible, and Colin Campbell, third earl of Argyll’s copy of Guido delle Collonne’s *Historia Troiana*. It is this last version of the quatrain that echoes, partly, the Laing manuscript:

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In my defens god me defend
And bring my soull to ane gud end
In tyme of velth think on our distress
He that this vret god send him grece.
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Per me Andrew Mallis [?]129

The third line of the quatrain is almost the same as the Laing scribble, and both scribes could draw on a long popular tradition of formulas ‘whose recital or inscription may preserve the individual (such as John Maxwell or ‘Andrew Mallis’) from adversity, a mixture of prayer and good-luck charm’. Bawcutt adds that although ‘[i]ts literary merit may not be high [...] it has great human interest’.130 In MS Laing III.447, ‘In my defens god me defend’ is mirrored to some extent in the French scribbles on the same page: ‘O dieu o dieu de ma saluation Deliure moy de ce rien sanglant / vice Et lors ma bouche en exultation chantera haut ta bonte’ (f. 84v). [Oh Lord oh Lord of my salvation, deliver me from my bloody vice, and then my mouth in exultation (with great joy) will sing aloud of your goodness.] With these lines in French the manuscript comes full circle, balancing the French scraps at the very start, and, by their lamentation of sin and the promise of

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129 Bawcutt, ‘Maxwell’s Commonplace Book’, pp. 64-65; see also Bawcutt, ‘Religious Verse’, p. 123. The first two lines also surface in Bodleian, MS Arch. Selden. B.24, f. 231v.
130 Bawcutt, ‘Maxwell’s Commonplace Book’, pp. 64-65. Maxwell, among his *sententiae*, also collects the following: ‘In tyme of plente, think on distres / In welth beware, and spend ye les / In tyme of plente, think on the puir / Be thow not guid, of distres be suir’, f. 20r.
Edinburgh University Library MS Laing III.447

divine adoration, the lines also strengthen the devotional poems earlier in the Laing collection. Compare, for instance, the conclusion of ‘O lord my god sen I am brocht to greitt distres’:

releif me of my miserie and presentt cair
remeid me that am lyk to mange and sor opprest
And [I] will sing thai prais as lang as I my lest. (f. 39r)

Thus, from even the smaller features of MS Laing III.447 patterns emerge, and connections open up to the highly complex scribal culture that defined early modern Scottish poetry.

Critics remain divided over the probable date of compilation for the Laing manuscript. Where Parkinson posited it could have been compiled ‘during the 1590s or shortly thereafter’, Bawcutt cautiously advances the ‘1st half 17th C.’; although Stevenson mentions no dates, his provisional association of the manuscript with William and Robert Melville suggests a date in the last two decades of the sixteenth, and perhaps the first decade of the seventeenth century. It is possible that all three are correct: MS Laing III.447 could have been compiled over a period of several decades. However, the uniformity of Hand A’s writing in particular suggests that the bulk of the poems were collected in a relatively short period of time. There is a very strong argument to be made that large parts of the Laing collection took shape linearly (although some poems may have been inserted later): taking this into account, the opening poem, a sonnet, indicates a date of composition not earlier than the great fashion for sonneteering of the 1580s. It must be acknowledged, however, that the Laing manuscript in many places also bears witness to a Scottish poetics more typical of the middle of the century, the age of Alexander Scott, and that of the Bannatyne manuscript. The Laing manuscript scribes’ inclusion of materials so similar to the Bannatyne lyrics raises pertinent questions, especially since in the opening and final manuscript sections these lyrics appear side by side with the quintessential post-1580s poetic form, the sonnet. The Laing manuscript represents a very fluid transition between literature traditionally associated with the court of Queen Mary on the one hand, and that of her son, James VI, on the other.

The inclusion of more modern poems in MS Laing III.447 is typical of a trend that may be observed more widely in Scottish miscellanies compiled from the 1580s onwards. A good example is the difference between the Maitland Folio and Quarto manuscripts. The date of compilation of the Folio is generally given as 1570-1586 (the cut-off date being Sir Richard Maitland’s death): however, it belongs mostly to around 1570. The Quarto is dated 1586, and is subscribed by its supposed抄yist, Mary Maitland, daughter of Sir Richard. The Folio is perhaps best known as the

most reliable and extensive manuscript witness for the works of Dunbar, and as such it has a
determinedly late-medieval outlook. Besides a great deal of Maitland’s verse, the Folio also
contains poems for instance by Henryson, Douglas, and William Stewart. As Mapstone states,

the Folio has a few contemporary or near-contemporary poets or attributions, but it
also has a great amount of verse that is early sixteenth-century or even earlier in
origin. The context it offers for reading Maitland’s poems is a strongly retrospective
one.  

A shift of emphasis is evident between these two related manuscripts: certainly by 1586 Mary
Maitland decided to include much more recent poetry, for instance by Montgomerie. Although the
Maitland Quarto manuscript was compiled in different social circumstances, and from a different
impetus (it seems to have been, first and foremost, a memorandum book after Sir Richard’s death)
it shares with the Laing manuscript this sense of contemporaneity: where in the Quarto Maitland’s
works are now framed by poems contemporary or even post-dating his (the first poem, in true
1580s fashion, is a tributary sonnet), so in the Laing manuscript the older lyrical tradition is framed
by contemporary sonnets, and the (by the time of compilation) relatively recent Cherrie.

In another aspect, MS Laing III.447 may fruitfully be compared to the Maitland Folio
manuscript, as both artefacts were compiled by a great deal of different scribes. In both cases, these
various collaborators cannot be readily identified, but provide provocative glances of the social
environments that produced the manuscripts. Craigie identifies up to twelve scribes in the Folio (A
to K, and two more that do not belong to the manuscript proper, L and M).  

Julia Boffey’s observations on the scribes are instructive: she notices first the way in which the Folio is dominated
by one scribe, whose work is complemented by others. She argues that a similar type of pattern is
evident from Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 (the Kingis Quair manuscript), and
several other English manuscripts. In relation to the Folio’s main scribe, it is striking how ‘at the
end of each major stint there is a dispersal into miscellaneity as groups of other hands make short
contributions – not necessarily of different kind of material, but of material which perhaps became
available at different times, from various sources’. Thus, the compositional practice of MS Laing
III.447, with its main scribe A, complemented by various others, is not unique; in fact, the
manuscript conforms to a wider practice of compilation where one scribe leads the way, and others
follow.

The bulk of the poetry in MS Laing III.447 appears to have been compiled by Edinburgh’s
burgesses and merchant classes, as discussed and evidenced above. The type of cultural milieu
exposed by van Heijnsbergen in his prosopographical study of the Bannatyne manuscript may be
the same that fostered literary manuscripts later on in the century. It needs to be remembered that

134 Maitland Folio, pp. 1-6.
although Bannatyne famously completed his miscellany between 1565 and 1568, or possibly even in the last three months of 1568, the manuscript was added to over the decades to follow, contemporizing his vast collection with changing times and tastes.\(^{136}\) In other words, there is reason to believe Bannatyne and his circle were active well after 1568. Inclusion of two poems from the Bannatyne manuscript and several similar lyrics into the Laing manuscript suggests that its compilers in the 1580s and 1590s could still draw on the same rich stock that furnished Bannatyne with his poems. There is no doubt Bannatyne envisaged his manuscript to be read by others, and the fruits of his labour may be seen (indirectly) to reflect on the later poetic scene in Edinburgh.

It must be conceded that none of the burgesses discussed above have been positively identified. There remains the danger of easy connections, simply of surnames matching up, in a city that by the 1590s, in the words of Michael Lynch, ‘must have had a population approaching 15,000’.\(^{137}\) Lynch reminds us, however, that

> [t]his was a society which, nevertheless, continued to cherish the old idea of itself as a small and close-knit community. It was an idea, of course, which had a religious dimension to it as well as a social or economic one. The burgh was seen as a corpus christianum; its council had responsibilities towards the spiritual as well as the secular welfare of its inhabitants.\(^{138}\)

It may easily be imagined that in this close-knit society poems, books and manuscripts were frequently exchanged.\(^{139}\) Moreover, in the Laing manuscript the spiritual and the secular are equally well represented. Although precious little is known about the scribes, the interaction between burgesses, merchants and craftsmen, for instance regarding burgh politics, commerce, or religion, has been described by Lynch, who stresses that the succession of councillors was often a family affair: ‘son tended to succeed father but it was rare for two brothers to sit side by side on the same council’.\(^{140}\) It follows that there is a strong likelihood that the various scribes who left their marks in the Laing manuscript, particularly the Hays and the Arnotts, were family, and that it is through such family connections that further poems were obtained.

This leaves us to consider the significance of MS Laing III.447 for early modern Scottish literary studies, and more broadly, manuscript studies in Britain. A new linear transcription has


\(^{137}\) Lynch, Edinburgh, p. 11.

\(^{138}\) Lynch, Edinburgh, p. 3.


\(^{140}\) Lynch, Edinburgh, p. 15.
proved to be of critical importance, as it has thus been possible to read the full manuscript’s contents in the order in which it was originally compiled. MS Laing III.447 is no random collection; indeed, as is becoming increasingly evident from other manuscript studies as well (for instance Kate McClune’s study of Stewart of Baldynneis’s manuscript), compilers organised their materials consciously. Though these organisational practices cannot always be expressed in clear-cut, absolute terms, nonetheless thematic patterns emerge. Parkinson finds correspondences between the thematic build-up of Montgomerie’s Cherrie and the general form and shape of the Ker manuscript:

Moving through opposites to assurance, the Ker Manuscript resembles Montgomerie’s best-known long poem The Cherrie and the Slae, much of which is debate between radically opposed voices – psychomachia leading finally to action, and success. This is the poem on which Montgomerie’s identity as an author depends. Remember that it remained in print throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, during which the Ker Manuscript lay in obscurity. Yet, in each, many voices produce suspension, then finally and almost unexpectedly, resolution of purpose. Opposition as the means to resolution is at the centre of Montgomerie’s authorship as figured in both this manuscript and this printed book.\textsuperscript{142}

This raises pressing questions about the nature of manuscript compilation in Scotland. Are these organisational principles shared between the Ker manuscript and the Cherrie’s long, allegorical dream vision the result of a particularly sensitive scribe who has meticulously unpacked the Cherrie’s mechanics, or are both poet and scribe working in a larger tradition that inscribes such organisation on a primal level? It is perhaps too early to answer such a question. For a start, a great deal more Scottish manuscripts need thorough revaluation, for instance the understudied Maitland Folio and Quarto manuscripts. It is clear, however, that MS Laing III.447 is tightly organised (although thematic and formal rigour dissolves towards the end), and both the Cherrie and the miscellaneous poems reinforce each other. Even there where an overall uniformity is lacking, still the echoes between clusters of poems often show the scribes to be acutely aware of intertextual connections. MS Laing III.447 is a crucial text to begin to understand Scotland’s rich scribal culture towards the end of the sixteenth century.

\textsuperscript{141} See Chapter One, pp. 2-5; McClune, ‘Stewart of Baldynneis’, pp. 16-62.
\textsuperscript{142} Parkinson, ‘Montgomerie’, p. 512.
James Murray, a minor landowner from Tibbermuir (modern-day Tibbermore, a few miles west of Perth) is a relatively unknown figure in Scottish literary studies. Yet, his name was lent to an intriguingly complicated hybrid manuscript, Cambridge University Library, MS Kk.5.30, or the Tibbermuir manuscript.¹ In its single binding, the manuscript combines two distinct but related sections, the first dating from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, and the second, on a fresh batch of paper added by Murray, dating to the beginning of the seventeenth century.²

The content of section one of the manuscript is as follows (section two is discussed below):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ff. 1-10</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ff. 11r-19r</td>
<td>Scots translation of Guido’s <em>Historia</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On f. 19r: ‘Her endis barbour and begyinis the monk’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 19r-304v</td>
<td>Lydgate’s <em>Troy Book</em> [starts at Book I, l. 1689, and ends at Book IV, l. 5337]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[f. 24 missing]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ff. 304v-323v</td>
<td>Scots translation of Guido’s <em>Historia</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On f. 304v: ‘Her endis the monk and begynys barbour’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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This first and largest section of MS Kk.5.30 mostly contains a transcription of John Lydgate’s *Troy Book*, a medieval historical romance in five books recounting the events of the Trojan War. This long Middle English poem, which Lydgate completed in 1420, was based on Guido delle Colonne’s Latin *Historia Destructionis Troiae* of 1287, which, in turn, was modelled after Benoît


² I am very grateful to Jayne Ringrose (Deputy Keeper of Manuscripts at CUL), who confirmed that MS Kk.5.30 was rebound in 1959 in half-black goatskin with marbled paper sides and vellum tips. Nothing except the labels survives of an older binding in brown leather, probably dating to the seventeenth century. Ms Ringrose also confirmed that the fresh batch of paper of the manuscript’s second section is different from that of section one. Its watermark, a jug, has not been identified.
de Sainte-Maure’s *Roman de Troie* in Old French. MS Kk.5.30’s transcription of Lydgate suggests that several fragments of its exemplar must have been wanting, because the unknown scribe filled two gaps in the Middle English narrative (ff. 11r-19v, and ff. 304v-23v) with fragments from another translation of Guido delle Colonne, this time in Scots. Twice the scribe noted the change of source: the end of the first Scots fragment is marked ‘Her endis barbour and begynis the monk’ (f. 19v); ‘the monk’ being Lydgate, who was a Benedictine at the monastery of Bury St Edmunds. When the Scots version resumes, the scribe noted that ‘Her endis the monk and begynis barbour’ (f. 304v). At f. 323v, section one of the manuscript breaks off, leaving the combined English and Scots *Troy Book* unfinished. It is worth stressing at this stage that the Scots translation of Guido is independent of Lydgate. As Angus McIntosh argues, ‘there is no question of [the Scottish *Troy Book*] being an original English poem with a mere veneer of Scots imposed by copyists’. Moreover, while Lydgate’s *Troy Book* is composed mostly in iambic pentameter, the Scots translation is written in four-stress couplets. Relating to the difference of the two texts, Bergen comments that ‘the Scottish version is so much more literal and concise that the first 60 of its lines are equal to the 175 of Lydgate’s’. No exact date can be provided for this first section: Bradshaw ventures it ‘is of the XVth century’, while Bawcutt more precisely suggests it ‘was written in the late fifteenth century or very early in the sixteenth century’.6

The second section of MS Kk.5.30 (the full content of which is given below, see pp. 97-98) following straight after the first but foliated anew (ff. 1-82), dates from c. 1612, and was added by James Murray of Tibbermuir. When Murray acquired what is now section one of the manuscript, it had already seen perhaps over a century of use, yet MS Kk.5.30 is aptly named after him, as he was personally responsible for substantial additions. First, the combined Scots and English *Troy Book* text must have been incomplete by the time Murray came to own the manuscript. Hence, in the second section, Murray supplied the endings to Books Four and Five, plus a title-page, table of chapters, Lydgate’s prologue, and Robert Braham’s epistle to the reader, all of which he copied from the *Troy Book* printed in 1555 by Thomas Marshe. All Murray’s additions to the *Troy Book* are bundled together in section two of MS Kk.5.30 (ff. 26r-71r). In addition, Murray collected around twenty-seven miscellaneous poems, both medieval and contemporary, from a wide variety of sources. This selection includes works by known Scots and English poets (such as Alexander

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5 *Troy Book*, IV, 49 note 2.


Montgomerie, King James VI, Alexander Hume, or Thomas Campion) and a good deal of anonymous verse. Besides the various sonnets, songs, ‘dyers’ (see below for this), and other poems, Murray also left a record of his book collection, both of books that he owned, and of those that were ‘lent’ (borrowed to or from others). The list will serve to assess Murray both as a well-informed reader, and as a participant in a system of book circulation. Moreover, several books that Murray owned can be shown to be directly relevant to the poems that he collected.

This second section of the manuscript, and particularly the miscellaneous poems, will be the main focus of this chapter. However, as will become evident, it is difficult to extract the later poems wholly from the *Troy Book* text. Physically, first of all, Murray’s additions to Lydgate are now exactly in the middle of the second section of the manuscript. Also in terms of literary-historical chronology, the two manuscript sections are not so clearly separable as to comfortably ignore, as earlier critics have done, either the ‘medieval’ or the ‘early modern’ poems. In a short sequence of three sonnets (ff. 71v-72r, discussed in detail below) Murray may be seen to have welded together the two sections of the manuscript, transforming a classically-inspired pagan narrative, in the form of a sonnet dealing with the Trojan War (explicitly linking back to Lydgate’s medieval poem), into contemporary concerns, as expressed and developed in two further sonnets by James Melville and Philip Sidney. This short sequence in MS Kk.5.30 may be taken as emblematic for the transition from the medieval *Troy Book* narrative to the early modern miscellaneous poems, and more generally, from medieval to early modern poetic modes. Even if only for this reason, the relationship between the *Troy Book* and the miscellaneous poems deserves further thought.

**Editorial History of MS Kk.5.30**

MS Kk.5.30 came to critical attention for the first time when the Scots *Troy Book* fragments were discovered in 1866 by Cambridge University librarian Henry Bradshaw. Since Bradshaw attributed the fragments to John Barbour, author of the *Brus*, the manuscript attracted considerable interest. This claim of Barbour’s authorship, not only of the *Troy Book* fragments but also of the *Legends of the Saints*, was soon disproved, but not soon enough to prevent Horstmann’s combined edition of *Barbour’s Legendensammlung* and his *Trojanerkrieg*. Both works are now considered to be anonymous – though the Scots *Troy Book* fragments may still have been written by an otherwise unknown Scots poet named ‘Barbour’.

MS Kk.5.30 is not the only manuscript to contain fragments of the Scots *Troy Book*, as Bradshaw found more fragments in Bodleian Library, MS Douce 148. The latter has been

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investigated more thoroughly, as one of the two scribes of that manuscript has been identified as John Asloan, scribe of the Asloan manuscript. Relating to the composition of MS Douce 148, Catherine van Buuren wrote that

\begin{quote}
\textit{[e]vidently Sir Thomas Ewyn, mentioned in the colophon, possessed several fragments of a copy of Lydgate’s \textit{Troy Book}, and requested scribe A [John Asloan] to make a complete book from the fragments in his possession: […] it is clear how the scribe set about this, copying the missing parts of the text from another MS. of the same work (or its Scottish counterpart) and fitting them in between the remains of the older MS.}\end{quote}

Asloan had access not only to Lydgate’s poem (presumably in manuscript), but also to the Scots translation of Guido (Asloan was responsible for the following sections in MS Douce 148: ff. 1-44, 139, 257, and 300-36). It may be imagined that something similar happened to the first section of MS Kk.5.30 – the problems of a defective manuscript or an incomplete exemplar were solved by the availability of a Scots translation of Guido which, though independent of Lydgate, was close enough in terms of narrative to fill out the lacunae in the Middle English poem. A critical edition of the Scots \textit{Troy Book} fragments and a full account of both manuscripts is certainly a \textit{desideratum}, as information on both manuscripts is scattered, and at times confusing. A complete \textit{Troy Book} in Scots has never been recovered, but since both John Asloan and the scribe of section one of MS Kk.5.30 could readily draw from a Scots translation to stop the gaps, it can be assumed that a more complete version was once in existence. Rhiannon Purdie spells out the difficulties of approaching the Scots \textit{Troy Book}, which is ‘in some way the most shadowy work in our corpus of medieval Scottish romances’. She adds that ‘it remains something of a “lost text” of Older Scottish Literature, doomed forever to be “the bits in the Lydgate manuscripts” that are neither by Lydgate nor [...] by Barbour’.

In the immediate wake of Bradshaw’s mistaken discovery, all critical attention for MS Kk.5.30 was focused on the first section, virtually ignoring James Murray’s later additions. Recently, however, critical interest in the manuscript has changed perspective: Sally Mapstone, David Parkinson and Rod Lyall have all highlighted the cultural significance of MS Kk.5.30’s

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11 \textit{Troy Book}, IV, 46-49, describes Douce in more detail. I am extremely grateful to Kate McClune who kindly allowed me access to her unpublished description of MS Douce 148.
12 A Scottish Text Society edition of the \textit{Troy Book} fragments was begun by John Farish, but never completed. The project was subsequently taken over by Catherine van Buuren, but she too died before she could bring it to completion. Farish’s material is currently in possession of the Scottish Text Society (personal communication from Sally Mapstone, President of the STS).
14 To Bradshaw’s credit, he significantly updated the CUL catalogue description and added a first-line index of Murray’s miscellaneous material, identifying some sources. See the ‘Corrigenda’ section of \textit{Catalogue of Manuscripts}, V, 600-3.
second section, using it to establish links between Alexander Montgomerie, Patrick Hume of Polwarth, and the court of James VI, between several closely related families with distinct literary interests, and between the literary cultures of Scotland and England.\(^{15}\) Priscilla Bawcutt, drawing from the manuscript’s second section but looking back to the medieval period, has explored James Murray’s fragmentary transcription of *Sir Lamwell*, and has highlighted the manuscript’s importance more generally, particularly in reference to Murray’s book list, and to the significance of the manuscript for the long-lived popularity of romance in Scotland.\(^{16}\)

The above brief editorial history reveals that, until recently, MS Kk.5.30 lived something of a double life, either as a late-medieval *Troy Book* manuscript, or as an early seventeenth-century miscellany. It is clear, however, that the manuscript must be read as a more meaningful whole, since James Murray was deeply interested both in the *Troy Book* – which he read attentively and added to (see further below) – and in the contemporary poetic scene around him. As stated above, the present focus will be on the miscellaneous material that Murray supplied around 1612. However, a discussion, firstly, of the manuscript’s earliest ownership that is of direct relevance to Murray, and secondly, of the occasional presence of Trojan imagery in later poems, will hopefully ensure that the present discussion does not lose sight of the challenging hybridity of MS Kk.5.30.  

**Ownership and the Cultural Context**

Not much investigative work has been carried out into MS Kk.5.30’s earliest history and provenance. Following the manuscript’s journey to Cambridge University Library, Bradshaw writes that it was

formerly in the Duke of Lauderdale’s collection, which was sold by auction in London in 1692, and that it had been bought with several others from the same library by Bishop Moore, and transferred with the rest of his books to the University […] in 1715.\(^{17}\)

Before the manuscript came into the collection of John Maitland, Duke of Lauderdale (d. 1682), it was owned by James Murray of Tibbermuir. There is no evidence of other later owners, but the manuscript may, of course, have changed hands before Lauderdale acquired it. There are, however, many earlier marks of ownership and related marginalia, all in the first *Troy Book* section (and so, in all probability, predating Murray’s ownership), that deserve to be mentioned. The manuscript is


\(^{16}\) Bawcutt, ‘*Lamwell*’.

\(^{17}\) Bradshaw, p. 58. A list of the manuscripts in Lauderdale’s sale catalogue is reprinted in *The Bannatyne Miscellany*, [ed. by David Laing], 3 vols (Edinburgh: [n.p.], 1827-55), II, 151-58. The manuscript in question is probably item 46, ‘History of the Grecian and Trojan Wars, in Old English verse, Ms. upon paper. Fol.’.
most prominently inscribed by one ‘Thomas Blair’ (for instance ff. 119v, 156r, 213r, 243r), but more names appear throughout: ‘Henricus Broun’ (f. 196v), ‘Adam Broun’ (f. 239r), and ‘William Brown’ (f. 247r); ‘James Ogilvy’ and ‘James Scrimgeour’ (f. 59r), and ‘Jacobus Huntar’ (f. 250r). On f. 193r occurs ‘Thomas Cormak’ (or ‘Gormak’), and underneath his name these lines in the same hand:

Marie be the grace of god Quein of Scottis
To our Louittis in that part coniunctlie and seuerlye
Speciallie constitute greighting Forsameikyll as it is
[the page is cropped here]

This is a fragment of a royal proclamation, or a warrant, deed, or other official or legal document. 

_DOST_ indicates other frequent occurrences of this formulaic phraseology particular to Scottish ‘non-notarial deeds and royal gifts, mandates, warrants, etc.’, for instance under ‘luvit’ for ‘louittis’, meaning ‘our beloved’, and under ‘forsamekle’, meaning ‘forasmuch’.18 In similar fashion, on several folios reference is made to ‘James be the grace of god king of Scottis’, and ‘our right trest King James’ (ff. 129v, 193v, and 227r). It is hard to ascertain the relevance of these marginal scribblings: they are unconnected to the _Troy Book_ text and might simply reflect a writer testing his pen. If the ‘Marie’ fragment quoted above is contemporary with the reign of Mary, Queen of Scots, however, it indicates that this section of the manuscript was read throughout the decades after its production. At a stretch, it might be imagined that the manuscript was once connected to legal, official, or courtly circles, but more evidence is needed to substantiate this claim.

There are other types of marginalia to be found in the first section of MS Kk.5.30. The first line of a favourite Scottish inscription, usually a couplet or quatrain, can be found on f. 59r: ‘In my defence god me defend’. The wide-spread popularity of this in Scottish books and manuscripts has been briefly discussed in the previous chapter (p. 82), and Bawcutt has traced it in various sources, significantly also in a copy of Guido delle Colonne’s 1494 print of the _Historia Troiana_ (or _Historia Destructionis Troiae_), once owned by Colin Campbell, third Earl of Argyll.19

Another marginal inscription appears on f. 167r:

Intill ane mirthfull maij morni
I went furthe myne alone
Among thir flowers fresche & gay
And this makand my monn.

18 On at least two more folios (ff. 264v, 280v), another type of proclamation appears, starting ‘Be it kend to all...’: Unfortunately, the ink is faded, and the fragments are difficult to read.

These lines are reminiscent of other Scottish poems and songs situating a speaker in the natural surroundings of a May morning, making a love lament, or ‘monn’. Use of this poetic convention is widespread. An example is the following poem or song from the Bannatyne manuscript:

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In may in a morning // I movit me one
Throw a grene garding // with gravis begone
As leid without lyking // but langour allone
for misheis & murning // makand my mone (f. 225v)
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The setting appears similar, and the Tibbermuir fragment shares its formulaic opening and closing phrases, as well as rhyme-words ‘alone’ and ‘monn’, with the Bannatyne text. Metrically, however, the fragment is very different, and there is no reason to assume a direct kinship between the two.

The marginalia in the first section of the *Troy Book* are difficult to date, but collectively the ‘mirthful maij’ fragment, the references to Mary, Queen of Scots, and (an unidentified) King James, plus the names of various readers or owners of the manuscript, suggest a lively Scottish readership of the *Troy Book* that predates (and perhaps overlaps with) Murray’s ownership. All marginalia could belong to the period during which Murray or his family owned the manuscript (see below), though it remains unknown when the manuscript was acquired for the Murrays. Bergen concludes that in light of MS Kk.5.30’s ‘numerous trifling inscriptions scattered among the pages’ it ‘has evidently been diligently read and re-read and has seen much hard usage’. Since the extent of Lydgate’s influence in Scotland is still a matter of debate, it is important to note here that this version of the *Troy Book* at least was indeed intensively read.

James Murray of Tibbermuir marks the manuscript as his own only once among the leaves of the first section (f. 307v). In addition, Bergen comments that ‘[i]nitials in red, running-title in roman numerals designating the number of the chapter according to the 1555 edition [of Lydgate], and headings to the chapters written on the margins’ are in Murray’s hand, thus providing evidence

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21 Edwards comments how Gregory Kratzmann ‘denies Lydgate any influence on Scottish medieval literature’, see ‘Lydgate’s Manuscripts’, pp. 25-26. The study of the ownership of another Lydgate manuscript (see Priscilla Bawcutt, ‘The Boston Public Library Manuscript of John Lydgate’s *Siege of Thebes*: Its Scottish Owners and Inscriptions’, *Medium Aevum*, 70:1 (2001), 80-94) evidences how much may be learned from marginal glosses. It is true that this particular manuscript (Boston Public Library, MS f.med. 94) has more information on offer, but it should be noted that MS Kk.5.30 contains more marginalia than can be discussed here.
for his careful reading of the book. 23 The second section of MS Kk.5.30 bears ample witness both to James Murray’s hand, and to his name (sometimes styling himself ‘Jacobus Murravius’). A first obvious question arises: who then was James Murray? His date of birth is unknown. He was the eldest son of John Murray of Tibbermuir and ‘a daughter of Stewart, of Grantully’; his father remarried, presumably after the death of his first wife, Helen Scrymgeour of Myres. 24 Although James does not style himself ‘Sir’ in his manuscript, he was knighted by James VI – the date, again, is unknown. In Tibbermore parish church, a stone plate erected to the memory of James Murray and his family still survives, and puts the year of his death as 1631. 25 Bawcutt notes the occurrence of the names of James Murray and his father among several documents, and she observes that ‘it is the father John rather than his son James who emerges most vividly and rather cantankerously from the records – failing to pay his debts, quarrelling with the neighbours, and refusing to allow the bailies of Perth to use material from the quarry on his lands to build a new bridge’. 26 More information can be gleaned from Gordon MacGregor’s genealogical records. James Murray married three times, first to Marjory, daughter of William Colville of Condie, second to Lilias, daughter of Laurence Oliphant of Gask, and finally to Anna, daughter of Sir Andrew Melville of Garvock (who was a son of John Melville of Raith). 27 This final marriage in particular is of significance, as it connected Murray to an influential family with strong literary ambitions (see previous chapter, pp. 40-43). MS Laing III.447 has been tentatively connected to the Melville family – though they were probably not involved in the production of the Laing manuscript, it was certainly at Melville House at the end of the seventeenth century. A tenuous link may thus be forged between the Laing and Tibbermuir manuscripts through a shared connection with the Melvilles. Whereas very little is known about James Murray of Tibbermuir, in Bawcutt’s words ‘a minor landowner’, and an insignificant player on the Scottish courtly, political and literary scene, still he may be connected through marriage to Scotland’s leading political and cultural figures, and as such he may have had access to literary materials circulating in that milieu.

23 Troy Book, IV, 50.
27 MacGregor, II, 652. Whereas MacGregor’s work is generally well documented, it is unfortunate that he provides no external reference corroborating this last marriage. There is some uncertainty about Andrew Melville of Garvock’s offspring. Fraser notes that ‘in the royal warrant of pension in 1626 Elizabeth Hamilton [Melville’s second wife] is described as a widow with ten children, but this may be a mistake, or the others may have died young’. Fraser only records ‘at least’ two sons, and no daughters. See William Fraser, The Melvilles, Earls of Melville, and the Leslies, Earls of Leven, 3 vols (Edinburgh: [n.p.], 1890), I, 167.
James Murray does not reveal how he came to possess the original manuscript. That it must have been incomplete when first he saw it is clear, however. The following are his conclusive remarks after transcribing the end of Lydgate’s Book Five:

all quhilk befoir it vantet this 40 yeiris ago now latlie / eikit addit & copeit out off the print the beginning and end their off / this holl storie as the breik bearneth be me James Murray / with my hand in all hest that for the present hes the samyn of / my father Jhone murry off Tibbermuit most Justlie / anno 1612 the 24 off Maj. (f. 71r)

Exactly what Murray means by ‘this 40 yeiris ago’ is unclear. Most likely, the manuscript had been in possession of Murray or his family for forty years at least. If speaking from memory, then Murray in 1612 must have been sufficiently advanced in age to remember the state of the manuscript forty years earlier. We do not have a date of birth for him: however, it is known that his grandfather Patrick Murray married Isobella Tod in 1551. Successor to the family seat was John Murray (James’s father). If John was born around or soon after that marriage, then we can conjecture an earliest birth date for James Murray as John’s first son in line perhaps in the late 1560s, or early 1570s. It is just about possible for James Murray himself to have known about the manuscript for forty years. Alternatively, he inherited it from his father or other relatives and information about the text was handed down to him. A third option is that the manuscript itself contained information that is now missing – a title page or marginalia that have not survived.

One final important connection might shed more light on MS Kk.5.30’s provenance, and draw attention to another bookish family. As stated, James’s father remarried Helen, daughter of James Scrymgeour of Myres. In 1537, John Scrymgeour of Myres was appointed Master of the King’s Works to James V, and his name is associated with the production of one manuscript copy of the heraldic manual known as the *Deidis of Armorie* (now NLS Adv. MS 31.5.2). In this manuscript, an anonymous ‘sixteenth-century hand’ declares that ‘This book wes wreatin be my grandsir Mr Jhon Scrymgeour of Myris maister of warke to the kings majestie’ (on flyleaf, f. ii). John Scrymgeour also had a much more famous kinsman, Henry Scrimgeour, styled by John Durkan as ‘Renaissance Bookman’, who was well known for his role as continental book and manuscript collector for the renowned Fugger library. Again, literary and family connections are strong here: Henry’s sister Margaret was mother to Peter Young, who became tutor and librarian to James VI. To return to John Scrymgeour: this scribe, known to be involved in the production or

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28 MacGregor, II, 648-49.
29 MacGregor, II, 649.
31 See John Durkan, ‘Henry Scrimgeour, Renaissance Bookman’, *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions*, 5:1 (1978), 1-31 (p. 1). University of St Andrews Library, GB227/ms36929, MS 30488 contains family writs, 1451 to 1610, and various other papers, relating to the Scrymgeours of Myres and their affairs. I have not consulted these documents myself.
circulation of at least one manuscript (Houwen suggests he transcribed Adv. MS 31.5.2 for his own use), may provide a clue to the earliest life of MS Kk.5.30. Significantly, Andrea Thomas also identified Master John Scrymgeour as precentor, or chanter, at the Chapel Royal in Stirling, an office that ‘would have demanded some skill in music, particularly singing’. R.W. and Jean Munro note that John Scrymgeour, the Master of Works, handed over land, and the offices of macer and sergeant-at-arms, to his son William. William died in 1568, and passed on the office of macer to his son James, who was also the baillie of Auchtermuchty. Whether it is this James Scrymgeour of Myres that was father to Helen (John Murray of Tibbermuir’s wife) remains uncertain. It is perhaps through John Murray’s marriage to Helen Scrymgeour that MS Kk.5.30 was acquired for the family. Whereas it is entirely possible that it came to James Murray via another path altogether, and that family connections to the Scrymgeours are a coincidence, it should be remembered that among the many names inscribed in the margins of the first section of the manuscript, one is ‘James Scrimgeour’ (f. 59r). If the involvement of the Master of Works in the manuscript’s early life could be corroborated, then the references to ‘our right trest King James’ greatly gain in significance, and it might be possible to posit a readership for MS Kk.5.30’s first section with clear connections to the court, and perhaps to Stirling’s Chapel Royal, a key centre for cultural activity.

**Manuscript Content of Section Two**

Any further consideration of the first section of the manuscript lies beyond the scope of this chapter – it will have to be more thoroughly addressed in a future edition of the Scottish *Troy Book* fragments. Relating to the second section, Bergen claims that the supply ‘was [...] collected, paged in pencil, and placed at the end of the volume’. It is possible that when Murray owned the manuscript the leaves were differently arranged: it makes very little sense for the title page that he carefully copied (f. 26r) to be placed at the end of the volume; similarly, the additional *Troy Book* fragments might have originally been inserted there where section one was lacking.

There are clear indications that the collection of miscellanea in section two used to be more extensive. Several pencilled folio numbers are missing, presumably because leaves were removed

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34 *Troy Book*, IV, 49.

35 Bradshaw’s pencilled notes guide the reader through the second section of the manuscript. According to these notes, ff. 1-2 form a single folded sheet (a1 and a2). The next gathering consists of four folded
after numbering: ff. 3-4, 18, and 22. In between consecutively numbered leaves, obvious stubs indicate the removal of many leaves before the manuscript was foliated. The following have been removed: two leaves between ff. 28-29, two between ff. 35-36, four between ff. 48-49, seven between ff. 72-73, and finally two between ff. 74-75. Of that which remains, the content is as follows (authorship is briefly indicated but will be discussed in detail below):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folio</th>
<th>First Line / Title and Author</th>
<th>Hand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f. 1r</td>
<td>‘The mirrie day sprang frome the Orient’</td>
<td>Hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 1v</td>
<td>[from Hary’s Wallace] [blank]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 2r</td>
<td>‘Catalogus Librorum Jacobi Murryi’</td>
<td>Hand A/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 2v</td>
<td>[blank]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 3r-4v</td>
<td>[missing]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 5r-5v</td>
<td>‘He that his mirth hes lost, quhais confoirt is dismaid’</td>
<td>Hand B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 6r-7r</td>
<td>‘Thou irksome bed Qhhairin I tumble to and fra’</td>
<td>Hand B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 7v-10v</td>
<td>[blank]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 11r-11v</td>
<td>‘Listine Lordings by the dayis off Arthure’</td>
<td>anonymous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 12r-25v</td>
<td>[blank]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 26r-71r</td>
<td>Supply to Lydgate’s Troy Book: title page (f. 26r), Braham’s Epistle to the Reader (f. 27), Lydgate’s Prologue (ff. 28r-32v), table of chapters (ff. 33-34), opening of Book One (ff. 35-48), end of Book Four (ff. 49-50), end of Book Five (ff. 57-71r)</td>
<td>Hand A/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 71v-72r</td>
<td>‘Quhen feirce Achilles att the sege off Troye’</td>
<td>Hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 72v-74r</td>
<td>[Alexander Craig] ‘Sen so it is that quho so ever tuik lyfфе’</td>
<td>Hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 74v</td>
<td>[James Melville] ‘Leve me O love qhilik rechis bot to dust’</td>
<td>Hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 75r-75v</td>
<td>[Philip Sidney] [blank (except for some scribblings)]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 76r</td>
<td>‘Heich Architecters wounderous wouttit rounds’</td>
<td>Hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 76v</td>
<td>[Alexander Montgomerie] ‘I am the sevint I was the first off tuelve’</td>
<td>Hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 77r</td>
<td>[anonymous] ‘Loip varlie on be sicker syne to fitt’</td>
<td>Hand B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

leaves, but lacks the first two (b3 to b8; ff. 5-10). The following is c1 to c7 (ff. 11-17) (c8, f. 18 is missing); then d1 to d3 (ff. 19-21), d5 to d8 (ff. 23-26) (d4, f. 22 missing). E1 to e8 is complete (ff. 27-36), but have an extra sheet inserted, ee1 and ee2 (ff. 33-34), between e6 and e7. Following is f1 to f8 (ff. 37-44), g1 to g4 (ff. 45-48) (g5 to g8 are missing, but foliation is uninterrupted), a single sheet h1 and h2 (ff. 49-50), another single sheet i2 (f. 51) (i1 is missing), k1 and k2 (ff. 52-53), l1 to l12 (ff. 54 to 65), and m1 to m4 (ff. 66 to 69). At this point, Bradshaw’s notes stop.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Hand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>[anonymous]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Mestress ye bad me thryse putt on my spurris’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[anonymous]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Quha vald cum speid latt him imploy his pen’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[anonymous]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. 77v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Cidippe reid and reidding reslie sueir’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[anonymous]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘First I beleived the erth suld turne in Assh’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[anonymous]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. 78r</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Owerquhelmed in vois &amp; drouned in deip dispaire’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[anonymous]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Mestress quhen last ve tua did part asundre’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[anonymous]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Lyk as the little emmett heth hir gall’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[anonymous]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. 78v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘First in the orient Rang the Assiriene Kings’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[?] William Drummond of Hawthornden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Nocht Orientall Indus christall streemes’</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[James VI]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ff. 79r-80v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘O Perfyt lycht quhilk shed away’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>['the Day Estivall']</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Alexander Hume]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. 80v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Cupid quhome sall I vyt bot the’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[anonymous]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. 81r</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Lyke as the Dum, solsequium, vith cair overcum, doth sorrou quhen the sone goth out off sicht’</td>
<td>Hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Alexander Montgomerie]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. 81v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Quhen I vay [?] in my mynd ye lyff of all sorts’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[anonymous]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. 82r</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Displesour, with his deadlie dairt’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Alexander Montgomerie]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Quhat mey be compared tuix labour &amp; luiff’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[anonymous]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. 82v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Quhat giff a day or a nycht or a yeir’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Thomas Campion]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The issue of handwriting throughout this section is rather a difficult one. Bawcutt, in relation to Murray’s transcription of ‘Listine Lordings by the dayis off Arthure’ (ff. 11r-v), observes that ‘[t]hree other shorter pieces of poetry […] were copied by James Murray himself’; these are, according to Bawcutt, the Wallace fragment, and the two ‘dyers’; she also includes the book list. In addition, she suggest that ‘[l]ater members of the family followed James Murray in employing other blank pages (fols. 71v-82v), at the end of the “Supply”, to record sonnets, short poems, and extracts from long ones’.36 Bawcutt may be correct, but she offers no evidence for distinguishing the different hands. Moreover, her statement implies that Murray employed two types of scripts: one an elegant, fairly large italic hand, employed for the Wallace fragment for instance, and the other a more closely-written secretary hand, as evident from the ‘dyers’ and the book list. This in itself is no unusual phenomenon: Parkinson accepts that Margaret Ker wrote both in italic and

secretary hands, and the same has been argued for Mary Maitland, the supposed copyist of the Maitland Quarto manuscript. Murray’s two scripts vary significantly in size, and appear either leisurely written (as in the Wallace fragment), or, as he himself confesses, written ‘with my hand in all hest’ (f. 71r). This means that a strong argument can be made that other poems in this manuscript are in Murray’s hand, too, and not in that of other family members. Bawcutt does not discuss the supply to Lydgate, which is written in Murray’s secretary hand, or the title page (f. 26r) copied from print, which is written in italics (copying the printed letter forms of the 1555 Troy Book). If Murray’s secretary hand, as employed for the ‘dyers’, is compared, for instance, to the hand of the ten sonnets (ff. 77r-78v), there are strong similarities; equally, individual letter forms of the Troy Book title page compare favourably with the two groups of sonnets in italic script on ff. 71v-72r, and 76r. Only an extremely detailed palaeographical study may prove this conclusively, but even at an initial stage it may be suggested that more poems were transcribed by Murray than Bawcutt suggests – at least it seems premature to conclude the opposite. Allowing for the development of Murray’s hand over time (there is no reason to suspect all poems were transcribed in 1612, and not later), and his use of two distinct scripts, it is even possible for the entire supply to have been written by him. In the discussion that follows, it will be assumed that this is at least a very strong possibility. If indeed others have aided Murray in the composition of the manuscript, then their identities are a mystery. In the light of the problems outlined, the identification of hands in the table above should not be read as definitive; rather, Hands A and B simply differentiate between italic script (Hand A), and secretary (Hand B).

Murray’s manuscript collects twenty-seven miscellaneous poems, thirteen of which can be attributed to various authors. The process of compilation is understood by critics to be roughly contemporary with the explicit of the Troy Book, dated 24 May 1612. Since no other evidence than that date can be found, it is difficult precisely to know when, and over how long a period of time, Murray put his collection together. Apart from two fragments of medieval (historical) romances (from the Wallace, and from Sir Lamwell), all identified authors are, broadly speaking, of Murray’s day and age. The manuscript features works by Scottish poets Alexander Montgomerie, Alexander

37 ‘Even in the initial transition from secretary to italic, the character of the hand suggests that this Margaret Ker wrote as well as owned K[er],’ see Alexander Montgomerie: Poems, ed. by David J. Parkinson, 2 vols (Edinburgh: STS, 4th ser. 28, 29, 2000), II, 2. For a discussion of the hands in the Maitland Quarto manuscript, see Maitland Quarto, pp. v-vi. See also for instance Alasdair A. MacDonald, ‘The Cultural Repertory of Middle Scots Lyric Verse’, in Cultural Repertoires: Structure, Function and Dynamics, ed. by Gillis J. Dorleijn and Herman L.J. Vanstiphout (Louvain: Peeters, 2003), pp. 59-86 (p. 73), which accepts that the entire manuscript was written by Mary Maitland. In ‘A Methodology for Reading Against the Culture: Anonymous, Women Poets, and the Maitland Quarto Manuscript’, in Woman and the Feminine in Medieval and Early Modern Scottish Writing, ed. by Sarah M. Dunnigan, C. Marie Harker and Evelyn S. Newlyn (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), pp. 89-103, Evelyn S. Newlyn accepts Mary Maitland as the scribe, ‘rather than some man’, although she acknowledges ‘uncertainty about compilation and paleography’ (p. 93).

38 For the italic hand, compare for instance the capital ‘G’ of ‘Grecianes’ with that of ‘Graeciane’ on f. 71v; the same flourished ‘G’ reappears on f. 76r. Compare also the serifs of ‘s’, both in capital and in lower case, between the Wallace fragment (f. 1r) and the sonnets (ff. 71v-72r).
Hume, King James VI, James Melville, Alexander Craig, and English poets Philip Sidney, Edward Dyer and Thomas Campion. Authorship of other items is less secure. One sonnet, ‘First in the orient Rang the Assiriene Kings’ (f. 78v), is thought to have been written by William Drummond of Hawthornden, though this claim has been contested.39 Another, ‘I am the sevint I was the first off twelve’ (f. 76r), is very cautiously associated with Patrick Hume of Polwarth, but evidence is slim.40 MS Kk.5.30 contains at least three songs, one by Campion (f. 82v), and two anonymous ones in Scots (ff. 75r-v, 81v). The bulk of the material collected seems to have been written before 1603 – though a notable and important exception must be made for the poems by Drummond, Craig, and perhaps ‘Murrayis Dyare’ (see below for this). Most poems will be explored in detail below.

Given the present collation of MS Kk.5.30, an overarching organisational principle is not readily apparent. The manuscript contains six small groups of poems, however, that were copied out at the same time in the same type of hand, and should thus be considered as belonging together – although the type of connection varies. The following clusters can be identified: two ‘dyares’ (ff. 5r-7r), a group of three sonnets (ff. 71v-72r), another of two sonnets (f. 76r), a group of ten sonnets (f. 77r-78v), and Hume’s ‘Of the Day Estivall’ followed by a six-stanza complaint against Cupid (ff. 79r-80v). Two poems are linked by an inscription, ‘finis quod thomsone vi th my hand’ and ‘Johne Thomsone wi th my hand’ (ff. 81r, 82r). Since both these poems are Montgomerie’s, this suggests that Thomson was a scribe rather than an author. Another more fanciful interpretation presents itself when we consider that ‘to be John Thomson’s man’ was proverbial, and jokingly applied to men who were strongly under the influence of their wives.41 The second poem, ‘Displesour, with his deadlie dairt’ (f. 82r), signals the poet’s disillusion when he fell out of favour with King James, and thus is occasional rather than amatory. Whereas ‘Lyke as the Dum solsequium’ (f. 81r), the other Montgomerie poem, indeed presents a speaker firmly under his beloved’s spell, it is still uncertain whether a contemporary reader would style Montgomerie’s dramatic construct as ‘John Thomson’s man’. It seems more likely, overall, that an actual reader or scribe by that name left his mark.

As in the manuscript’s first section, more users appear in the second section: ‘Kathrin Morton with my hand’, ‘Marie Moorray with my hand’ (f. 74v), and ‘Captane James Lyell’ (f. 76v). The reason to consider ‘Morton’, ‘Moorray’ and ‘Lyell’ users rather than scribes of the

manuscript rests with the occurrence of their names on blank pages. The names are scribbles, and are not, like ‘John Thomson’, attached to a poem. There remains a possibility that these individuals were more directly involved with the Tibbermuir manuscript’s production, but there is no evidence. No records survive indicating a Mary Murray in James’s direct family. If kinship between a Mary Murray and James Murray existed, then this suggests that the manuscript was circulated in family circles. Even more importantly, her presence, like that of the unknown Kathrin Morton, testifies to a female readership.

**The Book List, f. 2r**

An important piece of evidence for Murray’s reading habits is his catalogue of books (f. 2r). Many entries need further work, and the minute handwriting needs to be further deciphered, before all the items in question can be identified. Murray’s entries are in shorthand, sometimes very unspecific (‘seneca’), sometimes cryptic (‘vreit buikis collectit from dyvers Subjetts in Latin & English’), sometimes more clear (‘Buchananus Novum testamentum vulgare cum Psalmis’, presumably a New Testament and Buchanan’s popular metrical psalm translations). The catalogue is one page long, and contains around fifty entries. Murray subdivided his library into five categories: ‘libri sacri’, ‘libri Latinii’, ‘Gallici’, ‘Vulgares’ and ‘Scripti Libri’. A possible sixth category may be added (or this falls under ‘vulgares’): ‘Lent buikes’. Books lent either to or from Murray suggest that his library was no static collection, and that circulation was an important means of accessing more books. A useful strategy for identifying books is to compare Murray’s modest collection to the infinitely larger library, collected contemporaneously, by William Drummond of Hawthornden; similarly, books that Murray owned may also be traced in the inventories of Scottish booksellers.

In the category of sacred books fall an Old and New Testament in Latin (‘Vetus et Novum testamentum Latinum’), Buchanan’s psalm translations already mentioned above, and the following two works: an ‘Explicatio Sacramentorum Latina’, and a ‘Doctrina Vulgaris Bibliae Sacrae totius’. Two unidentified works are, according to Bawcutt, by the sixteenth-century scholar Fulvius Ursinus: they are ‘Ursinus impressus Vulgaris cum Commentarijs’ and ‘Ursinus Scriptum cum Commentarijs’ (Drummond owned a further work by this scholar, see item 607). Familiar entries among the Latin section are such authors as Seneca, Virgil, and Martial – of these three, only the latter’s work is further specified as ‘Epigrammata’. ‘Ciceronis sextio latina’ may refer to Cicero’s speech, or court-room oration, on Publius Sestius, a Roman senator (cf. Drummond’s 448-

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42 The only critic that has very briefly taken note of the catalogue is Bawcutt, ‘Lamwell’, pp. 90-91. For the identification of some books I am indebted to this article. I am extremely grateful to David McOmish, who identified two Roman histories for me, and helped to clear up the book list in general.


44 MacDonald, *Library*; all further references are to item numbers in this catalogue.
The ‘Retorica Talei’ circulated more widely in Scotland, as multiple copies were sold in the bookshops of Thomas Bassandyne and Andrew Gourlaw in Edinburgh. This work was Omer Talon’s (or Audomarus Talaeus) influential work of Ramist rhetoric. Another entry, difficult to read, possibly ‘Cleonard grammaica [?] gre[ca]’, might be in reference to the popular Greek grammar by Nicolas Clemenardus. Finally, in terms of Latin books it also transpires that Murray was interested in Roman history: ‘Justinus Pompeius trogus’ must refer to Justin’s abridged version of Pompeius Trogus’ lost Historiae Philippicae, a popular work in the Middle Ages; another entry, ‘Quintus curtius’ is probably in reference to the ten-book history of Alexander the Great written by Quintus Curtius Rufus (Drummond owned both; see 606, 467).

Only two books feature in the French section, one ‘Esopi fabula gallica’, and the other ‘Institutiones Galliciorum’. Of the latter, Bawcutt suggests this is Calvin’s Institutions de la religion chrétiennne (a book that was also sold by Bassandyne, and owned by Drummond, 994). Among Murray’s ‘vulgar’, or vernacular, books appear for instance a Virgil (probably the Aeneid), and a ‘Morall philosophy’, probably William Baldwin’s Treatise of Morall Philosophy, a work clearly popular in Scotland, since Bannatyne copied selections from it into his manuscript. ‘Dorastus and Faunia’ refers to Pandosto: The Triumph of Time, the wildly popular romance by Robert Greene that inspired Shakespeare’s Winter’s Tale. Some unspecified titles follow, such as a ‘Cronicle off Britaine’ (perhaps Holinshded), and several books of practical use, such as a ‘Phisiognomie’, and a ‘hors’ and a ‘halk buik’. The only item of certain Scottish provenance is Montgomerie’s ‘Cherrie & Slea’, printed twice in 1597. An important book in the wider context of the miscellaneous poems in MS Kk.5.30 is ‘Ovidis Epistles’, probably George Turbervile’s translation of 1567. Since Murray collects two sonnets that draw from Ovid’s myth of Acontius and Cydippe (see below), ownership of this book is relevant.

Several of the ‘lent buikis’ that can be identified, or indeed deciphered, are ‘Cleonard Homer’ (exactly what this refers to is unclear), two works related to Plato (‘hesiodus Plato’ and ‘Plinies Plato’), and a work by Valerius Maximus. A book entitled ‘the mirror of knyght[ede]’ was probably Margaret Tyler’s translation of Ortúñez’s Espejo de principes y cavalleros, a Spanish romance printed in English as The Mirror of Princely Deedes and Knighthood in 1578 (Drummond had certainly read these). This title, together with Greene’s mentioned above, underlines Murray’s interest in romance, which is further explored below. Wider Scottish interest

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46 As evident from the testaments and inventories at the time of death of these booksellers. See Bannatyne Miscellany, II, 191-204 for Bassandyne’s testament, dated 1579, and II, 209-17, for Gourlaw’s, dated 1586.
49 MacDonald, Library, p. 228, under ‘Bookes red be me anno 1606’.
in *The Mirrour* is again attested by the inventory of Robert Gourlaw, who sold the first two parts. Like Ovid’s Epistles above, another entry is of direct relevance to the poems in MS Kk.5.30: ‘Alexander & Darius’. This may be William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, whose *Darius* (the first of the *Monarchick Tragedies*) was printed in 1603, and written in Scotland. ‘Alexander’ may be in reference either to the poet’s name, or to *The Alexandrean Tragedy*, another of the *Tragedies* (along with *Darius*, *Croesus*, and *Julius Caesar*) that was first printed in 1607. Since Murray also copied ‘First in the orient Rang the Assiriene Kings’ (f. 78v), a sonnet assigned to Drummond and supposedly composed in commendation of Alexander’s plays, this is an important title (see further below). The direct evidence of Murray’s involvement in a circulating library suggests that poetry in manuscript might have travelled along similar channels. Murray’s *Troy Book* manuscript, unfortunately, is not named in the catalogue, unless it falls under ‘[…] vreit buikis collectit from dyvers Subjetts in Latin & English’.

From this list, a picture can be constructed of James Murray of Tibbermuir’s reading, his book ownership, and the manner in which he may have obtained the copy texts from which he compiled MS Kk.5.30. For a relatively unknown landed gentleman from Perthshire, this library is strikingly varied and learned. Although ownership alone is not enough to prove Murray had also read his books, nevertheless, based on his catalogue, it may be posited that Murray could read Latin, and perhaps even had a smattering of Greek. His taste in books is varied, ranging from staple items such as bibles and other works of devotion, to histories, romances, poetry, and drama. As will be argued further below, this library also underscores the eclectic nature of the miscellaneous poems in MS Kk.5.30.

**History, Romance, and Song, ff. 1r, 11r-v**

If Murray’s ownership of the *Troy Book* manuscript suggests an interest in medieval texts, then this is confirmed by two eclectic entries in his miscellany that draw attention away from the contemporary literary scene. The very first poetic fragment in section two of the manuscript in its current layout is the following:

> The mirrie Day sprang frome the Orient
> with bright beames illuminat the Occident
> efter Titan, Phebus upryseith faire;
> hich in the sphare, as signes mey declaire.
> Zepherus, begane his michtie morow course,
> the sueitt wapors from the ground did rescourse.
> the dunk deu, doune frome the hevin did waill
> On ewrie meid, both firth, forrest & deall.
> the fresh rever, *doune throu the roches rang,*  
> *amongst [in left margin]*
> throught brenches greene, quhair birds blythlie sang
> with joyous voice, in Hevinlie hermonie
> Then Vallace, thought, it ves no tyme to ly. (f. 1r)
These lines were identified by Bradshaw as coming from Hary’s *Wallace* (the beginning of Book 8, Chapter 5, ll. 1183-94). A printed version of this famous poem would have been readily available to Murray. Fragments remain of a very early print, presumably from the press of Scotland’s first printers Chepman and Myllar around 1508/9, but later editions were plentiful. It was printed by Robert Lekprevik in 1570, by Henrie Charteris in 1594 and 1601, and by Andro Hart in 1611 (and many subsequent editions). A comparison of the fragment above with the prints of 1570, 1594, and 1611 respectively reveals that Murray’s version differs only slightly – in orthography, and in word order. ‘Beames bright’ in all three prints reads ‘bright beames’ in Murray, and ‘greine branches’ in Murray reads ‘brenches greene’ (there are more examples of changed word order). The corrected ‘amongst’ for ‘doune’ agrees with all three prints. The chosen lines of the *Wallace* are very non-specific: if not for the mentioning of ‘Vallace’ this formulaic opening might suggest any conventional set piece, and the lines could well have been handed down in a separate manuscript tradition where the context of Hary’s *Wallace* was soon forgotten. However, given the huge popularity of Hary’s poem, Murray could have encountered it easily in its original context. Moreover, the presence of the *Wallace* fragment suggests that he was interested in a wider tradition of medieval Scots verse, and, more generally, that of historical romance. Rhiannon Purdie notes how ‘the five-stress couplet [for instance of the *Wallace*, but used also in Lydgate’s *Troy Book*] was [...] associated with courtly, sophisticated literature’; in addition, she argues for an autonomous Scottish tradition of verse romances that remained popular long after their decline in England. The Wallace fragment in MS Kk.5.30 underlines Purdie’s findings.

Murray collects another fragment of a well-known medieval piece. On ff. 11r-v can be found an incomplete version (some ninety lines), in rhyming couplets, of the legend of ‘Sir Lamuell’. The history of this text is complicated, and, in relation to Murray’s transcription, has recently been unravelled by Bawcutt. The earliest surviving version of the legend is *Lanval, a lai* by Marie de France; in addition, two Middle English versions have survived. The best known of these, *Sir Launfal*, is from the hand of Thomas Chestre; another different and earlier poem based on the *lai* is *Sir Landevale*, which apparently served as a source for Chestre’s poem. It is this *Sir Landevale*, preserved in Bodleian, MS Rawlinson C 86, which eventually gave rise to *Sir Lamwell*. Not many texts of *Sir Lamwell* have survived: only two fragments of early printed books are now available, printed in England by John Mychell in 1548, and John King in 1560. A later,
substantially altered version of the same romance, now titled *Sir Lambewel*, is preserved in Bishop Percy’s Folio Manuscript (BL MS Additional 27897), dating to c. 1650. Bawcutt suggests that ‘it is to this latter tradition [that of *Sir Lambewel*] of the story, widely diffused in time and place, that the fragment in Cambridge University Library belongs’, and she convincingly shows how Murray’s transcription can most fruitfully be compared to Mychell’s fragmentary print (Bodleian, Malone 941).

Murray’s transcription is thus of importance in the transmission of this early romance (MS Kk.5.30 is particularly useful to correct various misreadings in the unique but damaged Mychell print), but of limited value since it breaks off mid-sentence. The page is not mutilated in any way, and for some reason or other, the poem was simply abandoned. Bawcutt suggests that Murray ‘might have intended to write more of the poem. There would have been space to do this, since fourteen folios were left blank’. Perhaps, as she concludes, Murray ‘had an English print of *Sir Lamwell* on short-term loan […] and [it] was recalled too soon.’

More proof of a seventeenth-century interest in the adventures of this Arthurian knight was first explored by Helena Shire and Kenneth Elliott, in their discussion of a piece of music from Robert Edward’s commonplace book, tantalisingly entitled in the manuscript ‘Sir Lamuel’. No words are included in the commonplace book, however, and Elliott experimentally joined the tune to the words of Chestre’s *Sir Launfal*. Shire comments as follows:

One interesting item of music with the title ‘Sir Lamuel’ is in the style of a sixteenth-century dance tune. It is very likely indeed that this entitling indicates that to the dance tune words were sung concerning Sir Lamuel, Sir Launfal of English romance and French *lai*. Indeed the music matches the stanza-form of the version composed by Thomas Chestre during the fourteenth-century, as can be seen by the sample stanza here underlaid. […] His [Robert Edward’s] ‘Sir Lamuel’, then, may indicate a ‘romance’ sung in the sixteenth century to an up-to-date dance tune or a verse narrative meeting a current piece of dance music and remodelled ‘to its tune’ – a process known to have marked the making of many a broad-side ballad. Was there once, sung to a dance-tune, a ‘ballad of Sir Lamuel’ that has not survived? What this suggests is that Murray’s transcription might just have to be regarded from the perspective of a song, or ballad, and that its popularity was more widespread. Whether Murray viewed his *Lamwell* primarily as a medieval poem or contemporary song is difficult to know – both would fit equally well into the manuscript’s eclectic make-up (as Bawcutt observes, it is a shame that Elliott matched Chestre’s words to the tune, and not those of *Sir Lamwell*). Three strands of verse romance – historic, as in the *Wallace*; Classical, as in the *Troy Book*, and Arthurian, as in *Sir

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Lamwell – can be shown to have had a long-lasting influence in Scotland, and a considerable appeal for Murray. Considering these interests, a synthetic approach to MS Kk.5.30 that conjoins the medieval and early modern modes of writing is more than justified, and will be explored further below. That Murray was equally interested in contemporary prose romance printed in England is evident from his book list, as discussed above (particularly his copies of ‘Dorastus and Faunia’, or Pandosto, and The Mirrour of Princely Deedes and Knighthood).

**The Dyers, ff. 5r-7r**

As argued in Chapter One, miscellany manuscripts are an excellent site for research into the relations between Scotland and England, and the manner in which English poetry crossed the border – and vice versa. MS Kk.5.30 forms no exception to this rule, as it contains the only Scottish transcription currently known of a hugely popular lyric by Edward Dyer: ‘He that his mirth hes lost’. The influence of Dyer in Scottish circles has not been sufficiently explored, and in order to account for the presence of this poem and ‘Murrayis Dyare’ that follows it, some contextualising information on the influence of Edward Dyer in Scotland is in order.

First of all, Dyer’s position at the court of Queen Elizabeth reveals striking parallels with that of Scottish courtiers, and Dyer’s verse, if not the poet himself, certainly travelled northwards across the border. More evidence for this, also from the Tibbermuir manuscript, will be discussed below, as another of Dyer’s poems was reworked as a Scottish sonnet. The English poet’s career coincides exactly with literary explorations at the Scottish court in the early reign of James VI. Only twelve poems can now be ascribed to Dyer with reasonable certainty, and Steven May argues that ‘it is safest to conclude that Dyer wrote nearly all, if not all of his extant poetry between the mid-1570s and 1590’. Certain parallels between the career of Dyer, and that, for instance, of Alexander Montgomerie may be noted. Both poets actively sought to ingratiate themselves with their monarch, and both fell out of favour (although Dyer only temporarily, and Montgomerie permanently after the dispute over his pension). Both poets moved in circles that are now believed to have been loosely organised as a literary ‘brotherhood’. Indeed, Lyall in his study of Montgomerie suggests to view the ‘Castalian band’, rather than akin to the French Pléiade, as similar to ‘the much more shadowy phenomenon of the “Areopagus”, that rather loose literary


58 May, Courtier Poets, p. 288.

circle which seems to have enjoyed a brief existence in London in the summer and autumn of 1579 under the leadership of Sir Philip Sidney and Edward Dyer. Like Montgomerie (and Sidney), Dyer also spent time in the Netherlands, in May 1577, in the first two months of 1584, and again in May 1588.

Most importantly, just after his ambassadorial visit to Scotland had been suspended, Dyer was sent to Denmark in November 1589 for an unspecified mission, where he resided until February 1590. His stay in Denmark coincided with James VI’s visit to retrieve his bride. When James arrived in Oslo in November 1589, winter weather marooned the royal party. James and Anne travelled around Scandinavia, spending ample time also at the Elsinore court and in Copenhagen. No mention is made of Dyer’s visit in any of the surviving Scottish records of James’s sojourn, and neither is it mentioned in the Danish account of that visit. However, the following is suggested by Ralph Sargent, Dyer’s biographer:

In October James sailed for Denmark to claim his bride. The same month Elizabeth sent Edward Dyer on a mission to the Court of Denmark. It is possible that Dyer was to have a hand in adjusting the Danish tribute on British commerce with Russia; almost certainly, however, Dyer’s chief order required him to keep a watch on the king of Scotland, to discover the relations between his government and that of Denmark. Elizabeth did not quite fancy a Scottish-Danish alliance. It might be the first move in an attempt by James to escape from her orbit. Further, reports had recently come from Denmark to the effect that the Danes would like to negotiate a peace between England and Spain. She wondered what, if anything, was behind the proposal. James spent the winter at the Danish court; so did Dyer.

It is difficult to imagine the two did not meet, especially if Elizabeth’s orders were along the lines sketched by Sargent. And if they did meet it is not unlikely that some sort of poetic exchange took place – Dyer and James will have been well aware of their mutual literary interests, and just two or three years previously the king had composed his lament for Sidney. Dyer’s presence in Denmark among the Scottish courtiers suggests a path of enquiry not previously explored. Helena Shire and Steven May have drawn attention to Dyer and his association with the genre or verse form known in Scotland as the ‘dyer’, which was in vogue following the year 1590 in particular. Shire highlights that no ‘dyers’ survive by Montgomerie, whose verse after 1590 was more occasional,

and that the verse-form – in so-called poulters measure, rhyming couplets of alternating iambic hexameters and heptameters – makes no appearance in James’s Reulis and Cautelis. May documents the immense appeal of ‘He that his mirth hes lost’ in England, and comments on King James’s adaptation of the verse form, stating that ‘it is no small tribute to the popularity of Dyer’s poem that it circulated at the Scottish court in the 1590s’. James’s ‘A Dier at her Majesties desyer’ takes on new significance. Rather than a poem requested by Anne similar to one she might have encountered at court in Scotland (as May suggests), the genre might have been introduced by Dyer himself during the Danish wedding festivities, at the same time instigating a Scottish tradition of ‘dyers’.

This is a long preamble to the discussion of only two ‘dyers’ in MS Kk.5.30. Yet, even if no meeting between Edward Dyer and a Scottish courtier, or possibly the Scottish king, took place, then still the influence of the English poet’s works remains a fact. MS Kk.5.30 is the only known Scottish manuscript to contain ‘He that his mirth hes lost’. Murray titles the poem ‘Inglishe Dyare’, and, as both May and Bawcutt suggest, he replied in kind with ‘Murrayis Dyare’. There is no evidence to suppose that James Murray of Tibbermuir wrote the poem, however. Since another ‘dyer’ can now be ascribed to John Murray (see Chapter Four, pp. 174-79), an elusive Jacobean poet of whom very little is known, this Murray is a more likely candidate. Several poets embedded their name as puns within the ‘dyer’, yet in ‘Murrayis Dyare’ there is no (obvious) evidence of this, making it more difficult to establish authorship. As with most other poems in MS Kk.5.30, we can only painstakingly read between the lines, and will have to conjecture the existence of an underlying exemplar of both poems. Preparing his edition of Dyer’s works, May states that ‘the dialect of both [poems] obscures their textual value’, yet this only holds from an English point of view (by ‘dialect’, May means Scots). For the autonomous, if derivative, tradition of the ‘dyer’ in Scotland, they are of prime importance. It is unlikely that ‘He that his mirth hes lost’ was single-handedly adapted by James Murray of Tibbermuir – the general feeling of the manuscript suggests a faithful scribe (though not immune to error) rather than one intrusively introducing his own readings into his poems. The many small variants between the Scots-flavoured and English versions could have been gradually introduced by a wider system of circulation. Murray’s ‘Inglishe Dyare’ is textually very close to Dyer’s original as it circulated in manuscript, but shows the scotticisation of many words and phrases. Perhaps his source was a courtly manuscript of the 1590s directly associated with those Scottish poets breathing new life into the verse form (see further

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64 Shire, *Song, Dance and Poetry*, p. 221.
65 May, *Courtier Poets*, pp. 65-67. Shire comments as follows: ‘I submit that the kind of lament whether funereal or amorous, that was associated with Dyer at just this time may have come to be known as a ‘Dyer’ or ‘dier’ – to yield, in Scotland at least, a name for a genre of lament where the poet declares he is near death for love. Certain it is that a kind and measure long known in England and used as late as 1581 in the Devises (a volume that Montgomerie knew) was in fashion in royal circles in Scotland in the early 1590s’, *Song, Dance, and Poetry*, p. 223.
66 *Poems of James VI*, II, 74-78.
Chapter Four, pp. 174-79). Since MS Kk.5.30 preserves the only surviving Scottish text of ‘He that his mirth hes lost’, it is difficult to be certain.

‘Murrayis Dyare’, then, adapts a popular genre. In the English model, Dyer writes that

```plaintext
tho I seeme to wse the feinyeit poet styll
In figureing furth my dullfull plaint my faitt & my exyll
Yit fenye I not my greives quhairin I sterve and pyne. (f. 5v)
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James VI himself comments on the ‘dyer’s’ elated metaphors, hyperbolic imagery, and feigning near-deaths, in a sonnet appended to his ‘A Dier at her Majesties desyer’: ‘My Muse hath made a willfull lye I grante / I sung of sorrows neuer felt by me’. Yet, the king excuses ‘the luckless lott’ who are less fortunate in love, and encourages them that their ‘plaints I thinke should pierce the starrie skies / And deaue the Gods with shrill and cairfull cries’. Thus, from the moment of arrival the ‘dyer’ is recognised to be a highly rhetorical exercise, but attractive for that very reason. In this light, ‘Murrayis Dyare’ is a very successful adaptation. It is a complaint spoken at night firstly against the ‘Cypriane dame’ Venus and her ‘crewell Chyld’ Cupid, couched in cosmological imagery. Dyer’s reference to ‘the toune that subteill Sinon sauld’ is expanded in Murray to underline that the havoc wreaked by Venus is wholly undeserved: ‘No grievous traittour I quho meid that fatall hors / For to betrey the toune quhilk thai culd never take by force’. The expanded, iconic Trojan image here would have resonated strongly with the Troy Book. In ‘Murrayis Dyare’, the speaker’s most pertinent question is ‘why me?’:

```plaintext
how oft heve I proclaimed thy praise in verse & prai se
how oft heve I thi benner borne against all foraine fois
Quhat moves the then puire me to martyr on this vayis
And quhill I vald heve send the rest my toung to spek denyis. (f. 6r)
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After a mirage of fleeting thoughts – ‘Quhyles think I that quhyles this quhyles nether this nor that / Quhat vatt I quhat I think and quhyles I think I vatt not quhat’ (f. 6r) – the poem and the speaker’s disjointed thoughts finally ‘returne into ther wountit subjett love’. The complaint against Venus spirals out of control when the speaker starts ‘To challenge hevin to quarrell erth to raill on gods and man’, but he reigns himself in (the imagery here is that of a horse restrained) and soon after realises that ‘I did perceve such plents for to repeatt / Culd nether chenge my bad desinks nor better my esteat’. After retracting his previous accusations, the poem changes direction again: ‘Prepair vith patience then thy self for to receve / Such indiscreit discourtessie thy Creweltie doth creve’. His anger still outwardly directed, it is now aimed at his mistress. Yet, the attack is once again deflected, and the poem ends as follows:

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Eternall scilence sall schouett wp my secreit sichts & songs
and yit to be thy dog salbe my Cheiff delytt
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68 Poems of James VI, II, 78.
Figurative associations of the spaniel dog as a submissive creature go back at least to the sixteenth century, and it is used to good effect here.\textsuperscript{69} Ending on a thoroughly conventional note, wishing his mistress would dispense grace, the poem nevertheless manages to strike a note of originality. Notwithstanding cosmological complaint, confusedly wandering thoughts, and diatribes against Venus, Cupid, Heaven, earth, gods, men, and his beloved, the speaker ultimately wishes to be her lapdog. For an audience well aware of the genre’s required hyperbolic mode (as indicated by James’s evaluation in the sonnet), this instance of comic bathos must have found an appreciative ear. The Scottish poet responsible for this poem (John Murray?) freely borrows from Dyer’s ‘He that his mirth hes lost’, but, fully aware of its implicit ironies, also transforms the genre by adding a touch of the ludicrous: ‘Cum clak thy finger on thy thoumbe and cry ist ist pure best’.

While heavily rhetorical, harking back to Petrarchist imagery and written in what many critics consider an unfortunate metre, the ‘dyer’ and its popularity among Scottish poets is nevertheless of great interest. In the context of MS Kk.5.30, the poem’s inclusion is significant for another reason. ‘Murrayis Dyare’ is the first of several ‘Murray-related’ poems, items that have been included perhaps because they were of personal relevance to Murray of Tibbermuir, because they were composed by kinsmen, or because Murray derived his copy texts from family and friends who prized the family connections in the works they collected. As will be further explored below, ‘Murrayis Dyare’ draws attention to a close-knit network where authorship and subject matter are of direct relevance for the compiler. Discussion of the Scottish ‘dyer’ will be continued in the next chapter, since three other ‘dyers’ also occur in Margaret Robertson’s manuscript (NLS MS 15937).

\textsuperscript{69} See \textit{OED}, under ‘spaniel’. The conceit of the lover as a dog is widespread, and has also been exploited, for instance, by Sidney, Montgomerie, and Craig. See: \textit{The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney}, ed. by William A. Ringler (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 194; \textit{Amorose Songes}, p. 97, in \textit{The Poetical Works of Alexander Craig of Rose-Craig}, ed. by David Laing (Glasgow: Hunterian Club, 1873); \textit{Montgomerie: Poems}, I, 123.
Three Sonnets, ff. 71v-72r

The ‘dyers’ are followed by Murray’s Troy Book supply (on ff. 26r-71r). Directly following this, starting on the verso side of the same page featuring the conclusion to Lydgate’s Book 5, is a group of three sonnets, ‘Quhen feirce Achilles att the sege off Troye’, ‘Sen so itt is that quho so ever tuik lyffe’, and ‘Leve me o love quhilch rechis bot to dust’ (ff. 71v-72r). The first poem is by Alexander Craig of Rosecraig (an identification not previously noted), the second by James Melville, and the third by Philip Sidney. ‘Quhen feirce Achilles’, with its Trojan subject matter, stands out in light of the context in which it appears – it seems no coincidence that it immediately follows Lydgate’s Troy Book. Although all three poems were printed in English or anglicised form (in 1606, 1597 and 1598 respectively), Murray’s Scots orthography evens out the linguistic differences and so unifies this group.

The sequence is an excellent example of how creative scribal activity may give new meaning to works that originally appeared in entirely different contexts. Consider, firstly, Alexander Craig’s sonnet:

Quhen feirce Achilles att the sege off Troye,
Be fatall slicht, was so decreit and slaine,
Ane suddaine stryffe arreaste quha suld injoyes,
The Armour off that umquhill Græciane
Ajax ellegd the Ermes he suld obteene.
And be the suord to winn and wear them wouitt
Wlisses said thai suld be his againe
And he them wann griff Storeis mey be trouitt
Bot Lo the ermes var loist by seas ve read
And dreven be stormes far fra Vlisses sicht
Quha dreu till Ajax graiff quhair he ley dead
To signifie that he hed grettest right
So quhen this Tombe sall end thir tears off myne
Than sall thou greitt & say thou suld beene myne.

This was also printed in Craig’s Amorose Songes, Sonets & Elegies of 1606, a collection of interlaced poems addressed to eight ladies, all of whom represent a particular aspect of the female character. ‘Quhen feirce Achilles’ is written ‘To Penelope’. Recent scholarship has not been kind to the poet. Craig’s ostentatious classical learning is taken to extremes, weighing down the

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\[70\] Amorose Songes, p. 79, in Works of Craig.

\[71\] See for instance Morna Fleming, ‘“The End of an Auld Sang?” Scottish Poetry of the English Reign of James VI and I’, in Older Scots Literature, ed. by Sally Mapstone (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2005), pp. 560-73. Fleming argues that ‘[a]ll [Craig’s] parallels come from classical writings, and those are not the conventional Homeric and Virgilian parallels, but the most arcane comparisons, which give rise to a rather Baroque development’ (p. 562). Fleming is not entirely dismissive of Craig, however: his Amorose Songes are still ‘an astonishing sequence’. Michael Spiller characterises the poet as follows: ‘Not a faulty ear, but a stuffed head was the handicap of Alexander Craig of Rosscraig (c. 1567-1627), who was one of that older generation for whom recondivite classical allusion was “the golden fringe of eloquence”’, see ‘Poetry after the Union 1603-1660’, in The History of Scottish Literature Volume I: Origins to 1660, ed. by R.D.S. Jack (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), pp. 141-62 (p. 147). See also: R.D.S. Jack, ‘The Poetry of Alexander Craig: A Study in Imitation and Originality’, Forum for
sonnets with highly diffuse imagery, often (to the modern reader) to the point of obscurity. For this reason, Craig’s poems have never been commented on in much detail, and the only edition in existence is that edited by David Laing in 1873, which features a short introduction, but no critical apparatus. Craig’s status is mainly that of a ‘Scoto-Britane’, as he styled himself: a Scot who followed James to London, and actively expunged all Scotticisms from his printed works. It is significant, then, to find a sonnet by Craig that retains clear readings in Scots. When compared to the print, the Tibbermuir sonnet shows small variations, but also the two following substantial substitutions: ‘The Armour off that umquhill Græcian’ in print reads ‘The Armes of that praise-worthie Grecian’; and ‘Than sall thou greitt & say’ reads ‘there shalt thou sigh & say’. Thus, both ‘umquhill’ and ‘sall greitt’ have been radically ‘englished’, for the benefit of a southern reading public. Also, the Scots past participles of ‘wouitt’ and ‘trouitt’ in the print read ‘vow’d’ and ‘trow’d’. Though published in 1606, it is entirely possible the sonnet was written earlier, and that a manuscript tradition of the poem retained Craig’s original Scots.

Since this sonnet has never received any comment, it is worth considering it in more detail, also since, despite Craig’s reputation as a wordy poet, it is effectively written. The episode referred to, the death of Achilles, is recounted in the Troy Book, and thus for Murray the sonnet may have had extra significance (even though the subsequent quarrelling of Ajax and Ulysses over the dead hero’s armour is not narrated there). Craig employed the image of Achilles’ arms elsewhere too. In another sonnet to ‘Penelope’, again in Trojan spirit, he writes that

When stately Troy by subtill Sinons guile,
   And Grecian force was brought to last decay,
   Ulisses braue with faire and facund stile,
   Achilles Arm’s obtaind, and went away.

Craig, like Drummond, was rather a magpie, and frequently plundered both his own work, and that of others. The poet might well have found this conceit in his reading of the Classics, but another source seems equally likely. In Andrea Alciato’s hugely popular Book of Emblems (Emblematum liber, published first in 1531 but gone through 152 editions by 1621), the following emblem poem appears, accompanied by an image of Ajax’ tomb, and a shield floating on the sea beside it:

72 The topic of anglicisation in seventeenth century Scottish writing is complicated. That this language shift (set in motion much earlier in the previous century) was wholly pragmatic, and not nationalistic, is discussed for instance by R.D.S. Jack in relation to Robert Ayton, a poet who is in a position comparable to that of Craig, see The Mercat Anthology of Early Scottish Literature: 1375-1707, ed. by R.D.S. Jack and P.A.T. Rozendaal (Edinburgh: Mercat Press 1997), pp. xiv-xv.
73 Amorose Songes, p. 79, in Works of Craig.
74 For the relevant passage, see Book Four, II. 3098-3268, ‘How Achilles was slayne by Paris in the Temple of Apollo’, Troy Book, II-III, 655-60.
75 Amorose Songes, p. 72, in Works of Craig. Note also the echoing of the phrase ‘subtill Sinon’, which also occurs in Dyer’s ‘He that his mirth hes lost’.
Aeacidae Hectoreo perfusum sanguine scutum,
Quod Graecorum Ithaco concio iniqua dedit,
Iustior arripuit Neptunus in aequora iactum
Naufragio, ut dominum posset adire suum:
Littoreo Aiaci tumulo namque intulit unda,
Quae boat, et tali voce sepulchra ferit.
Vicisti Telamoniade, tu dignior armis.
Affectus fas est cedere iustitiae.

[The shield of Aeacus’ descendant, stained with Hector’s blood, the unjust assembly of the Greeks awarded to the Ithacan. Neptune, showing more respect for equity, seized upon it when it was cast into the sea in the shipwreck, so that it could go to its proper master. For the wave carried it to Ajax’ tomb upon the shore, the wave which booms and smites the sepulchre with these words: ‘Son of Telamon, you have conquered. You are more worthy of these arms’. It is right for partiality to yield to justice.] 76

Craig obliquely, or playfully, references a source – ‘giff Storeis mey be trouitt’ – in a manner that brings to mind that most untrustworthy narrator relating another Trojan myth, in Henryson’s The Testament of Cresseid. 77 In Craig’s sonnet, the elaborate Trojan plotline leads up to the resolution in the final couplet: as Achilles’ armour is finally delivered to Ajax, who deserved it most, so shall the beloved recognise that his/her place is with the speaker. Its underlying theme is close, then, to that of Alciato’s, indicated by his title to the emblem poem: ‘Tandem, tandem, iustitia obtinet’ (‘At last, at last, justice prevails’). The spurned lover will find recognition only through death. The theme of amatory justice is a commonplace in sonneteering, and if Alciato is indeed the source then the emblem is successfully transformed, the sonnet spinning twelve lines of Trojan narrative and concluding in a terse couplet. Though there is no space here further to discuss the impact of emblem books in Scotland, 78 it needs to be stressed that, as with the ‘Consider man’ poem from the Laing manuscript, ‘Quhen feirce Achilles’ underlines the significance of pictorial sources.

The second sonnet in the sequence, ‘Sen so it is’, is by James Melville, and was printed in 1597 in his Ane Fruitivyll and Comfortable Exhortatioun anent Death. Minister and diarist Melville was a poet also, and the Exhortatioun concludes with this sonnet, entitled there ‘A Sonnet Sounding a warning to die well’. 79 The text in MS Kk.5.30 runs as follows:

Sen so itt is that quho so ever tuik lyffe
Man be the Death unto the same portend
To pass his lyff out throu this vaill off stryffe
In halines with Cristianes contend

Leive still in awe thi God for to offend
Cleive to thy Cryst with faith onfenyeitly
Repent thy sones thy vickit lyff amend
And daylie think on Deth for thou man die
Cast not thy caires on Vordlie Vanitie
Quhois plesors ar with paines so deirlie boght,
Bot prest to pley thy pert, with honestie
And use the worild, even as thou usd itt noght
    Latt ay this sentence in thy saull remaine,
    Leive heir to Die, & Die to Leive againe.

It is worth considering whether Murray’s copy is likely to derive from the 1597 print, or from another source. The orthography is decidedly more Scots than Waldegrave’s anglicised print. Thus, for ‘vnfainedly’ in print, MS Kk.5.30 reads ‘onfenyeitly’; ‘wicked’ reads ‘vickit’, and ‘Whose’ reads ‘Quhois’. Besides these small and semantically inconsequential idiosyncrasies, Murray’s text shows two significant variations: for Waldegrave’s ‘Set not thy heart on worldlie vanitie’, he transcribed ‘Cast not thy caires on Vordlie Vanitie’, and for the first line of the couplet, ‘Let ay this precept be thy Preacher plaine’, Murray has ‘Latt ay this sentence in thy saull remaine’. These variations are too significant to be assigned to scribal errors, so Murray will have had another exemplar, possibly in manuscript. The first variation, ‘cast not thy caires’, is arguably the stronger reading, reinforcing its message by alliteration. The second reflects a difference in theological politics: ‘Latt ay this sentence in thy saull remaine’ suggests that readers should internalise the sonnet’s message to live and die according to their faith, whereas the ‘precept’ as ‘Preacher plaine’ reflects Melville’s vocational calling.\(^{80}\) It is possible that the sonnet was adapted by the scribe himself: a further example of the softening of stringent Protestantism, in Hume’s ‘Of the Day Estivall’, is discussed below.

Following Melville’s poem is Philip Sidney’s ‘Leve me o love quhilk rechis bot to dust’, the last of his Certain Sonnets. Ringler suggests that Sidney composed this sonnet before 1581, but his work circulated widely in manuscript and print, and was readily available to a large readership, especially after his death.\(^{81}\) Ringler states also that ‘Sidney’s original wording of the Certain Sonnets has been exceptionally well preserved’, and Murray’s version, too, is very close to Ringler’s copy text (the 1598 edition of Sidney’s works).\(^{82}\) Except for Murray’s scotticising spelling, not a single word varies from the print. Sidney’s sonnet is the conclusion to a series of doomed amorous pursuits, and therefore his speaker aims for his mind to ‘aspyre to heicher things’. In the context of MS Kk.5.30’s mini-sequence, the sonnet is a natural progression from Melville’s, which advocates to ‘Leive here to Die, & Die to live again’. Melville’s pun to live, or leave, to die, is followed by Sidney’s picture of an afterlife – one of light, where the speaker wishes for ‘Eternall

\(^{80}\) Lyall briefly discusses Melville’s sonnet as it appears in print, in relation to its ‘fixed view, implicitly underpinned by the doctrine of election’, *Montgomerie*, pp. 296-98.


\(^{82}\) *Poems of Sidney*, p. 425.
Love’ to ‘menteen thy Lyff in me’. Importantly, however, Sidney also meditates on happiness on earth, and a meaningful existence before ‘birth draus outt to Deth’. Sidney affirms life, but only when the speaker ‘Grou[s] rich in that quhilk never takith roust / Quhat ever feads butt feading plesour brings’. Thus, Melville’s vision of death as the meaning of life is also challenged, as heavenly ‘licht’ provides comfort on earth.

Three sonnets from disparate sources thus make up this mini-sequence, and, severed from their original context, they gain new meaning. There is little question that ‘Quhen feirce Achilles’ is an amorous sonnet, but it is succeeded by two others on the same page, in the same hand, that clearly shift the focus to divine love, and the transitory and inherently sinful life on earth as contrasted to everlasting life in heaven. Importantly for the context of the manuscript, in this sequence may be witnessed the transition from a pagan, classical narrative (as mediated also through the medieval Troy Book), to early modern Protestant sentiments. A yearning for material possessions (Achilles’ armour), and what this yearning comes to signify (human love) are transferred to a passion for God’s ‘licht’ both on earth and in the afterlife. This sequence signifies, in miniature, how important it is to consider Murray’s MS Kk.5.30 in its complex totality. The scribe took into his stride the classical motifs related to the Trojan War and related those to the concerns of very contemporary poetry. This illustrates, once again, how absolute period markers, such as ‘medievalism’, or ‘early modernism’ are very unhelpful, since already in the hands of an intelligent early seventeenth-century compiler they can comfortably be accommodated and effortlessly developed in a three-sonnet sequence.

One final connection transpires when we consider that ‘Penelope’, the lady to whom Craig addresses in ‘Quhen feirce Achilles’ and ‘When stately Troy’ (among other poems), was in fact Penelope Devereux, Lady Rich, object of affection for Sidney, and famous subject of his Astrophel and Stella. There is little question over this matter, since in ‘I serue a Mistri s infinitely faire’, Craig openly puns on her name: ‘If curious heades to know her name do craue / Shee is a Lady Rich, it needes no more’, and ‘Rich, wise, and faire, to thee alone as thrall / I consecrate loue, life, lines, thoughts, and all’. Whether Murray of Tibbermuir would have made this connection, and for that reason included a Sidney sonnet, is impossible to know. Yet, in 1612 both Sidney and Lady Rich were dead, and their story may well have been known to Murray.

The poetic corpus of Alexander Craig as it has survived is very much print-based, and the circles in which he operated are evident mostly from the poems addressed to him, and those that he addressed to others: Robert Ayton, William Barclay, Alexander Gardyne (author of The Theater of Scottish Kings), Patrick Gordon (author of two unfinished romances), and a great many others. Though based in London from 1603, Craig, after obtaining his pension, retired to his estate in

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83 As confirmed by Laing in the introduction, Works of Craig, p. 8. See also Roberts, ‘Craig’s sonnets’, p. 121-23.
84 Amorose Songes, p. 38, in Works of Craig.
Scotland (c. 1607-10). Significantly, his final two books, both confusingly entitled *The Poeticall Recreations*, were published in 1609 and 1623 in Edinburgh and Aberdeen respectively, and not in London. Another two poems by Craig, embedded in a twenty-five sonnet series in NLS MS 15937 alongside works by Montgomerie and Ayton, will be discussed in the next chapter, and support the notion that Craig was more widely anthologised and read in Scotland than was previously known. Craig wrote his earliest poems in Scotland, and only subsequently reworked them for post-1603 printing. MS Kk.5.30 reveals important clues as to what a Craig sonnet might have looked like before it arrived in the printing shop.

**Three Songs, ff. 75r-v, 81v, 82v**

Murray also collects the lyrics to four songs. Two are well known: ‘Begone sueit Night & I sall call the kynd’ (ff. 75r-v), and Thomas Campion’s ‘Quhat giff a day or a nycht or a yeir’ (f. 82v). A third song, ‘Quhen I vay [?] in my mynd the lyff of all sorts’ (f. 81v) is unique to the manuscript. In addition, Montgomerie’s ‘Lyke as the Dum, solsequium’ (f. 81r) was a song. Montgomerie’s famous lyric is carelessly transcribed here, but the shape of the stanzas on the page in the manuscript bring to mind a set of lyrics underlaid to music, rather than a careful representation of the words as a poem (as in the Ker manuscript) that highlights the intricate pattern of internal rhymes. ‘Quhen I vay [?]’ is difficult to decipher, and unfinished. In short, this song with its attractive refrain ‘And he pleyis wpon ane bagpype wpon a grene hillo’, celebrates the life of a shepherd in all its glories. The song’s strong emphasis on music and dancing suggests that this might have been sung to a dance tune.

‘Begone sueit Night & I sall call the kynd’ (ff. 75r-v) belongs to the tradition of Scottish music.86 Printed by John Forbes in *Songs and Fancies* in 1662 (reprinted twice after; the collection was probably compiled by Thomas Davidson), it also features in Robert Gordon of Straloch’s Lute Book (NLS MS 349) and William Stirling’s cantus part book (also known as John Leyden’s vocal manuscript; NLS Adv. MS 5.2.14). Elliott and Shire print five stanzas of text, and, using the copy text in the Stirling cantus part book, comment that it was ‘probably a good poem poorly transmitted’, and conjecture the structure of an answer poem consisting of two parts. Compared to their copy text, the Tibbermuir song shares the first two stanzas. Stanza three in Tibbermuir features as the closing stanza in Stirling’s part book and in *Songs and Fancies*, whereas stanzas three and four as found in the later sources are omitted from Tibbermuir altogether. In addition, MS Kk.5.30 retains a unique closing stanza that, in contrast to the later version in *Songs and Fancies*, which ends on a note of hope, concludes the song in a rather downbeat fashion:

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The nicht is gon yit absent is my Love
Day doith aryse secure yit sleips my deir
O then hou myndful is sho quhom I proue
Quhill Phebus shynes yit dois sho nocht appeir
Alace,
That absence suld devoirce me from so sueit so fair a face
O then approche deir nimfe by quhom I breithe
Giff me to leive bot to recoird my Deithe.

Given the poor transmission of the song, this new stanza, and Tibbermuir’s transcription more generally, will be of interest in the transmission history of the lyric.

Campion’s ‘Quhat giff a day or a nycht or a yeir’ (f. 82v) concludes the manuscript in its current layout. Fellowes comments that ‘this poem and tune with which it was associated together formed one of the most popular songs of the late 16th and 17th centuries’; its popularity is attested also by Swaen and Greer, who trace the words and music through a bewildering number of sources.87 The song’s earliest occurrences are, in fact, in Scotland. Swaen locates the song in BL MS Add. 33.933 (containing the Scottish Metrical Psalter) and it is famously sung at the end of the play Philotus.88 ‘Quhat giff a day’ is an excellent example of the malleability of the early modern lyric. The song was frequently adapted, and many versions include further stanzas to the original two. According to Swaen, MS Kk.5.30 is the earliest surviving source that adds a third stanza.89 It runs as follows:

Quhat hes thou then sillie man for to boist
bot of a short and a sorroufull lyff perplexit
Quhen haipe and hoip & thy saiftie is moist
Then vo & vraik disparies and deth is annexit
Blossums bubles as is erth doth thy steat resemble
Fear off seiknes danger death maketh the to trimble
Evrie thing that do spring shoone ryp is shoone rottin.

Although unique, the stanza echoes phrases from another broadside version of this poem, now in the ballad-collection of Samuel Pepys. That much-expanded version also features the ‘sillie man’:
‘Tell me then, silly Man, / Why art thou so weake of wit’. Murray’s closing lines are paralleled by lines in Pepys:

Fayrest blossoms soonest fade,
Withered, foule, and rotten,
And through griefe, our greatest ioyes
Quickly are forgotten’ 90

The blossom refers back to stanza one, but the rhyme-words ‘rotten’ and ‘forgotten’ suggest that the two might have had a common source.

We might never locate such a common source. In any case, and perhaps more importantly, the early Scottish witnesses referred to above indicate how quickly Campion’s song must have travelled across the border, and how eagerly it was incorporated into the Scots tradition. Murray’s inclusion of Campion’s song bears further witness to Anglo-Scottish literary relations, and its presence in the manuscript chimes well with other poems, for instance by Dyer or Sidney. It is striking how many of Murray’s selections are clearly popular works – it seems that the manuscript works well as a reliable indicator for the popularity of particular songs and poems in early seventeenth-century Scotland.

Two Sonnets, ff. 75v-76r

David Parkinson notes the significance of MS Kk.5.30 in terms of its courtly connections, and its personal nature:

Here [...] there is evidence of familiar interplay and exchange; even more than in [EUL MS Laing III.447] this evidence points to the accumulation of a body of verse befitting the occasions of such interplay. Here, authorship is not meaningfully related to situation. In such a manuscript, these poems are ‘about’ their readers’, or better, their sharers’ situations; and the signature of Julian Ker hints at a direct connection between [MS Kk.5.30] and miscellanies circulated at the court of James VI.91

For Parkinson, a strong indication of MS Kk.5.30’s supposed proximity to these courtly miscellanies is the presence in this manuscript of Montgomerie’s ‘Heich Architecters wounderous wouttit rounds’, and ‘Displesour with his deadlie dairt’, both of which are otherwise known only from the Ker manuscript.

For Sally Mapstone, too, Tibbermuir is a fine example of a manuscript signalling familial interest and connections that reach far beyond the confines of the text itself, suggesting intimate links between the poems and their collectors. ‘Murrayis Dyare’ has already been commented on above, and Montgomerie’s ‘Displesour, with his deadlie dairt’ signals similar connections:

Cambridge University Library MS Kk. v. 30, a MS anthology owned and partly written c. 1612 by Sir James Murray of Tibbermuir, contains copies of three poems by Montgomerie, one of which, ‘Displesur, with his deadly dart’ is doubtless included (fol. 82r) because of the tribute it pays in its last lines to ‘Murray myne’ –

91 Parkinson, ‘Montgomerie’, p. 505.
possibly the poet John Murray, some of whose verse survives – to ‘Len me a lyne/To end my epitaph’.92

In her essay, Mapstone uncovers the cultural context in which Alexander Montgomerie and Patrick Hume of Polwarth wrote and performed their ‘flying’ match, and the context also in which those poems circulated among members associated with the court of James, and perhaps beyond. Mapstone reinterprets the *Flyting* by exploring the Tullibardine manuscript version of that poem (Huntington Library MS HM 105), and the connection between its owners, the Murrays of Tullibardine, and Hume of Polwarth himself. If Montgomerie and Polwarth were traditionally presented as contenders for that much-quoted ‘chimney nook’, poetically and literally at each other’s throats, Mapstone concludes that what the Tibbermuir MS offers [see below] is a means of linking Hume and Murray [of Tullibardine] family members with works by Montgomerie in a way which usefully reminds us that the kind of polarisation of opponents that the *Flyting* evokes and has encouraged as a critical reading would not necessarily have been borne out in the responses of its immediate and succeeding audiences, in James’s court, and the nexus of familial alliances connected with its milieu.93

A better knowledge of Hume of Polwarth’s ties at court with various Murrays, but also of Montgomerie’s association with them (by means of a sonnet transcribed in the Tullibardine MS, addressed to King James in the name of Sir William Murray of Tullibardine, which Mapstone proposes may have been composed and ventriloquised by Montgomerie) suggests that relations between the two poets must be reassessed.94

For Mapstone, it is here in MS Kk.5.30’s sonnet associated with Julian Ker (mentioned by Parkinson above) that the spheres of Montgomerie and Polwarth again coincide. The Ker sonnet follows Montgomerie’s ‘Heich Architecters wunderous wouttit rounds’, on f. 76r, and both poems were copied in (Murray’s) bold, italic hand, similar to the group on ff. 71v-72r.

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I am the sevint I was the fyft off tuelve
My brother auld is younger then am I Julian
My father follous Titan throu the skye I: Carre
Bot not so fondlie as the soull that fell
My grandfather Quhois seinyiour vas him self
Quho by als manie fatall wounds did ty
As halff off thois vald father on me cry
Giff thai culd Speik geste quhat I am and tell
To quhilk giff ye this constant thing conjune
quhilk hard and fast hir rakles mestres binds
Quhilk uther vayis vald vaver with the Vinds
According to the Motions of the moone
Thryse happiest & blistest heth he beene
Quha gets & geshis quhat thes lynes can meene.
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92 Mapstone, ‘Invective’, p. 26
94 Lyall also discusses the poem and its circumstances, *Montgomerie*, pp. 75-83.
'Julian I [or ‘J’] Carre’ was the wife of Patrick Hume of Polwarth, Montgomerie’s *Flyting* adversary and author also of *The Promine*. Patrick, of course, was brother to Alexander Hume, well known for his *Hymnes or Sacred Songs*, and his ‘Of the Day Estivall’ (see below). Julian Ker has received some passing comment. Pamela Giles considers her an unlikely candidate as author of the sonnet and suggests hesitantly that the work may be Patrick Hume’s. Yet, Mapstone points out that Ker ‘herself put pen to paper. She may have been a poet; she was certainly a letter-writer’.95

To accept the sonnet’s challenge and ‘gets & geshis quhat thes lynes can meene’ is not straightforward. If Julian Ker is the answer, then still this riddle sonnet is a difficult one to solve. There is some ambiguity as to the first line, reading either ‘fyrst’ or ‘fyft’. Mapstone and Jamie Reid Baxter conclude that “‘fyft’ (rather than ‘fyrst’) is likely to be correct if a pun on “Julian” is intended’; the month of July was the fifth month of the year, but the seventh with the introduction of the Gregorian calendar in 1582.96 However, if it reads ‘fyrst’ then the riddle can still be solved: ‘I am the sevint’ – (JULy) and ‘I was the fyrst of tuelve’, (IANuary), adding up again to Julian. Moreover, the calendar that was replaced was the Julian calendar, which adds to this opaque word play. Based on these calendrical word games, Mapstone suggests that 1582 might be considered a *terminus a quo* for the sonnet. Matters are complicated, however, by the fact that although the Gregorian calendar was introduced in 1582, Scotland introduced January as the first month of the year in 1599/1600, when 31 December 1599 was followed by 1 January 1600.97 Though the sonnet may still belong to the early 1580s, there is also an argument to be made for the turn of the century, which pushes the uncertain *terminus a quo* forward by nearly two decades.

In the sonnet, line 3 implies a reference to Phaeton (or indeed to Helios, Apollo, or Phoebus) driving the sun-chariot, but who ‘my father’ is remains unclear (Mapstone adds that the chariot might contain an implied pun on ‘Carre’). Phaeton’s fall is alluded to in line 4, but ‘the soul that fell’ is also Icarus, punning again on ‘I Carre’. The other allusions are cryptic to the point that they might only have been intelligible to Ker herself and her direct acquaintances. Most imagery connects to the reckoning of time, and the motions of the sun and moon. If the solution to the riddle will elude the modern reader, still Julian Ker’s association with the sonnet is very strong indeed – either as author, or dedicatee.

The sonnet’s connection to Montgomerie’s complex ‘Heich Architeceters wounderous wouttit rounds’ might seem slight. Yet, Montgomerie celebrates the beauty of creation through a

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96 Mapstone, ‘Introduction’, p. 416 note 8, where Mapstone references personal communication with Jamie Reid Baxter.
highly verbose admiration for heaven’s architecture. The passage of time is referred to in line 6, ‘Celestial sings off Moneths making yeires’, and Montgomerie, too, traces the route of the sun, ‘Brigth Titane to the Tropiks that reteirs’. The riddle sonnet’s purpose is to entertain: its meaning lies in its obscure references and its message to the reader is deeply embedded, but it is playful. Montgomerie’s, by comparison, is theological, and carries a serious message. As Parkinson comments, the sonnet coins eight new compounds that ‘befit the greatness of creation’. The two sonnets share a referential framework that unites them, providing a good reason why they might have been grouped together either by James Murray, or by (the scribe of) his exemplar. It is equally likely, however, that the sonnets also survived side by side because of the association between Montgomerie and Hume of Polwarth.

The question that remains partially unanswered by both Mapstone and Parkinson is that regarding James Murray of Tibbermuir’s involvement, and awareness, of the cultural ties outlined above. Parkinson draws attention away from author-focused criticism to a reader-orientated approach, and it must be asked to what extent James Murray of Tibbermuir was a ‘sharer’ in the environment that produced these poems. If indeed Murray copied the two sonnets around 1612, then Montgomerie had been dead for fourteen years. Hume of Polwarth had died in 1609, though Julian Ker outlived him, and remarried; the court of James VI, finally, had migrated south nine years ago. Montgomerie’s sonnet is recorded unattributed, as are his other two poems in the manuscript. This de- and re-contextualisation that occurs in miscellany manuscripts frequently severs the poet’s name from his (or her) poem, though naturally it may be argued that when the scribe is a ‘sharer’ in the author’s concerns, there would be no need to record authorship. Even if connections between Ker, Hume and Montgomerie were irrelevant to Murray, then still the author of his exemplar can reasonably be expected to have grouped the two sonnets together for a specific, perhaps personal, reason. Even if not directly involved, a connection can be made between Murray of Tibbermuir, and his kinsmen the Murrays of Tullibardine, owners of the Flyting manuscript. The latter, first of all, were ‘a bookish bunch’ and are known to have exchanged books with James VI. The catalogue of books included with MS Kk.5.30 underlines Murray’s pride in his collection. His own family connections to the Scrymgeours of Myres and the Melvilles have already been outlined, but it is possible, indeed likely, that his channels of book supply extended further. Jenny Wormald draws attention to associations between the Tibbermuir and Tullibardine families. In 1586/7, a Bond of Friendship, ‘in which the establishing of amity and mutual support was the sole purpose of the agreement’ was made between John Murray of Tullibardine and, among others, John

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98 Montgomerie: Poems, II, 84-85. For a short discussion of this sonnet and its sources, see also Lyall, Montgomerie, pp. 306-9.
Murray of Tibbermuir, James’s father. Even if not directly involved in Parkinson’s ‘sharer’s situations’ then Murray still stood perhaps at only one remove from the cultural nexus described by Mapstone.

**Ten Sonnets, ff. 77r-78v**

A series of ten sonnets on ff. 77r-78v is the largest grouping of poems in MS Kk.5.30’s second section. Five sonnets (1, 2, 3, 7, 10) are in the Scottish interlaced rhyme scheme, while the other five are variations on the following: ABBA ABBA CDDC EE. Some are carelessly transcribed, perhaps in haste, and for this reason, several palaeographical problems remain unsolved. There is a sense here that at times the scribe copied from his source with too little regard for meaning. For instance, in sonnet 4, the phrase ‘brava Concius’ should have read ‘brave Aconcius’. Similarly, in the preceding sonnet, the puzzling ‘vindrauch tappil’ (or perhaps ‘cappil’) should probably have read ‘vin draucht appil’ (pointing forward to the apple ‘finely drafted’ on, in the next poem; see below). Whereas some sonnets are clearly related, the group is not a sequence. The series provides a rich pattern of connections, however, first of all within the collection of ten poems itself, second of all in relation to other poems in the manuscript, and finally more generally, in connection to the poetic culture of both pre- and post-1603 Scotland. Each of these connections will be explored in turn.

The first two sonnets are bawdy double entendres, and elaborate on the image of the riding and controlling of a horse. Both leave little to the imagination, and sexual innuendo is only thinly veiled. Sonnets 1 and 2 are clearly a pair, the first, ‘Loip varlie on be sicker syne to sitt’, relating the (imagined) female voice, and the second, ‘Mestress ye bad me thryse putt on my spurris’, presenting a man’s reply. The opening line of sonnet 1 is also mirrored in the final line of sonnet 2, ‘I most leip on altho I heve no skill’. Both poems thrive on ambiguous imagery, for instance here, in the second sonnet:

Ryd soift and faire and sumtyme lycht & leid
Rin nocht bot raik me throu the thirlit land.

This refers to a rider and the pacing of his horse. Firstly, the animal should not be exhausted (‘rin nocht bot raik me’, ‘raik’ meaning in this context, to stroll or to wander, or ‘to move about over pasturage’, see *DOST*). Secondly, the horse should be led over ‘thirlit land’, or land freshly ploughed. ‘Thirlit’ is often encountered in conjunction to a ‘thirlit’, or pierced, heart; in addition, the female body as land to plough is a frequently encountered image.101

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Both poems cast the woman as a wanton creature who cannot get enough – ‘thryse ye bad me spurr with all my speid’ – and leave scope for the assertion of male dominance, as in sonnet 2:

Bot breist I anes your buist I then confydy
To ruitt yow rycht iff quhen I strik ye stand
or iff my revell chance to raitt your syd
Be soift and fair and radie att command.

This refers back to the ‘spurring’ of sonnet 1, which, when ‘ontymeles’, ‘spils the speid’. A ‘revell’ is the barbed disk on a spur. A horse may be ‘birst’ [for ‘breist’], or, presumably, ridden to death (see for instance DOST, under ‘birst’, v., which lists the following example: ‘[Money] to by him ane hors, becaus his hors wes birstin in the Kingis service’). To ‘breist your buist’ may mean ‘to burst your breast’ by spurring, prefiguring the horse’s ‘syd’ scored or cut by a spur (‘iff my revell chance to raitt your syd’). Exactly what ‘ruitt yow rycht’ means is somewhat unclear: presumably, the rider applied his spurs to his horse, or his lady, when she is rooted to ground, or motionless. In other words, his will-power controls her pace. These first two sonnets are certainly not among the most sophisticated in the series, but it can be imagined that their innuendo and rough humour found an appreciative contemporary audience. The sonnets may have been particularly appealing to Murray if, as indicated by his ‘hors buik’ among his list of books, he took an interest in horsemanship. Also, similarly bawdy and misogynist verse is well known from, for instance, the Bannatyne manuscript, and is a common ingredient of verse miscellanies more generally. The subject of bawdy verse will receive more attention in the next chapter.

Sonnets 3 and 4 are another pair. They explore the power of the spoken and written word, in reference to the myth of Acontius and Cydippe. Ovid’s Heroides relates how, during the festival of Diana (or Artemis), Acontius tricked Cydippe into promising to marry him, by tossing her an apple with that very promise written on it. Reading the message out, she unwittingly made her vow in the name of the goddess. Unaware of this at first, every time Cydippe wished to marry another she was thwarted by Diana, who sent her illnesses just before her marriage so she was tied to her bed. Eventually, Cydippe married Acontius. It is worth remembering that Ovid treats the myth in the form of two verse epistles, the first from Acontius to Cydippe, and the second her reply to him. The Tibbermuir sonnets loosely follow this structure, presenting first Acontius’ voice, and then dramatising that of Cydippe. Very significantly, among James Murray’s books appears, under ‘Vulgares’, or books in the vernacular, ‘Ovides Epistles’; this may have been George Turbervile’s translation of 1567. Murray would have had access to Ovid, then, and be familiar with the narrative. Sonnet 3 opens as follows:

Quha vald cum speid latt him imploy his pen
And sussie nocht suppois the peper sink
For scho this vindraucht appil (?) can nocht ken
Nor yit destene (?) the difference off Ink.

The sonnet is addressed to those male lovers who would wish to speed up the wooing process, and
to trick their ladies into a love match. As this is one of the sonnets where palaeographical problems
have not been fully resolved, the opening quatrain is not entirely clear. ‘Sink’ in the second line
may mean ‘to fade’, or for the paper or parchment to absorb the ink (see DOST under ‘sinkand’, 2).
This should not cause the speaker any trouble, because the lady (Cydippe, or any other proposed
love object) will not recognise the true significance of the ‘vindraucht appil’, presumably an apple
craftily written on, until it is too late. The speaker in the closing couplet rather unscrupulously
advises not to heed any objections, and, rather as a weapon, to ‘Imploy your pen latt hir the lettres
reid’. The full implications of such a ploy are then worked out in sonnet 4. The syntax of this is
rather ambiguous:

Cidippe reid and reidding reslie sueir
Then brav aconscius plainlie did protest
That him to love scho presentlie profest
Diana hard the vow & vitnes bure
Swa Sacred Sir I Challenge & conjure
Your majestie by them quhom ye love best
By your imperiall voidr quhilk (?) by the rest
Is as I dout nocht constant prince (?) & suire
That ye of your fre greece vichest to do
Even quhil the sumtyme speik & spak befoir
And Diane quhom off dewtie I adore
Quhilk ves that ye suld change my forton to
   And mowit (?) me hir in effect ye mey
   bot royall Sir put hadgeing (?) out of pleyn ?

The ‘I’ and speaking voice is presumably that of Cydippe. After rashly swearing her vow, she
works her way through the argument. She seems not disinclined to marry, though what exactly her
words in the closing couplet mean is obscure: the manuscript appears to read ‘hadgeing out of
pley’. What ‘hadge’ or ‘hedge’ means here is undetermined. The sense of this appears to be that
Cydippe will consent to being ‘mowit hier’ [moved higher], or perhaps ‘wowit’, but perhaps wants
to be wooed fairly, and not by trickery.

Since in the myth Acontius is certainly no royalty, Cydippe’s reference to ‘Your majestie’,
‘prince’, and ‘your imperiall voidr’ introduces a third player into the narrative. At this point in the
sonnet series, it is useful to note the pervasive theme of royalty. Sonnet 6, ‘Owerquhelmeit in vois
& drowned in deip dispaire’, makes explicit reference to ‘princelie pens’ and ‘royal registration’,
and the poem is constructed as a love gift, a ‘simple offering of a loveing hart’, which reveals a star-
struck lover that presents his verse to ‘scho sweit scho’, whose praises had already been sung by a
prince or king. Similar connections can be made to the final three works in the series (which will be
discussed below in more detail): sonnet 8 closes ‘love is love in pure men as in kings’; sonnet 9 discusses the four great monarchies of the world and is arguably composed in reference to William Alexander’s *Monarchick Tragedies*, and addressed to King James VI and I. Sonnet 10, finally, is from the hand of the king himself. If Parkinson is right to suggest that MS Kk.5.30 hints at ‘a direct connection between [...] miscellanies circulated at the court of James VI’, then the sonnets bearing explicit witness to the theme of royalty become more significant, and take their place amongst the corpus of courtly-circulated verse where referentiality cannot completely be understood. Particularly the wooing poems (3, 4, perhaps 7) may be inspired by real marriage negotiations, the subjects of which are now lost. Tenuous links clearly connect several of the ten sonnets, though their contemporary references may elude us.

As stated above, meaningful connections can also be established between the sonnets and poems elsewhere in the Tibbermuir manuscript, particularly in the case of ‘Lyke as the litill emmet haith hir gall’, which can also be found in the Bannatyne manuscript. 103 Fox and Ringler assert that Bannatyne’s copy is unique, but its occurrence in MS Kk.5.30 suggests that circulation was more widespread than first assumed. It is uncertain when the sonnet was copied into Bannatyne’s ‘ballat buik’; it is a later addition, 104 but in Bannatyne’s own hand, so must have been transcribed before his death c. 1607. Murray’s version runs as follows:

Lyk as the litle emett heth hir gall
the sle bansticle heth hir fin ve see
Laich treis hes toips bowbeit thai be bot small
the vran heth vinges wth wther foules to flie
Flint is a stane sappois into the ee
Itt seems no half so precious a the perle
Ther is a droneing song into the bee
Suppois I grant it mey nocht mach the merle
As Mantua is nocht so fair ve find
As Royall Rome yit ar thai both bot tounes
Small Schalloips sails als veill a ships by vind
And penneis pass als veill as goldin crounes
And as small strypes as veil as fludes hes springis
So love is love in pure men as in kings. (f. 78r)

Murray’s copy varies from that in the earlier manuscript. Lines 7-8 in Bannatyne, ‘Flint is ane stone [...] as the perle’ are exchanged with lines 5-6 in Murray’s version; twice, Bannatyne’s ‘although’ (lines 6, 7) is changed into ‘suppois’. A final significant change in word order is line 13, which in Bannatyne runs: ‘Strypis hes streames, alsweil as fludes hes springis’.

Helena Shire reveals that the sonnet ‘is English’. Priscilla Bawcutt’s evaluation is more measured, as she states that a ‘very popular Elizabethan poem, interestingly also attributed to Dyer

103 *Bannatyne Manuscript*, III, 241; cf. Fox and Ringler, f. 211v. The sonnet is unprinted and unmentioned by Hughes and Ramson in their *Poetry of the Stewart Court* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1982).
104 Fox and Ringler, p. xxxii.
[...] clearly influenced a Scottish sonnet found in several manuscripts'. Neither Shire nor Bawcutt discuss the sonnet or its source in much detail, however. Marotti describes the wide dissemination of Dyer’s poem as ‘an extreme case of textual malleability’, though he seems unaware of Scottish adaptations. Consider the first stanza of Dyer’s hugely popular, two-stanza lyric, extant in twenty manuscripts and in three prints:

The lowest trees have tops, the ant her gall,
The fly her spleen, the little spark his heat.
And slender hairs cast shadows though but small;  
And bees have stings although they be not great.
Seas have their source, and so have shallow springs,
And Love is Love in beggars and in kings.  

Between Dyer’s lyric and the sonnet, verbal echoes are too strong for the two not to be closely associated: from nature’s catalogue, both poems share the ‘emmet’ (‘ant’), the ‘tops’ or ‘cropis’ of ‘laich’ or ‘lawest treis’, the bees (although they are associated with song in Scots, and with their sting in Dyer), and finally the ‘strypis’ and ‘fludis’, and ‘seas’ and ‘springs’. The resolution and closing line of the sonnet is near-identical to Dyer’s closing line of the first stanza. The exact relationship between the two poems is complex. First of all, it is difficult to establish which came first based on the texts alone. Since the composition of the Bannatyne Main manuscript was undertaken between 1565 and 1568, but items were added possibly as late as between 1603 and 1607 (when the copyist died), we are presented with over a forty-year period in which the sonnet may have been transcribed. Of Dyer’s poem, May argues that it was composed in the 1570s, although the earliest datable manuscript witness belongs to the 1580s. Each poem is autonomous enough to have influenced the other. The Scottish sonnet shares its imagery only with the first stanza of Dyer’s poem, but elaborates on the theme and contains a great deal of original images not in Dyer. If indeed the sonnet is based on ‘The lowest trees’, then the poet thoroughly appropriated the English poet’s diction, and introduced Scots vocabulary to expand the first stanza into a fourteen-line sonnet. Thematically, the two are identical. Clear evidence of the widespread popularity of Dyer’s poem in England strengthens the supposition that the sonnet is an imitation, but this is not proven. Dyer’s poem, set to music in England by John Dowland and printed in 1603,
appears expanded in Scotland’s first printed book of popular music, *Songs and Fancies* – the song does not, however, appear in any of the Scottish musical manuscripts inventorised by Terry. The significance of the English poet for MS Kk.5.30 has been explored above, and the presence of this sonnet in addition to ‘He that his mirth hes lost’ only adds to the weight of that argument. Again, it needs to be stated that Murray of Tibbermuir may have been unaware of Dyer’s authorship, since he titles the first poem simply ‘Inglishe Dyare’, and ‘Lyk as the little emett’ appears untitled and anonymously. Yet, both poems underline the influence and circulation of the English poet’s works in Scotland.

The wider cultural context of MS Kk.5.30 has already been noted above, particularly in reference to a sonnet by Montgomerie, and one associated with Julian Ker, on f. 76r. This context of coterie writing may be further expanded by a consideration of the last two sonnets of the series. Though evidence is rather complicated, there are further suggestions of what Parkinson terms ‘poems “about” their readers’, or sharers’ situations’. Consider sonnet 10, ascribed to James VI:

Nocht Orientall Indus Chrístal streemes
Nor fruitful Nilus quhich na banks can thoill
Nor goldin Tagus quhois bricht Titanes beames
Ar hurled hedlongst to vew the antartik poll
Nor Ladon quhom sueit Sidney dois extoll
Quhīll it Arcadias bewtie doth imbrace
All theis mey not the nameles the controll
Bot with gud richt suld fander & giff plece
Now quhīll sueit scho vithcheffs to schaw hir face
and vith hir presence honours the ilk day
Thow slyding semest to use a slawer pace
Agnis thi vill as iff thow vent away
So loth to leve the sycht of such a on
Thow still imparts thi plents to evrie stone. (f. 78v)

This sonnet also survives among ‘all the kings short poesis that are not printed’. In James’s manuscript it has a companion piece, ‘Faire famous Isle, where Agathocles rang’, which, according to James’s editor Craigie, laments the death of Lady Cicely Wemys. The first sonnet, ‘Nocht Orientall Indus’, according to Craigie, ‘celebrates the lady’s marriage’. Evidence that James’s two sonnets centre on Wemys is circumstantial. Westcott, James’s earlier editor, refers to a comparable sonnet by David Murray of Gorthy, ‘Fair Cicil’s losse, be thou my sable song’, the title of which clearly states the occasion: ‘Sonet on the death of the Lady Cicily Weemes, Lady of Tillebarne [Tullibardine].’ Murray of Gorthy puns on ‘Cicily’/‘Sicily’, and since James in

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111 Terry, “‘Songs and Fancies’”, p. 415.
113 *Poems of James VI*, II, 239-41.
114 For a facsimile edition of Murray of Gorthy’s *Cælia* (1611) and the sonnet, see *English and Scottish Sonnet Sequences of the Renaissance*, ed. by Holger M. Klein, 2 vols (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1984), I, 443-64 (p. 461).
'Faire famous Isle’ employs the same pun, Westcott identifies Cicely Wemys also as James’s addressee. Westcott and Craigie made important editorial decisions: whereas the first prints the two sonnets as separate items, the latter prints them as a single poem, with continuing line numbers. Westcott, furthermore, briefly raises the question of authorship, as both sonnets appear in Prince Charles’s hand, but he dismisses any doubts based on the strong claim that James oversaw the production of the entire manuscript, and added many corrections of his own. Still, Craigie’s assumption that both sonnets pay tribute to Wemys may be questioned. Regarding James’s second sonnet, there is less doubt in this respect. Although in a style more riddling than Murray of Gorthy’s direct approach, James signals clearly enough what his subject is:

Faire famous Isle, where Agathocles rang;
Where sometymes, statly Siracusa stood;
Whos fertill feelds, were bathed in bangsters blood
When Rome, & ryuall Carthage, strau so lang;
Great Ladie Mistriss, all the Isles amang,
Which stands in Neptunes, circle mouuing, flood;
No, nather for thy frutefull ground nor good
I chuse the, for the subject of my sang
Nor, for the owld report, of scarce trew fame
Nor heeretofore, for farelies in the found
But, for the sweet resemblances of that Name
To whom thou seemest, so sibb, at least in sound
If then, for seeming so, thy prays bee such;
Sweet she her selfe, dothe merit more then much.116

The intended pun in lines 11-12 (Sicily/Cicely) suggests James’s subject matter. The last two words of line 9, ‘trew fame’, bring to mind Montgomerie’s pun on the name of Eufame Wemys, who died in 1593. Montgomerie reveals her name in a clever word trick, ‘Treu Fame, we mis thy Trumpet for to tune’.117 Cicely and Eufame were sisters, both daughters of Sir John Wemys of Wemys. James’s choice of words may purposely reference Montgomerie, and thus add to the evidence that the poem addresses Cicely. Yet, to claim this sonnet mourns Cicely’s death seems a hasty conclusion, especially on the sole basis of Murray of Gorthy’s sonnet. James in ‘Fair famous Isle’ pays an elegant compliment to a lady named Cicely, that much can be inferred with certainty – but nothing suggests that she has died (though the king may subtly refer to her deceased sister already mourned by Montgomerie).

115 Another example of a similar pun may be found in Alexander Craig, who blandly borrows from James on other occasions: see, for instance, ‘Fair famous Ile where Zoroastres raign’d’, a sonnet loosely modelled on James’s ‘Faire famous Isle’, but written to detain a friend from marriage (Poetical Recreations 1609, p. 18, in Works of Craig). The opening line of ‘Faire famous Isle’ reappears again in a short poem addressed to Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, where Craig employs the Cicily/Cecil pun: ‘Two potent Kings over Siciles two Empyre / That famous Ile where Siracusa stood / Where gainst the heavens Encelad voms his fyre / King Philip bruks with much Iberian blood / Bot wise King James (O blest and happie case) / Commands a Cecil of more price in peace’ (Poetical Recreations 1609, p. 11, in Works of Craig). All this bears witness to a strong coterie spirit of exchanging poetic devices.

116 Poems of James VI, II, 118.

To return to MS Kk.5.30, does ‘Nocht Orientall Indus Christal streemes’ indeed celebrate Cicely Wemys’s marriage? The poem’s argument, first of all, is slightly convoluted, but appears to run as follows. If even the world’s great rivers can not ‘controll’, but should ‘rander & giff plece’ presumably to the subject of the poem, a beautiful lady, perhaps Wemys, then surely a local stream cannot hope to do the same. That stream (Craigie suggests the river Ore, which enters the Firth of Forth near Wemyss) presumably is addressed in lines 10-14. James borrowed this conceit from Sidney’s Old Arcadia, and the reference to Sidney’s Arcadian nymphs bathing in the river Ladon (and the river streaming by reluctantly) suggests that the subject of James’s poem may do the same.\footnote{The Prose Works of Sir Philip Sidney, ed. by Albert Feuillerat, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), I, 217-18.} Again, this sonnet is an elegant and learned compliment to a lady. There is no indication, however, to suggest that this deals with Wemys’s marriage. Association of this sonnet with her, then, rests on Craigie’s reading of it, and his decision to treat the two sonnets as one work. Only by implication of the second sonnet can the addressee of the first be determined.

The assertion that the sonnets may be connected is fruitful to explore for another reason, however. As Murray of Gorthy’s title indicates, Cicely Wemys was named ‘Lady of Tillebarne’. Westcott relates that she married William Murray, son of Sir John Murray of Tullibardine (first Earl of Tullibardine, and James’s childhood friend), in 1599, but the marriage was cut short by her death (the date is unknown, but William remarried in 1604). With a connection between the Murrays of Tibbermuir and Tullibardine established above, it comes as no surprise for James Murray of Tibbermuir to have taken a particular interest in this sonnet. He would conceivably have been close enough to the family circle of the Tullibardine Murrays to obtain a copy. If the slender evidence that ‘Nocht Orientall Indus Christal streemes’ praises Cicely Wemys can be corroborated, then similar to Montgomerie’s ‘Displesour with his deadlie dairt’, and ‘Murrayis Dyare’, this sonnet in coded reference adds a third ‘Murray’ poem to the collection.

The penultimate sonnet in the series of ten, ‘First in the orient Rang the Assirien Kings’, is also the most problematic, in terms of its conformity to the other nine, as it is the only non-amatory text. It runs as follows:

First in the orient Rang the Assirien Kings
To thois the sacred perciane prince succeids
Till he by quhom the varld soir vundit bleids
Erth crouns to Greice vith bloudie blead he brings
Then greice to Rome the reanes off staitt resigns
So fra the michtie Monarchs of the Medis
To this vast varld successvelie suceeds
This great and fatail period off things
Till vereit vith broils & lang Alarumes
Erths majestie hir diadame layis doune
Beffoir the feit of thi onconquerit croune
And thraws hirself great Monarch in thi armes

\footnote{The Prose Works of Sir Philip Sidney, ed. by Albert Feuillerat, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), I, 217-18.}
The first eight lines trace world history through the four empires of Assyria, Persia, Greece and Rome. The sonnet ends with the world, tired of conflict, finally delivering herself into the arms of its rightful ruler, the unnamed ‘great Monarch’. Sally Mapstone follows Drummond’s editor Kastner, who suggested that this sonnet was composed in tribute to William Alexander’s *Monarchick Tragedies*, a series of Senecan plays operating, according to Mapstone, in the advice to princes tradition that remained so prevalent in renaissance Scottish poetry.\(^{119}\) Drummond is known to have written another sonnet on the *Tragedies*, penned onto a flyleaf (f. iii) of the 1607 print of that text (NLS, MS 1692). In the context of the advice to princes genre, the great monarch is James VI and I, and the sonnet is an outrageous compliment to the king. In a more politically neutral reading, James may be substituted by Christ, whose victory over the Western world was complete, with the earth herself symbolically offering up her ‘diademe’. Both readings may also be combined as James actively propagated his role of Prince of Christendom.\(^{120}\) Kastner and Charlton confirm that ‘as this sonnet is addressed to James, it may have been intended to follow Alexander’s dedication to the king in an edition of *The Monarchick Tragedies*. As it surveys the course of all the four “monarchies”, it probably was meant either for the 1607 or for the 1616 edition […] If, however, Drummond’s sonnet is to be dated 1607 it is amongst his earliest extant works’.\(^{121}\)

The question of authorship is problematic. The poem was first ascribed to Drummond by Kastner, but Robert MacDonald finds this attribution unconvincing. Drummond collects the sonnet in one of his commonplace books (NLS Adv. MS 2060, f. 292v), alongside two other sonnets. MacDonald treats Drummond’s manuscript with great caution, as ‘we must suspect any poem in the commonplace books as being by somebody else, unless it shows definite signs of an original composition, that is, unless it is in rough draft, with emendations and perhaps a rhyme scheme still not quite worked out’.\(^{122}\) MacDonald’s suspicion is not unfounded, as throughout his notebooks Drummond copied verse from a wide variety of sources. Given the fact that the sonnet in question (and the two accompanying pieces) only exist as fair copies, MacDonald concludes that ‘without attempting to attach these sonnets to the name of another author […] we must remain doubtful of Drummond’s authorship’.\(^{123}\) Critics are not agreed, however. As MacDonald excludes the sonnet from Drummond’s canon on the basis of manuscript evidence, Mapstone allows it in based on style, and the fact the poet is known to have written other commendatory sonnets, for the

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\(^{120}\) On the king’s writings more generally, see for instance *Royal Subjects: Essays on the Writings of James VI and I*, ed. by Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002).

\(^{121}\) *Works of Alexander*, p. 447.

\(^{122}\) MacDonald, ‘Amendments’, p. 106.

\(^{123}\) MacDonald, ‘Amendments’, p. 115.
Monarchick Tragedies, and for Alexander’s Doomesday poem. Mapstone rightly criticised MacDonald’s curious and unfounded claim that ‘Drummond had already written a sonnet for this work [the Monarchick Tragedies]’; clearly, there is no reason whatsoever why Drummond would not have composed two poems for the same work. Finally, both critics ignore – probably wisely – the suggestion by Bradshaw that the sonnet might be Montgomerie’s, based on ‘Mon’ having been scribbled in the left hand margin.

Can the context in which ‘First in the orient Rang the Assiriene Kings’ appears in MS Kk.5.30 provide any answers? Unfortunately, none of the sonnets can be dated with any certainty. For James’s sonnet, a cut-off date can only be provided if we accept that it is addressed to Cicely Wemys; as she died before 1604, it must have been written before that year, perhaps following her marriage in 1599. Drummond’s earliest verse can only be dated roughly. After graduating from Edinburgh in 1605, he travelled the continent, and returned around 1608; his first printed poem was Teares on the Death of Meliades, published in 1613. Several sonnets from ff. 77r-78v appear to belong to the 1580s and 1590s, particularly ‘Owerquhelmeit in vois & drown in deip dispaire’ and ‘Mestres quhen last ve twa did part asunder’. Both these bring to mind the works of William Fowler for instance. As argued above, Bannatyne’s transcription of ‘Lyk as the little emett’ may have followed anytime after Dyer’s composition of ‘The lowest trees’ in the 1570s or 1580s (this presumes that Dyer’s poem was indeed the source). Thus, a portion of the Tibbermuir sonnets may be ascribed to the pre-1603 period, when Drummond (born in 1585) was arguably too young to have composed ‘First in the orient’.

Yet, a different scenario may be proposed. Consideration of the wider, post-1603, poetic milieu that the Tibbermuir manuscript bears implicit witness to is instructive. The fate of Scottish writing after the Union has still only hesitantly been described. In a very recent study, Sarah Dunnigan notes the ‘liminal and exiled status which renders it [renaissance Scottish literature] ripe for rediscovery’. Dunnigan locates three types of renaissance movements, one Marian, the second Jacobean, and the third, controversially, located after 1603. Each of these ‘moments’, she argues, are ‘differently founded upon acts of reconstitution, redefinition, and re-imagining’. It may be argued that one way in which this late, post-1603, renaissance reasserted itself was by means of a large collection of dedicatory verse, prefixed to printed works. This was no new phenomenon, but a

range of young writers had properly come into their own, and jointly they supported each other’s works through a complex and self-reflective series of prefatory poems. A good place to start is William Alexander’s printed works. Besides Drummond’s two sonnets (including ‘First in the orient’, if indeed it is his), a range of authors, both English and Scottish, composed works of commendation, for instance Walter Quinn, Robert Ayton, John Cockburn (whose poems have otherwise disappeared), John Davies, and the Latin poet Arthur Johnston. Most relevant for the current discussion is John Murray. His poem was prefixed to the 1603 print of Alexander’s *Darius* (which may be the edition that Murray of Tibbermuir owned, or borrowed). Significantly, as argued above, John Murray may also be the author of ‘Murrayis Dyare’ in the Tibbermuir manuscript, and Mapstone has suggested he may have been the ‘Murray myne’ addressed by Montgomerie in ‘Displesour, with his deadlie dairt’, also in Tibbermuir. To return to William Alexander: he composed a sonnet on the death of John Murray, as well as commendatory poems to, for instance, Drummond, or Quinn. Many more connections may be mentioned here. John Murray, it seems, was the cousin of David Murray of Gorthy, and the latter’s sonnet on Cicely Wemys has been mentioned above, in connection to James’s ‘Nocht Orientall Indus Cristal streemes’. Another final poet deeply involved in this scene was Alexander Craig, whose ‘Quhen feirce Achilles’ features in Tibbermuir. This poem was printed in Craig’s *Amorose Songes*, to which was appended ‘To the Author’, a sonnet composed by ‘I M’, or perhaps John Murray.

The early seventeenth century was a busy period in which many Scottish poets, based in Scotland and in London, lauded their fellow poets and so substantiated and legitimised a new wave of ‘Scottish’ writing, rooted in pre-1603 tradition, but also trying out new methods. This is not the place to explore the labyrinthine process of prefatory verse in the early seventeenth century further, nor the manner in which Scottish writing developed in this period. Suffice it to note here that several poems in the manuscript of James Murray of Tibbermuir reference familiarity with these newly established poets who were involved, in Dunnigan’s words, with the ‘reconstitution, redefinition, and re-imagining’ of Scottish writing. The scene of bookish and learned poets such as Drummond and Craig may have been one that Murray of Tibbermuir found very attractive, and had access to through his various family connections. It is certainly exciting to consider Murray to have been in touch, through circulation or other means, with the literary country house culture as lived by Drummond, adding yet another dimension to a manuscript that predominantly includes medieval and late-sixteenth century verse. The Tibbermuir manuscript, with its poems by Alexander Craig, possibly John Murray, and various other works in connection to the Murray

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127 See *Works of Alexander*, I, pp. ccv-ccxvii. The editors’ notes to the prefatory poems are useful, see pp. 443-50.


129 *Amorose Songes*, p. 166, in *Works of Craig*.

130 See further the works listed in note 126 above. Dunnigan’s argument will be further discussed in Chapter Five, pp. 207-8.
family, is a good context for early verse by Drummond. The only explicit date of compilation for MS Kk.5.30 is c. 1612. Although the sonnet series may have been added any time after this date, already in 1612 this third wave of renaissance Scottish writing, which may be posited as a background to some Tibbermuir poems, was well underway. The big unanswered question is whether James Murray would have compiled the series himself, out of one or more larger collections of sonnets, or whether he would have encountered a ready-made exemplar. Though similar themes connect individual sonnets (particularly that of kingship, or royalty more generally; love, in terms of the wooing game; and the praise of women by ‘princely pens’) there is less evidence for a carefully arranged sequence, as with the three sonnets on f. 71v-r. The ten sonnets on ff. 77r-78v represent a fluid transition between the ‘Castalian’ sonneteering of the 1580s and the later adaptation of that mode post-1603.

**Alexander Hume and ‘Cupid quhom sall I vyt bot the’, ff. 79r-80v**

Hume’s ‘Of the Day Estivall’ occurs elsewhere in manuscript (NLS Adv. MS 19.3.6). There, it is clearly transcribed from Waldegrave’s 1599 print of the *Hymnes or Sacred Songs*. Murray’s miscellany further disproves Alexander Lawson’s claim that apart from MS 19.3.6 and NLS Wodrow Quarto XX (which contains Hume’s prose ‘Afold Admonitioun’, see item iii) no other manuscripts containing Hume’s works are known to exist. ‘The weight of sin is wonder greit’, appearing in the Laing manuscript, has already been discussed in Chapter Two (see pp. 67-68), and Murray’s copy of ‘Of the Day Estivall’ may be added to the list of manuscript versions of Hume’s poems. Only one edition of the *Hymnes or Sacred Songs* survives, but Lawson conjectures the existence either of an earlier print, or of prints similar to that of 1599 but with significant variations. As will be shown below, the text of this poem in MS Kk.5.30 suggests that Murray had a printed book available, but it is equally likely that a manuscript source closely adhering to the print was in circulation. Generally, Murray’s transcription is faithful to the printed word, but a number of small variants suggest the possibility of another source. For example, ‘The pastor quits his slouthfull sleepe’, surely the stronger reading coming from ever-admonishing Hume, is mellowed down in Murray to ‘The pastor quyts his slumbring sleip’ (l. 45). This change from ‘slouthfull’ to ‘slumbring’ brings to mind the alterations to James Melville’s sonnet discussed above: in both cases, the poems in MS Kk.5.30 present a less rigorously reproachful reading. More variants may be found: for ‘Thy glorie when the day foorth flies, / Mair viuely dois appeare’, Murray’s transcription reads ‘mair planlie dois appeir’ (ll. 5-6). Other variants clearly reflect scribal confusions. Eight lines from the end, for instance,

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131 I am extremely grateful to Jamie Reid Baxter for allowing me access to his unpublished article, ‘The Contents of NLS Manuscript Adv. 19.3.6’, and for a full transcription of the manuscript. See further *The Poems of Alexander Hume*, ed. by Alexander Lawson (Edinburgh: STS, 1st ser. 48, 1902).


133 Lawson derives this evidence from readings adopted by Sibbald in his *Chronicles of Scottish Poetry*, see *Poems of Hume*, pp. lxxii-lxxiii.
Murray’s manuscript misses out one quatrain (‘With bellie fow [...] and lilting horne’, ll. 221-24), but this discrepancy seems no more than an eye-skip.

Evidence that might indicate that Murray’s source was a manuscript derives from the way that the poem is visually presented on the page. First of all, ‘Of the Day Estivall’ in MS Kk.5.30 is transcribed in double columns. On f. 79r, at the beginning of the poem Murray numbers each quatrain, 1 to 18, but separates eight-line stanzas (or two quatrains) with a simple drawn line. On f. 79v, numbering continues, but now in groups of eight lines, starting at 10 through to the end of the poem, number 29. The scribe consistently draws lines between stanzas of eight lines. By way of comparison, in Waldegrave’s printed text the poem appears in single columns; in addition, no stanzas are numbered, and the poem consists of quatrains, not octaves. This in itself is not incontrovertible evidence that Murray’s poem did not derive from print; yet, the poem that follows, ‘Cupid qut hom sall I vyt bot the’, shows distinct visual similarities with Hume’s. It is transcribed in double columns, each stanza of eight lines separated by a dividing line, and, within stanzas, as with Hume, every other line is indented. It follows that perhaps the scribe allowed himself substantial liberties if copying from print, which is not unusual. Alternatively, however, Murray may have found the two poems side by side in another manuscript or lost print, and copied not only the words but also the lay-out.

In the dedication ‘To the Scottish youth’ (from the Hymnes), Hume denounced his earlier writing in an attack on ‘that naughtie subject of fleshly and vnlawfull loue’. The poet reveals that

sometime I delighted in such fantasies myselfe, after the maner of riotous young men: and vvere not the Lord in mercie pulled me a backe, & wrought a great repentance in me, I had doubtlesse run forward and employed my time & studie in that prophane and vnprofitable exercise, to my owne perdition.¹³⁴

In his ‘Epistle to Maister Gilbert Montcrief’, Hume slanders the Scottish court which apparently he frequented before he became a minister – ‘I hanted court to lang, and I repent’.¹³⁵ It is ironic, then, for Hume’s ‘Of the Day Estivall’ in MS Kk.5.30 to be followed by ‘Cupid qut hom sall I vyt bot the’ (f. 80v), an amorous lament and a piece of courtly writing par excellence. If in the Laing manuscript ‘The weicht of sin is wonder greit’ keeps the godly company of other devotional poems, in the Tibbermuir manuscript ‘Of the Day Estivall’ is irreverently wedged in between a collection of ten sonnets on the one side, some of which are outright bawdy, and a complaint against Cupid on the other. In the latter poem, the speaker recounts his falling victim to both Cupid and Fortune. While he ‘tho cht the parrell past / off all thi huikeit arrous fyve’, Fortune allows for Cupid’s arrows to strike true. Helplessly ensnared, the speaker records how

Fra tyme I mycht no langer stryve

¹³⁴ Poems of Hume, pp. 6-7.
¹³⁵ Poems of Hume, pp. 68-79, particularly ll. 240-335.
as thi perfectiones meid me thrall
And shortlie did my hert depreyve
off former libertees and all.

The poem concludes as follows:

Sen so it is I rest content
Your thrall freind for to remain
Ye ar the last that sall frequent
my hert with sic oppressing pain
Your weilfair is the onlie gain
mey gled maist for all [?] my greiff
To vis you mooit it var bot vaine
For this my onlie herts releiffe.

Defeat is admitted, and, with the lover enthralled, Cupid’s victory is complete. ‘Cupid quhom sall I vyt bot the’, a competent though not outstanding piece of amatory writing, follows somewhat awkwardly after Hume’s celebrations of the natural world and his praise to its creator, in ‘Of the Day Estivall’. Hume’s dislike for amatory verse must not have been shared by Murray. Scribal sensitivity to thematic considerations, as shown for instance in the Laing manuscript, played no considerable part in this short section of MS Kk.5.30. A fascinating but dangerous conjecture emerges when it is assumed that Murray found, in manuscript or print (perhaps a broadsheet), the two poems side by side. The manner in which both poems are laid out on the page suggests a certain kinship, which might be either authorially or scribally imposed. If the (entirely hypothetical) underlying exemplar is related to the works of Hume that circulated more widely, however, then perhaps ‘Cupid quhom sall I vyt bot the’ could also be his, a youthful fancy dating from his early years at court. Evidence is hard to find, since only eight poems survive by Hume, and all are devotional. One of these, ‘The Humiliation of a Sinner’, is composed in the same metre and rhyme scheme as ‘Cupid quhom sall I vyt bot the’: a stanza of eight lines, each line four stresses, and rhyming ABABBCBCB. Yet, Montgomerie employed the rhyme scheme frequently, and in combination with a four-stressed line, in ‘A Description of Vane Lovers’ and ‘As Nature passis Nuriture’; Stewart of Baldynneis employed it, for instance, in ‘Ane Prayer and Thankisgiwing’ and ‘In Name of Ane Amorus Ladic’, so it was common enough. To find an early poem by Hume is not unlikely, as a great deal of miscellany verse is anonymous. Stevenson had already associated the devotional poems in the Laing manuscript with Hume, but found no evidence to support these claims (see Chapter Two, p. 60). A complete lack of thematic relevance between the two poems may also indicate that the second poem was chosen arbitrarily, with no regard for wider context whatsoever. Miscellany compilation is dictated, to considerable extent, by serendipity, and the unpredictable availability of copy texts. Most likely the poem will remain anonymous forever – yet, its position in MS Kk.5.30 is intriguing, to say the least.

So far, discussion of Murray’s manuscript only looked backwards to possible source materials for the compiler. However, ‘Cupid quhom sall I vyt bot the’ affords us a valuable glimpse into the future. Among the papers of Lilias Murray, a distant kinswoman to James Murray of Tibbermuir, can be found two poems in manuscript, in her own hand.\(^{137}\) Lilias Murray was the daughter of John Murray, first Earl of Tullibardine (and thus the sister of William Murray, who married Cecily Wemyss). Cultural ties between the two family branches have already been discussed above, and one of Lilias Murray’s poems hints at further connections. One poem in the bundle of papers is ‘The grisileig Gollf of grepein gref’. It opens as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{The grisileig Gollf of grepein gref} \\
\text{Filld vp vith valttreng stremes of vo} \\
\text{The masket mumchanc of mescheif} \\
\text{Vith mariades of thocht and mo} \\
\text{And fanssies fleittein to and fro} \\
\text{My martret mynd do so molest} \\
\text{Ewin better bell dothe brek in tvo} \\
\text{The bovellis of my bolleng breist.}
\end{align*}
\]

The final three stanzas of this poem (there are five in total) are the very same as the three opening stanzas of the Tibbermuir manuscript’s ‘Cupid quhom sall I vyt bot the’. Thus, Lilias Murray’s version concludes with the speaker’s complaint that ‘Her rar perfeksiones med me thrall / And svddandly did me depryve / Off former leiberttie and all’. The closing three stanzas in Tibbermuir that follow after are omitted from Lilias Murray’s version; likewise, the latter’s two opening stanzas are lacking from MS Kk.5.30. In the three shared stanzas, a great deal of small variants may be noted, but these are inconsequential to the overall effect and meaning. Perhaps the two transcriptions combined were once one poem; alternatively, individual scribes or poets may have adapted an underlying original.

Lilias Murray is an interesting character in her own right. A contemporary sketch still survives of this lady and her husband, John Grant of Freuchie, drawn up in 1618 by John Taylor, ‘The Water Poet’.\(^{138}\) Of interest are Taylor’s compliments to Lilias Murray, a lady, apparently, of many accomplishments, ‘inwardly and outwardly plentifully adorned with the gifts of grace and nature’. Lilias Murray’s surviving papers also attest to her literary interests. Apart from the two poems, she left behind a list of her books. This catalogue was noted by Fraser, who prints the titles. Unnoticed by him, however, is yet another list on which she ranks ‘The names of my best buikis’; in other words, a list of personal favourites, suggesting intelligent and discerning reading behaviour. The latter list can be found on the back of a letter (NAS GD248/46/1/13), and entries

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\(^{137}\) NAS GD/15/4/4, 2 sheets. The poems were printed and discussed by Fraser in his *Chiefs of Grant*. Fraser consulted the papers while they were still at Castle Grant (formerly Castle Freuchie; it is situated just north of Grantown-on-Spey), but the papers have subsequently been moved to the NAS. Sir William Fraser, *The Chiefs of Grant*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: [n.p.], 1883), I, 193-95.

\(^{138}\) *Travels Through Stuart Britain: The Adventures of John Taylor, the Water Poet*, ed. by John Chandler (Thrupp: Sutton, 1999), p. 44.
correspond to the booklist printed in Fraser. There is no space here further to explore Lilias Murray’s interest in literature and letters, but in the context of the Tibbermuir manuscript it is important to note that yet another poem can be earmarked as displaying strong familial ‘Murray’ links, as well as indications of a lettered culture of verse and reading.

**Conclusion**

Of the three miscellany manuscripts discussed, MS Kk.5.30 is most obviously a family manuscript. The connections explored above, between James Murray of Tibbermuir and his various kinsmen, particularly the Murrays of Tullibardine (including Lilias Murray), but also the Melville family that he became associated with after his third marriage, and the Scrymgeours of Myres (a connection forged by the second marriage of Murray’s father), have all been shown to be meaningful in relation to the poems in the manuscript. This web of connections expands outwards, and familial considerations may account for the inclusion of James VI’s sonnet on Cicely Wemyss, for instance (if indeed the poem is addressed to her), or Montgomery’s ‘Displeasure, with his deadlie dairt’, which may reference John Murray, who, in turn, may have composed ‘Murrayis Dyare’. More Scottish miscellanies were born out of family piety: the related Maitland Folio, Maitland Quarto, and Reidpeth manuscripts are a good example.

In addition to the *Troy Book* supply, and the ‘Wallace’ and ‘Lamwell’ fragments, James Murray of Tibbermuir collects many known poetic highfliers of Scotland’s late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries: Alexander Montgomery, James VI, James Melville, Alexander Hume, perhaps his brother Patrick, Alexander Craig of Rosecraig, and perhaps John Murray and William Drummond of Hawthornden. Collectively, MS Kk.5.30 is a noteworthy anthology of the leading voices of Scottish writing, complemented by various English poems, and some anonymous poetry. It is a shame the manuscript is incomplete, as it may well have contained a great deal more poetry now lost. In places, it bears witness to a creative process of compilation that intelligently juxtaposes poems from various sources, and Murray himself can be shown to have had a very active hand in this process. The inclusion of Alexander Craig in the miscellany is important for a subtle re-conceptualisation of the early modern poetic landscape in Scotland. Craig has never been regarded as a poet actively anthologised by Scottish scribes, but, crucially, investigation of miscellany manuscripts presents a different picture, and – moreover – exposes an early-seventeenth century web, if not necessarily a coterie network, of literary activity. For James Murray of Tibbermuir, inclusion of Craig and Drummond shows that he was in touch not only with the age of Montgomery (the 1580s and 1590s), but also with a more contemporary scene that actively built...

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139 * Chiefs of Grant*, II, 54. I have not yet located among the NAS’s holdings the original of Fraser’s list. Further research will no doubt reveal more about Lilias Murray’s reading habits. More items of interest might be contained among the copious Grant papers.
on that earlier heritage. This becomes most evident in the various sonnet series, on ff. 71v-72r, 76r, and 77r-78v.

It is only rarely that a catalogue of a miscellanist’s library survives in Scotland in the early modern period; the only other example is with the library of Drummond of Hawthornden. Murray’s collection of books is far more modest, yet even in his short list titles relevant to his manuscript poems can been discovered: Montgomerie’s *Cherrie*, Alexander’s *Darius* (and perhaps *The Alexandrean Tragedy*), Ovid’s *Epistles* in English, or for instance ‘the mirror of knyckth[ede]’.

More early modern libraries await inspection. Lilias Murray’s small collection referred to above is one example; the ever-growing book collection in Melville House, described in three subsequent catalogues (discussed in Chapter Two) is another. Such libraries, even if not individually, then certainly collectively, reveal crucial information about Scottish readers and their books. As has been shown above, the subject of book collecting is of prime importance also for the study of miscellany manuscripts, as the copy texts of Scottish compilers were likely to have been in circulation in Scotland.

MS Kk.5.30’s hybrid nature is very striking. As stated above, the manuscript was previously treated either as a repository of medieval verse, for instance by Horstmann, and Buss and Koeppel (who questioned Bradshaw’s ascription of the Scottish *Troy Book* fragments to Barbour), or as an early modern miscellany, for instance by Lyall, Parkinson, and Mapstone. Yet, both sections of the manuscript were comfortably bound together from at least the seventeenth century onwards. The question exactly how for Murray old and new works connect is a difficult one to answer, but any rigid periodisation (medieval versus early modern) is most unhelpful for understanding the manuscript’s contents, and, more broadly, the literary culture that produced it. On Murray’s pages, Lydgate’s historical romance rubs shoulders with an amatory sonnet employing Trojan imagery, and themes from the Arthurian courtly-love adventures of Sir Lamwell (though unfinished in the manuscript) are mirrored, or rather reworked, into Scotland’s late-sixteenth century amatory paradigm, the sonnet. As shown above, in MS Kk.5.30 there is no sense at all of a rift between the poetry produced pre- and post-1603. The question how Murray and his contemporaries received Lydgate’s poem is a subject of study in itself. Murray’s completion of the *Troy Book* may be viewed as an act of bibliographic, even bibliophilic, zeal; to what extent its medieval historiographical sentiments appealed to him is unclear. In the prologue (which was copied by Murray), Lydgate was careful to set up a distinction between his own work, with strong claims to ‘historic truth’, while denouncing the deceitful language of poetry, or ‘veyn fables’. Of Ovid, for instance, Lydgate claims he ‘also poetycally hath closyed [clothed] / Falshede with throuthe, that maketh men ennosed’. Presumably, to Murray these issues were of little importance, since he fills the remainder of his manuscript with literary fancies which, like the

‘dyers’ or the sonnets, are highly rhetorical exercises with no claim to intrinsic truth value. Such is the nature of Murray’s miscellany that these poems can coexist within one binding. Murray’s reading practices assimilate rather than divide the different modes of poetry present in the manuscript: this hybridity is one of its most attractive features, and one worthy of continued study.
chapter four ~

‘Margaret Robertson with my hand’: National Library of Scotland MS 15937

National Library of Scotland MS 15937 is an early nineteenth-century transcript of an early seventeenth-century verse miscellany that was compiled by Margaret Robertson. The original is now presumed lost. MS 15937 has been unduly neglected, and discussion of it appears to have been hampered for several reasons. Firstly, with the original manuscript, or manuscripts, now lost, the transcript is a secondary source, lacking authority. As seen from the previous chapters, even primary sources such as EUL MS Laing.III.447 and CUL MS Kk.5.30 raise questions of provenance, ownership, and the manner of compilation, that cannot easily be answered – as MS 15937 was copied approximately two hundred years after the original was apparently compiled, a whole new set of interpretational problems arise. Secondly, very little was known about the manuscript’s compiler, Margaret Robertson of Lude. Thirdly, its contents at first sight may appear similar to that of other manuscripts of the age. Bawcutt summarily writes that ‘[t]he contents resemble those of the Wemyss Manuscript: love songs in English and Scots, though without musical settings’. Finally, what seems to have deflected critical interest most is the large collection of English material. One looks in vain for the medieval Scots makars (who appear frequently in miscellanies until the 1580s), and will find instead a large collection of English songs copied mostly from printed books. Although MS 15937 contains works, for instance, by Scott and Montgomerie, and a sizeable collection of anonymous material in Scots, still it seems at first sight to be dominated by English poets. As recently observed by Lyall (and evident from the previous chapters), ‘[a]mong the least considered aspects of late sixteenth-century British culture we may certainly count the relations between England and Scotland’. Given these facts, neglect of MS 15937 comes as no surprise.

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3 The only critics to have recently indicated interest in the manuscript are Bawcutt (see note 1), and David J. Parkinson, see his ‘Alexander Montgomerie: Scottish Author’, in Older Scots Literature, ed. by Sally Mapstone (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2005), pp. 493-513, and ‘Literary Anthologies in Manuscript in Seventeenth-Century Scotland’, [forthcoming]. Brief attention is drawn to Robertson and her manuscript by Hans Hecht, in his publication of the manuscripts of ballad-collector David Herd. He draws mostly on the manuscript of Peter Buchan, however (of whom more below), and offers little new: Songs from David Herd’s Manuscripts, ed. by Hans Hecht (Edinburgh: William J. Hay, 1904), pp. 280-81.
That such neglect is entirely unwarranted will become evident here. In comparison to other, better-known Scottish anthologies, the Robertson manuscript impresses with its 175 poems, over 215 folios (equalling 215 pages, as all verso sides are left blank). Thus, in sheer size, MS 15937 outdoes the Maitland Quarto manuscript (137 folios, 95 poems), and rivals even its larger counterpart, the Maitland Folio manuscript (183 folios, 182 poems). Apart from its size, MS 15937 has a great deal more to offer: it contains, for instance, several poems in Older Scots, a curious selection of bawdy songs, and a beautiful reworking of the well-known ‘O Lusty May’. It features various poems whose intricate stanza forms suggest an author not unlike Alexander Montgomerie. With the exception of a brief mention by David Parkinson, its collection of twenty-five sonnets remains uncharted by critics, as does its series of four ‘dyers’. In the manuscript, amatory materials are complemented by several religious poems of great interest. The sheer number and variety of poems and songs found in MS 15937 suggests that Robertson was an extremely well connected compiler. As it turns out, her family history can be made relevant, in general terms, to the manuscript’s concerns. In short, MS 15937 is a large and important collection, not only as a monument to ‘the century of the gifted amateur and the collector’, but also as a repository of many unique Scots poems that deserve to see the light of day. That said, it is also one of the most puzzling miscellanies that has survived, posing questions that can only hesitantly be answered.

History and Description of MS 15937

The provenance and history of MS 15937, and that of the original(s) it was copied from, is complex. A good starting point is the National Library of Scotland’s catalogue entry, which states that MS 15937 was bought from Sotheby’s on 27 June 1972 (Lot 311):

[MS 15937 is] a 19th century copy (the paper is watermarked 1823) of the collection made in 1630 by Margaret Robertson, wife of Alexander Stewart of Bonskeid. The original collection belonged to John Richardson of Pitfour (later Sir John Stewart-Richardson) who lent it to Peter Buchan for the compilation of his Ancient ballads and songs of the north of Scotland, Edin. 1828. Buchan intended to use it in the third volume of his work which was never completed. His extracts from it are contained in the British Library, Add. 29409, ff. 256-77; the whereabouts of the original is not known. This copy also belonged to the Richardsons of Pitfour and contains their bookplate dating from after their succession to the baronetcy in 1837.

6 NLS, Catalogue of Manuscripts Acquired since 1925 [unpublished typescript].
In other words, two transcripts survive of a lost original that was compiled by Margaret Robertson; a partial transcript was made by Peter Buchan, the controversial ballad-collector; and the scribe or compiler of MS 15937 (whether this is a partial or complete transcript is difficult to determine, see below) has never been identified. A simple stemma will be helpful:

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Margaret Robertson’s lost MS(S)  
(henceforth MS X)  

NLS MS 15937  
(post-1823,  
unknown scribe)  

BL MS 29409  
(ff. 256-78  
c. 1828, Buchan’s MS)  
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There is confusion both over the date and the exact nature of the lost MS X, which was first described by Colonel David Stewart of Garth (identified as General Stewart by Buchan) in 1822, as follows:

> The fragments of manuscripts and private correspondence which have been preserved in families give evidence of classical attainments, and prove also, that this was not confined to one sex. The following is an instance. There is a manuscript volume preserved in the family of Stewart of Urrard, of 260 pages, of poems, songs, and short tracts, in the Scotch language, written, as is stated on the first page, by Margaret Robertson, daughter of George Robertson of Fascally, and wife of Alexander Stewart of Bonskeid, dated 1643. It is written in a beautiful hand, and with such correctness, that it might be sent to the press.7

Stewart dates the manuscript that he saw to 1643. Buchan, however, in his introduction to *Ancient Ballads* and in his manuscript notebooks, claims that it was compiled in 1630. Bawcutt comments that, although both transcripts (NLS MS 15937 and BL MS 29409) ‘give the date of their original as 1630, not 1643’, ‘how accurate they [these dates] are it is impossible to say’.8

This confusion needs to be cleared up as best as possible. Underlying Buchan’s printed *Ancient Ballads*, first of all, are his manuscript notebooks, now two volumes, in the British Library.9 Buchan published only two poems from MS X, as the planning of his book was too far

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8 Bawcutt, ‘Miscellanies’, p. 199.

9 For a study of all Buchan’s manuscripts, see William Walker, *Peter Buchan and Other Papers on Scottish and English Ballads and Songs* (Aberdeen: D. Wylie, 1915); for BL MSS 29408/9 in particular, see Appendix C, pp. 172-95.
advanced to include more.\(^{10}\) Many more transcriptions of MS X are to be found in his manuscript notebooks, however. About these, we learn most from Buchan’s sales catalogue. Much to his dismay, the collector was forced to auction his books and manuscripts after he fell into financial hardship. In his sales catalogue, describing the two manuscript notebooks, Buchan relates how he copied ‘upwards of forty pages of rare old Poetry’ from MS X. In addition, no doubt wanting to confirm the authenticity of his material and to raise the price as high as possible, the catalogue reads that ‘it was I who copied the Poems from the old MS. while at Pitfour Castle, in Perthshire’.\(^{11}\) Importantly, Buchan does not acknowledge the existence of another transcript, which might indicate that MS 15937 was copied after 1837, the year of the book sale.

The British Library catalogue entry for MSS 29408 and 29409, Buchan’s notebooks, confusingly states the following:

> the ballads […] on ff. 256-277 are ‘copied from an unprinted MS. written by Lady Robertson of Lude in 1630’ […] A note inserted at f. 278 refers to a MS. volume of ballads in possession of the family of Steward of Urrard, also written, in 1643, by Lady Margaret Robertson, ‘daughter of John Robertson of Lude, and wife of Alexander Stewart of Bonsleid’ [sic].\(^{12}\)

This implies the existence not of one, but two different manuscripts associated with Robertson. Whereas there is evidence to suggest that she indeed compiled more than one manuscript, this discrepancy between dates is easily explained. The note on f. 278 is an inserted handwritten scrap copied from Stewart’s *Sketches*, quoted above, so the date of 1643 is Stewart’s, not Buchan’s. The note on f. 255 is of more interest:

> See, a great many other copied from an unprinted MS written by Lady Robertson of Lude, in 1630, and even then the Ballads so written by her were several hundred years old. They are at the end of this MS. vol. P[eter].B[uchan].

Buchan’s claim that the poems were ‘several hundred years old’ even by 1630 may be ignored (unless indeed he found poems that he decided not to copy and which equally did not end up in MS 15937); this remark seems symptomatic of his antiquarian desire for ‘old’ texts, rather than anything else. This note, introducing his selection of poems from MS X (all of which also appear in MS 15937) must refer to the manuscript volume he consulted at Pitfour Castle. There is nothing to suggest that Buchan ever saw any other manuscript than one dated 1630.\(^{13}\) Buchan’s transcript is

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\(^{10}\) They are ‘Sumtyme have I sein whein the world hes been merrie’ (titled by Buchan ‘Its a vonder to see how this world does goe’, after the refrain) and ‘My love band me with a kisse’, titled ‘James Heruie’ by Buchan. This title also occurs in MS 15937. The two poems occur on ff. 62-63 and f. 100 respectively. Buchan, *Ballads*, I, pp. xvii-xviii.


\(^{13}\) In Appendix Four, Table 2, are listed all the poems that Buchan copied from MS X, and the corresponding folio numbers of the relevant poems in MS 15937. One curious fact is the inclusion of ‘Now for to tell you will I turn / Of [the] batayl of Bannock burn’ (ff. 276v-77r) at the very end of MS
valuable, as his poems follow the same order of those in MS 15937. On Buchan’s ff. 256r to 267v, though he leaves out much more from his copy text, the order of the poems follows exactly that as in Robertson (with the one exception of f. 263v); then, after f. 267v follow five more poems. What this indicates is that Buchan read MS X and initially copied whichever poems he liked, in the order in which he found them. Subsequently, he went back into MS X and selected a few more. Since both transcripts follow roughly the same order of poems, it may be assumed that the scribe of MS 15937 followed the original MS X closely.

Stewart’s tantalising account cannot be discarded and provides its own problems. He describes a manuscript that is 260 pages long and contains ‘poems, songs and short tracts’. Firstly, ‘short tracts’, particularly following the labels ‘poems’ and ‘songs’, may imply works in prose, absent from both transcripts. Secondly, as stated above, MS 15937 consists of 215 folios, equalling 215 pages as all verso sides are left blank. Only pure conjecture can explain the discrepancy of 45 pages between the lost original and the transcript: a different-sized hand, paper size, or selective copying could all allow for the difference. Perhaps the nineteenth-century copyist of MS 15937 decided to copy all poetry and songs, but discarded the ‘tracts’ – it is difficult to know. It seems impossible that Stewart saw MS 15937 and mistook it for an original early seventeenth-century manuscript: the paper of MS 15937 is clearly watermarked with a date, 1823; Sketches was published in 1822 and Stewart’s preface is dated 24 April 1821. Finally, it seems that it was Stewart’s book that drew Buchan’s attention to MS X, and that the latter was copied by Buchan only subsequently, and his selection of two poems printed in 1828.

In this increasingly bewildering array of imperfect evidence, a final matter yet further confounds issues. On f. 53v of MS 15937, it is noted that ‘What follows is written in a different hand – more modern – by a different poet [person?] too’. This note, pencilled in by an unknown hand, raises serious questions. Was MS 15937 composed from two different sources? Or was MS X a single source collected or composed by at least two different hands, something either unnoticed or unmentioned by Stewart? The occurrence of the two dates, 1630 and 1643, short of a mistranscription or simple mistake, can only be explained by the existence of two different texts. It is not inconceivable that these two, both by Robertson, had been bound together and jointly served as copy text for MS 15937. Stewart’s ‘tracts’ might be considered evidence that an unknown nineteenth-century editor stands between Margaret Robertson’s lost original manuscripts and the
manuscripts that have survived. If we work on the assumption, as supported by the pencilled note on f. 53v of MS 15937, that Robertson produced more than one text, then what is now found between ff. 1-53 and between ff. 54-215 might have originated from her separate manuscript items. Unless Robertson’s lost texts surface, this problem is unlikely to be solved. It must be remembered that MS 15937 is not as unified a collection as it appears at first sight, and that its steady and graceful nineteenth-century hand may obscure any number of sources.

Considering the problematic relationship between MS 15937 and the lost MS X, a brief note on the transcription’s reliability is in order. Whereas it is difficult to make definite claims, it appears from the transcript that care was taken to retain Scots spelling, and faithfully to render stanza forms and the order of the contents. Concerning spelling, on several occasions the scribe inserts corrections: on f. 213, for instance, English ‘heart’, is corrected to Scots ‘hairt’; similarly ‘peace’ (f. 133) is corrected to ‘peice’. Concerning the order of the poems, on f. 107 the scribe mistakenly begins to transcribe ‘Fyr that most flame’, finishes the first stanza, but then transcribes ‘My love is forsaken me’, only to return to the earlier poem on f. 109, thus correcting the supposed earlier eye-skip. Relating to Peter Buchan’s transcripts, Bawcutt concludes, while taking into account his sometimes questionable editorial practices, that ‘he here attempts to follow the spelling and grammar of a seventeenth-century original fairly closely’. She offers as evidence the frequent use of ‘v’ for consonantal ‘w’: the same can be seen throughout MS 15937.16 It may be assumed, then, that the copyist attempted closely to reproduce Robertson’s manuscript(s). However, this is not to say that the transcript is without problems: it is difficult to surmise whether the mistakes are Robertson’s or the later scribe’s. On the part of the latter, we should at least allow for small mistakes in transcribing, such as occasional substitution of ‘wh-’ for Scots ‘quh-’ in Scottish poems. Larger problems, such as missing words, obvious mistranscriptions, or incomplete texts like ‘The Lamentatioune of a Sheep-heard’ (ff. 48-53) could equally originate from MS X or have arisen with MS 15937 itself. That the scribe of MS 15937 faced problems with his/her copy text is indicated by the many question marks in brackets that suggest, presumably, illegible or difficult words. Words are also occasionally underlined to indicate uncertainty on the scribe’s part. At times, the sense is easy enough to reconstruct, while in other instances scribal corruption renders some meanings hopelessly obscure.

One example of intelligent copying of clearly deficient lines in MS X may be found on f. 110: where Robertson (or the scribe of MS X) originally wrote ‘meekes’, the scribe of MS 15937 recognises that in a series of complimentary epithets to a lady, ‘Wisdom meekes wertew grace / suetnes modestie bewtie bot measure’, ‘meekes’ should surely read ‘meeknes’ and so pens this in the margin. Similarly, in the same stanza, the same lady who is ‘rich in bewtie and heavinlye

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reasone’ is supposed by the scribe to be rich in ‘heavinlye treasure’ instead, to rhyme with ‘measure’; ‘treasure’ is added to the stanza, within brackets.

All transcriptions below are taken verbatim from the manuscript, even when it is obviously wrong, as in Montgomerie’s ‘Lyk as the doul solsequium with care overcome’ (f. 204), where ‘doul’ should read ‘dum’. Errors of this kind, unfortunately, are rife throughout MS 15937. In the discussion that follows, the textual problems as outlined above are constantly taken into account; it is also assumed, however, that it is possible to read between the lines, and to reconstruct to some extent Robertson’s activities as a scribe. An extremely cautious approach is necessary, yet these textual problems should not stand in the way of discussing the contents of this important Scottish miscellany.

The Robertsons of Lude
In his introduction to *Ancient Ballads and Songs*, Buchan notes the following inscription in MS X: ‘This Buick perteens to a verie honourable womane, Margarat Robertsoone, relict of vmquhile Alexander Steuart of Bonskeid, Anno Domini 1630’. MS 15937 shows the exact same inscription, with only some minor differences in spelling:

Margarat Robertsoone
with my hand
1630.

This buik perteenes to a verie
honourable womane

Margarat Robertsoone
Relict of umquhll Alexander Steuart
of Bonskeid

Anno Domini
1630. (f. 1)

Relating to Robertson, Bawcutt concludes that ‘very little seems to be known of her life, but her father and her husband, Alexander Stewart of Bonskeid, possessed estates in Perthshire, near Blair Athol’. Indeed, the production and preservation of the manuscript can be located precisely in Perthshire. Buchan and Stewart disagree over Margaret’s parentage: Buchan identifies John Robertson of Lude as her father; Stewart finds George Robertson of Fascally. In fact, both estates are very near to each other, and the families are intricately intertwined. The Robertson of Lude family papers held at the NAS, and Gordon MacGregor’s *Red Book of Perthshire*, provide more

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19 While copying out Stewart’s observations about MS X, there where Stewart wrote ‘daughter of George Robertson of Fascally’ Buchan inserted ‘daughter of John Robertson of Lude’. It seems Buchan must have received information unavailable to Stewart. As it turns out, both were wrong.
information. Margaret is the fifth child of Agnes Gordon and Alexander Robertson, son of John Robertson of Lude. She must have married, first, Robert Robertson of Fascally (second son of George Robertson; this is where Stewart’s confusion might stem from). We know of the marriage only because she obtained a divorce, or perhaps a marriage agreement was annulled before the marriage took place. In any case, Robert discharged Alexander from his daughter’s ‘tocher’ of £1000 Scots in a document dated 7 August 1610. She later remarried Alexander Stewart of Bonskeid, but as is evident from a document settling a dispute regarding the lands of Wester Clune between Margaret and her son James Stewart on the one part, and Neil MacPherson and his wife Christian Stewart on the other, Margaret was ‘Relict [widow] of vmq uhi ll Alexander Stewart of Bonskeid ’ at least by 7 November 1629. Finally, Bawcutt had already noticed that the NLS holds a reproduction of a letter from Montrose (MS 2617, f. 2 (reproduction), f. 3 (transcription)), dated 22 June 1646, which suggests that Margaret and her son John Stewart raised soldiers for the Royalist cause in the civil war. Margaret is styled here ‘lyfrenterix of the lands of Boranich’. Unfortunately, the family papers yield little more information about Margaret Robertson in particular. Much more can be said, though, of the family in more general terms.

Throughout almost four centuries, a cultural interest can be traced among the Robertsons of Lude. To begin with, two musical instruments now considered national treasures, the Lamont harp and Queen Mary’s Harp, were in the possession of this family. According to John Gunn (writing in 1807), the ancient Lamont Harp travelled to Lude with Lilias Lamont, who c. 1464 married Charles Robertson. Two generations later Margaret’s grandfather John Robertson married Beatrix Gardyn, who in 1563 allegedly was presented with a harp by Mary, Queen of Scots, who was said to be out on a hunting expedition with the Earl of Atholl. Several versions of this story circulate, most famously perhaps that by James Hogg, whose The Queen’s Wake, loosely based on the instruments at Lude, romantically re-imagines a bardic competition for two priceless harps. The presence of these instruments in the Robertson of Lude household leads Gunn to interesting speculation:

In the same manner it must be inferred, from Queen Mary’s having, in about a hundred years afterwards, presented the other lady [Beatrix Gardyn] with her own

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21 NAS GD132/301.
22 NAS GD132/59.
23 Both harps are currently on display in the Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh.
24 John Gunn, An Historical Enquiry Respecting the Performance on the Harp in the Highlands of Scotland; from the Earliest Times, until it was Discontinued, About the Year 1734 (Edinburgh: Constable and Murray, 1807), pp. 1, 73.
Harp, that she was also a performer on that instrument, and had been taught by a master, who probably had taught her, as well as others, in a very different part of Scotland, her father’s residence being at no great distance from Aberdeen; and from both instances we must necessarily conclude, that the Harp was taught and performed upon, in different parts of the Highlands of Scotland, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and that playing on, or singing to, the Harp, was an accomplishment of the ladies of the Highlands of that period.26

Gunn pictures a lively musical household, where such sophisticated instruments as the harp, difficult to play and tune, are taught by expert music masters and played upon by the ladies of the house. For confirmation that the harps were continuously played and not simply ceremonial objects, Gunn relates the visit of Roderick Morrison, or Ruairi Dall (Blind Roderick), distinguished Highland harper, to the Lude household in 1650. At this occasion, Morrison is said to have composed *Suipeir Thighearna Leoid*, or *The Laird of Lude’s Supper*, an air that survives today.27

Gunn’s early-nineteenth century scholarship leaves something to be desired, however, and his more fanciful conjectures are exposed by Sanger and Kinnaird in *Tree of Strings: A History of the Harp in Scotland*. Firstly, documentary evidence is too scanty to prove exactly how the instruments came to Lude, and Sanger and Kinnaird offer alternatives itineraries.28 Secondly, relating to a harper’s visit in 1650, Gunn confuses two musicians of the same name: Irishman Ruairi Dall O’Cathain, and the Scot Ruairi Dall Morrison. As the latter was not born before about 1656, he could not have visited Lude in 1650. His Irish namesake however, an itinerant harper who frequently visited Scotland, ‘may well have been at Lude much earlier than 1650’. Since ‘there was without doubt a striking concentration of Harpers in Perthshire in the 17th century […] it seems very possible that Ruairi Dall O’Cathain might have settled in Atholl’.29

What is most striking in Sanger and Kinnaird’s argument is that musical activity appears continuously, not only in the household of Lude, but throughout the Atholl area. Margaret Robertson’s manuscript should be considered in direct relation to the locality where it was most probably compiled. It is within this cultured, musical environment that Robertson’s large collection of songs gains extra meaning. Evidently, where sources are lacking it is impossible to prove a sustained continuation of musical interest from one generation to the next, or to prove Robertson’s involvement in this. It is well documented, however, that to a contemporary audience the boundaries between music and poetry were virtually non-existent, something that is attested by the many Scottish manuscript anthologies of particularly the seventeenth century that indiscriminately merge music, poetry, and ballads from a variety of sources.30 Whereas it is difficult to assess the

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29 Sanger and Kinnaird, p. 107.
30 For a general overview of Scottish music, collectors, and musical manuscripts and their content, see Elliott and Rimmer, *A History of Scottish Music*, pp. 41-48. See further note 60 below.
level of interaction between (Gaelic) folk culture and Scots or English music, still the two strands reinforce the idea that the Robertsons of Lude were a sophisticated and cultured family, and connected to the music of the Gaelic Highlands as strongly as to the latest love-lyrics (and perhaps even the music) from London. The compilatory work of Margaret Robertson confirms that whereas in the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries female involvement in the arts always seems relatively scarce, women do frequently feature as collectors. It is significant that both the harps and the literary manuscripts have come down via the female line.31

**Manuscript Content**

A vast collection of approximately 175 poems, MS 15937 defies categorisation. In the space of a chapter, it is impossible, unfortunately, to do full justice to every single poem, also because many textual issues (relating to source materials) need first to be addressed. Yet, for a measured appreciation of Robertson’s editorial practice, it is essential to show both the breadth and depth of the collection. The full content of MS 15937 is listed in Appendix Four, Table 1. The manuscript can be divided roughly into sections, based on form and genre, or subject matter. First comes a group of twenty-five sonnets, ff. 2-16. Only five short fragments (f. 17) divide the sonnets from the next significant group, four ‘dyers’, on ff. 18-28. Two long stanzaic poems follow, ‘Amintas Ghoste’ and ‘Argulus his Letter to Parthenia his mistress’, on ff. 28-36. The remainder of the manuscript is largely made up of amatory verse and songs of varying length, stanza form, and quality. One notable long work is ‘I caitie crete languishes’ (ff. 74-84), a penitential poem whose speaker laments the infirmities of old age and his life of sin and profanity, but who finally seeks reconciliation with God. Tucked away in between several rather conventional love lyrics are two series of bawdy songs both in English and in Scots, on ff. 144-68, and ff. 173-76. A closing section starts at f. 212 and runs until f. 215; as will be explored below, the poems and fragments from this closing section may be read as a collection of verse of personal relevance to the compiler.

An important issue to confront is the plethora of source material that Robertson must have had available. In the age of heavy anglicisation in Scotland on the one hand, and the scoticising of English originals by scribes on the other, it is not always straightforward to trace a poem’s origin. Even poems showing distinct Scots rhymes, for instance, may still turn out to be loose adaptations of English material.32 A large number of poems are recognisably Scottish, however, because the

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31 A sustained interest in music and literature runs through the family until at least the nineteenth century. Elsewhere in the family papers (NAS GD132/867; GD132/868) are two bundles of poetry, songs, and music, dating from the early eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Also, in the Perth and Kinross Council Archive is kept Major General Robertson of Lude’s ‘manuscript volume of poetry, letters and other papers’ (GB/252/MS14/80), collecting materials in English and in Gaelic. Unfortunately, no obvious connections can be made between MS 15937 and these later collections.

32 This problem is not unique to MS 15937, since various English poems in Scottish dress have mistakenly been assigned to Scots poets. One example is the ‘Earth upon Earth’ poem, ascribed to Mersar in the Maitland Folio manuscript and to Dunbar in the Reidpeth manuscript: it is in fact English in origin. See Bawcutt, ‘Miscellanies’, p. 201.
source or author is known. Sixty-six English poems and songs in the manuscript have already been identified, as evidenced by a modern list, pasted onto a flyleaf (f. ii) in the front of MS 15937, which cross-references the relevant poems to the most exhaustive anthology of Elizabethan and Jacobean song-books printed between 1588 and 1632, E.H. Fellowes’s *English Madrigal Verse*.\footnote{English Madrigal Verse 1588-1632, ed. by E.H. Fellowes, rev. by Frederick Sternfeld and David Greer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967). Going into much more textual detail and providing non-modernised texts, but covering the same ground as Fellowes, is *Lyrics from English Airs*, ed. by Edward Doughtie (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970). Organised chronologically, and drawing first and foremost on printed sources, is *Elizabethan Lyrics*, ed. by Norman Ault (London: Faber and Faber, 1949); another anthology continues the work of Ault, but prints only songs from manuscript: *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, ed. by John P. Cutts (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1959). Drawing more exclusively on bawdy material is *Merry Songs and Ballads, Prior to the Year A.D. 1800*, ed. by John S. Farmer, 5 vols ([privately printed], 1897).}

This is a good start, but the list is far from complete, however, and to locate and identify all of Robertson’s manuscript and printed sources, both Scottish and English, is a daunting undertaking. As will be shown below, many poems can be located in printed and manuscript sources not previously noted. Even in light of new discoveries, however, over sixty poems remain unclaimed, or unique.

In terms of likely source material for Robertson, meaningful groups may be discerned within the manuscript. For example, of the eighteen poems on ff. 64-88, eleven are found in John Dowland’s *1597 First Book of Songes or Ayres*. Even though this group is broken up by ‘Praise me as ye think caus quhy’ (f. 68), a popular Scottish song, and by ‘I catiue curate languishes’ (f. 74), a long devotional poem unique to the Robertson manuscript, the eleven Dowland poems nevertheless suggest that they might have been collected at a time that the printed book, or a manuscript copy, was available to the compiler, perhaps on loan. Similarly, the four songs on ff. 184-88 derive from Robert Jones’s *1601 Second Booke of Songs and Ayres*; the four following that, on ff. 189-91, are printed in Thomas Ford’s *Mysicke of Svndrie Kindes* of 1607. Both groups of four follow the ordering as found in the prints. Whereas most of these groups are interspersed with material from other sources, they are coherent enough to suggest an underlying order loosely based on the various source collections.

Materials that do not derive from the English song books also come in small clusters: ff. 54-63, ff. 94-100, ff. 110-16, ff. 125-27, ff. 132-38, ff. 144-56, and ff. 204-15. One of these groups, ff. 56-63, is unified by a repeated inscription, ‘finis amen so be it’ (once simply ‘finis amen’, f. 62), suggesting the underlying work of a particular scriber or source, much like the scribal additions of ‘nescio’ to several poems in the Laing manuscript. This group has further significance in that several poems are clearly of Scots descent. Possibly the first of this group (though without subscription), is an extremely bad transcription of Alexander Scott’s ‘Depart depart depart’, on ff. 54-56. The penultimate stanza lacks five lines, the final stanza lacks several words, and stanza three repeats the closing five lines of stanza one. The second poem of this group, ‘I saw a nimph vpon yon plaine’, is a pastoral wooing song (f. 56; it then reoccurs on f. 126). It is a simple song, and
follows the suit of ‘ane young man’ to ‘ane nimph vpon yon plaine’ through to its end. When the nymph is swayed and offers her ‘hand’ – perhaps in marriage, or in anticipation of further sexual favours – the youth recoils, stating that ‘Now haue I gottin that I long sought’, in other words, his euphemistic ‘one poor kis’, and he promptly abandons her. The next poem is Montgomerie’s amatory ‘Even death [behold] I breath’, which in turn is followed by three anonymous lyrics: ‘Fairweill peace cair is my cace’ (f. 58), ‘Impassionate in pensiue plyt’ (f. 60), and the incomplete ‘In [blank] I am allon’ (f. 61). Another song follows, this time from an English source: ‘Not full twelf yeiris twis told a wearrie breath’, which was printed in Thomas Ford’s *Mysicke of Syndrie Kindes*. The final poem of this group, and the last to be subscribed ‘finis amen so be it’, is ‘Sumtyme haue I sein whein the world hes bein mirrie’ (f. 62-63). Although no textual source for this has survived, this lyric might be connected to a tune featured in Gordon of Straloch’s lute book (NLS Adv. MS 5.2.18), a Scottish musical manuscript of c. 1627-29 (further explored below, see pp. 164-65). Whatever Robertson’s source will have been for the poems on ff. 54-63, on the basis of its repeated inscription it seems likely that she found them all in one place. They are, however, formally and thematically still diverse, and ultimately derive from quite divergent sources. Finally, the many errors and omissions in this section of MS 15937 indicate this underlying source must have caused Robertson, and then the later copyist, considerable transcribing difficulties.

It is very difficult to make any inferences about the way in which Robertson’s MS X, and, by extension, MS 15937, might have been put together. It seems plausible at least that Robertson had various manuscripts or printed books at her disposal – for instance a collection of sonnets, a collection of ‘dyers’, and one or more musical prints and manuscripts (certainly containing the words, and perhaps even music). There is very little indication why the manuscript was compiled. George Bannatyne, for instance, wrote with an audience in mind, whereas Mary Maitland compiled her Quarto manuscript as a memorial to her father. No clues suggest that Robertson collected her poems and songs for any other reason than private use, only to be shared perhaps with members of the family, the household, or friends. Since MS X has been lost, it is extremely difficult to determine whether the content of MS 15937 was collected with an underlying structure in mind. In EUL Laing MS III.447, for instance, it is possible to show a thematic progression, and scribal awareness of the pages in the manuscript that preceded their own contributions. Even if such a process would be detectable in MS 15937, we cannot be sure that this is Robertson’s work. For that reason, the poems shall be treated as distinct groups, mostly defined by genre or type (for instance sonnets, ‘dyers’, bawdy songs). Whereas within these groups connections between individual poems sometimes become evident, it remains difficult to detect a larger organisational principle. With the exception of some sections (for instance ff. 212-15, see below) it will be assumed that Robertson simply copied whatever became available to her, in no significant order. As the compilation of miscellanies is always partly dependent on circumstance, and partly on design, the safest way to approach MS 15937 is to suppose that a large collection of copy texts must have
made their way to Lude (or vice versa), after which Robertson, according to a loosely applied selective rationale, proceeded to copy poems and songs into her manuscript(s). As will become clear, the Robertson manuscript, more than any of the manuscripts discussed so far, needs also to be considered in the context of Scottish seventeenth-century musical manuscripts. Although no music is contained within its pages, the number of Scottish songs that is included is considerable.

**The English Songs and Poems**

Before exploring the material in Scots, or seemingly of Scots descent, it will be useful to see where Robertson may have found her English songs and poems. As stated above, sixty-six titles have already been traced to a large number of English printed books. These songs ultimately derive from at least seventeen different late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth century song books, ranging from William Byrd’s *Psalmes, Sonets and Songs* (1588) to Thomas Campion’s *The Third and Fovrth Booke of Ayres* (probably published in 1618). Appendix Four, Table 3, provides a full list of all books and corresponding songs and poems. A great number of different English song books must have been in circulation in Scotland soon after they were printed in London. By way of comparison, *Songs and Fancies* (which was printed and introduced by John Forbes, but probably compiled by Thomas Davidson), the first secular song book to be published in Scotland in 1662 (and revised in 1666 and 1682) ultimately draws on nineteen English song books: eight books provided songs for both Robertson and *Songs and Fancies*.35

Most song books fall into one of two categories: Fellowes distinguishes between the books of madrigal composers, and those of lutenists. ‘The madrigal took the form of unaccompanied song for at least three, and rarely for more than six, voice-parts’. By comparison,

the Airs of the lutenists usually took the form of solo-songs with several stanzas of words, for each of which, as a general rule, the same music was repeated […] When performed as solo-songs they were accompanied with the lute, reinforced by a bass viol or some such instrument, to add support and body to the general effect; while occasionally, as in three of the songs of Dowland in *A Pilgrimes Solace*, more elaborate instrumental accompaniment was added.36

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Thus, madrigals are sung unaccompanied, as opposed to airs, which are sung to accompaniment of a variety of instruments: the lute, bass-viol, viola da gambo, or orpharion. Of the seventeen song books that can be identified as possible source material for Robertson, fourteen are books of airs; only three contain madrigals. This overwhelming predominance of songs set explicitly to musical accompaniment suggests that, if indeed Robertson copied her poems from the books directly, she may have had an interest in the music, and in the performance aspect of songs.

In addition to the songs and poems located in *English Madrigal Verse*, many more sources can be identified that have not previously been noted. ‘O quhat a Plague is love’ (ff. 48-54) was printed in England as a black-letter ballad before 1603, and collected in the Shirburn Manuscript (as well as in the later Roxburghe collection).37 ‘Shall I waisting in dispair’ (f. 90) was printed in 1615 in George Wither’s *Fidelia* – this song has also been transcribed into the Bannatyne manuscript as a later addition, and features in the Leyden vocal manuscript of 1639; both these versions allow many more liberties with the words to Wither’s song.38 Robertson’s version is close to Wither’s 1615 print, but omits the fourth stanza. In one instance (the first four lines of stanza three), the Robertson poem is perhaps closer to Bannatyne than to the print:

Shall a womans vertewes mone
    [scribal error for ‘move’]
Me to perrish for hir loue
Or hir vorthie merites knawn
Mak me quhyt forget my awne. (f. 90)

In Wither’s print, the last two lines quoted read ‘Or her wel deseruings knowne / Make me quite forget mine owne’. In Bannatyne, these lines read ‘Or a Womanis meritis knowin caus me quyt forgett my awin’. In other words, in both manuscript sources ‘merites’ replace ‘deseruings’. Robertson’s inclusion of Wither’s song is clearly in line with popular taste in Scotland at the time, and suggests how the canon of English songs in Scotland was sustained by repeated copying into verse anthologies.

The *Golden Garland*, a miscellany compiled by Richard Johnson, and printed in London in 1620, may have been the ultimate source for another two songs: ‘Come suet love let sorrow cease’ (f. 120) and ‘How now schepheard quhat meanes that’ (f. 134).39 It is evident from other sources

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that this first song from *The Golden Garland* had some currency in Scotland, as Elizabeth Melville, Lady Culross, reworked ‘Come suet love’ as a religious lyric (entitled ‘Come sweet LORD, let sorrow ceass’).  

Both songs from the *Garland* also appear in all three editions of *Songs and Fancies* – this certainly confirms that several of the songs that appeared in *Songs and Fancies* had already been present in Scottish (musical) manuscripts for many decades.

Without a doubt, many more poems in MS 15937 that appear unique will in fact have been lifted from the English tradition, and survive perhaps in less well-known manuscripts, music books, ballad collections, or other sources. One example is ‘As on a day Sabina was asleep’ on f. 145, which Margaret Crum also finds, in incomplete form, in Bodleian, MS Rawlinson Poet 172, f. 2. 

Hyder Rollins traces the same poem to the collection of Roxburghe Ballads. Rollins’s index provides another title, ‘As at noone Dulcina rested’ (f. 164), which was printed as an undated black-letter ballad and attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh. This, again, is also collected in the Roxburghe Ballads.

Certainly one and perhaps two Robertson poems have survived in English commonplace books now held at Yale University. The first is the bawdy poem, or song, ‘Walking in a midow faire’ (f. 153), which in the Osborn manuscript (Beinecke Library Osborn b 200, p. 370) is entitled ‘A Wanton wench hath ne’er enough’. MS 15937’s ‘Ane puritane of latt’ (f. 150) shares its *incipit* with another poem from the same Osborn manuscript, on p. 363; this poem also features in yet another commonplace book, that of Tobias Alston, dated c. 1639 (Beinecke Library Osborn b 197, p. 33). These are the first and the final stanzas of the latter poem in MS 15937:

Ane puritane of latt
And also ane holie brother
In catishisame seat
Full faine he wald haue usit hir
As his mark (f. 150)

Our elders thought it meit
That privie meditatioune
For holines sould weep
And suffer still tentatioune
For the sprit. (f. 151)

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43 Parks, *Index*, entries A0395 and W0016.

44 I have not yet consulted these manuscripts myself. On the basis of the first and last lines of the relevant poems listed in Parks, however, it appears extremely likely that Robertson’s poems are in fact (versions of) the works that are described by Parks.
The poem relates the puritan’s sexual misconduct with ‘ane bab of grace / And child of
reformatione’. This song was also printed in 1661 (in Merry Drollery), but clearly circulated in
manuscript much earlier.45

One of the poems mentioned above, ‘Walking in a medow faire’, and two more from the
Robertson manuscript, ‘Methought my loue was in hir bed’ (f. 149), and ‘When Phoebus adrest’ (f.
151), also survive in the mid-seventeenth century Percy Folio manuscript (the song on f. 149 in
Percy starts ‘I dreamed my loue lay in her bedd’).46 Bishop Percy’s Reliques of Ancient Poetry,
published in 1765, relied to some extent on this latter source, but the whole manuscript was not
published until edited by Hales and Furnivall at the end of the nineteenth century. Victorian
propriety frowned on those songs in the Percy Folio manuscript that the editors were ashamed to
print, and which indeed the bishop himself had already marked out with three crosses, indicating
bawdy content. Yet, it is exactly those songs that appealed to Robertson, and which she copied into
her miscellany. Clearly, the early-seventeenth century Perthshire anthology could match London’s
interest in ‘the wonderful intellectual energy of Elizabeth’s and James I’s time ran riot
somewhat’.47

On f. 17 of MS 15937, the following verses on friendship are included:

Lyke as the purest gold in fyrie flame is tried
Evine soe is faith of friendis in hard estaite descryed
Giff hard missape doe mak ye affrayit
Each of thy friendis doe flie away
And he which erst full frendlie stood to the
A friend noe more to thy poore staite is he.

This derives from an English print of 1567, William Painter’s The Second Tome of the Palace of
Pleasure.48 Painter’s sizeable book is divided up into what he terms ‘nouels’, prose translations of
histories and romances from several languages, which were an influential source for many
Elizabethan dramatists.49 The friendship poem features in the story of ‘Salimbene and Angelica’,

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45  The song is also reprinted in Farmer, Merry Songs, I, 133-34.
46  Bishop Percy’s Folio Manuscript: Ballads and Romances, ed. by John. W. Hales and Frederick W.
    Furnivall, 4 vols (privately printed, 1867-68), IV, pp. 3-5, 7-8, 102-3. See also the reprint and
    introduction to Loose and Humorous Songs from Bishop Percy’s Folio Manuscript, ed. by Frederick J.
    pp. 197-99, discusses a song, ‘When Phoebus did rest’, or ‘When Phoebus addres’d his course to the
    West’, the words of which were printed in a relatively late musical anthology, Wit and Drollery, ed. John
    Phillips (London: [n.p.], 1656), but a Dutch song book (Friesche lust-hof, ed. by Jan Jansz. Starter
    (Amsterdam: [n.p.], 1621)) collects the music, entitled ‘O doe not, doe not kil me yet for I am not &c’.
    This title is the refrain of the Robertson poem ‘When Phoebus adrest’.
47  The phrase is Furnivall’s, Loose and Humorous Songs, p. iii.
48  William Painter, The Second Tome of the Palace of Pleasure, conteyning more of goodly Histories,
    Tragicall matters, and other Morall argument, very requisite for delighte and profit (London: [n.p.],
the thirtieth ‘nouel’. There is no need to suppose Robertson ever saw more of Painter’s book, as the verse may easily have been transmitted separately.

Another influential Elizabethan translation that may have supplied at the very least the idea for a poem in MS 15937 is Bartholomew Yong’s *Diana*, printed in 1598.⁵⁰ This was a tripartite work: the first part was a translation of Jorge de Montemayor’s *Diana*, a very popular Spanish pastoral romance; the second and third parts were later additions to Montemayor by Perez and Del Polo. The first quatrains of one of Robertson’s sonnets (for more on the sonnets, see below), ‘He that in fredome lives may proudlie boast’ (f. 15), seems to owe a great deal to a poem in Yong’s translation of Del Polo, *Enamoured Diana*. This is the opening stanza (of a three-stanza song):

He that in freedome lets it proude and braue,
   Let him not liue too carelesse of himselfe:
For in an instant he may be a slaue
   To mighty Loue, and serue that wanton elfe:
And let that hart that yet was neuer tamed,
   Feare at the last by him to be inflamed.⁵¹

This poem follows a long debate on the nature of Cupid, and indeed, of love poetry: ‘All Louers verses are full of dolour, compounded with sighes, blottet with teares, and sung with agonies’. The Robertson sonnet opens thus:

He that in friedome liwes may proudlie boast
   Yit latt him not be caireles of his staite
Fyer is ane instant loue may make him crost
   And doune his fortoune and his cruel faitt. (f. 15)

Neither poem is particularly original and all symptoms of infatuation are well known; yet, the echoes of ‘friedome’, ‘proudlie’, ‘caireles’, and ‘instant’ suggest that the Robertson sonnet was influenced by, if not modelled on, Yong’s translation (alternatively, del Polo’s original and the Robertson poem may share a common model).

Another similar type of dependence of a Robertson poem on a possible English source can be found in ‘I can not injoy peace’ (f. 192), towards the end of the manuscript:

I can not injoy peace
   And yet I haue no weare
I burne I friz with cold
   I hoop and yet doe feare
I mount the heavins aboue
   The lawer is my fall
I nothing hold in hand
   And yet I compass all.

⁵⁰ Bartholomew Yong, *Diana, of George of Montemayor* (London: [n.p.], 1598).
⁵¹ Yong, p. 383.
This is the first of four stanzas. The model for this is, ultimately, Petrarch’s ‘Pace non trovo et non ò da far guerra’, first translated, or paraphrased, into English by Thomas Wyatt as ‘I fynde no peace and all my warr is done’.\(^{52}\) Whereas the Robertson poem departs from its immediate Petrarchist roots in the second stanza, it returns to the model in the first four lines of the third and fourth stanzas:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Loue will not that I liue} \\
\text{Nor yet will let me die} \\
\text{Nor will he hold me fast} \\
\text{Nor yet will set me frie} \\
\text{[...]}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{I want both eyes and toung} \\
\text{Yet can I sie and speik} \\
\text{I daylie wish for death} \\
\text{Yet efter liue I seik.}
\end{align*}
\]

This Robertson poem adheres closely to its source, either Petrarch, Wyatt, or another intermediate translation; in some of the wording it is closer to the Italian original than for instance William Fowler’s ‘I burne by hope’, a sonnet from the \textit{Tarantula of Love}, based on Petrarch’s ‘Pace non trovo’, employing that much-loved endless play on antitheses.\(^{53}\) There is nothing particularly remarkable about this poem in MS 15937, but the example serves to illustrate how difficult it is to pinpoint exact sources for some of the poems. Interesting in the context of so many songs in the manuscript is that Wyatt’s sonnet appears to have been set to music, which does not now survive. A musical arrangement (but no words) entitled ‘No peace I find’ survives in manuscript (BL MS Add. 31992), but we cannot be certain that Wyatt’s words were once sung to that particular tune. Nevertheless, it seems clear that a song once existed based on Wyatt’s sonnet, or on another similar translation of Petrarch.\(^{54}\) ‘I can not injoy peace’ in MS 15937 may well have been a song too. Another poem may be identified by, or at least associated with, the title of a popular tune: ‘Ane lustie youthfull gallant’ (f. 127). Two versions of the ‘Lusty Gallant’ tune have survived, and many songs were composed to fit the two melodies.\(^{55}\) Since the refrain and repetition so clearly mark this Robertson poem as a song, it might be related to the ubiquitous Elizabethan ballad ‘Lusty Gallant’.

It is impossible to research the provenance of each individual English song in MS 15937 (and, by implication, to point to an exact source for Robertson), as the textual and musical history of many songs is very complex. An example of a lyric in MS 15937 which had already enjoyed a


\(^{55}\) For the music and a discussion of the song, see Simpson, \textit{Broadside Ballad}, pp. 476-78.
long life before it was printed is ‘His goldene lockes tyme hath to siluer turned’ (f. 64). Collected by John Dowland in 1597, Fellowes records it was sung in 1590 when Sir Henry Lee resigned his title of Queen’s Champion; the lyrics were twice printed elsewhere, too.  

Examples such as these abound, and a thorough investigation of the critical apparatuses of Fellowes, Doughtie and Ault will result in a labyrinthine network of manuscripts and prints. Another example is ‘Now I see thy lockes art but fained’ (ff. 91-92), ascribed to Thomas Lodge. It was printed firstly in 1593, in *Phillis: Honoured with Pastorall Sonnets, Elegies, and Amorous Delights*; secondly, in 1593 also, in *The Phoenix Nest*; thirdly, it appeared in Thomas Ford’s 1607 *Mysicke of Syndrie Kindes*.

Edward Doughtie traces the song, including the music, in five more manuscripts: BL MS Add. 24665 (1615-26), Rosenbach MS 239/27 (c. 1635), Folger MS V.a.345 (c. 1630), NLS Adv. MS 5.2.14 (c. 1640), and Bishop Smith’s MS, Carlisle Cathedral (c. 1637). Thus, the poem is printed first in a single-author book (Lodge’s *Phillis*), then in a miscellany (*Phoenix Nest*), and is subsequently underlaid to music by Ford. From there on, it acquires a life of its own and resurfaces in at least six manuscripts, MS 15937 included. Presuming that Robertson did indeed collect her songs c. 1630, it is fascinating to see that her scribal activities fit perfectly into the time frame (1620s to 1640s) of the production of the five English manuscripts that include this poem, as traced by Doughtie. This suggests that no real time lag prevented the inclusion of English song into Scottish manuscripts, and that the northern estate of Lude could easily partake in an English/Scottish trend of contemporary song compilation.

The seventeen English song books listed in Appendix Four, Table 3, comprise a very substantial collection by any standard, and a collection that may now be much enlarged again by the English sources identified above. The question that arises, then, is whether we can be sure that Robertson found her material in printed books. The songs may have derived from one or more unknown manuscripts, but there is no evidence for this. If her material derives from printed books, where would she have found such a large collection? Were the songs collected mainly as poetry, or, as is not inconceivable in the musical environment she grew up in, were they collected to be sung? It is certainly the case that Robertson’s selection of songs is in keeping with that of other Scottish musical manuscripts of the time. Several English prints supply no more than a single song – for instance, ‘With my louse my lyf is vaisted’ (f. 124) from Thomas Morley’s *First Book of Ayres* (1600), or ‘Come love lets walk into ye spring’ (f. 203) from Henry Youll’s *Canzonets to Three Voyces* (1608). Both these songs feature in other Scottish musical manuscripts, and when, several decades later, *Songs and Fancies* was compiled, the same single songs are selected again.

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The first edition of Cantus: Songs and Fancies, then, was certainly comprised of evergreens (this is not surprising perhaps, as many songs circulated for decades before they were printed). This also suggests that Robertson would not necessarily have needed access to Morley or Youll (and by implication to other printed books), but rather responded to a tradition that had already selected its favourites, perhaps handed down orally and in manuscript. Exactly what the missing link between Morley, Youll and Robertson might have been is difficult to establish, but it is important to realise that not all pieces of the puzzle have survived.

The editor of the above-mentioned manuscript of the Shirburn Ballads, Andrew Clark, struggled with similar problems. This English manuscript features ballads and songs from printed broadsides, probably from between 1600 and 1603 and between 1609 and 1616. Clark wonders ‘why the copyist set himself to write out so much printed matter […] and whence he got the necessary Broadsides’. Regarding the second question, he suggests either a wide circle of friends owning the material, or rather fancifully that the copyist ‘may have rented a house whose owner had papered the walls with them’. Clark even supplies evidence: ‘it will be remembered that John Aubrey […] saw the engraved description of Sir Philip Sidney’s funeral doing duty as a chimney-piece’. Notwithstanding the attraction of the image of a drawing room at Lude wall-papered with the songs of Scott and Montgomerie, it is safer to disregard Clark’s latter idea and presume instead that Robertson had an extensive circle of literary and music-minded friends. MS 15937 is testament to the cultural diversity present in the house of a small landed family away from the traditional cultural nexus of the court and the city.

Scottish Poems and Songs in Other Sources

It will be helpful to identify those items in Scots of which the authors are known, or which appear elsewhere anonymously, before exploring the remainder of unidentified poetry. Three Alexander Scott lyrics are preserved: ‘Depart, depart depart’ (f. 54), ‘How should my feeble bodye fur’ (f. 196) and ‘Quha list to leive or that law proue’ (f. 136) – the first two have also been set to music.

59 The Shirburn Ballads, p. 2.
60 Unfortunately, no single reference work exists that catalogues early modern Scottish music in its entirety, but several individual articles, editions, and theses, may help to identify many poems in the Robertson manuscript. A selection of Scottish songs is printed in Musica Britannica XV and in Musica Scotica II: Sixteenth-Century Scots Songs for Voice and Lute, ed. by Kenneth Elliott (Glasgow: University of Glasgow Music Department, 1996). Willsher, ‘Music in Scotland’, lists and inventorises over twenty musical manuscripts, and Evelyn Stell, ‘Sources of Scottish Instrumental Music 1603-1707’, 2 vols (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 1999), produced a database of Scottish instrumental music. Although Stell does not list vocal songs, still the titles to some of her instrumental tunes are revealing. A final indispensable work of reference is Terry, ‘John Forbes’s “Songs and Fancies”’. Also providing an extensive list of references to Scottish musical sources is Walter H. Rubsamen, ‘Scottish and English Music of the Renaissance in a Newly-Discovered Manuscript’, in Festschrift Heinrich Besseler, ed. by Eberhardt Klemm (Leipzig: Institut für Musikwissenschaften, 1961), pp. 259-84.


63 All further references are to the numbered songs in Elliott and Shire (for instance MB 53).

structure of the song, but multiple variants appear, ranging from individual words to complete lines. Stanza six of the Bannatyne text is moved to seventh place in Robertson’s manuscript; in sixth place the later text inserts a new stanza entirely. The last two stanzas of both manuscripts illustrate to what degree in Robertson’s manuscript the song has changed:

Thairfoir be trew but vairians
And I salbe as of befior
Vtherwayis generis discrepans
content yow / this ye get no moir.65

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Be just and trew butt varience
And I sall as I said before
Vtherwayes generes discrepance
Yow chuse ye get no more. (f. 69)

Variants may easily be explained, as Elliott and Shire comment that often ‘songs from the sixteenth century were less fortunate, surviving only in song-books, manuscripts or print, of a hundred years later. Here the texts have suffered change and decay, from the singer’s memory and the transcriber’s hand’.66 Although the general sense of the Bannatyne poem has been retained, the wording has been significantly changed. Elliott and Shire’s notion of ‘decay’, and, for instance, the ‘further loss and muddle [that] followed as English grammar, English vowel-sounds in rhymes and current poetic clichés supplanted earlier forms’, suggest that Scots characteristics had been lost by the time Robertson transcribed the lyric.67 Yet, an entirely positive aspect is that the appearance of this poem and others in a manuscript from the 1630s proves the longevity and malleability of such lyrics through the ages. When Bannatyne collected the song, it might already have been several decades old; yet it continued to be sung a century later.

‘Intill ane May morning’ (f. 94) was a well-known song, and exists in two versions: one a courtly lyric probably dating to the first half of the sixteenth century, the other ‘godlified’ for the Gude and Godlie Ballatis.68 The secular text surfaces in Robert Edward’s commonplace book (c. 1630-70), the music books of Louis de France and John Squyer (c. 1680 and 1701 respectively), and the song is also included in Songs and Fancies (all three editions); Robertson includes the secular version. Compared to the text printed by Elliott (from Robert Edward), Robertson’s text in the first line of every stanza omits a two-syllable word: thus, ‘Into a mirthfull May morning’ runs ‘Intill ane May morning’, similarly, ‘First, therefore when I did you know’ runs ‘First when I did yow knaw’. It is likely that these words were added or removed for the lines to better fit a tune. Shire discusses a similar practice, of removing iambic feet to fit the music, in Alexander Scott’s

65  Bannatyne Manuscript, IV, 1-2; cf. Fox and Ringler, f. 250r.
66  Musica Britannica XV, p. xxii.
67  Musica Britannica XV, p. xxii.
‘Depairte, depairte, depairte’ as it survived in the Wode part-books, where she notes that ‘the music [...] was matched with the words after the poem was written’.  

Another example of a secular ballad that has a spiritual counterpart, or contrafactum, is ‘Right sor opprest am I with pains smart’; yet again, Robertson copied the secular song. In another poem the manuscript, a hint might be contained of a godlified love lyric and its amorous original. The following is the last stanza of ‘My loue is bright as enbur bone’, a bitter-sweet lyric attempting to reconcile the speaker’s love for what appears to be a ‘bad’ woman (as he observes, ‘Wnder the rose both rid and quhyt / May be ane serpent of dispyte’):

For causes thrie I loue hir noght  
Ane caus that she is light of thought  
The secund she is door and thro  
The thrid it needs not (to) be sought  
She seames good and is not so. (f. 211)

Compare this to the single fragmentary stanza that appears on f. 95, straight after ‘Intill ane May morning’:

Sein in hir is no asperance  
Bot feinyet love and inconstance  
All haill my love on god I lay  
He is without all variance  
She seames god and is right sua.

Both stanzas are five-lined, in iambic tetrameters, and rhyme AABAB. In fact, the lines of f. 95 could perfectly be considered the end of the poem on f. 211 had the poet decided to turn away from his lady and towards God. Alternatively, this is the only remaining fragment of a longer spiritual reworking of the same text, along the lines of the other poems discussed above. No other traces of this lyrical fragment survive.

One of the earliest surviving Scottish part-songs is ‘O Lusty May’: collected in a wealth of music books, as well as in the Bannatyne manuscript, this is a true classic. Robertson does not disappoint, and included this song in her collection, but it is a version that is somewhat different from that found in Bannatyne and in the musical manuscripts. It is almost double the length – nine stanzas, against four in Bannatyne, and five, for instance, in Robert Edward’s commonplace book. In addition, the focus has changed. The Bannatyne song, after three stanzas of natural description, ends thus:

All luvaris that ar in cair  
To thair ladeis thay do repair

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69 Shire, Song, Dance and Poetry, pp. 58-59.  
70 For the godlified lyric, see Gude and Godlie Ballatis, pp. 62-63.  
71 For a list of sources, see Musica Britannica XV, p. 210 note 35; see also Bannatyne Manuscript, III, 300; cf. Fox and Ringler, f. 229v.
In fresch mornyngis (befoir the day) And ar in mirth ay mair and mair Throuch glaidnes of this lusty may.

The Robertson text matches the initial stages of the poem, and even embellishes on the rich description of a May morning:

On herbes the balmie liquor sueit Bedewes the virgines hunteres feett With subtill shoures before the day Rejoyes lye lyk the sprit Throw gladnes of this lustie May.

Till Phoebus with his golden beames Inlight the land and cristall strimes Then Cinthia she steilles away And right to rin his race he clines Through gladnes of this lustie May.

The dew lyk diamonds appeir Redubling Phoebus rayes most cleir This pleasantlye now springs the day Let us rejoy with heartlie cheir Through gladnes of this lustie May. (f. 143)

May is not, in this instance, the ‘moneth maist amene / For thame in Venus seruice bene’ (the phrase is Alexander’s Scott’s);72 rather, the poem concludes that

To god we giue all praise for all Father sone sprit celestiall Preserve the kirk the king we pray And us on quhom thy nam doe call Through gladnes of this lustie May.

This may be an instance of a godlified courtly lyric, but if it is, then it lacks the stern moralising and plain style of other ‘gude and godlie ballatis’ – instead, this version of ‘O Lusty May’ rather anticipates Alexander Hume’s ‘Of the Day Estivall’. The older poem presents a more classical, or ‘educated’, portrayal of the natural world, but a similar sense pervades of the wonder and the beauty of God’s creation. This attractive rendering of the song deserves to be better known.

Musical manuscripts frequently record only the music, and perhaps the title of a tune, but no words. In such cases, the words can be joined with the song only when they have survived elsewhere. As far as can be ascertained, MS 15937 contains at least two Scots lyrics of which only the tunes and titles have survived elsewhere, and as such these lyrics will be of great interest to musicologists. The first is ‘Quhat heigh offence has my trew love taikine’ (f. 112). It is an elaborately rhymed, three-stanza lyric. This is the first stanza:

72 Poems of Scott, p. 23.
Quhat heigh offence has my trew love taikine
Chus for to sie me flame
Is thair no hoop bot I most be forsaikine
Rests no remeid for my paine
Och sillie saul
Thy hoop is verie small
Thair rests no remeide at all
So resolued is thair disdaine.

In the Skene manuscript (NLS MS Adv. 5.2.15, ff. 125-27) can be found a tune entitled ‘What high offences hes my fair love taken’. 73 It is entirely possible that the poem in MS 15937 fits this tune, or at least that both share a common source (it would still have to be tested whether the words match the music). It is unfortunate that Robertson’s (or the later scribe’s) transcription seems rather marred by inaccuracies, in particular in the final stanza, where two rhyme words have been lost, and the sense is muddled.

The second Robertson poem which seems to have been set to music, but of which the music and words may have survived separately, is ‘Sumtyme haue I sein whein the world hes bein mirrie’ (f. 62). In the Straloch Lute manuscript (c. 1627-29), owned or written by Robert Gordon, a piece of music survives that is entitled ‘Its a wonder to see how the world does goe’. 74 The title is identical to the refrain of the Robertson poem, as quoted below. Again, musicologists will have to determine whether the song might be sung to the tune as preserved by Gordon. This is the first stanza, and the last:

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73 The manuscript is reproduced in William Dauney, Ancient Scotish Melodies, 2 vols (Edinburgh: [n.p.], 1838). In Dauney’s list of contents, I, 8, the song appears in the fourth part of the manuscript as no. 58. When Dauney reproduces the manuscript, the song is no. 72, II, 246.

74 The original Straloch lute manuscript, like Robertson’s MS X, is lost, but a partial transcription was made in 1839, and presented to the Faculty of Advocates in 1847 by George Farquhar Graham (NLS Adv. MS 5.2.18; for the song, see f. 17r). Graham lists the full content of the manuscript on ff. xi-xii. Dauney’s Ancient Scotish Melodies also contains a lists of titles, II, 368. See also Willisher, II, 73-79.
Its a wounder to sie how this world doth goe.

The tone of this piece, of disappointment, changeabiliy, of new fashions and fleeting fortunes, and more generally of a world up-side-down, may be traced more widely. One example is Chaucer’s ‘Lak of Stedfastnesse’, collected in both the Bannatyne and the Maitland Folio manuscripts. As Chaucer relates, ‘Somtyme the world was so stedfast and stable / That mannes word was obligacioun / And now it is so fals and deceivable’. The poem condemns ‘cuvettyce’, and, in a stanza not originally in Chaucer but included in Bannatyne and Maitland, ‘ffalsheid that sowld bene abhominable’, and ‘vycis’ that are ‘the grund of sustentatioun / All wit is turnit to cavillatioun’. A particular genre of ‘complaint’ poem is directed at the court, and practiced in Scotland, for instance, by Dunbar, Scott, or Sir Richard Maitland. Whether ‘Sumtyme haue I sein’ should be situated in the same social and poetical milieu is not certain – although it is very clearly concerned with fashion. The ‘skiprigs’ in stanza four apparently refer to wanton women, or items of women’s clothing (the word is not in OED, and DOST suggests its meaning is uncertain, see under ‘skiprig’). What ‘fatlands’ and ‘spaikers’ are, in connection to ‘hatbands’, has yet to be determined – possibly, scribal errors obscure the sense here. Whether the song is Scottish is debatable, although the rhymes ‘down/mone’, the spelling ‘veirs’ for ‘wears’, the occurrence of ‘skiprigs’, and the persistent alliteration, perhaps tip the scales in favour of a Scots poet. In the wider context of the manuscript, this song stands out in Robertson’s repertoire for its subject matter, and it is refreshing after the first sixty folios of largely amatory verse.

It has already been noted above that, according to Bawcutt, the Robertson manuscript is not unlike the manuscript compiled for, or perhaps by, Lady Margaret Wemyss (NLS Dep. 314/23; the deposit was part of the Sutherland papers, and the collection contains another seventeenth-century musical manuscript, see Dep. 314/24). Not much is known about Wemyss, other than that she was born on 24 September 1630, and died sometime after 17 May 1648. Wemyss, like her sister Jean who seems to have inherited the manuscript, was a lutenist (although how proficient it is hard to tell), as she refers to the music as her ‘lessons’ – on f. 42r, a scribe, perhaps Margaret, noted that ‘all the Lesons behind this are learned ut of my Sisteres book’. In terms of selection by their respective copyists, the two manuscripts overlap: where Robertson has copied eleven songs from

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75 Bannatyne Manuscript, II, 164-65; cf. Fox and Ringler, f. 67r. Maitland Folio, I, 397-98.
77 For other such ‘complaint’ poems, see also for instance the many works in Satirical Poems of the Time of the Reformation, ed. by James Cranston, 2 vols (Edinburgh: STS, 1st ser. 20, 24, 28, 30, 1901-3).
78 The Wemyss manuscript consists of five sections: ff. 1r-11r, seventeen songs, words, and music, originally by Thomas Campion and Thomas Morley; ff. 12r-16r, eight poems; ff. 17r-27r, twenty-eight instrumental pieces for the lute; ff. 28r-50r, a further sixty-one lute songs, and finally ff. 52v-73v (the manuscript is reversed here, reading from back to front), another group of nineteen poems. The manuscript is discussed in more detail (but focussing on the instrumental lute-music) by Matthew Spring, ‘The Lady Margaret Wemyss Manuscript’, The Lute, 27 (1987), 5-29. Another comparable manuscript is discussed by Evelyn Stell, ‘Lady Jean Campbell’s Seventeenth-Century Music-Book’, Review of Scottish Culture, 8 (1993), 11-19.
Campion and one from Morley (see Appendix Four, Table 3), Wemyss copied fourteen from Campion and three from Morley – seven songs are shared by both manuscripts. Concerning the miscellaneous poems in Wemyss, some are known works, by Robert Ayton, Henry Howard, Thomas Carew, and Alexander Montgomerie, but most are anonymous. Montgomerie’s ‘Quha mightie motioune’ is collected by both manuscripts (f. 206; Wemyss f. 58v), but they also share an unfamiliar poem, which seems unique to these two manuscripts: ‘Quhen Cynthia vith a sweit consent’ (f. 36; cf. ‘When sinthia with sueet consent’, Wemyss f. 71v). This is a typical sixteenth century lyric, featuring a narrator who, while moving through ‘ane vildernes’, happens upon a lovelorn speaker, and overhears a lament. It opens as follows:

Quhen Cynthia vith a sweit consent
Haid callit Titan from his tent
Outthrow ane vildernes I went
My spirit for to repoise
Soe weil I saw it gried in one
The morning and the louveris moane
I vearied and I vanderit one
quhill trees did me incloise.

Many textual differences occur, including entirely new stanzas, which suggest that the two scribes did certainly not share a copy text for this poem. The Robertson version is one line short of forty; the Wemyss poem consists of ten quatrains, so appears complete. The most significant difference is that in MS 15937, the lamentor is male; in the Wemyss manuscript, she is female (cf. ‘He wes ane louver poore and just’ and ‘the tears ... owerflowit his chinne’ with ‘She was a louver tru and iust’ and ‘the tears ... ouer floud her chaine’). In the latter instance, this may be a mistake, as the lament certainly seems more unorthodox spoken by a woman. On the other hand, the Wemyss version of the poem may be an example of a love lyric appropriated by the female voice, and inscribed by a female compiler. Another such example of a female-centred poetics (and perhaps even lesbian sentiments) can be found in the Maitland Quarto. Only one other example of a female persona can be found in MS 15937: towards the very end of her manuscript, Robertson collects one sonnet clearly spoken by a woman. This sonnet, and the further issue of female appropriation, will be discussed below (pp. 195-96).

79 The shared songs are: ‘Giue loue loues trueth, then vemen doe not loue’ (f. 39; Wemyss f. 10r); ‘Be thow then my beautie named’ (ff. 40 and 163; Wemyss f. 1v); ‘Yong and simple though I am’ (f. 84; Wemyss f. 2r); ‘If any haue the heart to kill’ (f. 168; Wemyss f. 3r); ‘With my loue my lyf is vaisted’ (f. 124; Wemyss f. 9r); ‘hir faire efflaming eyes’ (f. 169; Wemyss f. 4r); ‘Whit as lillies was hir face’ (f. 171; Wemyss f. 5v).

To return to the Scottish, music-related content of MS 15937: Robertson indiscriminately conflates over five decades or more of songs and poems. Some titles belong to distinct periods of historical significance: ‘Depart, depart depart’ (f. 54), ‘Right sor opprest’ (f. 138), and ‘O Lusty May’ (f. 142; but perhaps not the version as recorded by Robertson), for instance, are compositions dating from the 1540s and 1550s, in the wake of French cultural dominance in the reign of Marie de Guise. Slightly later, from the Scottish reign of Mary, Queen of Scots, date such songs as ‘Intill ane May morning’ (f. 94) and ‘Woe vorth the tyme and eik the plaice’ (f. 43 and 105). From yet another two decades onwards date ‘Now let us sing Christ keip our King’ (f. 64), a musical drinking song, ‘Remember me my deir’ (f. 193), and several of Montgomerie’s compositions. It is important to note that, although the earliest English song book providing copy text for MS 15937 dates from 1588, many Scottish songs in this manuscript are much older (though, as argued above, many English songs may also have circulated prior to printing). In all likelihood, Robertson derived the multitude of her English songs from printed books (or manuscripts based on those books). By way of contrast, in the absence of any Scottish printed secular music until 1662, Robertson must have had access to copious manuscript materials: manuscripts perhaps much like those of Robert Edward, Margaret Wemyss, or Jean Campbell.

As study of the latter two compilers (by Spring and Stell, see note 78 above) has shown, ownership of such music books often implies musical aptitude, though of varying levels. As Stell surmises about Campbell,

Jean would have received a thorough grounding in domestic concerns, and tuition in social accomplishments, with a high-ranking marriage as the goal. Music was one of the more important of these accomplishments, and the lute and the virginal [...] were the most popular choices for young ladies to learn to play.82

The household of Lude, with its two treasured harps, was doubtlessly a musical environment, and for Margaret Robertson, the transition from indigenous, Gaelic music (as evident from the visits of itinerant harpers) to Scots and English art song might have been a natural progression. In light of this, the importance of MS 15937 for musical scholars should be firmly stressed. Inclusion of many known Scottish songs adds to the knowledge of that music as it was circulated; in addition, the inclusion in MS 15937 of various unique items (such as ‘Quhat heigh offence’ and ‘Sumtyme haue I sein’) adds to the relatively small corpus of surviving Scottish lyrics. Despite its occasionally badly transcribed lyrics, MS 15937 needs to be recognised as an important repository of Scots and English song texts, and thus as a manuscript of considerable interest in terms of the social history of music (and poetry) in early-seventeenth century Scotland.

81 A concise chronology of Scottish music is provided by Elliott and Shire, in the introduction to Musica Britannica XV, pp. xv-xvii, and in the introduction to Musica Scotica II, pp. vi-ix.
The Sonnets, ff. 2-16

Twenty-five numbered sonnets open the manuscript. Like the ten-sonnet series in CUL Kk.5.30 discussed in the previous chapter, this is certainly not a narrative sequence. Five sonnets so far have been identified, or are familiar from elsewhere: the anonymous ‘I dreamed a dreame I wishe my dreame wer trew’ (sonnet 1) also features in EUL Laing.III.447 (see p. 71 above); Montgomerie’s ‘Soe sueitt a kis yestreen from yow I reft’ (sonnet 5) is part of a three-sonnet series in the Ker manuscript, and Robert Ayton’s ‘I bid faireweill both to the world and the’ (sonnet 24), survives in another manuscript source, BL MS Add. 10308. Sonnets 3 and 22, ‘Quhy loue I hir that loues not me againe’ and ‘I patt my hand by hazard in the hatt’, were both printed in Alexander Craig’s Amorose Songes of 1606. In relation to Montgomerie’s sonnet, it is not very surprising that in MS 15937 it appears unaccompanied by the other two sonnets that it is linked with in Ker. The provisional group of three in the Ker manuscript is almost certainly editorially created; moreover, while the first sonnet, ‘Bricht Amorous Ee’, is presumably Montgomerie’s own translation from Ronsard, the second sonnet is composed by his friend Henry Constable, and perhaps rendered in Scots by Montgomerie. It is likely that ‘Soe sueitt a kis’ (also translated from Ronsard) circulated separately, prior to the compilation of the Ker manuscript.

The opening sonnet in MS 15937, ‘I dreamed a dreame’, is modelled on a popular conceit (that of a dream vision, or reverie, of a suddenly responsive lover) which derives from the French, and ultimately from Italian. One source is traced by William Alexander’s editors, in connection to one of the poet’s Aurora sonnets (number 51): ‘I dream’d, the Nymph that ore my fancie raignes’. As Alexander concludes that ‘Thus whil’st for kindnesse both began to weepe / My happinesse euanish’d with the sleepe’, so the anonymous sonneteer ends (in Robertson’s version), ‘Mercie madame as I begoud to say / Quhen I awook allace schee ves away’. Alexander modelled his sonnet after Desportes; he, in turn, found his source in Sannazaro. William Fowler, too, explored the conceit, in ‘A Dreame’, which concludes in similar manner: ‘bot oh quhils wakned I behalds the day / my pleasurs past all with my dreames away’. Fowler’s source was probably Petrarch. Of all the examples quoted here, the sonnet and the dream as it appears in Laing and in Robertson is by far the most explicitly sexual:

And evin with this hir night gowne aff schee caste
And lightlie lappe and lay doune one my arme
Hir rosie lippes me thought to myne schee thruste
And sayes may this not ease yow of your paine.  
[‘paine’ reads ‘harmes’ in Laing]

This very first poem in the Robertson manuscript sets the tone for a pervasive strain of eroticism throughout the collection. This theme is continued in sonnet 11 (f. 8), which showcases a humorous, but coarser wit. Undermining Petrarch’s well-known conceit of the lover as an insect, or moth (adapted, for instance, by Fowler), this sonnet opens:

O that I wer transformed in a flea
To hant the scheittis my dearest deare lyes in
Quhyles heir quhyles thair to play me to and frae
To loupe and skippe athort hir milk quhite skinne.

Leaving little to the imagination, this image is then developed and concludes:

Beneath hir nawell wpe to hir chirrie chinne
Wpone hir lint quhyte lyre lightlie thair to leape
Syne turne againe and doune directlie Rinne
In richest roomes quhair fleas wald fainest creipe
Then round about my compas wald I keipe
Betweine her thees to thrust me be some traine
And syne quhen that my saull were sound a sleipe
To be reformed into my scheape againe
   Then sould schee know that I my Ladie quhyte
   Sould stryke hir deiper nor any flea would bite.

This sonnet explodes the Petrarchist myth, adapting from the Italian poet an image that changes implicit sexual tension into explicit bawdy word play. John Donne would exploit, and explode, this image in his ‘The Flea’, but Donne’s poem is more sophisticated.  

Another lover transformed can be found in Sonnet 16: ‘Goe sonnat sweitt my sweittest santt vnto’ (f. 11). Sending away the poem, the writer wishes that ‘I vnseine / Ware changit in thee [the sonnet, or the letter bearing it]’. To the question ‘quha watt quhat I would doe’, the sonneteer answers that he would wait until his love would kiss the paper, and then ‘in the end my former schape ressaue / Soe doe the thing that sweitt sweitt kisses craiwe’. Transformed into a flea or embodied in writing, both poets (or perhaps the same) present a lover sick with desire, and resort to fanciful metamorphoses to satisfy the urge for the physical union that the Petrarchist bella donna conventionally denies the lover. Sonnets 1, 11 and 16 set the scene for other even more explicitly bawdy poems and songs that follow later in the manuscript (see below).

Though many sonnets explore the lover’s plight (either in bawdy terms, or more conventionally, in Petrarchist longings and deaths), there are other works to be found within this first group of twenty-five poems in the manuscript. The most puzzling is sonnet 7, stringing together a number of cryptic references and paying tribute perhaps to a contemporary addressee. This is an occasional poem, and perhaps a somewhat wry epithalamion. Mistranscriptions (either by Robertson or by the scribe of MS 15937) occasionally obscure the sense:

Arcadianes ladie silentlie did slyd  
Owerschadowit with painles majestie  
Bot the phoeleas ? beautie did dewyd  
Theise silwer streames in twiges from tuo or three  
Bot they in joy could not compair with thee  
One letter changeing maketh heawin  
And doth salute that hous of Magistie  
Whose walles inscrywes theise matcheles muises sewine  
And doeth wouchsaiff thair presence ewerie day  
And aft in the doth dye their daintie handis  
Quhilk makes the now soe loath to pairt away  
Thow rather chuis for to be tyed in bandis  
And to thy grieff since thow must neidis begone  
Thow doth impairt thy plaint to ewerie tumbling stone. (f. 6)

The key to start unravelling this lies in an almost equally diffuse sonnet, already discussed in Chapter Three (pp. 127-29), James VI’s ‘Noch Orientall Indus Christal streemes’ (CUL MS Kk.5.30, f. 78v). Compare the last six lines:

Now quh’l sueit scho vithcheffs to schaw hir face  
and vith hir presence honours the ilk day  
Thow slyding semest to use a slawer pace  
Aganis thi vill as iff thow vent away  
So loth to leve the sycht of such a on  
Thow still imparts thi plents to evrie stone.

While not an exact match, the lines are close enough to suppose some sort of kinship. For sonnet 7’s ‘And doeth wouchsaiff thair presence ewerie day’ James’s sonnet reads ‘Now quh’l sueit scho vitchcheffs to schaw hir face’. Similarly, ‘Quhilk makes the now soe loath to pairt away / Thow rather chuis for to be tyed in bandis’ is paralleled by ‘Thow slyding semest to use a slawer pace / Aganis thi vill as iff thow vent away’. The closing lines of both poems are near identical (though Robertson’s is hypermetrical, probably by mistake). Imitation of James’s verse has already been noted in the previous chapter, for instance by Alexander Craig, who relentlessly pillaged his monarch’s poetry in order to embellish his own; a similar process of adaptation may underlie the sonnet as it survived in Robertson. The question, of course, is what it all means. If indeed James’s sonnet addresses a river or stream, then perhaps so does the Robertson poem. ‘Arcadianes ladie’ may refer to Erato, wife of Arcas, and muse of lyric poetry – her presence would be suitable in this context. The muses of line eight (of which there should be ‘nine’ rather than ‘sewine’) link back to
Erato. The scribe was obviously uncertain about ‘phoeleas’: perhaps this should read ‘Phillis’, a common name for a pastoral nymph (cf. the similar spelling of ‘Phoelas’ on f. 130). Equally puzzling is the ‘One letter changeing maketh heaw in / And doth salute that hous of Magistie / Whose walles inscrywes theise matcheles muises sewine’. Clearly, a name is hidden here, by means of an anagram, pun, or other type of word game – whose name it is remains uncertain, however. James’s sonnet may have been addressed to Cicely Wemys, but there is nothing to suggest she is the ‘ladie’ in question here.

The addressee of the final six lines may be the river (as in James) in which ‘daintie handis’ may be ‘dyed’. The single line suggesting that this may be an epithalamion, ‘Thow rather chuise for to be tyed in bandis’, may either have the same referent, the river, or allude to the sonnet’s overall addressee, a lady. Overall, this is a difficult sonnet, and it may be asked what significance the work may have had for Robertson, if any. Hopefully, another less corrupt version of it may have survived elsewhere. It is possible that this sonnet and that of James are remnants of a highly elaborate intertextual game (similar to the Julian Ker sonnet in the Tibbermuir manuscript): a game of textual obfuscation rather than elucidation, and one, finally, where the real subject of the poem has long been lost.

The majority of sonnets in MS 15937 explore the lover’s plight, employing many Petrarchist devices that were so popular in Scotland from the 1580s onwards. If the general tone resonates strongly with other works produced in the late sixteenth-century, there are remnants too of an older poetic strain, for instance here:

 Helpe hairt the hairt that pynes in peirceing paine  
 Helpe hairt the hairt that nowayes cane the flie  
 Helpe hairt the hairt that willing is to die  
 Helpe hairt the hairt quhois favoure cannot find. (f. 9)

These are the opening lines of Sonnet 12, reminiscent of a particular type of mid-century lyricism that in each individual line meditates on a singular image, here the ‘hairt’. A companion sonnet (14) is ‘Hairt hoipes for hairt and hairt is my desyre’, again featuring this heavily repetitive image. A taste for this type of sonneteering is evident also from the sonnets included, for instance, in MS Laing III.447, such as ‘Nevere madame of your mercie me infold’ (see Chapter Two, pp. 44-45). Though these types of sonnets (12, 14) draw from an earlier tradition in terms of imagery and rhetoric, formally they comply to the archetypal Scottish sonnet with its interlaced rhyme scheme. In fact, sixteen sonnets out of twenty-five follow this rhyme scheme perfectly. Though this is no exact science, such a large proportion of sonnets following the scheme that was explicitly endorsed by James VI and practised by his courtiers in the 1580s and 1590s suppose that at least some, and perhaps most, sonnets on ff. 2-16 belong to that period.

As indicated above, two sonnets in MS 15937 are by Alexander Craig. This poet has already been discussed in the previous chapter, as our awareness of the inclusion of Craig’s poems
into manuscript is important for a reconceptualisation of a readership for his works. Not normally regarded as a poet to be actively anthologised, three of his poems have now been unearthed in miscellany manuscripts. The first to be included here is sonnet 3 (f. 3), ‘Quhy loue I hir that loues not me againe’. In line with the fact that Robertson compiled her manuscript probably in or around 1630, there is less evidence of Scots vocabulary or pronunciation features here (as was found in the sonnet transcribed by James Murray of Tibbermuir). Only one rhyme word makes more sense: where the print reads ‘alone’ and ‘complaine’, the rhyme is righted in Robertson, who records ‘alane’ and ‘complaine’. Otherwise, close resemblance to the printed word suggests that the compiler’s copy derived from print. The sonnet in Craig’s Amorose Songes – though not in Robertson – is addressed to ‘Lais’, a fictional lady (or so one hopes for Craig’s sake) who embodies unfaithfulness and adultery. Out of the fourteen poems Craig addressed to ‘lascivious Lais’, six define her in no uncertain terms as a ‘woore’. So, too, in ‘Quhy loue I hir’ (the couplet is perhaps another instance where the rhyme makes more sense in Scots):

Bot now tynt tyme and trawel makes me suire
I played the foole and schee playit the huire.

In Craig’s poems to Lais, conventional Petrarchist inconstancy turns into outright sexual unfaithfulness (though the fact that Craig eulogises seven other women is not problematised!). Inclusion of this sonnet in MS 15937 underlines a move away from stylised Petrarchist love laments, and heralds the introduction of a more open poetics of sexual love (as evident also from sonnets 1, 11 and 16). Certainly not all sonnets on ff. 2-16 subscribe to this agenda; in fact, the multitude steer clear of a more explicit sexual poetics (see for instance sonnets 6, 8, or 9), but a distrust of Petrarchist ideals, and an adoption of what might be termed Ovidian models, is certainly noticeable here.

David Parkinson has already drawn attention to sonnet 22, but without realising that it was composed by Craig. As Parkinson argues, the sonnet in question alludes ‘to a game played by the writers and readers of the original manuscript’, the sonnet lifting the veil of highly rhetorical love poetry and suggesting, indeed, a lively audience portrayed in action.

I patt my hand by hazard in the hatt
Where many names did intermiscit lye
With hir and hir and yow and this and that
A fortoune blind or niewienak to trie
A soe it wes my luke that I

91 There is no space here further to discuss this subject. In reference to Montgomerie, see for instance Lyall’s reading of the poet’s love poetry, Montgomerie, pp. 227-79, which discusses the oscillating modes of Petrarchist and Ovidian discourse; more generally on this subject, see Sarah M. Dunnigan, Eros and Poetry at the Courts of Mary Queen of Scots and James VI (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).
Amang soe many fand thy noble name  
And one my heid that thow and all may spie  
I weil avow the wearing of the same  
I sall inferr noe soile into thy name  
That thow art borne wpone soe bas a head  
Ane begger findes a stone of curious frame  
And yet the stone remaines a stone indeid  
So thow art thaw and of more worth to me  
Deir Vallantyne nor thow wes vonte to be. (ff. 14-15)

This describes a Valentine’s Day game, where participants draw a name out of a hat and pin it ‘onto [their] heid’. It must have been a contemporary pastime. Parkinson points to Montgomerie’s use of ‘nevie nevie nak’ (‘niewienak’ above, a children’s game) in the advice poem ‘Yong tender plant’. Where in Montgomerie the act of choosing unseen (‘Bot put your hand by hazard in the creiil / Yit men hes mater vharvpon to muse / For they must drau ane adder or ane eill’) has greater symbolic and moral significance, in Craig this action remains innocent, and more literal. This poem, attractive for its grounding in social practice, describes perhaps the equivalent of an early-modern blind date.

In MS 15937, like in the Laing and Tibbermuir manuscripts, the proximity of anonymous works to known poems, for instance by Montgomerie, Ayton, and Craig, raises pressing questions. By Robertson’s time, the significance of named poets of the previous century might have been negligible. Yet, some of the sonnets here would undoubtedly have received more critical attention if they had been positively attributed. If some poems will not directly commend themselves, because of their conventional treatment of love, for instance, still this is the environment in which to read the works of Montgomerie, but also those of a later generation, such as the writings of Ayton and Craig. Parkinson is the only critic to have touched on this subject, and he notes Montgomerie’s appearance in the manuscript, but also (briefly), the anonymous poems that immediately follow or proceed the ‘maister poet’s’ work. Though this is pure speculation, in the same spirit it might be argued that Montgomerie’s translation from Ronsard, ‘Soe sueitt a kis’, makes an excellent pair with the poem that follows it directly, ‘Sueett blame me not thought I nothing can wreitt’ (f. 5). The former follows the conceit that with one kiss, the lover leaves behind his spirit, his life, and his heart; the latter poem works out the idea that the beauty of a mistress ‘owergoes my blunt inventioune quytt’. At the centre of the latter poem, as in Montgomerie’s, lie ‘the secreittis of myne hairst’. Both poems are equally eloquent and capable explorations of a single conceit, and the latter poem would not look out of place in Montgomerie’s canon. It is unlikely that ‘Sueett blame me not’ will ever be ascribed; yet this sonnet may serve as an example to show how important it is that the twenty-five sonnets that open MS 15937 are read by critics, as they are among the closest and most reliable contextual witnesses that we have.

The ‘Dyers’, ff. 18-28

As discussed in the previous chapter, the arrival of the ‘dyer’, or, as spelled by Robertson, ‘deere’, in Scotland probably dates to around 1590, following perhaps the example as set by Edward Dyer. The genre has been commented on but little, yet the verse form appears relatively frequently in Scottish literary manuscripts. Best-known perhaps is the sequence loosely attributed to Robert Ayton, William Alexander, and Alexander Craig, in NLS Adv. MS 19.3.6. Shire lists two more ‘dyers’ by Ayton: ‘My temperate style at first’, and ‘My heart exhale thy greife’, both of which have been broken up in half-lines. Another ‘dyer’ survived in EUL MS Laing.III.436. Alexander Craig favoured poulter’s measure (the verse-form employed for ‘dyers’) for other works, such as his ‘Scotlands Teares’ and ‘Calidons Complaint’; he employs it frequently, too, in the closing ‘farewells’ to the eight ladies addressed in his Amorose Songes. William Lithgow adapted the ‘dyer’ in his ‘I Wander in exile’, where the writer, as a traveller in a strange land, found himself standing sentinel against assailing Turks, and ‘on the top of a high Promontory’, the situation ‘did invite my Muse to bewail the tossing of my toilsome life, my solitary wandring, and the long distance of my native soil’. The popularity of the ‘dyer’ as a genre in Scotland, and its related verse form of poulter’s measure, is due more exhaustive investigation, regardless of the fact that critics today dislike the verse form. Unfortunately, the current project allows no space for such a discussion, and can only focus on the four specimens in MS 15937 (though in reference to other ‘dyers’).

All four dyers are love laments. In the first, ‘Now must I as of lait unto my plainte returne’, the speaker runs through a number of stock conceits, and begs compassion from his audience: ‘All ye that weipes for me yo\textsuperscript{u}r eyes to me resigne / All ye that sighes and sobbis for grieff yo\textsuperscript{u}r bosomes to me bring’. He is portrayed as a steerless bark on the ocean, as Cupid’s prisoner, as ‘weak against the streames of loue’, and as mortally wounded by his lady’s ‘frowning feattis’. Interestingly, the most arresting image links this poem strongly to various other ‘dyers’. One of these occurs among the group in NLS Adv. MS 19.3.6, and is attributed to William Alexander by

\footnotesize{95} These have been printed in Poems of Ayton, pp. 110-142. 
\footnotesize{96} Shire, Song, Dance and Poetry, 219-25; Poems of Ayton, pp. 144-48, 149-54. 
\footnotesize{97} Poetical Essays, pp. 18-22, Amorose Songes, pp. 121-41, in Works of Craig. 
\footnotesize{98} William Lithgow, The Totall Discourse, or the rare Adventures, and painefull Peregrinations of long nineteen yeares Travailes from Scotland, to the most famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia and Africa (London: [n. p.], 1640), pp. 110-13. 
Matthew McDiarmid.\textsuperscript{100} Compare the two fragments, the first from MS 15937, and the second from NLS MS 19.3.6:

\begin{quote}
All ye that murnes I say or drawes a sobbing breath  
Come and assist me quhen I sing the obsequies of death  
Ewine as the singing Swane prognosticates hir fall  
Degorging ane exequall sang quhilk fatall foiresight send (f. 18)\textsuperscript{101}

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Evin as the dying swain  
almost bereft of breath  
Sound’s dulefull songes and dririe not’s,  
a presage of her death,  
Sua since my date of lyfe  
almost expyr’d I find  
My obsequeis I sadlie sing  
as sorrow toounes my mynd.\textsuperscript{102}
\end{quote}

Strong verbal echoes (the ‘breath/death’ rhyme, the ‘obsequies I sing’, the central image of the swan) suggest that both poets worked in a finely delineated genre, and one, like the sonnet, where the success of one poem is partly dependent on the deft redistribution of striking imagery found in another. The image of a dying swan is iconic and not particular to the ‘dyer’ – yet it is striking that when Lithgow adapts the verse form, it is again this image of the swan that he turns to:

\begin{quote}
Ah I, poor I, distres’d  
Oft changing to and fro  
Am forc’d to sing sad obsequies  
Of this my Swan-like wo.\textsuperscript{103}
\end{quote}

Alexander Craig opens ‘His louing farewell to Pandora’ in much the same way: ‘Deare to my soul once degne, those passions to peruse / The Swan-like Dir’ges and the Songs, of this my deeing Muse’.\textsuperscript{104} These examples indicate to what extent different poets were aware of each other’s works, and how strongly intertextual a genre the ‘dyer’ was.

At thirty lines, this first ‘dyer’ in MS 15937 is relatively short, which renders it more attractive. The second ‘dyer’, ‘Giff Argulus cause haid’ (f. 19), is of equal length, but broken up into half-lines, as follows:

\begin{quote}
Giff Argulus cause haid  
To murne to weipe to waile  
And mak a swallowing sea of smairst  
His breathles breist to seall  
Quhill as he look’t and saw
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{100} Matthew P. McDiarmid, ‘Scots Versions of Poems by Sir Robert Aytoun and Sir William Alexander’ \textit{Notes and Queries}, n.s. 4 (1957), 32-35.\textsuperscript{101} The lack of a corresponding rhyme word here may well be a scribal error here.\textsuperscript{102} Poems of Aytoun, p. 133.\textsuperscript{103} Lithgow, \textit{The Totall Discourse}, pp. 110-11.\textsuperscript{104} Amorose Songes, p. 138, in \textit{Works of Craig}. 
His faire and daintie deire
Berefe of all the beauties braw
Quhilk schee sometymes did beare. (f. 19)

The figure of Argulus points forward to another poem later in the manuscript, ‘Argulus his Letter to Parthenia his mistres’, a pastoral work (see below). Argulus, and, by implication, also Parthenia (presumably ‘his faire and daintie deire’) function only as a long-drawn comparison: if Argulus had cause to ‘murne to weipe to waile’, then ‘thri ce vnhappie’ (f. 20) is the speaker, who defeats Argulus in sorrow and misfortune. The poem is an elegant valediction:

For thoise my eyes must sie
That seemelie schadd declyne
Quhilk once I hoipit for till injoy
And trowit till haue maid myne.

This ‘dyer’ does not rely on outrageous hyperbolic imagery (as do other examples of the genre): rather, the speaker internalises his grief, and takes leave of his mistress once and for all. It ends thus:

And qhill my liff sall last
Ile vow to loue my faire
Thow sall be still my Horescope
My hoipe my cross my caire
And thus Resolu’d to love
Altho amidis decay
I sigh, I sobbe, I weipe I waile
And sayes faireweill for aye.

None of this is particularly original (cf. for instance Montgomerie’s ‘Of me thou mak / Thy Zodiac’), yet this poem, despite its demanding verse form, reads as a light lyric, perhaps even a song.

The previous chapter (pp. 106-11) already discussed ‘Murrayis Dyare’, in MS Kk.5.30. Authorship of that poem has cautiously been ascribed to John Murray, on the basis of further evidence found here, in MS 15937. Shire writes speculatively on ‘Mr John Murray’, author of several sonnets of praise to fellow poets, and recipient of the same. Montgomerie composed ‘To Maister J. Murray’, and a poet of that name is eulogised by both William Alexander and by Ayton, after his death in 1615. Two sonnets are addressed to him by Sir David Murray of Gorthy that draw attention to John Murray as a songwriter: ‘No maruell if thy songs b’admired then / That yeeld both musicke unto gods and men’. Murray’s identity remains uncertain, however, and his body of work small. A manuscript volume containing ‘Certaine Sonnets’ was owned by Drummond: this

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105 Montgomerie: Poems, I, 36.
106 Shire, Song, Dance and Poetry, pp. 181-86.
volume, unfortunately, is lost. 107 Shire, eager to trace this elusive ‘Castalian’, wonders whether there is ‘anywhere a corpus of poetry of this era lying anonymous containing pieces that might […] be claimed as his lost work’. 108 This question can be answered with some certainty now. Consider the opening lines to the third dyer in MS 15937:

Och aye I murne for loe my name incluidis my fate
My anagrame does weil bewray my sorrowing sadd estaite. (f. 22)

Puns and anagrams denoting authorship are common across the sixteenth-century poetic range, and for the ‘dyer’ this seems almost to have been a generic feature. These lines straightforwardly invite the reader to look for an anagram, and ‘Och aye I murne’ yields ‘Iohne Muraye’. 109 With this evidence of Murray composing ‘dyers’, the final ‘dyer’ among the group in NLS MS 19.3.6 might also be ascribed to him, as Shire already noted a similar pun on his name there: ‘Rest yee in thy wnest / and murray be thow still / The maike where meneles miseries / directes yere endles ill’. 110 Evidence of John Murray composing ‘dyers’ is strong: there is no need to suppose, then, that James Murray of Tibbermuir wrote his own; it is far more likely that he collected a poem by a poet who was already a recognised part of the literary landscape.

The first twenty-five lines of ‘Och aye I murne’ debate the relative virtues of secrecy in form of a ‘sedul’, or missive. The genre of the verse epistle has been discussed in the first chapter: its popularity is evident from many Bannatyne lyrics, but it was also incorporated into the later sonneteering tradition – here, it resurfaces yet again in the ‘dyer’. The speaker debates the merits of his poetry, and that of other poets, and concludes that if his poetic skills may be inferior, his suffering surely is not:

Quhairfoire I will giff plaice to all that vreitt in veirs
Since newer yit my piteous plaint could haue noe pith to peirs
Bot as in staitely styll they flie aboue me farr
Ewine soe in hardnes of mishappes latt none of thame compaire. (f. 23)

Yet the speaker is not entirely modest, as he debates with himself, for the remaining length of the poem, what would happen if ‘the whisperring winges of fame this bill to hir may beare’ (f. 24). 111 What follows are the customary ruminations on her cruelty and disregard. At times, this ‘dyer’ simply goes through the motions, and is tedious in its long-winded approach to time-worn literary conceits. The long lines, with ample opportunity for digression, do not always add to this poem’s

108 Shire, Song, Dance and Poetry, p. 186.
109 The letter ‘c’ to spare could easily be a later scribal insertion from ‘oh’ to ‘och’, perhaps in an attempt to ‘scoticise’ the text.
111 This phrase is echoed in Craig, who writes that his ‘publisht Rymes […] are gone abrod / vpon the winges of fame’, Amorose Songes, p. 121, in Works of Craig.
appeal. Yet, at other times something of interest may be glimpsed, such as here, where an everyday meeting between the speaker and his lady is imagined:

> Quhat restis bot patience then against the streame to strywe
> It not awailles yit it may be schee read before schee rywe
> Becaus that now and then at meititnes I and schee
> Will speak and look conferr and crack and do as wtheris doe
> Soe schee to kythe her craffe both courteous seemes and kind
> And I putt one ane maske of mirthe wpone ane murning mynd
> Thus quhill we disaguyse our humour with our airt
> From wtheris we haue hieght to hide the haitrent of our hairt. (ff. 24-25)

Perhaps this would have recalled, for a contemporary audience, the codes and conventions of social gatherings, much the same as in the Valentine’s Day sonnet encountered earlier. If indeed this is the work of John Murray, and Shire is right to identify Murray as a one-time retainer of Francis Bothwell in 1592, and if indeed this was the same Murray who was eulogised in verse after his death in 1615, his ‘lifespan shortened by disease and misfortune’ and ‘not in good odour with the king’, then the social backdrop to this poem might well be that of the Scottish, and later the English, court.

‘Och aye I murne’ is very similar in style and diction to the fourth and final ‘dyer’, ‘Giff he desyres to die quho can noe wayes deny ’, which might equally be Murray’s work, though it is not signed in any way. Where the third ‘dyer’ concludes

> And quhill my buriell be I look for noe Relieff
> For as my birthe begoud my graiwe sall end my grieff
> Quhairone some friend sall wreit, Loe heir he lyes allaice
> That lik as vnbeloweit he liued and died in deipe disgraice

so the fourth ‘dyer’ ends with an image of the grave:

> This last love lynne in end I wische ye would wouschaiff
> To signifie my sadd succes ingraiwed wpone my graiwe
> whilk vitnes sall thy wrong and all my paines sall proowe
> Heir lyes vntyme lyes allaice thy lover not thy love. (f. 28)

These correspondences do not prove Murray’s authorship of the fourth ‘dyer’, but certainly suggest kinship of some kind.

As stated above, the Scottish ‘dyer’ has not received due critical attention. Also, it must be conceded that various specimens (such as ‘Giff he desyres to die’) do not entirely accord with modern taste. Yet, as a poetic phenomenon that clearly attracted a great deal of talented poets (Ayton, Alexander, Craig), it must not be disregarded, and the Robertson manuscript is an important witness to its presence in Scottish poetry. The longevity of the genre’s popularity in Scotland (with its dominant tone of mourning, decay, and death) remains intriguing, but only

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speculation may explain its widespread appeal, for instance for Robertson and Murray of Tibbermuir. Sarah Dunnigan has recently located, in Scottish poetry produced post-1603, ‘a poetics of melancholy and mourning that depends on the power of literary equivocation’. Moreover, she proposes a political subtext in Scottish writing following the departure of King James that reveals the nation’s struggle to come to terms with this loss. A poetics of melancholy has always featured strongly within the amatory mode, but, as Dunnigan suggests, such poetic commonplaces may be invested with topical, renewed relevance for the uncertain political climate in post-Union Scotland. From this point of view, a long-lived popularity of the dyer may be more easily explained. This idea will be further explored below, in relation to Robertson’s pastoral poems.

**Pastoral Lyrics, ff. 28-36**

The ‘dyers’ are followed immediately by two stanzaic poems: ‘Amintas Ghoste’, and ‘Argulus his Letter to Parthenia his mistres’; the latter poem consists of two sections, the second entitled ‘Partheniae ansuer to Argulus Letter’. These two poems introduce a pervasive pastoral strain that remains dominant throughout MS 15937, particularly in terms of the English songs. Although no sources have been identified, both poems on ff. 28-36 may be tied to the popular tradition of pastoral romance and drama from late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth century England; the mode was imported from Antiquity, and renaissance Italy and France, and, in England, greatly popularised by Spenser and Sidney. Lovestruck shepherds and virgin nymphs haunt the pages of many song books, too, and MS 15937 is no exception.

There is no linguistic evidence to suggest that ‘Amintas Ghoste’ and ‘Argulus’ were composed by Scots – if they were, then the language has been successfully anglicised. Both poems in Robertson feature well-known pastoral heroes and heroines. The character of Amintas was famously given life by Torquato Tasso: his dramatic romance *Aminta* was printed in 1581, and translated into English first by Abraham Fraunce (1591), and later by Henry Reynolds (1628). In the Robertson manuscript, Aminta’s object of affection is named ‘Phyllis’, yet in Tasso her name is Silvia. This discrepancy may be explained if we consider Fraunce’s version, which was an amalgamation of Tasso and Thomas Watson Latin poem, *Amyntas*. Fraunce introduced substantial alterations to the original Italian play: ‘If Amyntas found favour in your gracious eyes, let Phyllis be accepted for Amyntas’ sake. I have somewhat altered S. Tasso’s Italian and M. Watson’s Latin *Amyntas to make them both one English*. ‘Amintas Ghoste’ may owe ‘Phyllis’ to Fraunce, and perhaps the anonymous poet has lifted both characters from Fraunce’s pages. That said, the


115 Fraunce is quoted in Brand, p. 278.
enormous popularity of these characters must be appreciated, and the anonymous Robertson poet could have had other sources. Robert Ayton, for instance, composed his ‘Amintas’, as well as ‘Cloris and Amintas’. In any case, ‘Amintas Ghoste’ does not follow Tasso’s narrative, since in MS 15937 both Amintas and Phyllis have died, and the swain returns to bewail her absence as a ghost. Phyllis died of grief, since Amintas had realised too late her love for him; because her love went unanswered, Phyllis perished. In the Robertson poem, Amintas is trapped between heaven and hell as a ghost, ‘Betwixt the cloudes and crawes my stay’, and has realised that he has become ‘A patrone to all suche that pay / Thair loweris w ith disdaine’. Having realised his errors, he vents his regret as follows:

Consooming fier cannot distroy  
My newer Resting breath  
Nor raigeing seas cuire my annoy  
Nor end my woes by deathe  
The furies griwed to latt me rest  
Haith sent me to the aire  
Quhair damned spirites may me molest  
With terroures of dispaire

My pleasoures ar all paines to sie  
My musick thundering clapes  
And I for ewer ame to be  
A modell of mishapes  
Still curseing and bewaylling soe  
The Echo in my plaintes  
Resoundis to me a dowlbe woe  
And more my caire augmentis. (f. 31)

The poem has a good rhythmic drive to it, and, as a powerful lyric of eleven stanzas, it is a good deal more readable than Fraunce’s translation. It concludes, hyperbolically, that ‘hilles, nor caiwes, nor graiws can hold / My ewerlasting schame’.

The second poem, which is structured as an epistolary exchange between Argulus and Parthenia, may owe its inspiration to Francis Quarles’s Argalus and Parthenia (1629), a romance that extracted the two characters from Sidney’s Arcadia, and greatly expanded the narrative. The poem in MS 15937 imagines the anxiety of Argulus over Parthenia’s absence, and his letter to her reports all the conventional lovers’ discomforts induced by absence; however, Parthenia writes

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116 Poems of Ayton, 156-59 (poems); for a list of manuscripts of Ayton’s poems, including those of Scottish descent, see pp. 253-58.

117 This reverses Tasso’s narrative, where Aminta desperately attempts to win the love of Sylvia, a nymph in the train of the goddess Diana. Aminta’s unrequited love, and his mistaken discovery of Silvia’s ‘death’ after a hunt, leads him to attempt suicide unsuccessfully. Silvia, who then appears alive and well, is so moved by Aminta’s devotion that she requites the shepherd’s love.

back, and assures her lover that all is well. It should be noted that both poems in MS 15937 share a similar verse form: in ‘Amintas Ghost’, each eight-line stanza consists of alternating rhyming tetrameters and trimeters. ‘Argulus his letter’ employs rhyming heptameters, but broken up into units of four and three feet, and so produce a similar effect to the preceding poem. Metrically, then, ‘Amintas Ghoeste’, and ‘Argulus his Letter’ are also close to the dyer’s ‘poulter’s measure’.

The presence of these works in MS 15937 is interesting in light of their genre. There is very little evidence that pastoral drama ever gained a strong foothold in Scotland at the end of the sixteenth century; certainly no Scottish poet ever produced a work to rival, for instance, Sidney’s *Arcadia*. Yet, in the early seventeenth century, pastoral imagery gained in popularity. A brief look at Drummond’s collecting and reading habits with regard to pastoral is instructive, and may provide a perspective on Robertson’s inclusion of pastoral-related poems. Drummond in 1606, for instance, read Sidney’s *Arcadia*, and Montemayor’s *Diana* (a work which may underlie another Robertson poem, see p. 156 above); in 1607 he read Tasso’s *Aminta* (direct inspiration for Robertson’s ‘Amintas Ghoeste’), Sannazaro’s *Arcadia*, and, again, Montemayor.119 These are only some isolated examples of Drummond’s ferocious reading, and the list may be greatly expanded (for instance with the ‘Italien bookes red be me anno 1610’, including Sannazaro again, Guarini’s *Pastor Fido*, Morinella’s *Arcadia*, Tasso again, and – not, of course, an Italian book – Spenser’s *Fairie Queen*). Drummond’s interest in pastoral is summed up as follows: ‘by the time he abandoned literature there can have been few pastoral romances then in print he had not bought. His library was full of Arcadias, shepherds, and courtly lovers’.120 Though Drummond was uniquely well-read for his age, his interest may nevertheless be reflective of a budding Scottish interest in the genre more widely – perhaps it was the country-house culture embraced by Drummond that was more receptive to the idyllic natural scenes of Tasso and others, and perhaps a similar sentiment influenced Margaret Robertson.

Yet, not all pastoral deals solely with ‘shepherds and courtly lovers’. Sarah Dunnigan has recently offered a fascinating explanation for the popularity of pastoral in post-1603 Scotland. As she writes,

> It is the genre of pastoral which forges a new relationship with the absent monarch by those writers who chose to accompany their monarch south (such as Alexander Craig [?1568-1627]) and William Drummond (1585-1649) who remained in Scotland.121

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119 See MacDonald, *Library*, pp. 228-32, for a list of ‘books red be me’. See also Lyall’s article which makes excellent use of this list, ‘London or the World? The Paradox of Culture in (post-)Jacobeanc Scotland’, in *The Accession of James I: Historical and Cultural Consequences*, ed. by Glenn Burgess, Rowland Wymer and Jason Lawrence (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006), pp. 88-100.


121 Dunnigan, ‘Cartography’, p. 111.
In reference to Drummond’s poem inspired by the death of Prince Henry (Teares on the Death of Meliades, printed in 1613), and his later Forth Feasting, which was addressed to James for his 1617 visit to Scotland, Dunnigan continues that

the intrinsic political potential of pastoral is renewed in the wake of Scotland’s condition [one of ‘melancholy and mourning’]. Invoking the Classical myth of the Golden Age (Scotland has lost hers because her ‘lover’, her king, abandoned her), Drummond composes another elegy, this time not for a dead prince, but for Scotland, a nation itself, or for its power as symbolically incarnate in its absent monarch.122

These ideas need to be more thoroughly investigated (as Dunnigan herself realises), and this chapter is not the place for it. Still, Dunnigan’s revisionist theorising of post-1603 Scottish poetry may be applied to Robertson’s preference to pastoral verse, if only very cautiously. It will be very difficult to ascertain whether Robertson read her pastoral poems for possible political subtexts, or simply because of surface romantic appeal. There is little direct evidence in the manuscript of politically engaged verse, yet it is possible to read, for instance, Amintas’s disdain for Phyllis, and her subsequent death, or Argulus’s plea to his absent lover for constancy, as implicit criticisms on James as monarch, or ‘lover’. Naturally, without any further explicit hints in the poems (as can clearly be found in Craig for instance, or Drummond), such a reading would stretch credulity. We know that Robertson was involved in local politics, as she raised soldiers for Montrose (see above, p. 147). To what extent this compiler shared Ayton’s, Craig’s, or Drummond’s anxieties over an abandoned nation (as identified by Dunnigan) is a very interesting question indeed, but one that must remain unanswered for now, due to lack of evidence. It is important to realise, however, that pastoral works increasingly featured in Scottish manuscripts and libraries in the beginning of the seventeenth century, so that Robertson’s interest, in this respect, too, reflects a wider trend.

Widening the Range, ff. 74-84, 110-16, 135-38

Three more sections of the manuscript will be investigated below, two in generic terms (ff. 144-68, 173-76; both sections feature bawdy songs and poetry), and the third in terms of its function in the manuscript (ff. 212-15, which properly concludes the collection). Before that, however, it is important briefly to draw attention to poems that stand out from the rest of the manuscript, either because of their subject matter (‘I catiue curate languish’es’, ff. 74-84), because of revealing traces of metrical ingenuity (the texts on ff. 110-16), or because the poem in question (such as ‘In May I rose’, ff. 135-36) is considerably older than the bulk of works collected in MS 15937.

At thirty-two eight line stanzas, ‘I catiue curate languish’es’ is the longest poem in the manuscript.123 The poem is a verse prayer of sorts, presenting a speaker repenting for his sins and

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122 Dunnigan, ‘Cartography’, p. 113.
123 I am very grateful to Dr Jamie Reid Baxter for sharing his thoughts about this poem with me.
making peace with God. The opening line introduces a ‘curate’ (in its primary meaning, a priest). This might have been a corruption, however, of ‘I catiue creature’, as it appears on f. 82 – it is possible that Robertson or the copyist of MS 15937 mistranscribed whichever source this poem was found in. There is no evidence in the poem that the speaker had taken orders, however, and the poem makes better sense if the declaration of sin and a life of godlessness comes from the mouth of a ‘creature’, rather than a ‘curate’.

The poem can be divided into 3 movements: the first (stanzas 1 to 10) sets the scene, and introduces a speaker suffering from the foibles of ‘dispised age’; the second (stanzas 11 to 23) laments the misdeeds of a long life in sin; the third and final movement (stanzas 24 to 31) asks God for forgiveness. The infirmities of old age, explored to great length in the first section of the poem, culminate in a catalogue of diseases:

\begin{quote}
The gutte the grauell, and the cruke
the fiuer felt and the Cyatick
The megrine never me forsuk
The cauld the crampe, and the Coatick
Thes melladies and the atick
sik not to beare mee companie
Sen I am vanquisht doune with sick
Jesus receaue my saulle to ye. (f. 75)
\end{quote}

Gout, gravel, and ‘cruke’, or lameness; ‘Cyatick’, or sciatica; fevers, migraines, colds and cramps – all these leave the speaker ‘spent / Of bewtie strength and brawitie’. It is important to notice that, although every stanza ends on the wish for Jesus to save the speaker’s soul, the latter’s first complaints are all of a bodily, or carnal, nature (cf. ‘My blood hes lost the kyndly heate’, stanza 5) – complaints of a sickly soul, weighed down by sin, only come second, as in stanza 17,

\begin{quote}
My publik sine the world hes seene
Though thay be blind and fals to see
My secrete sinnes I surely meane
That no man knawes bot god and I’ (f. 79).
\end{quote}

In the section that follows, the speaker portrays a life of ‘hid iniquitie’, ‘double dealling’, ‘hid hipocrisie’, and moreover, a life in the service of ‘Sensualitie’, ‘fed with fleshly fantasies’. Lust extended both to sins of the flesh, and lust for worldly goods:

\begin{quote}
Sometyme I was with puirteth pricked
That I for geare thrifted full sore
Where I fand it sueitt, there I licked
And lusted for it more and more
Thereon I trust for constant care
Though it be fals felicitie
Yet saue me, Lord, now frome that snare
And syne receiue my saull to ye. (f. 81)
\end{quote}
There is a great deal of textual evidence to prove this poem is in Scots. Examples of Scots rhymes, for instance, are in stanzas 2 (‘overtaine/allone’ [pronounced ‘allane’]), 14 (‘blame/hame’), 16 (floure/stoure), 18 (‘moure/turme’), and 22 (‘sore/more’ [pronounced ‘sair’ and ‘mair’ to rhyme with ‘care/snare’]). Examples of Scots diction are ‘sen’ and ‘sua’ in stanza 1, ‘gaist’ and ‘pow’ in stanza 3, ‘brawitie’ in stanza 7; more examples may be found throughout. No source for this work is known. There are few stylistic characteristics that would make it possible to connect this poem to a known poet. The poem is not like the works of Elizabeth Melville or James Melville, two poets known for their penitential verse. \(^{124}\) Similarly, nothing stands out to connect the poem, for instance, to Alexander Hume (who in later life renounced his involvement with profane poetry), or to Montgomerie. Whereas it is possible it was written nearer the time of compilation (c. 1630), the many Scotticisms (sometimes hidden under an anglicised orthography) suggest that this work was composed in the sixteenth century. Within Robertson’s collection, its length gives it prominence, rather like the Cherrie in the Laing manuscript; in contrast, there is no sense that other poems were meaningfully arranged around it. It is preceded by four English love songs from John Dowland, and immediately followed by a single Campion lyric, and another four from the same book by Dowland (The First Booke of Songes Or Ayres, 1597). The manner in which these songs are arranged, with ‘1 catiue curate languishes’ in the middle, certainly gives the impression that the compiler did not wholeheartedly subscribe to the ‘curate’ or ‘creature’s’ moral edification: the poem does not signal a change in attitude in the compiler, as following this long lament appear many works that indulge in every single sin listed and regretted by this ‘cative creature’.

Whereas in subject matter perhaps unsurprising, three poems deserve mention for their intricate stanza-form. They are ‘My love is forsaikin me’, ‘Bewtie hath my eyes asayled’, and ‘Quhat heigh offence has my trew love taikine’ (ff. 107-9; ff. 110-11; ff. 112-13, this last one has been identified above as a song). The most elaborate stanza is rhymed ABABCCCBDD:

Bewtie hath my eyes asayled  
And subdewed my sauls affectioune  
Cupids dairts hes so prevailed  
That I most leve in his subjectioune  
Tyed to on  
Quho is machles allone  
And second to non  
In all perfectioune  
Since that fortoune so most be  
No love sall pairt my love and me. (f. 110)

The other two poems show similar stanzaic features: ‘Quhat heigh offence’ rhymes ABABCCCB (thus lacking the closing couplet), and ‘My love is forsaikin me’ rhymes ABAAABB (although sometimes missing out the third half line rhymed A). The metrical ingenuity found here is evidence

\(^{124}\) Private communication with Jamie Reid Baxter.
of considerable poetic skill and a tradition of metrical experiment: the change of pace by indented half lines, together with the triple internal rhymes, certainly brings to mind the work of Montgomerie, renowned for metrical invention and playful stanza forms. Montgomerie’s poem most closely matching the rhyme scheme of the lines quoted above is ‘The Commendatione of Love’. Its first eight lines are identical: ABABCCCB. Rather than a closing couplet, however, Montgomerie opted for a final quatraine (CCCB). However, another formal feature that links these two poems together is the strong closing refrain. What detracts from Montgomerie’s possible association with these works are the many inconsistencies, and particularly the third stanza of the poem quoted above, where several missing words leave the reader guessing as to how the poem might originally have run. These gaps may equally signify an unfinished product, a bad poet, or significant scribal errors.

These poems provide tantalising suggestions of a tradition contemporaneous with or continuing that of Montgomerie’s age. With no evidence to ascribe these poems to the ‘maister poet’, still Parkinson reminds us that

[c]ertain texts seem to have taken their own paths through and beyond the milieu in which many of Montgomerie’s poems initially circulated. That milieu, the court of James VI, does not seem to have been one from which a complete Montgomerie canon ever emerged. The very notion of ‘The Complete Works of Montgomerie’ is inapposite. [...] With their inclusions, exclusions, contiguities and hierarchies, the manuscripts present canons of Montgomerie that appear more authentic than does the print canon.125

An example of such travelling texts and canon-formation is the appearance of ‘Soe sueitt a kiss’ among the twenty-five sonnets, discussed above. Little-explored manuscript miscellanies may contain further additions to the received canon. An almost insurmountable problem is that of secure attribution. At the very least, though, these poems provide more evidence for a wider dissemination of Montgomerie’s poetic genius through the works of anonymous followers.

A final poem that stands out from MS 15937 is one that appears in a small group of predominantly Scots poems (ff. 132-8, featuring ‘Richt sor oprest’, and an Alexander Scott lyric). This poem looks distinctively older than most of the manuscript’s content. These are the first two stanzas, and the last:

In May I rose to doe my observance
As Phoebus bright out of his chamber threw
Intered (I entered) in ane gardein of pleasance
Quhair silver dropes hang of balmie dew
Sittand alon quhair pleasant flowers grow
Richt sor I hard a voyce disgest and clar
Ane woefull wight doe sing in this maner.

O Venus queen and mestres of delyt
Have reuth on me and let me not forfair
As ye that the precious perile perfyt
Of wisdome well in beutie but compair
Princes love the veritie declaire
To my dear heart if I be trew or nought
And if she be maist speciallye in my thought.

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O fragrant flour well of faith and fame
Preceallant wight caus of my woe and smart
M sall I prent in honnour of hir name
Syne doe it grave right sadly in my heart
Whill deadful death both saull and body pairt
And strenght doe fall my body for to walk
In word and work quhill that my toung may talk. (ff. 135-36)

This poem has all the attributes of an early-sixteenth-century love lyric. Its hints of aureate diction (‘hir pearles portratour’, ‘Preceallant wight’), though less heavy than for instance in Dunbar’s rhetorical set pieces, still look back to Older Scots poetic convention. Its setting of an (admittedly rather short) chanson d’aventure, and the overheard lamenter’s prayer to Venus to intervene and save the lover, are all familiar early poetic devices. The lyric ends on a mysterious personal note: ‘M sall I prent in honnour of hir name’. This ‘M’ shall stand as a monument, ‘in word and work’, to the lover’s devotion after his death. This poem would have looked less out of place in the Laing manuscript for instance, which collects more mid-sixteenth century lyrics. Here, in Robertson’s collection, this older strain of love poetry is virtually drowned out by the multitude of English songs. Yet, as has been observed above, many Scots songs date from the mid-sixteenth century, and ‘In May I rose’ is in fact followed by Alexander Scott’s ‘Quha list to leive or that law proue’, and the anonymous ‘Right sor oprest’, both dating roughly to the 1540s and 1550s. It is very likely indeed that Robertson’s source for ‘In May I rose’ was the same, or of the same kind, as that which provided her with many Scottish songs.

Bawdy Verse, ff. 144-68, 173-76

In Scottish literary manuscripts of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and to an even greater extent in printed books, the explicitly bawdy is a relatively rare phenomenon. The repression by the General Assembly in 1568 of an ambiguous love lyric in an edition of the Gude and Godlie Ballatis is indicative of the post-Reformation puritan milieu that attempted to eradicate

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A tradition of erotic poetry in Scots may of course be traced back perhaps as far as James I’s Kingis Quair, and its endorsement of earthy love within the institution of marriage. The speakers of Dunbar’s Tretis of the Tua Marrit Wemen and the Wedo engage in extremely candid sexual conversation. Alexander Scott writes openly of a consummated love affair in ‘Up helsum hairst’. Particularly in the Bannatyne manuscript, critics have noted and discussed the presence of sexual, bawdy, or misogynist verse (see note 128 below). Yet, these earlier references to sexual politics often serve a more profound point; none of these poems are bawdy simply for the sake of bawdiness, and delight only in their risqué subject matter, as do a great many Robertson songs, primarily those derived from the English tradition.
such materials. Yet, several decades on, particularly within the confines of a family house, the manuscript tradition was eminently suitable for such ‘offensive’ poetry. Given the relative scarcity of Scottish bawdry before the eighteenth century, there is not much material with which to compare the songs in Robertson’s manuscript that are of obvious Scottish descent. It is clear that, in MS 15937, the largest part of the sexual, playful songs, mostly featuring ‘lusty youthfull gallants’ and ‘prettie sueit wenches’, comes from England – whether Scotland developed a tradition of its own, post-1603, or largely imported foreign models, is unclear. In relation to Scottish music, Evelyn Stell summarises as follows:

In Scotland, the Church had disapproved of bawdiness since the Reformation of 1560, and continued to do so during the whole of the seventeenth century and beyond. Nevertheless, the incidence of titles which are ribald, openly or by implication, among the Scottish popular pieces in seventeenth-century instrumental manuscripts reveals that this disapproval had only partial effect. In spite of the Church, an earthy tradition, which probably stretched back long before the Reformation, prevailed in Scotland throughout the seventeenth century.

The bawdy lyrics collected by Robertson belong to this ‘earthy tradition’. Moreover, some of Stell’s songs will have had lyrics. Stell continues that

[although it is impossible to estimate the incidence of bawdy songs in seventeenth-century Scottish traditional music, the available evidence suggests that the proportion was not especially high, certainly when compared to contemporary England.]

If bawdy poems and ribald songs were relatively uncommon, then the evidence in MS 15937 has even greater rarity value, and is of musical, literary, and cultural significance.

The first bawdy poem that appears to be in Scots is ‘My Ladye quhat let yow my love to injoy’ (f. 125), a debating poem between ‘he’ and ‘she’. A similar debate poem features in the Laing manuscript (see pp. 46-48). The two most interesting stanzas of the former run as follows:

She.
Qhat if I content you and so be with chyld
My freinds will forsaik me my mother grow wyld

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127 The lyric in question is ‘Welcum, Fortoun, welcum againe’. See Mitchell’s introduction to the Gude and Godlie Ballatis, pp. lxxv-lxxvi, and p. 222.


The poet’s language at this stage is very candid, punning unsubtly on the ‘chirry’, which had strong, sexual connotations – it may be wondered whether Montgomerie Cherrie and the Slae is alluded to here.\(^{131}\) Again, we see a strong social element to these wooing poems, similar to the debate poem in the Laing manuscript. The youth replies with platitudes to the maiden’s all too realistic concerns, but his proverbs have effect, and he successfully woos his maiden. ‘I saw a nymph’, the poem that immediately follows this (briefly discussed above), follows a similar pattern of resistance, seduction, and finally success from the male point of view.

A further cluster of bawdy verse starts at f. 144, with ‘Men seldom thryves in all thair lyfes’ and ‘As on a day Sabina was asleep’. The latter was probably an English black-letter ballad; the former was identified as ‘Scottish’ in a marginal inscription by an unknown hand. Evidence of the Scots language in this poem may be found in the first stanza, for instance, where ‘For I had on quhom God hes taine’ should surely have read ‘For I had ane’ to rhyme with ‘taine’ and thus continue the pattern of internal rhymes. Another example is in stanza two, ‘we glaik hir’. Compared to other bawdy songs in the manuscript, this poem is less explicit, although its central concern is clearly sexual intercourse – in the refrain, ‘weill moue and then well mary’, ‘moue’ takes on unambiguous connotations. The poem is also concerned with children born out of wedlock, and the social consequences particularly for the mother. Stanza two introduces first the wooing game:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Get we a lasse we play we passe} \\
\text{We glaik hir thus so roundlye} \\
\text{We waill we wisch we ban we blisse} \\
\text{We clap we kisse hir soundlye}.
\end{align*}
\]

The seemingly inevitable results of this are related in the next stanza:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{With leges abrod hir maidenhead} \\
\text{Slipes on ane rid so cleirlye} \\
\text{For all hir ruffes and gifit gloves} \\
\text{She buyes the broed full dearlye} \\
\text{Hir belly rys the kirk outcryes} \\
\text{The sessone tryes hir fairlye} \\
\text{Scars payes hir fies hir penalties} \\
\text{And yet we mow and mary.}
\end{align*}
\]

Material gains cannot outweigh social implications for this unmarried mother. Alexander Scott concisely captured the same idea in ‘Up helsum hairt’: ‘I coft hir deir, bot scho fer derrer me’. The anonymous poet’s message states much the same: ‘She buyes the broed [‘brood’, or her unborn child] full dearlye’. Consequences for the male speaker, set out in the final stanza, are only financial, to provide ‘some geir’ for the child. Yet, the last word is the mother’s, who wields some power still:

And everi day she bostes away  
Schell nether stay nor tary  
Till on our knees we man hir please  
And heigh hir for to mary.

It would be interesting to establish whether a song such as ‘Men seldom thryves’ was enjoyed for its indecent content, or perhaps for its admonitory quality – despite the ‘kirk’s’ sanctioning, the poem remains light in tone, yet an underlying moral message cannot be ignored here. It is fascinating to see how the Protestant kirk’s reproachful teachings had completely suffused the moral universe that surrounds these poems – and also how a courtly focus had shifted to one grounded in a wider community.

A brilliant piece of humorous writing in Scots, and a poem that deserves its place in modern anthologies of Scottish writing for its rarity value alone, is ‘Sir I thought good to send yow a bukell’ (f. 147):

Sir I thought good to send yow a bukell  
Both daintie and delicat such as ye sie  
Faltes (faultless) Il warrand if it be not to bruckell  
With cunning composed of mettall most frie  
A jewell most fair for a prince a propyne  
Quhois praises to pen doth passe my ingine  
A subject of poyetes mor meet to sing  
Bot hey me my bukell it laikes a toung.

This is the first of five stanzas, and introduces the conceit of the ‘bukell’. Borrowing from the register of speech of the makars, the poet hyperbolically characterises his gift as ‘A jewell most fair for a prince a propyne’, but at the same time also playfully incorporates a ‘modesty topos’. In connection to ‘poyetes’ and the speaker’s inability to give praise, the final line cleverly puns on the ‘bukell’ lacking a ‘tongue’ (in the first sense a buckle pin). The metaphor for the buckle as a woman’s body is sustained throughout the poem: the ‘bukell’ lacking a ‘toung’ gives rise to many double-layered remarks, initially on the ‘matchles’ qualities of the gift, secondly on the need for ‘a guid craftesman’ to fasten a new ‘toung’, and ending finally in a series of jocular insults at the address of the ‘frend’ receiving the buckle, mocking his skills at the metaphorical forge:

This tak to vndertak if ye dar adventure

132 Poems of Scott, p. 45.
Of maxing of metalles ye most have good skill
The better the toung is the harder the temper
It bevit and byding it cannot be ill
Of laton and copar it most not be chosit
Bot of the sam mettall the bukell composed
Syne closely put in and cuninglye hung
Great losse war this bukell sould want a toung

If the metall be dour and ill to dantane
A thousand sad straikes and more it will crave
The crafts man most be young lustie and wanton
A ferce fyre man ye labour most have
Ane old cresit craftis man will tyne bot his travell
Yet better he cannot be purged of the gravell
It most be weill beaton dintit and dong
Great losse war this buckle sould want a toung

Bot I feare that my bukell be badlie bestoued
Your worklomes are worne and forgett force of fyre
Your tempring brouch is als dead
Of such a fair labour gray hares will sone tyre
If your borel be bluntit my bukell send back
A toung frome my self perhaps it will tak
Bot frend I suppone that when he was young
He wald not send back my bukell to toung.

The date of composition and the origin of this poem in Scots are unknown – yet its mastery of form, highly effective alliteration, and well-sustained comical poise suggests a poet of considerable skill. It may be a private piece, from one poet to another, or written more generally, to entertain an audience. The refrain might characterise this as a song, but it is difficult to be sure. In contrast to some of the more conventional poems in the manuscript, the language is precise and varied, skilfully handled, and never succumbing to bawdiness for its own sake. As with a flyting, the quality of the poem lies in its inventiveness and sustained artfulness and mock-seriousness. Jokes at the expense of old men suffering from ‘the gravell’, a urinary ailment, are familiar in the Scottish tradition, for instance, from the Freiris of Berwick, or from Montgomerie and Polwarth’s Flyting. This good-natured, amusing and craftily composed poem is one of the most engaging works in the Robertson manuscript.

Later in MS 15937, bawdry degenerates into the scatological ‘O ho the moone’ (f. 162). In terms of style, this song seems to belong almost to the eighteenth century, and provides a very curious alternative to the other largely conventional songs and poems in the manuscript. It is very uninhibited and does not attempt to disguise itself in any way, as its heroine pronounces after she finds ‘her hose full & hir shoes full too’: ‘I schyt I schyt I schyt’. Another song clearly transgressing decorum starts out deceptively as a piece of moralism:

133 ‘Bot verry tyrit and wett wes Freir Allane / For he wes awld and nicht nocht wele travell / And als he had ane littill spyce of gravell’, Bannatyne Manuscript, IV, 262; cf Fox and Ringler, f. 349r. Montgomerie: Poems, I, 145.
This partiall world so gevyn is
To flattring and a[m]bitions
It prayes (praises) things of small desyrtes [correction in the manuscript]
And leaves throughout all better pairtes. (f. 173)

It comes quickly to the point, however:

Thus for I mynd now for to sing
The commend due of a thing
More worthie of praise altho it ly
In darknes and obscuritie.

Even though the speaker addresses all ‘suiet ladies’ in his audience, that they ‘not offended be / I meane no bady thing trewlye’, what he is about to commend soon becomes clear: ‘For giue ane week it eydle lye / The world will ceas to multiplie’. The poem ends on a long celebratory catalogue of the various attributes of the female sex organs, or ‘cunnie’.

It is very difficult to know what sort of reaction a poem such as this would have elicited from Robertson and her circle (assuming that the manuscript was used by a larger group of people). It might be surmised that this type of coarse sexual humour found a willing ear among male audiences, but not so much among women. Stell certainly suggests that bawdy song manuscripts were generally associated with male owners; in England, Marotti argues that obscene verse in manuscript ‘was most frequently associated with all-male environments’. Yet, given the strong female involvement in Scotland in manuscript compilation, we must perhaps conclude that the audiences include both sexes. Since relatively few bawdy works have survived in Scottish sources, there is no significant research to match the interest in bawdy and in sexual poetry south of the border. In any case, it is important here to note that works of apparent Scottish origin feature side by side with English poems, and that Scotland must indeed have had a tradition, albeit small, of bawdy poems and songs for entertainment.

**Concluding the Manuscript, ff. 212-15**

More can be learned about Margaret Robertson from the end of the manuscript. Medieval and renaissance book owners frequently personalised books and manuscripts, and Scottish owners formed no exception. Inscriptions range from the simple attachment of names – to signify authorship, ownership, or the bestowal of a gift – to more elaborate ways of personalising a text,

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135 See, for instance, Ian Frederick Moulton, *Before Pornography: Erotic Writing in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), particularly chapter 1, ‘Erotic Writing in Manuscript Culture’, pp. 35-69. Significantly, Moulton argues that ‘manuscript erotic texts, while primarily male-authored and overwhelmingly representing a masculine view of sexual activity, were not limited to an exclusively male readership’ (p. 69). His examples include the manuscript of Margaret Bellasys (BL MS Add. 10309), a miscellany compiled c. 1630, and containing a good deal of bawdy verse. A comparative study between the contemporaneous manuscripts belonging to Robertson and Bellasys would be very interesting indeed.
such as dedicatory verse or proverbs. In illuminated manuscripts, more elaborate devices still, such as portraits, miniatures, or coats of arms often signify ownership. Not infrequently, these devices, inscriptions or dedications can be related to the contents of the text, or to the personality of the author, scribe, or owner.\footnote{See, for instance, Sally Mapstone, \textit{Scots and Their Books in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: An Exhibition in the Bodleian Library, Oxford} (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1996). For an introductory study of book ownership by women in Scotland, see Priscilla Bawcutt, “‘My bright book’: Women and their Books in Medieval and Renaissance Scotland”, in \textit{Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain}, ed. by Jocelyn Wogan-Browne and others (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), pp. 17-34.} As already shown above, Margaret Robertson can be seen to claim ownership for her manuscript: ‘Margarat Robertson / with my hand’, stating moreover that ‘This buik perteines to a verie / honourable womane’ (f. 1). It has not previously been remarked that MS 15937 is similarly inscribed at the end. On f. 211, a half page is left blank. This is unusual, as on every single page (save one blank page, f. 117, and the imperfectly copied end of ‘O quhat a plague is loue’ on f. 53) every new poem is directly continued, and no space is wasted.

On closer investigation, it is clear that the material that follows on the last four pages fulfils a different function in the manuscript, and is not part of the miscellaneous contents of the collection proper. Instead, it may tell us something of Margaret Robertson herself. Consider:

\begin{quote}
Giff thow wald loue or loveit bee 
Kiepe in thy mynd thir thingis thrie 
Be secreitt true, and pacient 
To father and mother obedent 

The feare of the Lord is the beginning of visedom 
But foules dispise knowledge and instructioune 

Tak tent in tyme and not deferr 
Quhen tyme is gone ye vill doe warr 

Margaret Robertson with my hand. (f. 212)
\end{quote}

This small collection of lines of sententious wisdom is markedly different in tone from the rest of the manuscript. The first quatrain is an interesting reworking of an old Scots poem:

\begin{quote}
Gif ye wald lufe and luvit be 
In mynd keip weill thir thingis thre 
and sadly in thy breist imprent 
Be secreit trew and pacient. \footnote{See Priscilla Bawcutt, ‘A First-Line Index of Early Scottish Verse’, \textit{Studies in Scottish Literature}, 26 (1991), 265-66. The manuscript in question is the so-called St Giles Bible, a thirteenth-century French}
\end{quote}

This is the first stanza of six of the poem as it features in the Bannatyne manuscript; this first quatrain is also to be found in the commonplace book of Andrew Melville (Aberdeen, AUL MS 28) and in NLS Adv. 18.1.2 (f. 177v).\footnote{In Bannatyne, subsequent stanzas work out the conceit, but that attribution has now been rejected.}
commenting on all three qualities – discretion (‘secreit’), loyalty (‘trew’), and patience – and culminating in an advice to all lovers: ‘Thus he that wantis ane of thir thre / ane luvar glaid may neuir be’. The Robertson fragment, borrowing three out of four lines, draws focus away from the theme of love (which raises the question: ‘why’?, considering the largely amatory content of the manuscript) and domesticates the sense. This imposition is clumsy, as the fourth virtue of obedience follows the announced ‘thinges thrie’; neither do the three virtues, which are of clear amatory cast in Bannatyne, fit in well with the reorientation in MS 15937 to parental, or familial, love. It is difficult to determine whether any importance should be attached to this in terms of Margaret Robertson herself, since this sententious fragment (like the ones to follow) was so frequently copied.

The second item is a well-known biblical phrase (Proverbs 1.7). One example of a type of setting where this proverb was also encountered may be found in Crathes Castle, in Aberdeenshire. On its famous sixteenth-century painted ceilings, in the so-called Muses Room, the representation of Wisdom (here the first of five Virtues; they are followed by the nine Muses), bears the inscription ‘The fear of the Lord / is the begining of all wisdom’.139 Use of such sententious materials was clearly not restricted to manuscripts. Intriguingly, however, Robertson is not the only Scottish woman to attach this particular proverb to a collection of poetry. It can be found, too, in the Ker manuscript, principal witness of Montgomerie’s verse, compiled by Margaret Ker. Parkinson comments as follows:

To return to the title page, there is a prominent epigraph. It draws on Proverbs 1.7, ‘The feare of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; butfooles despise wisdome and instruction’. More freely, this epigraph alludes to psalms (135 and 138, but especially 72.II) praising the Name of God, against which earthly kings are powerless. Corresponding to scriptural allusions in the poems themselves, the epigraph indicates the scribe’s commitment to the religious and political elements in the thematic range of the poems following.140

The same certainly cannot be said for MS 15937: with the exception of one long religious, and a few occasional poems, the contents are secular and amatory. The presence of this particular proverb in both manuscripts invites speculation, however, especially considering that all of Montgomerie’s poems in MS 15937 are derived – as far as we know – from a circulating manuscript, and not from a print (see above). Even if this proverb does not reflect the contents of the manuscript, it chimes with this section of moralistic wisdom denoting, perhaps, a virtuous owner or compiler (although, as shown above, part of the content tells quite another story!).

production. Several marginal verses appear on ff. 177v-78r, including, on f. 177v (and on f. 150r), ‘In my defence god me defend / and bring my soull to ane guid end’. This same inscription features in CUL MS Kk.5.30, section one, f. 59r.

139 For a representation of the ceiling, and a discussion of the Virtues more generally, see Michael Bath, Renaissance Decorative Painting in Scotland (Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland, 2003), pp. 198-200.

140 Montgomerie: Poems, II, 2.
The final maxim, ‘Tak tent in tyme and not deferr / Quhen tyme is gone ye vill doe warr’ can also be found in two major Scottish miscellanies: again, in the Bannatyne manuscript, and in the Maitland Folio manuscript. Among Bannatyne’s ‘balletis mirry and Vther solatius consaittis’ an imperfect twelve-line poem appears on f. 122r. It then re-occurs on f. 147r, its lines rearranged, and both versions feature the same couplet as found in MS 15937. In the Maitland Folio manuscript, on p. 294, the poem also appears, following the line ordering of Bannatyne’s version on f. 147r, but broken up into three distinct items. The third opens ‘Tak tyme in tyme, and no tyme defer / Quhone tyme is past ye may do war’. The lines are anonymous, but in both manuscripts are subscribed ‘quod quha to quhame’. Clearly, such a proverb would easily be memorised and have circulated orally. Its popularity in literary writing is well attested, however: it occurs (in various forms) in several anonymous pieces, in the work of Sir David Lindsay, and, again, in Montgomerie.

The poem that immediately follows these lines, ‘Wpright to liue I sett my mynd’, has already been the subject of a study by Bawcutt. It occurs, its stanzas slightly rearranged, on the back of Timothy Pont’s Map 23 (depicting the area around the river Tay, in Perthshire). At the time of writing, Bawcutt seems to have been unaware of the occurrence of a version of this poem in MS 15937, but in an addendum to her article she notes that she found a second copy of the poem in the notebooks of Peter Buchan. Buchan’s source is Robertson’s lost manuscript, and the poem as it appears in his manuscript notebook (the above-mentioned BL MS 24904, f. 275r) is much the same as in MS 15937. On Pont’s map the poem is ascribed to Sir Philip Sidney, but Bawcutt convincingly refutes this claim. She concludes that it is more likely to be the work of a cultured amateur, and in the addendum she suggests the following:

Both these texts [the Pont map and MS X] are associated with the same Highland area of Scotland, and provide a small but precious clue as to its social, literary and musical culture in the early seventeenth century. […] Other questions inevitably arise – but at this stage are difficult to answer – as to the priority of one or other of these versions, and as to whether Margaret Robertson might have been not just the scribe but the author of this poem.

In Buchan’s transcript the poem is subscribed ‘Margaret Robertsonsoue vith my hand’. In MS 15973 this subscription occurs only underneath the proverbs and at the very end, and not with this particular poem. The personal nature of the final section of the manuscript lends credence to Bawcutt’s suggestion of Robertson’s authorship of the poem, however, and provides more evidence

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141 Bannatyne Manuscript, II, 324, and III, 44; cf. Fox and Ringler, ff. 122r, 147r. Maitland Folio, I, 344.
142 For an exhaustive list of occurrences of this proverb and its literary use in Scotland see R.J. Whiting, ‘Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings From Scottish Writings Before 1600: Part Two M-Y’, Mediaeval Studies, 13 (1951), 87-164 (pp. 141-42).
143 Bawcutt, ‘Pont’s Map’.
to consider Robertson not only as a compiler, but possibly also as an author of some poems in her manuscript.

The poem reflects on the theme of contentment, and the golden mean, and, states Bawcutt, is strongly reminiscent of a tradition of verse exemplified by ‘I joy not in no earthly bliss’ (appearing in William Byrd’s Psalms, Sonets and Songs of 1588). The tone shifts, however, in the last stanza, where the speaker addresses a friend:

Quhilk great contentment I yow wis
And all your sower translaite in sweit
I woulde be glaid to hear of this
I long bot hes no hoope to meitt
Yitt friendis ar friendis thought fortoune moove
Nought will dissolue a loyall love. (f. 214)

The conclusion personalises, and appears to be addressed to a reader, dedicatee, or loved one. Certainly it suggests that the writer (or speaker) and the (imagined) ‘yow’ have been separated. The presence of this poem within its context raises fascinating questions: indeed, Bawcutt queries whether it might be addressed to Timothy Pont by ‘a friend’ from the area of Tayside, and so end up at the back of his manuscript map. If indeed Robertson is the author (that she had access to Byrd’s 1588 song book is evident from other works present in her manuscript), then perhaps the address to Pont is less likely, unless the whole manuscript was intended as a gift, rather than a collection for private use. Exact answers to these questions might not be found: what is important to realise is that the Pont poem confirms the notion that Robertson’s manuscript was firmly grounded in an active cultural milieu. With two stanzas shifted and the many variants between the two texts, Pont’s poem might stand at some remove from Robertson’s (or vice versa), and testify to significant scribal interference. However, in an area where precious little evidence exists to piece together a wider cultural community, it is tempting to speculate about the evident relationship between these two witnesses.

As the manuscript opens with twenty-five sonnets, so too at the end appears a sonnet. It is not particularly original, and fits in well with other ‘Castalian’, Petrarchist explorations of love. The repetition and wordplay of ‘one’ is typical of the rhetorical strategies of the sonneteers of the 1580s and 1590s. What the sonnet is remarkable for, however, is its female speaking voice:

On onlie one both day and night I pance?
On onlie one soe satled hes my thought
On is my choice thought non haiff beine my chance
On is my hap albeit my hope be nought
The worthynes of on my woe hes wrought
On hes me maid the most unhappiest shee
The bluisching blinkis of one deir haiff I cofte
On sies me sighe and sob, and will not sie

Female writers (if not ventriloquised female voices) are notoriously scarce in Scotland around the
turn of the century. Christian Lindsay’s, Mary Beaton’s, Elizabeth Douglas’s, and Mary Oxlie’s
claim to fame rests on the basis of single sonnets, of which authorship is disputed and uncertain.
Literary women of the mid-seventeenth century, such as Barbara MacKay or Lilias Skene, have
only recently been discussed by Pamela Giles; her findings are, as yet, unpublished. Relating to
Christian Lindsay’s questionable authorship of ‘Oft haive I hard, bot ofter fund it treu’, Sarah
Dunnigan, perhaps wryly, reassures us that ‘even if we consider that her name may have been
playfully invented for the poetic role-play practised by this coterie [the ‘Castalian band’] it still
importantly signifies the incursion of a female voice’.

It is the female voice, then, that sets this
sonnet apart from the other twenty-five in the manuscript, and, more importantly, from the large
output of other Scottish sonneteers. If indeed the small collection of poems closing the collection is
of a more personal nature, then the inclusion of this sonnet by a female scribe or collector is highly
significant. Parkinson remarks that

Among the Scottish anthologists, an indication of progress toward associated
composition becomes detectable in Margaret Robertson’s activity as a scribe. The
last sonnet in NLS MS 15937, the fuller of the two nineteenth-century transcripts of
her lost manuscript, ends in a feminine voice with a reassertion of continued
longing for “one onlie on” who regardless persists in loving another, “her onlie on”
(ll. 13–14). Both concealing and hinting at a personal reference, this wordplay
exemplifies the style of the Scottish sonnet in the early seventeenth century.

It is possible that Robertson is not simply the scribe, but also the author of this sonnet. Although it
is difficult to be certain, this reading would certainly connect to Bawcutt’s suggestion of
Robertson’s authorial autonomy. If indeed the act of compiling a miscellany is indicative of a
burgeoning authorial ambition, and, more generally, indicative of the health and coming-of-age of a
scribal community, then the inscription of Robertson’s own verses at the end of her large collection
is fitting.

The manuscript’s final eight lines, again subscribed ‘Margaratt Robertsoune with my
hand’, belong to the tradition of *ars moriendi*, or the art of dying, frequently explored by Scots
poets:

147  Sarah M. Dunnigan, ‘Scottish Women Writers c. 1560–c. 1650’, in *A History of Scottish Women’s
Writers*, ed. by Douglas Gifford and Dorothy McMillan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997),
pp. 15–43 (p. 15).
Remember man as thou goes by
As thou art now, soe once was I
As I ame now soe must thou bee
Remember man that thou must dye

All men think on the houre of death
And the great god above
Its sweet to die thought ye be loath
Syne liwe vith Chryst your love. (f. 215)

The genre’s widespread popularity throughout older and contemporary Scots poetry is attested by the formulaic opening of several ‘Ballatis Full of Wisdome and Moralitie’ found in the Bannatyne manuscript for instance, where some of the ‘documenta’ (as Bannatyne calls his verses here) open ‘Remembir, man’. Dunbar opens in similar vein with ‘Memento, homo, quod cinis ess’.\(^{149}\) Robertson’s manuscript confirms that by the seventeenth century such sententious material had not yet lost its appeal. Indeed, it is interesting to note that *Songs and Fancies* (1662) contains a religious song, opening

> Remember, O thou man, O thou man O thou man
> remember O thou man, thy time is spent
> Remember O thou man how thou was dead and gone
> And I did what I can, therefore repent.\(^{150}\)

Clearly, this song and the closing lines to MS 15937 draw from the same strong tradition that advocates a morally sound and virtuous life, as death is always close.

Collectively, the material on ff. 212-15 celebrates proverbial wisdom, advocates the middle way, addresses a friend, and problematises unrequited love from a female perspective. All this is finally contextualised by man’s (or indeed woman’s?) place in the universe, under God’s dominion, and inevitable death. This constitutes a decidedly different conclusion from the final poem of the collection before the blank half page, ‘My loue is bright as enbur bone’ (ff. 210-11), a conventional love lyric concluding in each refrain that ‘She seames good and is not so’. If some of the ownership verses above seem trivial, then Bawcutt usefully reminds us that ‘a solitary item has more interest when it is a member of a group’.\(^{151}\) Combined with Robertson’s repeated reference to her ‘hand’, the sentiments from this manuscript’s last four pages might well be seen to present a book ‘perteining’ to ‘a verie honourable womane’ (my italics), and to contextualise also the more light-hearted, and at times even bawdy, poems and songs collected by this lady. The overlap between Robertson’s choice of epigraphs and the Bannatyne manuscript, perhaps the Maitland Folio manuscript, and the Ker manuscript is fascinating, and suggests two paths of enquiry: either, the


\(^{150}\) [Thomas Davidson], *Cantus: Songs and Fancies* (Aberdeen: John Forbes, 1662). This book is not paginated. The song quoted above is song number nine.

\(^{151}\) Bawcutt, ‘Index, p. 263.
material above was ubiquitous and easily accessible for any compiler, or, more excitingly, Robertson must have had access to poetic collections that were close descendants of some of Scotland’s most important literary manuscripts. Although the latter is difficult to prove with certainty, the sheer diversity and number of poems included in MS 15937 suggests that Robertson must have possessed an impressive library, and that she was an extremely well connected compiler.

**Conclusion**

One hundred and seventy-five poems cannot all be done justice to in the space of a chapter. Although it has proved possible in the discussion above to present a cultural backdrop against which to view the manuscript, to trace many sources for Robertson’s poems, and to submit a limited amount of poems to a more literary-critical analysis, a more comprehensive literary appreciation still awaits. As will have become evident, MS 15937, despite all its ‘problems’ of textual unreliability, uncertain provenance, and English-orientated content, is still a miscellany manuscript of considerable importance for Scottish literary history. Many of these problems would be solved if Robertson’s MS X could be found, but, even if our conclusions are necessarily based on a challenging transcript, the anthologising efforts of Robertson can be appreciated.

To contextualise the manuscript, it might most fruitfully be compared, as suggested by Bawcutt and as discussed above, to the Wemyss manuscript. It will remain a moot point whether Robertson herself was musical and whether MS X might have contained musical notation – yet against the background of the household she grew up in, and considering the vast quantity of Scottish and English songs she collected, this seems not unlikely. It is interesting to compare the ‘title page’ of MS 15937 with the two title pages of Wemyss’s miscellany (there is one on each side of the manuscript). Both ladies style themselves very similarly: whereas Robertson, as seen above, is an ‘honourable womane’, Wemyss (on the side of the miscellaneous verses) opens ‘Margrat Wemeyss with my hand’, and ‘Margaret Weemes my very good Lady’. Opening the collection of music and songs, she writes that the manuscript is ‘A booke / containing some pleasant aires / of Two, three or foure voices / Collected out of diverse Authors / Begunne June 1643’ (f. ii.). Both Wemyss and Robertson must have had similar types of copy text available (certainly Campion and Morley, and what was presumably a manuscript containing ‘Quhen Cynthia vith a sweit consent’). Wemyss’s notes reflect that her manuscript was enjoyed in a wider family circle (‘all the Lesons behind this are learned ut of my Sisteres book’, f. 42), and the same type of environment can be surmised for Robertson.

Robertson’s scribal activities may be seen from the perspective as outlined by Elliott and Rimmer:

When the Scottish Court moved south in 1603, a younger generation of Castalian poets and musicians was growing up in the northern castles. This generation, however, inherited a fragmented culture that lacked the focus of a royal court to give it direction and purpose. The result for music was that the art of composition
declined. Interest in contemporary English and European music continued, but when a Scottish musician wanted something of his own he turned to music of a much earlier generation or to folksong. […] Rather, this is the century of the gifted amateur and the collector. Manuscript anthologies of music were compiled throughout the century, some recording art music, some folk, and a few both.\footnote{Elliott and Rimmer, \textit{History}, p. 41.}

The question needs to be asked whether a decline in creativity, both in music and writing, can only be appreciated in hindsight, or whether the collectors of these manuscripts indeed thought that they were bringing up the rear in a kind of post-‘Castalian’ movement that was but a remnant of the glory days of the sixteenth century. Elliott and Rimmer’s assessment is also informed by a court-dominated view, as given shape by Helena Shire, that has more recently been refined (albeit implicitly), or even re-defined. The court is no longer understood as a coherent, hermetically sealed, continued presence that functioned as the only centre and patron to all the arts; rather, the courtly audience, and hence ‘court culture’, was probably more porous (certainly when compared to the Elizabetan court), and also a more occasional phenomenon based around specific events (such as a royal entry, wedding, baptism, or other similar occasions).\footnote{This is not the place further to explore the difficult question of the social make-up of the Scottish court in relation to literary writing and other cultural pastimes, but it is important to note that critical reconceptualisations of ‘the courtly’ are of real importance to the manuscripts discussed here. It follows that a great deal of work remains to be done in early-modern Scottish cultural studies.}

It is telling that, whereas the first two miscellanies discussed (the Laing and Tibbermuir manuscripts) could be linked back to courtly circles (through family connections), in the case of Margaret Robertson, by 1630 certainly there are no obvious connections between her relatively unknown family, and the accepted centres of cultural exchange such as the court (although it must be noted that connections earlier in the previous century, such as the alleged presentation of Queen Mary’s harp to the family, may have continued to be influential later on). Admittedly, more could be learned about the Robertsons of Lude and their connections. Yet, exactly this lack of connections might indicate that the Scottish and English poems and songs in the manuscript had properly entered the public sphere; in other words, in order to gain access to such works it was unnecessary to be connected to exclusive literary cliques or coteries (such as that of James VI and his supposed circle), if indeed these existed in such rigidly demarcated terms. This might be taken as an indicator of a certain democratisation, or regionalisation, of literary activity, which ties in with a reconceptualisation of Scottish court culture.

As MS 15937 amply testifies, it is a mistake to consider post-1603 Scottish literary culture as entirely backward-looking. Furthermore, and partly in response to Elliott and Rimmer’s notion of a ‘fragmented culture’ and a declining creative spirit, within the process of anthologising (by Robertson, and others) may be detected a spark of originality that could easily light up. Parkinson argues the following regarding the importance of Scotland’s later miscellany manuscripts:
The function of the anthology to advance and commemorate social bonding remains valid throughout the century, at least in some localities, in the burghs, the great households, and the schools. Antiquarian projects, engaged in by teachers as clients of noble patrons, reveal the rising status but also the increased retrospection of such a function: seeking songs, Robert Tait, precentor and schoolteacher in Lauder, consults the library of the duke of Lauderdale at Thirlstane with its holdings of volumes owned by previous generations of Maitlands. Well into the century, however, the anthology continues to offer an appealing way for gentlewomen like Margaret Robertson c. 1630 and Margaret Wemyss in the 1640s to participate in and initiate the exchange of texts as a ‘kindlie’ act of familial piety but also an opportunity to exhibit and cultivate creativity. The anthologising activities of such gentlewomen may indicate their assumption of the shared enthusiasms of the writers they copy and thus those writers’ depiction of relationships; still, it would be a mistake to ignore the corresponding signs of independent-mindedness, as Margaret Robertson demonstrates pre-eminently.¹⁵⁴

These channels of interaction, so difficult to uncover, expose a healthy scribal culture that nurtures its own, new generation of writers. Parkinson holds an altogether more positive view of post-1603 Scottish literary culture than, for instance, Elliott and Rimmer (although their discussion focuses on music, and not on literary writing per se); a similar line of thinking has been proposed by Sarah Dunnigan, in relation to a third wave of renaissance Scottish writing that occurred post-1603 (as discussed above, see pp. 131-33). Crucially, MS 15937 leads us to re-assess the more established views of seventeenth-century Scottish literary culture that have outlined the period only in terms of ‘fragmentation’ and ‘decline’. Based on the evidence presented here, of Robertson’s impressive range of source materials, her wide reading among English and Scottish printed books and manuscripts, her eclectic tastes in poetry and song, all against the background of her family’s wider cultural interests, she can be shown to have been an very active proponent of early-modern Scottish musical and literary culture.

¹⁵⁴  Parkinson, ‘Anthologies’, [forthcoming].
Conclusion: The Miscellany and ‘the Whole Book’

Five hundred years ago, the chief of an upper hexagon came upon a book as confusing as the others, but which had nearly two pages of homogeneous lines. [...] The content was also deciphered: some notions of combinative analysis, illustrated with examples of variation with unlimited repetition. These examples made it possible for a librarian of genius to discover the fundamental law of the Library. This thinker observed that all the books, no matter how diverse they might be, are made up of the same elements: the space, the period, the comma, the twenty-two letters of the alphabet. He also alleged a fact which travellers have confirmed: In the vast Library there are no two identical books.¹

As explored in Chapter One, and self-evident from discussion of the three miscellanies, medieval and early modern textual culture is defined in terms of variance, or, according to Marotti, in terms of ‘textual instability and malleability’.² Each manuscript poem is unique: the mythical underlying ‘original work’, free of variations, does not exist. For this reason, the manuscript poem’s meaning is always ambiguous, and partly dependent on the context in which it is encountered. Medieval and early modern manuscripts share an important characteristic with the tomes described in Borges’s iconic story: indeed, ‘there are no two identical books’. Manuscripts, like the imagined books in Borges, are ‘illustrated with examples of variation’.

The manuscript books of early modern Scotland, and the three miscellanies discussed here, bear explicit witness to textual variance. A good example is the sonnet of Alexander Craig, ‘Quhen feirce Achilles att the sege off Troye’ (as discussed in Chapter Three). This was previously thought only to survive in print, but MS CUL Kk.5.30 records a version that displays marked Scots language features that are absent from the print, and that therefore perhaps predates the 1606 printing of the poem. The question is no longer which version has precedence, which presents the least ‘corrupt’ reading, or which best reflects Craig’s authorial intentions – the question is rather how to make meaning from this cumulative evidence. Though nothing is known about this, Craig may have seen his Amorose Songes through the press himself. Both versions of the sonnet, one in Scots, the other ‘englished’, may be equally authoritative. To prefer one version over the other would be to ignore the multiplicity that is inherent in early modern textuality. A great deal more evidence has been presented in the previous three chapters that underlines the value of variance,

Conclusion: The Miscellany and ‘the Whole Book’

particularly since a fair portion of the works featured in MS Laing III.447, MS Kk.5.30 and MS 15937 also survives elsewhere, in Scottish and English manuscripts and printed books. As demonstrated, the contexts of these miscellanies are crucial to establish ‘what poetry did’ in renaissance Scotland.² The three miscellanies under scrutiny here (and MS 15937 in particular) do not always retain the ‘best’ versions of poems also known from elsewhere, but this is not the point: what matters is the rich contextual accumulation of evidence that gives meaning to these poems.

The manuscript critic faces a very similar task to that of the ‘official searchers, inquisitors’ described in Borges’s story. The searchers wander about in an apparently infinite library, browsing books, looking for structure, for meaning, and for order. Borges relates how ‘[t]hey always arrive extremely tired from their journeys; they speak of a broken stairway which almost killed them; they talk with the librarian of galleries and stairs; sometimes they pick up the nearest volume and leaf through it, looking for infamous words. Obviously, no one expects to find anything’.⁴ Manuscript critics, thankfully less gloomy than the ‘inquisitors’, do expect to find something.

The ‘Whole Book’

Chapter One concluded with the advice of Derek Pearsall to maintain a certain ‘adventurousness’ in manuscript studies. It is fitting, then, in this final chapter, also to take account of his recent words of warning; words, moreover, that are directed specifically at scholars of miscellany manuscripts. In reaction to very recent book-historical perspectives on medieval miscellanies that aim to consider ‘the whole book’ and its ‘unifying controlling intelligences’, Pearsall comments that

[...]acking authors of any kind, for the most part, critics dealing with manuscript miscellanies, especially those whose first training was as literary scholars, are yet driven by the same desires, and fall with enthusiasm upon the idea of the ‘guiding intelligence’ that must have controlled the choice and arrangement of contents and been responsible for the subtle strategies of organization that turn an apparent miscellany into a continuing meta-narrative. To acknowledge that all kinds of random factors might have been operating, and, might have been much more important in determining what went into the miscellanies, is by contrast so negative, so dispiriting, so pusillanimous, and of course so unproductive.⁵

Pearsall, no doubt, exaggerates for effect, yet his warning is an important one. To replace authorial intention by that of the compiler (in absence of the author) entirely disregards the complex forces at work in manuscript compilation, and subjects medieval and early modern textual culture to a distinctly anachronistic treatment. The ‘random factors’, for instance the limited availability of

³ The phrase is Steven May’s, as quoted in Chapter One, p. 25.
⁴ Borges, pp. 82-83.
copy text, and the order in which those texts arrived on the scribe’s desk, need to be taken into consideration.

Pearsall’s article is somewhat flippant, particularly in reference to his newly suggested categories of miscellanies, the ‘UMRISCs’ and ‘UMWELAs’, or ‘Unorganised manuscripts reflecting the interests of a single compiler’ and ‘Unorganised manuscripts with an element of local anthologising’. Pearsall here draws attention to the unsatisfactory situation of nomenclature in miscellany studies, and indeed his article is concerned with the confusing terminology of various manuscript critics. This problem was equally registered by Nichols and Wenzel in the introduction to their book, the premise of which Pearsall in his turn attempts to problematise (*The Whole Book: Cultural Perspective on the Medieval Miscellany*). The book’s editors state that, as a term, ‘miscellany, does not even provide an accurate taxonomy for cataloguers, editors, and historians of book making, let alone literary scholars’. They continue that the term ‘miscellany’

sheds little light on the relationship of the texts to their codicological context, and it may even be misleading, suggesting, as it does, an arbitrary principle of organization for manuscripts in which there may be a perfectly clear organizing principle.

Pearsall takes issue not with the fact that the manuscript terminology needs to be cleared up, but rather with the eagerness of critics to embrace a ‘clear organizing principle’.

Yet, to be always deeply suspicious of structure and meaning in miscellanies is to do the early modern compiler a disservice. This would negate intelligent reading and juxtaposition of individual items into meaningful wholes, a process that has been extensively demonstrated in the previous chapters. Many miscellanies contain ample evidence of creative compilation; if this cannot be always proven on an overarching, structural level concerning the entire manuscript, then it can certainly be shown on more localised levels, for instance individuals groups of poems. In terms of the early modern Scottish miscellanies discussed in the previous chapters, organising principles are exceedingly difficult to prove. Paradoxically, the manuscript compiled by the greatest number of hands – MS Laing III.447 – has been shown to be the most thematically coherent. It may be suggested that exactly because in the Laing manuscript scribes only contributed small clusters, their entries are more deliberate and purposeful. Pearsall would probably have argued that the compilers have been allowed too much ‘intention’. An argument could be advanced that such thematic coherence is the result not of scribal intention, but of the fact that the compilers drew their poems from such a finely delineated group of sources incorporating such well-established genres that any poem they would have chosen would have meaningfully reverberated with others in the same collection. Yet, such an argument denies the inherent social nature of

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manuscript compilation. Marotti identifies the ‘socially dialogic context’ which explicitly caters for so-called ‘answer poetry’: in the case of the Laing manuscript, the most relevant type is the ‘extension poem [that] develops or amplifies some idea, image, or characteristic feature of rhythm or style’ from a preceding poem.8 The manuscript contains at least one ‘answer proper’, however, where the ‘Inglis Sonet’ on f. 79r is promptly followed by ‘Ane scottis sonnet’. Compilers cannot be denied their ‘intentions’ in such instances. To identify what Pearsall terms ‘continuing meta-narrative[s]’ may be a dangerous venture. The miscellany of James Murray of Tibbermuir, for instance, though (probably) compiled by one man, aims less to develop a theme, and is more properly composed of miscellaneous items. Yet, as has been discussed for instance in reference to the sonnets by Alexander Craig, James Melville, and Philip Sidney, or in relation to Montgomerie’s ‘Heich Architecters wunderous wouttit rounds’ and the sonnet associated with Julian Ker, localised scribal intention gives new meaning to individual works.

**Textual Spaces**

Research into miscellanies invariably implies contexts of distinctive kinds. The contexts, or spaces, that matter when investigating the social surroundings of literary production are discussed by Judith Scherer Herz in reference to the ‘literary circle’, as follows:

Sometimes we are talking of lived spaces – houses, taverns, universities, Inns of Court, theatres – at other times, of the structure of social relations and gender relations; of brothers, sisters, cousins; of friendship, love, and conversation (in its sexual sense, as well); of patronage and politics; and of intellectual networks and religious affiliations. We are, too, talking of textual spaces: of title pages, of dedicatory poems and epistles, of circles and circulation, and of issues of genre, both those genres that derive from the circle (the country house poem, the pastoral and masque, or, in France, the salon novel) and those genres from which we constitute the circle after the fact – dedications, records of conversations (Drummond and Jonson, for example), letters, and diaries. Thus, what we are primarily talking about is the construction of an archive where the circle functions as a cataloguing mechanism and as a heuristic, that is, as a way to pose questions about textual production and reception, and about the subtle and not always predictable intellectual, political, and literary affiliations that connect families, friends and colleagues.9

Scherer Herz’s ‘lived spaces’ and ‘textual spaces’ may usefully be applied to the manuscripts considered here. MS Laing III.447 is indicative of a circle of sorts (though only in the loosest sense), of Edinburgh burgesses, most likely the readers and probably also the compilers of a manuscript that is a true collaborative effort. CUL MS Kk.5.30 and NLS 15937 are more obviously related to family environments. The preceding chapters bear witness to an intricate patterning of

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8  Marotti, p. 159. His definitions are adopted from E.F. Hart.
circles, often in directions hitherto unmentioned. Examples are the possible connection between the Laing manuscript produced in Edinburgh, and the verses inscribed in Walter Cullen’s ‘Aberdeen Chronicle’; the connection between James Murray of Tibbermuir’s ‘Cupid quhom sall I vyt bot the’, and a love poem which later surfaced among the papers of Lilias Murray, a distant kinswoman; and finally, in MS 15937, the links between a Robertson poem and Timothy Pont’s map of Tayside. In the case of the Laing manuscript and Cullen’s registers, no immediate personal connections are necessary to link their compilers’ activities; indeed, they are unlikely to have existed. However, religious affiliation or intellectual networks (yet to be uncovered) may well account for the inclusion of the same two poems in these manuscripts. In the case of James Murray and Lilias Murray, the circulation of the poem which both scribes recorded (in different versions) may well be explained by family connections; in the Tibbermuir manuscript particularly, family connections have been shown to be instrumental in Murray’s choice of copy text. In the instance of the poem shared between Robertson and Pont, this may be the result of a ‘lived space’ more widely, in geographical terms, since, as Bawcutt observed (and as quoted in Chapter Four), both manuscripts ‘are associated with the same Highland area of Scotland’.

In terms of both textual and social space, it remains important to stress the role of women in book culture. Scribes Margaret Ker and Mary Maitland have been discussed above, and Margaret Robertson may join their ranks, alongside other female scribes such as Margaret Wemyss and Lady Jean Campbell. The art of calligrapher Esther Inglis has long been celebrated, and her sumptuous books are a rare example of Scottish manuscripts created also with a commercial aim in mind – Inglis presented her work to prospective patrons in the hope of financial recompense. Such early female author-scribes cleared the way for female authorship more generally, witnessed, for instance, in the case of Elizabeth Melville, or Anna Hume (who had her translation of Petrarch’s Trionfi printed in 1644). That women became increasingly active also in commercial book production, particularly in print shops, is argued by Alastair Mann: ‘[a]s female literacy expanded with that of men, women played a crucial role in the dynamics of the Scottish book trade. It is a role that should be recognised more widely’. It is against this wider backdrop of female

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involvement both in amateur and professional book production that we must consider Margaret Robertson’s manuscript(s). It is all the more important that Robertson’s efforts as a compiler are recognised. Further research may hopefully unearth more details about Robertson’s social and cultural milieu based in or around Lude. As argued in Chapter Four, a large amount of printed books and manuscripts must have passed through her hands, as evidenced by the impressive size of her collection. NLS MS 15937 is of significant value for the history of literature in Scotland, since it contains many unique poems in Scots. It is equally significant for the distribution of English verse and song in Scotland.

On the topic of spaces, finally, critics must be cautious not only to look for unifying textual space. The chapters above have perhaps raised more questions than provided answers, since only a fraction of the evidence survived. David Parkinson describes a fractured textual space in relation to Montgomerie, whose works were produced in a Scotland that, at the end of the sixteenth century, was politically and linguistically under pressure:

Montgomerie’s varied signatures of style are gambits towards claiming a space, textual but also social, in an increasingly crowded scene. Scots is undergoing rapid changes under pressure from the neighbouring vernacular. These pressures are not linguistic alone. Self-presentation becomes self-concealment. In this scene, no wonder that the poem with which I began, *The Cherrie and the Slae*, is so multivalent in its allegory. No wonder that the evidence for authorship is so equivocal for all the poems ascribed to Montgomerie. The poet must dissemble and express discontent in complicated, obscure ways – it is the price of being caught between the cherry and the slae.12

Multivalence, then, or multivocality, is one of the defining features of Montgomerie’s works. The conclusion to Chapter Two has further explored how this multivalence is evident also from the Ker manuscript, but also how by careful consideration of the poet’s ‘radically opposed voices’ a ‘resolution of purpose’ might still be attained. In such a fractured textual space, room can be allowed for an expansion of the canon. The preceding chapters have argued for an increased recognition of known poets on the basis that their works were more widely anthologised than previously known, as is now demonstrably the case with, for example, Alexander Craig and John Murray. Equal attention must be given to anonymous works, however. Poems that deserve to deserve to be better known are, for instance, the Laing manuscript’s ‘Och luif in langour heir I ly’ (f. 6v; the wooing poem), some of its more accomplished lyrics (‘Fresche flureis fair’, f. 82r), or even the fragment relating to Beggis Donaldson; the Tibbermuir manuscript’s collection of ten sonnets (ff. 77r); or finally, from the Robertson manuscript, the rendition of ‘Oh Lusty May’ (f. 142), or the brilliant ‘Sir I thought good to send yow a bukell’ (f. 147). Whereas these works


cannot be conveniently classed in terms of authorship, their anonymity should not obscure their potential relevance for a history of Scottish writing at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries.

**Scottish Manuscript Studies and the Future**

Even if particular readings of the miscellanies and the poems contained therein remain open to criticism, the value of these manuscripts for early modern Scottish literary studies cannot be contested. In a tradition that has often been described in terms of its paucity, particularly in comparison to English renaissance writing, it is of critical importance to consider that which has in fact survived. Collectively, the poems in MS Laing III.447, MS Kk.5.30, and MS 15937 add significantly to the corpus of early modern Scottish writing. In addition, the manuscripts are an unrivalled source of information for the reception history of both Scottish and English poetry and song.

The investigation of the three miscellanies had to deal, by necessity, with very primary issues: manuscript descriptions, their (often very sketchy or even non-existent) editorial histories, listings of their contents, the establishment of textual sources, and more. These basic steps had to be completed before the poetry contained in these manuscripts can be subjected to more radical literary analyses in the future, and when more widely encompassing literary-historical theories can come to explain the development, for instance, of certain genres. These considerations should not be divorced, however, from the very material concerns as exposed here. Stephen Kelly and John Thompson suggest the way forward for manuscript studies generally:

> the book is not only a medium for conveying prefabricated narratives and texts, but also the identities, politics, and perspectives they will express. [...] If manuscript scholarship hopes to move from the matter of codicological assessment, to the cultures and societies within which, and for which, books were made, it must marry a consideration of material culture with a keener awareness of rhetorical, poetic, and literary strategies derived from the materiality of books and their production.13

This is equally applicable to studies of the Scottish book. To understand the production and circulation of manuscripts in early modern Scotland, to identify owners, readers, and collectors, is not, eventually, an end in itself. It is a means to understand the literary culture that it underpins, to unravel the complex relationship between the literary and the social, which finally will shed a light on the reading and understanding of the poetry contained in these manuscripts. In other words, manuscript research is not purely materialist; it wants to unfold meaning in literary texts through the prism of material considerations. For an example of how this may be achieved, we may consider the rise of pastoral, evident from the poems in Margaret Robertson’s manuscript, but also,

for instance, from the library of Drummond of Hawthornden. Now that we know that Robertson indeed collected pastoral lyrics (based primarily on English sources), we can attempt to connect those with a particular political strain evident from the pastoral poems composed by Drummond, for instance. Amatory and bawdy poetry may equally be subjected to more politicised interpretations. Of the bawdy poetry frequently encountered in English miscellanies, Marotti writes that it ‘may have signalled social iconoclasm, neurotic misogyny, adolescent sexual awakening, class antagonism, anti-Puritan attitudes, or, more basically, the social bonding of those who engaged in coterie exchange of verse’. In addition, in England bawdy poetry became ‘a kind of political badge’ for Cavalier writers and royalist sympathisers. Which of these descriptions, if any, best fits the bawdy poems in the Laing, Tibbermuir and Robertson manuscripts is a very interesting question indeed. Regarding post-Union Scottish literature, Sarah Dunnigan rightly states that ‘reinterpretation, or redemption, of the period is urgently needed’. For this to be possible, a reliable record needs to exist of the literature that was produced and read in Scotland right before and after the Union of 1603. An inventory of manuscript materials (not only the three discussed here, but also others) is crucially important to support Dunnigan’s thesis (and others), in order to develop a more sophisticated understanding of Scottish reading and writing at the turn of the century and beyond.

This study commenced with the deprecating remarks of two Scottish compilers, George Bannatyne and John Stewart of Baldynneis. Bannatyne commented on his ‘copeis auld mankit and mvttillait’ (the subject of much speculation already, in reference to the scribe’s source materials, but perhaps also a reflection on his own manuscript). Stewart, in similar fashion, revealed that when making his manuscript he took ‘not in Hand the fynnest stuff Bot rather sum slycht cloth to Susteine the sklents and manks of his cu

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14 Marotti, pp. 76, 80.
Manuscript Images

I am grateful for permission to reproduce images from Edinburgh University Library MS Laing III.447, Cambridge University Library MS Kk.5.30, and National Library of Scotland MS 15937. Please note that the copyright of the images rests with the respective libraries. No further reproductions may be made without permission.
Appendix One: Manuscript Images

EUL MS Laing III.447, ff. 6v-7r – ‘Och Luif in langour heir I ly’ in Hand A.
EUL MS Laing III.447, ff. 31v-32r – Conclusion of the *Cherrie and the Slae*. 
EUL MS Laing III.447, ff. 76v-77r – Alphabets and ‘Grund the on patience’.
EUL MS Laing III.447, ff. 78v-79r – Signatures of Edinburgh burgesses and ‘Ane Scottis sonnet’. 
EUL MS Laing III.447, ff. 83v-84r – Closing sonnet and a page of scribbles. A mark of ownership is scored out at the top margin of f. 84r.
CUL MS Kk.5.30, f. 2r – James Murray’s book list.
Appendix One: Manuscript Images

CUL MS Kk.5.30, f. 6r – ‘Murrayis Dyare’.
CUL MS Kk.5.30, f. 26r – James Murray’s title page to the *Troy Book.*
CUL MS Kk.5.30, f. 71v – Start of three sonnets by Craig, Melville, and Sidney.
CUL MS Kk.5.30, f. 77r – Start of ten sonnets.
CUL MS Kk.5.30, ff. 80v – Conclusion to Hume’s ‘Of the Day Estival’ and ‘Cupid quhom sall I vyt bot the’.
CUL MS Kk.5.30, ff. 81v-82r – A song, Montgomerie’s ‘Displesour’, and ‘John Thomstone with my hand’.
NLS MS 15937, f. 1r – ‘title page’ of the Robertson manuscript.
Sonnattes.

Sonnatt 1.
I dreamed a dream, I wise my dreamers true
I thought my therees to my charmer came
And with her harmelop handes the courtaine drew
And softly the said and called me by my name
O sleeper ge sir awake now by for shame
Do it not said that Loueris gettes noe Rest
I anseverd her, trustt it is madame
I sleepe not sound as one doe soe molest
And even with this her right youre off schee cysfe
And lightie lippes and blye donee one my arme
Her ro设立了 me thought to mye schee thruste
And sayes may this not eap you of your pains
Mercie madame as I begt to say
When I awoke allace schee ves away
finis

Sonnatt 2.

NLS MS 15937, f. 2r – Start of the twenty-five ‘Sonnattes’.
Appendix Two ~

Transcription of EUL MS Laing III.447

Preliminary note
With the exception of Montgomerie’s ‘Off the cherry and the Slae’ on ff. 15r-31v (see Stevenson, pp. 2-68), the following presents a full transcription of MS Laing III.447. Each of Stevenson’s editorial emendations to the manuscript text have been included in the right-hand margin and marked ‘St’. Whereas generally the editor’s decisions are sound, in some cases (and as discussed more fully in Chapter Two) his decisions must be questioned (see for instance f. 45r).
f. 4r

Voulez vous escrire a l’encontre de moy Je le veux bien Je vous donnerray une plume si vous me gaignez & moy Je vous donrray un autre

[these lines in French are repeated several time over]

[Two names appear at the bottom of this page:]

James [...est]

L. of Leven

f. 5r

Donner moy ma cles que ie ailles atteindre a mon coffre vn liure pour lire dessus, vous ne fauriez voir sans chandelle Je vous promets qu’il est vray

Sonnet

Nevere madame of your mercie me infold
That I may remerciat through your mercie so
To crave your mercie gif I durst be so bold
without your mercie my lyfe can haif no ho
craifing your mercie as hes done mony mo
Your merciles peirles persoun most preclair
Imprent with mercie intill all tyme ago
That but your mercie is trappit in your snair
Abyding your mercie and can no wayis eschew
Sen bountie and bewetie but mercie ar but rair
Haue mercie on me that is your lufair trew
For except that ye mak mercie off remeid
My awin tua handis but mercie salbe my deid

Finis  Amen  [≡]

Donner moy ma cles que ie alles

James Be the

f. 6r

As eis ar message to the hairt
The hairt consultis with the thocht
So thocht and mynd consultis Inwart
To will and quhen that thy haue wrocht
Directis the handis and handis hes brocht
This bill vnto your guidlie heidis
Your guidlie heidis this send hes socht
And socht is mercy and remeid
Remeid man mend my mellodie
   Than mellodie is my desyre
Desyre is medicene for me
   And medicene that I requyre
And I requyre Luif to inspyre
   Your hert to myne as myne is yours
That yours ower myne may haff impyre
   And myne to serve yow at all houris

As at all hour I salbe readie
   Quhen ye ar readie to ressaue it
Ressaue it ye ar my Ladie
   for ye ar Ladie quha suld haff it
Sen ye haff it quha can craif it
   Craif it can none bot yow allone
To yow allone now heir I laif it
   Now laif ye it my hairt is gone

f. 6v

Interrogatis
   Och luif in langour heir I ly
      with woffull cheir
In luifis rage opprest am I
   As ye sall heir
That I am cassin clene in cair
      and confortles
And woundit in your bewtie fair
      with sic distres
Och love haue pitie on my payne * and constancie * and caus
My woffull cair refrane * sueithairt haue reuth on me
Och love haue pitie on my payne
   your lust & lanquar I lament with hert
   richt soir
She ansueris
   Your Ramping rage and your intent
Dois euill dischore
That ye ar cassin clene in cair
      and confortles
And woundit in my bewtie fair
      with sic distres
Ye may gang seik sum medicene
   Bot nocht at mee
Sum vther may that may yow deine
      your lust to satisfie

My burd so bricht bayth day and nicht
   with woffull cheir
Quhen that ye ar out of my sicht
   and luif but weir
It dois me peirs so vehement
   In at my braynis
Sueit hairt ye suld be weill content
   To eis my paynis
It is your luif that I do chois
& crawe trewlie
Al vthir vemen to refuis
Sueit hert haif Reuthe on me

f. 7r

ansueris
Quhy call ye me your burde so bricht
Be day or nicht
My freindis will cheis sum vther weicht
For me I say
That of great kin and clan is cummit
To be my maik
Thairfoir I pray yow hald your tung
your paynis to slaik
And not perturbe your mynd no moir
in vanitie
Latt wit and wisdome you restoir
and seik no louf of mee

O fragrant flouris of eloquenc of femini
Sen euer in yow is my pretens
quhill that I die
And sen I schaw the suith full sueit
To yow but weir
Ane temperat tree will bear gud frute
Ainis in the yeir
Althocht the branches dois nocht glance
In wemenis eie
Yit for your humble obseruance
Sueit hert haif reuth on mee

As flagrant flouris of eloquence [St: ‘fragrant’ for ‘flagrant’ ]
I neuer knew
Now as I sie ye man go hence
and nocht persew

f. 7v

Nor braik your brane for me in vane [St: schew ye plane]
In ony wayis
For sindrie tymes I schew plane
Thair was na mayis
To plant your treis quhair euer ye pleis
and latt me bee
Ressaue your frute with mekill eis
And seik no luif of mee

Now I possessour of all cair
sueit ladie fair
Till oppin my pak and sell no wair
I say no mair
For gif my life lay in your luif
Than war I lost
Quhen I offend ye may repruif
me with gryte bost
Heir as I meane ye may obstene
from feminie
Les nor your grace do as ye meane
Sueit hairt haif reuth on me

O lustie lufe of luferis all
This lady sayis
Your wordis with weping makis me fall
This all my dayis
To pas with yow in ony place
quhair euer ye pleis
Into hir armes sche did him brace
and to him sayis

f. 8r

O trew luif  myne quhilk is myne awin
and ay salbe
Desyring yow that it war knawin
That ye wad marie me
To marie the he sayis agane
how micht that be
for sindrie tymis ye schew me plane
My law degree
And said thy frendis wald noch consent
Nor gif ye leive
And bad me seik sum medicene
Quhilk did me greive
Most rissolut expell my frute
[St: expellt my frute]
Intermitiue
Ye and your freindis thay may go hence
And seik no luif of mee

I B [?]
Finis quod nescio

Luif still in hoipe with pacience
My gentill hairt for all thy woo
Quhy ar thow euer so suspence
[St: art thow euer so in suspence]
Quhy threat ye in your body so
is all plesure past ye fro
Quhy art thou to thy self sic woo
Quhy art thow so dismaid but sence
Quhy art thow to thy self sic We fo
Luif still in hope with pacience

f. 8v

Althocht I leive in mirthles mone
Half mingled with melancolie
Wald god the day sall come anone
That thow thy awin desyre sall sie
Althocht it cum nocht instantlie
as ye wald wis with diligence
Yit on na wayis ye weirie be
Bot luif in hope with pacience

In Luifis court quha listis to duell
at euer schoure thai may nocht schrink
Bot oft man suffer stormes fell
and of the well of dolour drink
No thing can gar thame wray nor wrink
No thing can do to thame offence
Bot pacientlie that thay will think
To luif in hope with pacience

Hope is the onlie meit remeid
for thame that lyis in memorie
Hope causis captivis demit to deid
In presoun strang richt blyith to be
Hope causis men in rageing see
To sowe theocht thay sie no offence
Hope causis luifaris verrilie
To luif in hope with pacience

Hope causit Jacob fourtene yeiris
In bondage bas for to remane

f. 9r

Hope causit atrides and his feiris
In Troy ten yeiris to fecht full fane
Houpe causit penelopie to refrane
Lang tuentie yeiris in obseruance
Hope causit luifaris to constrane
and luif in hope with pacience

My Ladyis hert is nocht of stone
I watt sche will nocht sie me die
I watt sche is nocht sic ane one
As god forbid se crueltie
Hir gentilnes assuris me
My service sche will recompance
Assuring hir that quhill I die
To luif in hope with pacience

O peirless peirle of pulchritude
O cheif charbucle off chaistitie
O deaisie dear O rubie rude
The fairest flour of feminie
O plicht anker of constancie
Eccept my seruice but offence
Assuring yow that quhill I die
To luif in hope with pacience

Finis I B [?]
f. 9v

Sueit hairt reios in mynd
With conforte day and nicht
Ye haue ane luif as kynd
As euer luifit weich
Thoict I be out of sicht
Latt nocht your courage fall
My joyfull hert and licht
Ye haif and euer sal

My bony burde be blyith
And ye sall find me so
Imprent to yow I kyith
to latt yow nocht be woo
Quhaireuer I ryde or go
ye sall nocht sorie be
My leill luif hert and Ioo
Nane hes my hairt bot ye

And yie my trew luif sueit
This do ye nocht gang stand
My blyithnes for to beit
As I serve at your hand
To think me nocht constand
My bony burd lat be
My constant hairt sall stand
To yow quhills that I die

f. 10r

I bid no mair of yow
Bot god grant yow his blis
god be als blyith of yow
As I wald be of this
Your lillie lippis to kis
Thinkand that mynd of youris
My awin trew luif sche is
That luifis hir paramouris

finis quod nescio

Wo worth the fall of fortounis quheill
That was so cheangeabile vnto me
Than quhen I thoicht me sure and weill
Thow threw me down str rycht suddanlie
Syne causit all my pleaures be
Turnit in dolour day and nicht
For absence of hir fair bewitie
quha onlie hes my hairtis licht

Schir Troyalus was nocht opprest
with sic lamentabill peisit payne
for Cresceidis luif quhome he luifit best
Wald into troy turne nocht agane
Bot yit sueit hairt I mak yow plane
Of this oure pairting so suddanlie
I may nocht langer this remane
Sen all my pleasure is gone from me

f. 10v

I am into dispair allace
Agane I will yow newer sie
Remane or hant into the place
Quhair I may beir yow company
Bot yit sueit hairt I testifie
My constant hairt sall nocht remove
Albeit ye haue fra me absent be
Quhen onlie hes my hairtis love

Finis quod nescio

fallowis the ravisching of Beggis do
naldsoun future spous to Thomas Lou
thian mercheon

Johnne Nesbet

f. 11r

Suppois I be of simple clan
Of small degrie and michtie name
My father is ane welthie man
Howbeit he be of littill fame
To tell the treuth I think nocht schame
for sen I was compellit to flie
I durst nocht duell wth freindis at hame
for feir that folkis suld raveis me

Quhat fairlie thocht I tuke the flicht
I was persewit wth lad and loun
Rycht quyetlie into the nicht
from the falkirk I maid me boun
My parentis may spair mony croun
Of gold and geir thay ar richt ryfe
Thairfor thay brocht me to this toun
heir for to be ane burges wyfe

It is nocht lang sen he begane
My fatheris hous for to frequent
Thay bad me tak ane mercheant man
quhome wth I was richt weill content
fra tyme to him I gif consent
My freindis in haist gart feche me heir
That mariage he may sair repent
As his schaft-bleid can witnes beir
f. 12r

My breist is maid the verray graif of woo
My sichis ar windis and tempestis of my cair
My hairt allace quhil peirsit is in tuo
Owerquhelmit lys with cluddis of cauld dispair
O thow my sueit my deirrest and my fair
quhois cristall eis my passioun hes increst
drop doun sum grace quhil may my paynis impair
And pitie him quhois mynd is woyd of rest
This for your saik and luif I am molest
This for your saik thir sorrowis I sustene
This for your saik I am so sore opprest
That euermore in sadnes I remane
And euer sall quhil that your hevinlie face
Pronunce my dume or ellis grant me sum grace

Giffand with all dew reuerence
Peirsit with luif be violence
To yow my hairt in governence
My ladie deir
quhois neue sueit wordis of eloquence
Excell now heir

Finis quod Constancie

f. 13r

Prepotent palme Imperiall
Of perfyte pulchritude preclair
O Iusume Lamp Etheriall
Quhais beamis bricht hes no compair
Your angell face fragrant and fair
hes me bereft of my puir hairt
Quhais perfytnes I will declair
Gif ye wald tak it in gude pairt

My witt of knawlege is to faint
with barrane speich and barbour brane
My toung vnabill is to paint
That constant lufe that dois remane
within my hairt with greif and payne
for laik of knawlege to furth schawe
Sens I can nocht the same explane
O wald to god your grace wald knawe

O happie war the Rethoriciane
That with sueit wourdis wald lament it
Als happie war the gude musiciane
wald sett and caus it to be prentit
And in your graces hand presentit
Sua that ye wald reid and pervsit
To knaw so soir I am tormentit
So that my grosnes war excusit
The vehement wodnes of the wind  
Or rageing of the Roring sea  
Nor cannownis with thair thundering din  
Nor yet in battels for to be  
Throw force of armes tho\textit{cht} I suld die  
war no\textit{cht} so grevous to my hairt  
As to schaw furth my mynde to the  
Or \textit{jet} latt yow know my painfull pairt

for quhen I haue declarit at large  
My mynde to yow \textit{with} diligence  
And hes committit all the charge  
To your wisdome and excellence  
Or yit to yow suld do offence  
That I so bauldlie durst proceid  
Than suld I tak in pacience  
Ilk day to die ane sindrie deid

Qhairfore I humele pray your grace  
Latt my complaint cum \textit{peirs} your careis  
Gif pitie in your hairt hes place  
as be your pulchritude appeiris  
Than suld I no\textit{cht} with fludis of teiris  
Bevaill the day nor weip the nicht  
Nor yit be faischit with deidis feiris  
Throw absence of \textit{your} bewte bricht

Lyke as it is the Lizairtis kynd  
Of mannis face to pray hir fude  
So nature still steris vp my mynd  
To wew your peirles pulchritude  
Qhairfore schortlie to conclude  
Lat clemencie in yow be schawin  
And no\textit{cht} of mercie so denude  
As rigorouslie to slay \textit{your} awin

Quhat vantage hes ane armit kny\textit{cht}  
hes his yeild in presoun for to kill  
Or be qu\textit{hat} equitie or richt  
May he on him his rage fulfill  
Lykwyse sens I am in \textit{your} will  
And for \textit{your} pitie dois imploir  
Lat your sueit confort cum vntill  
Your bundman now and euir moir

\textit{James}  
\textit{Finis quod ane luiffar}  
B

In somer quhen the feildis ar fair  
With fragrant floures ouer spred  
The grund depaintit euerie quhair
with cullouris costlie cled
Quhen that priapus out foirth fair
that god of garding gay
and beuche and branche and all was fair
Of all kynd frute I say

ff. 15r-31v

[‘Off the cherry and the Slae’, see Stevenson, pp. 2-68.]

f. 32r

King cupaid gracles god of glaikes
Sen thou takis pastym for to pyne
Thay sarwand/is that sick plesur takis
to leif lyk sempell slaives of thayne
Thow sell nocht hurtt this hairtt of myne
I sell lett all thai flanis fle bay
Schott on thow sall bott trawill tyne
Deirtt In thay nok I the defay

I call the king bott in to s[c]ourne
thay mother gwklett goddes quene
for sene the our that I was borne
thay baneist rebell I hawe bene
thay curt I hawe contemitt elene
And ever sell do quhill I die
In spaitt of the itt selbe sene
fra leuff I sell Leif ever fre

belind best I bid the bend thai bowe
Schairp will thai schaft bind on thai braice [St: Schairp weill]
Than drocht do att that thow dow
for Luf I sell nocht say nocht say ales
nocht throw gud gaing bott be grace
I hawe eschewitt thai deidlie dairttis
my freddome thow dar nocht defaice
for all thai bowttis of bludie hairttis

f. 32v

In nathing yeitt I hawe bene wys
except I newer folowitt the
for all the wyllis thow can deways
thai sleichtis sell neur subgek me
Na presens nor perswationis slie
sell newer mouf my mynd ane Inch
nor bewtie sell nocht blind my eie
For I hawe leirmid to countt my kinch

Thay painfull plessuris & annoyis
Thay hukis that hundrete hes orthraune
Thay schortt delytt in constant loyis
Thy creweltie is ever schawin
bott contra sik as is [thayne] awin
Sa fas tratour vngraitt & periurd
By art & prouff thai craff Is knayne
to me quha newir this kyndnes curd

Now of thai outlawes I am ane
Sell newer ser the for reward
be trane or tressone be I tene
I sel for panis will be for me prepairitt
I sell nocht houp for to be speritt
that hes thai dedlie wraithe deserwitt
bott I sell stand vpoun my gaird
Ay bodin as I wald be serwitt

f. 33r

Yitt sair alas I pittie some
Thatt hes bene men of knawlege kend
And yitt with the hes bene owircum
quhais witt I no can na wayis commend
As for my selff I sell defend
And cairis nocht by thai feid ane blee
Dischairging frondschip and so I end
fair will that day I dyne with the

Finis Amen

My freind if thow will credeitt me in ought
To quhome the treuthe in trayall weill appeiris
Nott worthe is witt quhill it be derlie bocht
Thair is na wisdome bott in hairie hairis
Yit if I can of wisdome aucht defyne
as weill as wthairis hawe of happynes
Than to may wordis my freind thi eris inclyne
The thingis that mak the wyse ar thes I ges

feir god and knaw thi self in eiche degrie
Be freind to all familiar bot to few
to licht of credeit se thow newer be
for trayall oft in trust dois tresone schawe
To wthairis faultis cast not to muche thai eir
Accuse na man of guild amend thai awin
of medling mucho dois mischeif of aryis
And oft debaitt by tiekill toung is sawin

f. 33v

quhat thing thow willtt hawe hid to nane declair
in word or deid be wer of had I wist
So spend thai gud that sum thow ever spair
for freindis lyk halkis dois soir frome emptie fist
Cutt outt thai cott according to thai claithe
Suspectit persounes se thow alwayis flie
Beluee not him that anes hes broken his treuthe
nor yitt of gilt with out desert be fre
Tyme quicklie slipps bewar how throw it spend
of wantoun youth repent/s ane panefull aige
Begin na thing butt ane eye to the end
nor bow thai eir frome counsell of the saige
gif thow to far lett out thi fansie sleip
and wittles will frome reasonnes rewle outstartt
thy folie sell at lenthe be maid thi quhipp
And soir the stryippis of schame sell caus the smartt

To do to muche For auld men is bott Lost
of freindschhip had to wemen comernes lyik gane
Bestow not thow on childrene to much cost
For quhat thow dois for thais is all waine
The auld man or he can requytt he deis
Vnconstand is the womanis wauering mynd
full sone the boy thy freindschip will despyis
and him for luif thow sell ingrattfull find

The agit man is lyik the barrane ground
the woman lyik the reid that waggis with wind
thair my na trust in tender age be fund
and of the thr the boy is most vnkynd
Iff thow haif fund ane faithfull freind indeed
Bewer thow lose not loufe of suche a one
he sell sumtyme stand the In better steid
than treasure greitt of gould or precious stone

Some men for suddane Joy do weip
And some for sorrow sing
Quhen that thai ly in danger deip
to putt away muring
[St: murning]

Retenen thame tua this I begin
being in Joy and pan
In sicheing to lament my sin
bott yitt reioce agane

My sinfull lyf dois still increas
my sorrow is the mor
Frome wiketnes I can nocht ceis
Wo is my hairtt thairfor

Som tyme quhen I think to do wiell
And serue god nicht and day
my wiecket natur dois rebell
and leidis me astray

As bonnd and capteue wnto sin
quhilk grewis me full soire
This miserie I do liue In
Wo is my hairtt thairfor
In deid sumtyme I do repent
and pardon dois obtene
bott yitt alace Incontenentt
I fall to sin agane

f. 34v

My corrup nature is so ill
offending mor and more
That I offend my lord god still
Wo is my hairtt thairfor

Wo is my hairt wo is my mynd
that to my lord I am vnkynd
wo is my saul and spritt
that to my lord I am vnkynd
in quhome I suld delytt

Hes lowe alwayis I suld regerd
quhilk towartttis me was so peure
bott I with sin do him rewaird
most vnkynd creature

The best the bird the fiche the fowll
Thair maker do obeay
Bott I that am ane leiffing saull
Am far much wors than thai

For thai according to thair kynd
To serue him do nocht ceas
Bott I with sinfull hairtt and mynd
do daylie him displeis

Thes do I sore complene of sine
And withe king dawid weip
for I do fleill my hairtt within
The wairthe of god full deip

f. 35r

To hevene my eyis I dar nocht lift
Aghanest it I hawe trespast
nor In the eirthe I find no scheift
nor succoure that can lest

Quhat sell I do sell I dispair
And frome my saweoure slyd
Nay god forbid thair is na feir
Sen chrest for me hes deid

God became man and for ws men
he died and rais again
hes merci greitt we may se that
For ever dois remane
Thairfoir my sinns will I confes
to god and muring mak
quha will forgeif the same dowttles
For his sonne Chrystis saik

If sin In me god suld respectt
Than do I knaw full will
hes Iustice wald me sone rewers
To the deip pitt of hell

His gloriis eyis can nocht abayd
the full and fillthe smuk
quhairwith I am on everie said
coweritt as with ane Clok

f. 35v

Bott he in Chryst dois me behald
In quhome he dois delytt
And myn offences manifold
throw him releiffitt quytt

Reputting me amang the Iust
Forgieifing all my sun
Thairfor my faiethe my houp my trest
Sell ever be In hem

O lord Incres trew faiethe In me
Thy guid spritt to me geif
Thatt I my grow in lowe to the
And evir seik to leiff

In trew obedience of thai will
and thankfullnes of hairtt
And with thai graice so gaid me still
Thatt my newir depairtt

Frome thy trew lord and testament
all the dayis of my lyff
nor forme thai Churche most Innocentt
thy awin trew spous & wyf

Bott frome thatt fillthie hour of rome
Lord keip me evir more
as gratiouslie as thow hes done
thankis be to the thairfor

f. 36r

And sen thow hes of gudnes
For gevine all my sine
Strenthe me thai trewthe for to confes
And boldlie die thairin
Thatt as I hawe confessitt the
Befor the wickitt sortt
Thow may in thai guid tyme knaw me
to my loy & confortt

My saull returne vnto thai rest
Thow artt will satisfiitt
The lord hes grantit thai requist
And nothing the denayitt

Prais be to god the father of micht
prais be to the o Cryst
prais be to the o holie gost
Thre In on most heist

f

f. 36v

Nan luffis bott fullis vnlud agane
qua spendis thair tyme and cumis na speid
Mak this ane mexeme to remene
Thatt luisis beiris nan bott fullis at feid
And thai get ay ane gud geis heid
In recompence of all thair pane
So off ncessetie man succeid
Nan luisis bott fullis vnlude agane

Yit will ane wyse man weill be war
and will nott whenter butt adwys
Gritt foullis for me I think thai ar
That seikis hett watter wnder yse
Yitt sum mair welfull ar nor wys
Thatt for thair luisis saik wald be stene
Bayand repentance on thatt pryece
Nan luisis bott fullis vnlude agane

Thocht sume we sie In evere age
Lyk as gukit fullis gangis gukitt gaittis
quhair ressonre gettis na place for age
Thay luf thame best that tham bott cancentis
Same of thair of thair folleis wytis the fattes
As desteneis did thame disdane

Nan luisis bott fullis was on lud agane

f

f. 37r

O lord my god to the I cray heir my complent
with sinnis so sair opprest am I that I wax fantt
my hairt is wexit Inwartlie with pane & greif
That I am forst to cum to the to seik reiief
Confessing all my sinfullnes in thy presence
beseiking the to grant me graice for my offence
my sinnis hes so provokit thyne Ire that I allace
deserwitt hes the hellis fyr for my trespass

Yitt lord to the I call and cray with hairrt Intreit
Thy word dois say nocht anis at all thow hes delytt
In sinneris deithe bott wald that thai suiid tunne
quhilk promis lord keip wnto me that sair dois murme
If that thow lord did call to mynd our sinis ilkane
than Lustifeit of adame kynd thair sell be nane
Except thow of fre merce saf ws frome deid  
We ar all damnett eternalie withoutt remeid

Sen nan can throu his awin desertis be maid perflyt
we the besetik into our hairt grant ws thai spreitt
For nan can come to the excep that thow him draw
As chryst vnto his awin electt dois planlie schaw
Bott thay spritt ws remane we the exhort
In all our anguishe greif & pane
and for thai names saik defend thai flok ilk ane
dispersit to the warldis end & bring thame hame

f. 37v

Into thay fald that now is wyd scateritt abrod
be thow thair protectour and gaid thair lord thair god
thow artt our heid and evar thai scheip & ever sell
thay faithfull folk defend & peik frome pittis all
evin as thow keipit thai servand noy the ark within
quhen thow did all the warld distroy for adame sine
And sauitt lott quhen In thayne air thow did reproue
Sodom with furius flames of fyre frome hevines abou[e]

Thow brocht Iserall throw the Reid sie baith saif & sund
and pharaoh with his gritt armie thairin thow drownde
and Jonas in the quhelliis bellie thow swafth thrie dayis
syne send him into nenawe to preiche thai wayis
Thow did also preserw & keip thai serwandis thrie
sidrach misache abendnago quhen cruelie
be nebagodneser king thai wer all tene
syne to his presoun causit bring thir thrie ilkane

And furiously into his yre thir children thre
he cast into ane flame of fyre thair bruntt to be
bott thy angell withe thame abod the fyre to suage
that hurtt was no hair of thair heid for all his raig
thow did o lord defend and keip Susana be man[e]
frome Judges fals quhilk did pretend to wirk hir schame
And daniell in the lyouns dene thow did preserue
Sic is thai favore to all thame that do the serue

f. 38r

Amangis thir exemplis all we may imbring
How thow preserwit dauid frome saull and maid him king
And efter that of presone strang thow did relewe
paull the sulderis frome amang that none him greif quhatt mister I to multiplie exampellis awld thair restis an wark of thai merci yitt to behald of Iames the Sext our nobill king quhome chryst mocht keip with daudow thod him for to bring of dangeris deip

Quhen that hes fois begud to fane and him persew Achitophell and absalon thow than overthrew And thow did dullfulie doun ding thame did thame deir Chryst grantt him lang over ws to ring in thai trew feir Nott onlie dois thow defend frome perelis gritt bott als oft thai do offend thow dois remeitt Thair sinnis ilk ane and dois nocht lay thame to thair chairg As in the scriptur fund we may the same at large

Now sen that thow hes heir to for thai servante sawitt And sufferitt nane to be forlorne that mercy crawitt with petie than behald my greif my pane & griff smartt and for thai names saik releif my troublitt hairtt The sowme of all that I wald haue is thai merci The quhilf for chrystis saik I craue of the onlie Forgeif me quhen I haue offenditt & finalie bring me quhen that my lyf enditt to golore with the

O lord my god sen I am brocht to greitt distres And in my bodie thair is nocht bott hewenes mak haist In tyme to succur me o richeous judge sene I haue nane In eirth bott the for my refuge My onlie hoip and confidence In the is sett assuring me that myne offence sell be foryitt And all my tormentis sell tak end with suddan speid quhen thow sick confortt sell me send as I hawe neid

Lord strenthen me with patience to suffer quhitt pleasis best thai excellence on me to lay and let me nocht declyne att all In tyme of neid bott ever more on the to call for my remeit help me to beir my burden lord for I am weik and lett thai strenthe and cair accord for thai name saik assist me with thai holie spreitt that I may still with constannt hairtt and houp repleitt abaid thai will

At leist sum pairitt I the beseik to suaige my pane as thow artt loving kynd & meik thai wrathe refrane Into thy iustice and judgment deall nocht with me bott sen that I am paniteitt grantt me mercie Quhen strenthe and senses ar all gone & wordis faill my hairtt and mynd in the alone sell be all heill thai promes nor tender love na tyme nor tyd outt of my hairtt will I remoue nor yitt lett slyd
f. 39r

If that thai pleasur be that I sell now depairtt
I recommend my saull to the with thankfull hairtt
quhen it sell have ane duelling plaice with angellis hie
to ring in hevenlie Ioy and peice perpetuallie
If that thai pleasure be my lyf to spair
releif me of my miserie and presentt cair
remeid me that am lyk to mange and sor opprest
And will sing thai prais as long as I my lest

[St: And I will sing]

f

Quha so dois put thair confidence
and treistis in me with trew accord
to thame I sell be ane defence
In tyme of neid thus says the lord
If thai stand stiffe be my word
Frome dangeris gritt thai selbe frei
thocht weickit perische be the suord
to myne ane bukler will I be

Thocht Pharoth with his gritt armie
Israel to kill he did Intend
I led thame throw saiflie the sea
[St: saiflie throw]
And frome his bost did thame defend
quhair he maid ane mischeifus end
baith he and all hes companny
Thairfor to all I mak itt kend
to myne ane bukler will I be

f. 39v

Thocht I did all the warld distroy
because the wickit wald nocht mend
Yitt sawitt I my sarwannt Noy
And frome the flud did him defend
quhair Sodem maid ane weickit end
and sawitt Lott as ye may sie
To weickitt thocht greitt plaigis I send
to myne ane bukler will I be

Thocht wickit saull and absalon
dauid his kingdom wald haue rentt
Yitt causit I him to ring abone
and did thame plege with punishment
For Saull by his awin suord wes slane
And absalom was hangitt hie
Be this it is richt evident
to myn ane bukler will I be

Becaus wickitt Isabill the quene
Eleas blod scho snair to spill
On hir gritt sorrow thir was sene
Yitt him I sawitt frome her Ill
For hors ran over hir at thair will
  Doggis knew hir baneis assuretlie
Thocht wickitt wald my sarwandis kill
  To myne ane bukleir will I be

f. 40r

Thocht wickitt haman gartt vp sett
  Ane pair of gallows lairg and lang
Belewene surelie for to gett
  Mordecai thairon to hang
Yitt I red him out of that thrang
  Haman thairon was hangit hie
quhair ever myne dois ryd or gang
  to myne ane bukleir will I be

Quhen danell wes overthrawin
  in presoun deip with lyounes strang
To him they did no thing bot fane
  And lickit him with tungis sa lang
Bot quhen his fais come thame amang
  they did thame ryif dispytfulie
thocht myne sumtyme dois suffer wrang
  to thame a bukleir will I be

Quhen susanna was In point of deid
  to me scho did boithe cray & call
And be me bethocht to mak remeid
  and I did heir hir by and by
Thay that accusitt hir wranguslie
  ane schamefull deid I gart thame die
Thocht my sarwandis In danger lay
  To thame my bukleir will I be

f. 40v

Now ye that ar myne cheldrene deir
  and be with me enteritt in band
ye knaw full oft ye stuid in feir
  of tensall baith of lyf and land
For quhen grett king did yow gainstand
  and als your preistis that ar so hie
As then I sawitt yow fra thair hand
  Sa will I will I yitt your bukleir be

Ye knaw they thocht yow to distroy
  quhairfor thai sett thair men of weir
thinken thairwith yow to annoy
  And daylie to yow do grett deir
Bot yitt to feicht I did yow leir
  And I gaue yow the victorie
As than I did your baner beir
  Sa will I yitt your bukleir be
Sen I frome boundage maid yow frie
And out of Egypt did yow call
Thair wickitt lawes se latt ye latt be
to thame attend na thing at all
And be not lyk the doge thatt sell
his womett lik maist schamfulie
Do yow so plaiges sall on yow fall
And I sall nott your bukler be

f. 41r

And thocht I hawe begone to serue
according to the law ye sett sett
fra ye begin and for to sweirue
your richteousnes sell be foryett
Than I in haist bott ony latt
sall plaige yow for Inequitie
Besyd the plaig that ye sell gett
I sall no mor your bukleir be

Howbeit the wickitt did mak lawis
for to suppres my word of licht
Compelling myne be greitt ouerthrowis
the sam obey be thair gritt mycht
Now sa far as they ar not rycht
bot saweris of Idolatrie
do thame ganstand both day and nicht
And ay your bukler will I be

Thocht nabucadonosor king
cast sidrach and abendnago
And mesach als into the fyre
becaus on na wayis thai wald go
Worship the Imag he maid tho
bott prayitt to me richt ardentlie
And I did saife thame frome thair fo
Lyk wayis your bukleir will I be

f. 41v

Thocht I the wickit tholl yow kill
and violent deith do yow deuoir
This promes suire I mak yow to till
And better lyf I sell restoir
To yow quhair that ye sell in glore
Do ring withe me continalie
quhair ye sell dwll for evermore
quhair I sell ay your bukleir be

Harken herkene me thinke ane trompett dois stund
blawing ane dreidfull blast
arys ye deid out of the grund
cum to to your judgmennitt Last
The king of kings and god most hie
sall mak this blast to blaw
for he sell cum In maistir[ie]
to ludge boithe hie and law

Ten hundreth thousand angellis bricht
Appostellis and prophettis
His marteris all In oppin sicht
Sell sit in Judgment sett

f. 42r

For to beir witnes schairp and schor
aganis the wickit trane
quhome cryst sell dame for ever more
wnto eternall pane

For god dowtles most neidis be Just
and thocht it seames lang
and compt of all men tak he most
of all thair evell and wrang

Quhat everie man befor hes done
In secreitt or In sicht
In presence of that feirfull throne
It selbe brocht to licht

Bott sowme will say I wein
and lauche goddis word to scorn
the warld is now as it hes bene
sene mankynd first was borne

Thairfor it is vncredabill
thatt chryst sould come sa sone
It is also wnpossibille
this warld suld be vndone

Thir thingis ar feynit of subtill men
as thingis to mak ws feir
Come lett ws tak oure plesure than
as lang as we be heir

f. 42v

To this sanct peter ansuoris
contrary thair desyre
that bothe the hevenen and eik the arthe
ar keip in stor for fyre [St. heven]

Wnto the day of last iudgment
and of perditioune
quhair with the vngodlie selbe brunt
with greitt distructioun
Our god quhilk promisit to come
  his promes will nocht beir
quhairfor he will not tary lang
  his coming is not far

Ane day is had as muche with him
  as we ane thousands yeiris
Agane ane thousand yeiris with him
  bott as ane day appeiris

Not onlie peter wryttis so
  Sa dois the Appostellis all
that this sam last and dreidfull day
  That this day is at hand
bot we haue ressonis money mo
  as ye sell vndirstand

Our maister Cryst himselfff dois say
  Sa dois the apposellis all
that this same last & dreidfull day
  Lyk to ane theif cum sell

f. 43r

Quhen thai sell wein that all is will
  In peice and quyit rest
euen than sell fall distroutioun fell
  quhen thai think on it les

Thai bocht and sauld befors the fluid
  thy drank and spairit na coist
thy tuik thair lust as thai wor wod
  and suddenlie wer lost

Sa sell thai do befors the dome
  as chryst dois plainlie say
we sie the lyk to pas is come
  quhy doutt we of this day

Sanct James did beir the Iewis in hand
  now money yeiris befors
that Chryst the Iudge did present stand
  and knokit at the dure

In his appocalips sant Jhone
  dois plainlie testifie
that chryst saysis his awin persone
  behald I come schortlie

[S]: sayis in his awin

Sant peter wrett ane vthair quhair
  And I beleif it trew
The finell end of all is neir
  and schortlie will Insew
If they did think the end at hand
sa mony yeiris ago
muche moir aucht we to vnderstand
thair be not money mo

This by the scripturis evident
it planlie dois appeir
now proue we sell by argument
that this same day drawis neir

All thingis thatt be vnder the sonne
manis saull exceptit plane
Lykwyse as they anis begune
sa sell thay end againe

[St: as they did anis]

The fyre with heitt and rege ferwent
Dois sor consume and burne
As sur and sertene argument
That all to it sell turne

Qhat so dois waist in evere pairof
the haill most neidis decay
the world dois waist in evere airthe
quhairfor it most away

The sune the mone the starnis so fair
and all that hevenlie host
the wateris and the mowing air
Sum of thair strenthe heve lost

The erthe of auld gaue heir encres
without tillage or labour
bott now hir strenthe is les and les
and les the workmanis gane

[St: without tillage or pane]

Now herbes haue lost thair auncient strenthe
that they did haue beforne
Thais do laik thair breid and lente
and smaller is the corn

The bodie of all beistis grow les
then they haue bene before
thairby may ye planlie ges
thair kynd is feblit soir

We haue hard tell of gyanttis fell
that wer in elder tyme
bot now we be lyk emmettis small
if we compair to thame

Euerie thing quhen it is new
then it is fresche and fair
bott yeitt we find this resoun trew
  it waxis auld and bair

Religioun trew was anis ferwent
  bott now we sie it cauld
that is ane certene argument
  this warld is faint and auld

Bot quhatt so ever waxis auld
  it wenischis away

f. 44v

thairfor by resone manifold
  this warld must neidis decay

quhen nott on dall nor yitt on hill
  ye sie the sune do stand
na langer dowtt I think ye will
  that nicht is neir at hand

So quhen no wertew wsit is
  in greitt nor yett in small
than may we trewlie trust to this
  the warld sell hawe ane fall

Quhen naturall heit dois man forsaik
  and wynature dois abound
It cawsit him with fefeir quaik
  and dois his lyf confound

Quhen the lowe to god is small
  and self lowe dois exceid
then certenlie some plaige mortall
  sone efter lett ws dreid

Now luf to god is out of land
  and selff luf waxis strange
quhairfor the warld most ceas to stand
  I think or it be lang

Quhen daithe drawis nereist man vnto
  thy raig in thair mad moid
thy hawe no skyll to say or do
  bott feir as thai war wode

f. 45r

Before the end of all lykways
  salbe no quyet rest

Now Antechryst dois stile deuys
  the godlie to molest

[St: It cawsis him]

[St: So quhen the lowe]
Bot lett that beist still rage and roir
and kill by sea and land
feir not ye folk of Chryst that for
for your iudge is at hand

He will yow tak to heven full hie
and rais yow frome the ground
Prepair yow then to heir shortlie
this joyfull trompit sound

Our king is James the we pray
Lord saif him with thai grace
keip all his subiectis in gud stay
and all his foes defece

Come lord come quicklie we the pray
and tak ws wp on hie
that we may sing for ay
eternall prais to the

[St: that we may sing in bliss for ay]

f. 45v

The weicht of sin is wonder greitt
qua may that grevus burden beir
my god maist huu
m lie I submeitt
my sellff befoir thai heichnes heir
och ruthfully Inclyne thai eir
wnto my petitfull complentt
Thy punysmentis & plaigis reteir
frome me pure pyning pennitent

qua when darknes hes [t]he hevenes rewest
But ather mone or starrie licht
qua when man and beist is at ther rest
throw secreitt of the silence of the nicht
I waltering lyk ane wofull wicht
Still walking in my bed I lay
my sinis presentis thame in my sicht
och harkin lord for help I cray

My pansing dois ogment my pane
becaus I can nocht be excusitt
I am sa oft relapis agane
Into the sin quhilk I refussit
Thay clemenci I haue abussitt
be leiding of ane wickit lyff
my spreit within this fleisch infusitt
is lyk to pereish in the stryff

Och to my fais than sell I yeild
and all thai merceis quyt dispar
och sell I now gif over the feild
and newer luik for mercy mair
f. 47r

quhilk hes so oft baith leitt and air
Sung prais to the with joyfull hairt
no lord preserwe me frome that snair
and leit this cup frome me depairtt

I hawe assurance of thai spreitt
that yow the laidneitt will releif
quhilk cumis to the with hairtt contreitt
and in thi bontie dois beleif
my feibill faith o lord relief reviewe
for thocht my sinis be lyk the sand
Yit thow art habill to forgif
and rais me with thai helping hand

Quha can onfenyeitlie repentt
quha can frome wickeitnes abstene
venles thai grace be to thame lenti
to sikh & sob with weeping ene
the prayer profeittis nocht ane prene
except the same from faith proced
Latt faihte and graice In me grow grene
that I may turne to the In neid

Lord with my selff I am disspleisitt
and weirreis of this burdene fasst
thay wreyth thairfor let be appeisitt
foryett my wofull sinis past [St: full offenis past]
I feir I faint I am agast
quhen I prepend my awin estaitt
bot this releif I find at last
my penitence is no to leitt

f. 47v

Albeitt thow be ane vpricht Iugde
thow art my father nocht the les
My bukler & my sur refuge
My only only confort I confes
hawe peitie on my greitt distres
cast nocht me catewe clene away
thow knawis the Inwartt hevenes
for sin to suffer everie day

This than my god of graice I craif
with humell hewe hairtt of the
my sinis ar lyk me to dissayff
bot let me nocht desaiffit be
tak nocht thai helping hand frome me
for I am frael and Imperfyt
 gif me nocht over to drone & dei
Into my flechely hairttis delytt
Thy werking spreitt let me assist
Into this feirce & fechting feill
that I may wailleandlie resist
the fleche the warld the dewell & hell
My secreitt sinis frome me expell
My natur hes currupit thow knawis
Mak me to prectei & furth tell
Thy preceptis prayeris & holy lawis

Thir giftis I grant I meritt nocht
For I in sin was borne & bred
bot Iesus Chryst he hes me bocht
frome deithe event with his blud he sched
hes merittis hes me frelie fred
mak me thairfor perticipentt

f. 48r

Let me be with his justice cleid
and conteit thai redemitt santt

Nocht he bot I hes deith deserwitt
Nocht I bot he dois merit graice
For me nocht for him seliff he sterwitt
with the to purches me a plaice
throw him I am in happie cais
evin with thai godheid reconseild
to the throw him quhome I Imbraice
Be prais quha hes this loysis reweild

finis

f. 69r

Of all warldlie confort trew freindschip is cheif
because it is allwayes the speciall relief
In weill and In wo In st[...] strong & stabill
And allso to mankynd [...] thing agriabill

[The names of ‘Lady Leven’, ‘Lord Leven’, and ‘Lady Mary’ appear here.]

f. 69v

I wis I wair transfigurat in ane ring
To link about my maistris finger fyne
Or ellis into hir snaw qhyte hals to hing
To be inclosit into hir bosome fyne
Gif it war day I culd my mynd Inclyne
To wring hir handis and vew hir bwtie fair
Gif it war nicht think the that I suld tyne
That precious tyme that war presentit than
No surelie no no my maistris than
Suld find ane ring transformit in ane man.

Bon sieu.
Ane dreame

I dreamit ane dreame o that my dreame wer trew
Me thoche my maistris to my chalmer came
And with hir harmeles handis the crowteingis drew
and sueitlie callit on me be my name
Art ye on sleip quod sche o fy for schame
haue ye noch tauld that luifaris takis no rest
me thoche I anserit trew it is my dame
I sleepe noch so your luif dois me molest
With that I me thoche hir nicht gowne of sche cuist
liftit the clais and lichtit in my armis
Hir Rosie lippis me thoche on me sche thirst
And said may this noch stanche yow of you harmes
Mercy madame me thoche I menit to say
Bot quhen I walkennit alace sche
was away

Consider man how tyme do pass
And lykvayis how all fleche is gairs
As tyme consumes the strongest ark
So daith at last sell straik the strak
[St: sell straik the stark]
Thoche luistie youthe dois bewtie beire
Yit youthe be aige In tyme dois weir
And aige at last a deithe doithe bringe
to riche & poure emprioure & king
Thairfor liue as thow suldest die
thay saull to saiv frome Iepardie
And as thow waldest be done vnto
So to thai nochbour
The hevinlie Ioyis at lenthe to sie
Lat faithe In chryst thi anchour be
[St: thi authour be]

finnis quod  

consider

Redolent rois my onlie schois I man disclois
I man disclois my siching sair
my frendle fois throcht passing wois
for to reios I may no mair
quhat cruell cair quhat deip dispair
may be compair into my pairt
quha may repair my siching sair
or sall prepair to mand my smairt

Except my sueit with hairt contreit
I do repeit with fervencie
quhilk to retreit luif causis fleit
for sorrow heit of ardencie
Sen destinie my libertie
Alluterlie is reft away
assuring me that I sall die
Except ye be the onle stay

Sen that I now on force mun bow
to yow in deid to seik remeid
houping thaithro ye will allow
to quha I bow I sall proced
seiking but dreeid favour or steid
till atropis thread my lyve devoir
To seik my deid your name will spreid
As homicide for euermore

My hairt convert this dairt fra me
my luif remove this ruif of cair
my deir apeir that feir my fle
my dow be now my conforter

f. 72v

my bird your word word as suord is sair
my breist is persit with uyolence
me saif I craif to haif na mair
bot hert for hert in recompence

quhilk hert as rube in this ring
I do conuir into your cuir
hoiping it sall get conforting
s eruand your plesand portratour
quhilk gif ye do ressaue be suir
nocht cowntting this my crwell cair
my lyfe my na langer Indwre
quhilk meiting
[here the poem breaks off]

f. 73v

Your outward gesture forme & fassoins fair
decleris the inward secrettis of ingyne
quheir is contenit sic verteuis hed and cair
that al the varld dois se in yow to schyne
resembling weil the verteuis raiice & lyne
quhairof ye com quhois name to last for ay
is eternissid be yow and mede devyne
in register that never sal decay
quhairby I hoip mestres hap quhat so mey
for sic revard as lustly I expect
to cum fra hir quhair vertew beiris the sway
quhilk alvayis suld produice the awin effect
sens as be nature so ye ar inclyned
plece constancie into this verteuis mynde

quod
[...]

Dauid
Dauid

f. 74r

I hoipe to serve sane syne for to deserue
[St: sane syne to deserue]
Syne never for to suerue from hir that I luif best
Quhait for minerve Imply my pen to serve
for to deserue sum fauour that may lest

f. 74v

I serve ane dame moir quheiter than the snaw
Quhois straichtnes dois the Ceder treis exceid
Quhois teith surpasis the orient peirle in hew
Quhois collourit lippis surmountis the skarlet threid
The hinging lokkis that cummis from hir heid
dois staingye the grace and glorie of the gold
The braith quhilk dois out of hir mouth proced
Dois moir than flouris a sweitar smell vnfauld
Yit sche allace within hir breist dois hauled
moir feirsnes than the lyoun feirs and vyld
Sche hes ane hairt for seasoun hard and cauld
That from my mynd all pleasur hes exyld
Loo this my dame dois work my lesting soir
Yit will I serve althocht I die thairfore

Arnot I

f. 75r

O fragrant flour fair and formois
And nychtngall in to the nycht
Quhat said I say thow art the chois
Ane Lantern and ane Lamp of Lycht
I wait thair is na warldlie wycht
That for your favoour mair remanis
Quhan I think on your bewteis brycht
My spreit is pacifiit from panis
---------------------------------------
I suffer tormenttis for your saik
so that my eyes with tereis dois weir
Ane cumlie mak ye haif na maik
Nor yit in persoun hes na peir
Bot wnto fantus I effeir
Becaus I am tormentit so
Quhan he thocht on his darling deir
his hairt was woundit ay with wo
---------------------------------------
To teirris he did himself apply
   The dairttis of luif so did him lance
Into the lyk estait am I
   Vpoun your persoun quhen I pance
Quhan of yowr face I gett ane glans
Your bewtie dois my body bind
My panis wald pacefie perchanche
   In cais I culd your favour find

f. 76r

Suppois your self I do nocht sie
   Yit I ly trappit In your tranis
And thocht my body absent be
   My constant hairt with yow remanis
Your cuumlie corpis so me constranis
   That I for favour man procur
Be memorantive of my panis
   quhilk for your saik I do Induir

With dolour damone did dekay
   for mentas luif a so he deis [St: and so he deis]
quha had hir pictour present ay
   hung in ane brod befoir his eyes
yit pancing on hir propertis
   maist madlie thair he did amais
my luif surmuntis in ma degreis
   howbeid that dayth distroyit his dayis

Now sen my lyf lyis in your handis
   remeid the dolour quhilk I dree
I am sa bund into your bandis
   that frome your luif I can nocht flie
beseking yow sa guid to be
   me of my tormenttis to relax
that onlie adamand ar ye
   quhairto my luife adheranttis takis

Fin [......]

f. 76v

gund the on patience blind not thy conscience
do to god reuerance thankand him ay
preis the with dilligence to put away negligence
Content the with Sufficience this warlde
   will away
[alphabets]
The royall palice off the heichest hewin
the staitlie fornace of the sterrie round
the loftie wolt of wandring planettis sewin
the air the fyre the wattir & the ground
suppoois of thais the science be profound
surpassing far of our gros & sillie sens
The pregna spreittis yit of the leirnit hes fund
by age by tyme & lang experience
Thair pitche thair powir & Influwence
the cowrs of natwre & hir mowingis all
sa now that we neid nocht now be in suspence
off ethelie thingis nor yit celestiall
Bot onlie of this monstwre luif we dout
Quhais craftie cowrs no cwning can find out

grund the on pacience blind not thy conscience
do to God reuerance thank and him ay
preis the with dilligence To put away negligence
Content the with sufficience this warlde
will away

The tender snow of grane
Is nocht so sone conswmit vith phenus heit
As is my breist beholding my delyte
Pyneit vith the presence of my lady sueit
The surging seyis vith stormie streamis repleit
Tormoylit nocht the wandring shipis sa sair
as absence dois torment my werie spreit
fleittiing a flocht betuixt hoip & dispair
my cative corps consumis with cursed cair
Mistrust & dreid hes baneist esperance
That I am forceit to per perishe quhac sould mair
& trast the wyte vpon rememberance
Than absence presence remembrance all thre
Torment me for hir saik eternallie

goi g hay   James Arnot   Johe Hay
Joannes Arnotis   Finis

Glade am I glade am I
my mother is gone to henislie
steiche the dur & cache me
lay me doun & streche me
ding me & dang me
Ye gif I cry hang me
Ye gif I die of the same
Bury me burie in goddis name
     Inglis Sonet

     Ane scottis sonet
     Ane Scottis sonnett

first serve syne sute quhiles seme to lichlie luif
gif thow intend to win thy ladyis grace
Serve hir and sche thy constancie sall pruif
gif in hir mynd that modestie haue place
Persewing hir may rander the relaise
     Or ellis thow can nocht conqueis hairtis desyre
appeirantlie sumtyme to forgett I gaise
     Hes na les force to kendill cupydis fyre
hes thow nocht hard of mony leissant schyre
     Thus sayit flie luif and it will fallow the
quhilk nawayis commandis the to espyre
     Bot wald thow suld nocht perrell libertie
Be trew crave tyme assoyt nocht gif thow can
find sche the dischit thow art ane marterit man

B

f. 79v

[alphabets]

Grund the on patience blind not thy conscience
Grund the on patience blind not thy conscience
do to god reverance thank him ay
pries

f. 80r

Peccaui pater meserere mei
     I am nocht worthie to be callit thy chyld
quha stubburnelie hes went so lang astray
     nocht lyk the sone but lyk the prodigall wyld
my sillie saull with synnis is sa defylit
     That sathan seikis to cache it as ane a prey
got grant me grace that he may be begylit
     [St: god grant me grace]
     Peccaui pater meserere mei

I am abaysed how I dar be sa bauld
     Befoir thy godlie presens till appeir
Or hazaret anis the heavinis for to behauld
     Quha am nocht wourdie that the earth suld beir
Yit damme me nocht quhome thow hes bocht so deir
     Sed saluum me fac dulcis fili dei
For out of luke this leasing now I leir
     Peccaui pater miserere mei

Gif thow o lord with rigour walde reuenge
quhat flesche befoir the fatles suld be fund
Or quho is he quhais conscience culd him clenge
   Bot by his brother is to sathan bund
Yit of thy grace thow tuke away that ground
   And send thy sone our penulties to pay
To saif ws from the hideous hellische hund
Peccaui pater miserere mei

f. 80v

I houpe for mercie thoct my sinnis be hudge
   I grant my guilt and gronis to the for grace
Thoct I wald flie quhail suld I find refuge
   Till heavin o lord thair is thy duelling place
The earth thy futestule yea in hels palace
doun with the deid bot all most the obey
Thairfoir I cry quhill I haif tymne and space
Peccaui pater miserere mei

O gracius god my guiltines forgeve
   In sinneris deith sen thow dois nocht delyte
Bot rather that thai suld convert and leive
   as witnes for thy sacret holy wryte
I pray the thanne thy promeis to perfyte
   with me and I sall with the psalmes say
To pen thy prais and wondrous workis Indyte
Peccaui pater miserere mei

Suppois I sled lat me nocht sleip in sleuth
   In stinkand sty with sathanis sinful suyne
Bot mak my tung the trumpet of thy treuth
   And len my verse sic vingis as ar devyne
Sen thow hes grantit me so gude ingyne
   To luif the lord in galland style and gay
Lat me no moir so trim ane talent tyne
Peccaui pater miserere mei

f. 81r

Thy spreit to speik with speid Imspyr
   Holp holie ghost and be mongomries muse
flie doun on me in forkit tungis of fyre
   as thow did on thyne awin apostles vse
And with thy fyre me feruentlie infuse
   To luif the lord and langer nocht delay
My former folische fictionis I refuis
Peccaui pater miserere mei

Stoup stubbornne stomak that hes bene so stout
   Stoup filthy flesche and careoun of clay
Stoup hardnede haint befoir the lord and lout
   Stoup stoup in tymne defer nocht day by day
Thow watt nocht weill quhen thow man pas away

[St: ‘The Tempter als is bissie to betrey’, Ker MS]

Confes thy synnis and schame nocht for to say
Peccaui pater miserere mei
To gryte Iehova latt all glore be givn
Quha schwpe my saull to his similitude
And to his sone quhome he send doun from heavin
quhen I was lost to by me with his blude
And to the holy ghost my guyder gude
quo mot confirm my fayth to tak na fray
In me cor mundum I conclude
Peccaut pater miserere mei

f. 81v

The luif I beare is fixtt on one
I can nocht declair the luife I bear
Itt dois me drav to leif alone
The lufe I beir is fixtt on one

Absence I meane garris me lament
and wa workis me tene
Absence I meane
It garris me grene for my intent
Absence I meane garris me lament

Euen for hir saik I tak this cair
My hairt will braik euen for hir saik
No grace dois laik this flour so fair
Euen for hir saik I tak this cair

f. 82r

Fresche flureis fair and lusum ladie quhyte
off natouris work in erthe the maist perfyte
Gewe eir vnto my wofull hewines
This sedell schorte my sorrowis sall resyite
And bitter greife that dois my bowellis byte
That toung nor tyme nocht trewlie can expres
Bot being drewin throw dolour to distres
Pane doithe me preis this paper to present
In my absence my langour to lament

For as the seik in dainger oft is sene
lang tyme he hoipis for help of medecein
his sair to cuir and dolloour to remeid
sua haif I fund aganis my predestene
The lang dissimulance of my cairis kene
To my grit greife and sorrow to succeed
quitheirthrow at lenthe tastis taisting the stoundis of deid
Forceit I am your mercie to Imploir
To be my leiche or dolloour me dewoir

Oft in deserte I wander myne alone
From day to nicht in mynd makand my mone
Calling to count the caussis of my cair
sum tyme guid hoip your luiff trowis to obtane
Sum tyme tyne dispar byddis me lat it alane
Your hie estait to myne is na compair
Sum tyme I think quhairfoir sould I dispair
sen luiffe is blind & fleis but judgement
Quhair luiffe doith licht sould nane be miscontent

f. 82v

Sua esperance my fyrie flameis doith feid
Prowoiking will in purpois to proceid
Dryweand of tyme in rampart of the laife
And I agre thocht I sould suffer deid
Tyne to provyde quhill tyne provyde remeid
For tyne of tyneis to luiffaris ar releife [St: to luiffaris is releife]
quhilk tyne I dout nocht gewe ye haid to preife
And my trew pairt and Faythfull constantnes
Bot sumtyme ye walde pitie my distres

Christ gewe my Breist war of the cristell cleir
That my trew pairt in presence micht appeir
with Judgeing eis befire yow to be sene
Thair sould ye se your port portrautor but peir
Your face so suet to me that is sa deir
Your cheik your chin your lywelie cristell ene
Thair sould ye se the dairstis and arrowis kene
quhilk in your handis my bludie hert doith pers
mair crewalie nor I can heir rerhese

With perceing eis fra that I did persaife
the guidlie gift that natour to yow gaife
ye Your bewtie Bricht your bewtie bountie but compair
the wantoune youthe quhilk libertie doith craiffe
Fredome forsuik & vald na fredome haiff
bynding my self to be your pressoner
my mynd also opprest with crewell cair
Into your will dois yeld without ane straik
refuseand lyfe and Fredome For your saik

f. 83r

O sueit contreit my spreit talk in your hand hauld
With hert Inwart convirt my cairis cauld
lang thocht hes socht and brocht me to this place
persaife your slaiff ye hawe me as ye wald
heir to fulfill your will my feit I fawld
sen I apply deny me nocht your grace
In neid with speid remeid my crewall cais
It war to Far to mar me but offence
Sen stay ye may alway my violenc

Suiet thing conding benyng of memorie
my Paneis to lane war wane but remedie
But sen ye ken quhairin the mater standis
my sair dispar prepare to satisfie pacifie
hawe reuthe with trewth let nocht your schiruand[is]
For stownd of wund ar found among your handis
Bot sen ye ye ken that men ar in your bandis
Crowall at all ye willbe callit awayis
to sla the man that yeldis at your deuyse

Finis amen
quod I Nisbit

B.. concerte [?]

Sonet

Thocht Polibus pisander and vith them
Antinous vith monie wowaris than
did preis for to suppryse & bring to schame
Penellope in absence of hir man
Yit sche remanit chast as sche began
To tyme vlisses happinit to cum hame
That nane of thais as yit do quhat thai can
lang saxtene yeiris dowc[h]t to defyle hir fame
Ewin so most sueit discreit and mansueit muse
Remember on your yoldin sîruiure
Thoill nane your blaseme bewtie to abuse
thocht thai vith leing lippis vald yow allure
Bot sen my lyffe dois on your luife depend
In trew luiff with Penellope contend

finis

Finis
I B [initials?]
Amen

Finis amen be me Ihone bane tak ane staf In his

Cum moritur divis concurunt [?] vndigne sines
Cum moritur pauper vix [...] ades videtur

Cum moritur divis concurunt vndigne sines

f. 84r

This buik [

To my traist freind Thomas henrison

f. 84v

In tyme of welth think on distress

John Nesbet vith my hand

O dieu o dieu de ma saluation Deliure moy de ce mien sanglant
vice Et lors ma bouche en exultation chantera haut ta bonte
Transcription of Section Two of CUL MS Kk.5.30

f. 1r

Tibbermure

James Murray

Jacobus

Murravius

The mirrie Day sprang frome the Orient
with bright beames illuminat the Occident
efter Titan, Phebus upryseith faire;
hich in the sphare, as signes mey declaire.
Zepherus, begane his michtie morow course,
the sueitt wapors from the ground did rescourse.
the dunk deu, doune frome the hevin did waill
On ewrie meid, both firth, forrest & deall.
the fresh rever, *doune throu the roches rang, [in left margin] * amongst
throgh brenches greene, quhair birds blythlie sang
with joyous voice, in Hevinlie hermonie
Then Vallace, thought, it ves no tyme to ly

James Murray with my hand
at the pen

A B C

James Murray with my hand att

unusquisque

[this page contains several scribblings of Murray’s name]
f. 2r

Catalogus Librorum Jacobi Murryi ut sequitur

Libri sacri

Ursinus impressus Vulgaris cum Commentarijs
Vetus et Novum testamentum Latinum
Buchananus Novum testamentum vulgare cum Psalmis
Explicatio Sacramentorum Latina
Doctrina Vulgaris Bibliæ Sacrae totius
Ursinus Scriptum cum Commentarijs

Libri Latini

Tho as [Phi……] Pedagogus de varijs scientijs
* * Epigrammata Martialis Virgilius * * Retorica Talei Cleonard grammatica gre[ca] [?] Ciceronis sesstito latina [?] Valerius Maximi de amica Evangeli Magnitudine
Justinus Pompeius trogus Quintus curtius seneca

Gallici

Institutiones Galliciorum
Esopi fabula gallica

Vulgares

Virgilius Impressus *
Dorastus and faunia*
Aristotles Apotheomes*
Ovidis Epistles
Philosophers lyffis *
Engles Apotheomes *
Cronicle off Britaine *
Phisiognomie *
hors buik
halk buik
Post off the Varld

Scripti Libri

Item [?] ane Grammer / four vret authoris in Ingles & Latin / buk of sentence & [ve…]
Greik authores / Arithmetik & Commentares on Arist[ot]le Commentaries on Arist[ot]le
* [……] vreit buikis collectit from dyvers Subjetts in Latin & English
* Buk [……] [……]
Inglishe Dyare

He that his mirth hes lost, quhais confoirt is dismaid,
quhais hoip in vaine, quhais faith in scorne quhais trust is all betrayit
If he heve held thois deir, and can not cesse to mone
cum latt him tak his plece by me he sall not rew alone
Bot iff the smallest sweitt be mixit with all the sowre
If in the day the month the yeir he find ane lichtsum houre
Then rest he vith him self he is no mach for me
Quhais hoip is fallin quhois succour void quhais hart his deth most be
Bot not the vishit deth quhilk hyds no plent nor laik
Bot making free the better pert is alvais naturis wraik
O no that var too weil my greiff is off the mynd
Quhilk alvayis yeildeth extreame paines bot leves the lyff behind
As on that leives in shaw bot invairtlie dois die
Quhais confoirt is a bludie feild quhair all hoip slaine dois ly
Quhais heart the alter is quhais spreit the sacrificis
Quhais sorowis ane for to appease no confort can suffice
My fancies are lyk thornes quhairin I go by nicht
My arguments ar lyk ane hoist quhome fors hes putt to flicht
My sence my passiones spy my thocht off ruveens auld
Off famous Cartage or the toune that subteill Sinon sauld
Quhilk hailf befoir my face my mortall faitt doth ley
Quhome loue and Fortoune anes advanced bot nou haith cast avay
O thochts no thochts bot vunds sumtyme the feild of joys
Sumtyme the stoir off quhet rest bot now off all annoyis
I sow the seid off pece my bliss var in the spring
and day by day I reap the fruitt my leiff treis did furth bring
To nettels now my corne my field is turnd to flint
Ouersitting in the Cypress schade I reap the hiacint
the pece the rest the ease that I obteend off yoire
 Came to my lott that is my loiss my hurts micht sting the moire
So to anhappie men the best cums for the voirst
oh tyme och plece och luiks och deid deir then bot now och curst
In vas stands my delyt in is and sall my voe
My horror festnith on thy yea my hoip hings on thy no
I luik for no releiffe releiffe vald cum too laitt
Too laitt I find I find too weil too weall stands my esteat
Bot loo siche is the Chance no thing att all is suire
And no thing els saiff cairs and plaines dois in this varld in dure
Forsakin first ame I and utterlie forgottin
And such as came not to my faith to my revard ar creippin
Oh luiffe quhair is the shaiiff that makes thy torment sueitt
Quhilk is the caus that sume hes thocht that deth by the bot meitt
Thy staitlie chest disdaine my secreitt thankfulnes
Thy greives reserves the commone rycht that shynes in wairdines

O wald itt varr not so or I culd itt excuse
Or that the vreth off jeloussie my Judgment suld abuse
O fals inconstant kynd keips faith and treuth to no man
No weemen angels be bot loo my maistres is a Woman
Yit blame I bot the falt and not the faltie one
no can I red me off thois bandes quhairin I ly alone
Alone I leive quhois lyk be luve vas never yit
The young the auld the prince the puire the fond nor full off vitt
Here [?] still remain I by vrong by deth by shame
nor can I blot out off my mynd that luiff * theocht in hir name
nor can I mak it sheeme so far that is indeid so neir
na do I meane hencefurth the strenge will to profess
As ane that vald betrey such treuth to beild on fickilnes
Na that sall never feall that my faith bure on hand
I geve my voird my voird geve me both vord and vreitt sall stand
ane sence itt man be thus and thus is all to ill
I yield me Captive to my Curs my hard happ to fulfill
The solitarie voods my citie sal become
The darkest denn salbe my Ludge quhair I sall rest or rounne
Off Ibaine blak my burd, off woormes my feist salbe
Quhairon my Carcage salbe fed, till thai sall feid on me
My vyne the Incubie my bred the Craigie roik
the serpents hissing my hermonie the screiching oulle my kloik
My valk a paith off planits my prospect into hell
Quhair vrechit Ciciphe vith hir Feires in endles tormentes duell
My exercise not els bot rageing agoneis
My buiks off frauneing Fortone beis and drearie tragedies
And tho I seeme to wse the feinyeit poet styl
In figureing furth my duilfull plaint my faitt & my exyll
Yit fenyie I not my greives quhairin I sterve and pyne
Quha thinks hes maist sall compt them leist be that compair to myne
My sang giff anie ask quhois grevous caise is such
Dy or thow latt thy name be knaueene quhois follie shawes to much
For best is the to hyd and never cum to licht
Sence in this erth that thair ar none this accent sounds aricht

FINIS

f. 6r

Murrayis Dyare

Thou irksume bed Quhairin I tumble to and fra
And restles rolle boith wp and doune may witness veill my vae
how loithsome ar alace to me thy softest sheitis
Quhilk nichitlie I puire vrechit man in woful weiping weits
For quhill eich wther weicht dois rest thair wereit bones
then I beginn to utter thois my plentes vith grevous grones
O haitfull starre said I that in my birth appeird
That meid me thus to be abhord yea both of hevin & Eird
Iff Wertew in yow be above all uthr things
Quhy was your planets placit so in there senister sings
Quhy rang the Cypriane dame then in hir cheiff degrie
or quho geve to that crewel Chyld sic power greatt ower me
Then boy tho thow be blind yit hoip I thou doth heir
I am not he did sumtymes vound and hurt thy mother deire
No grievous traittour I quho meid that fatall hors
For to betrey the toune quhilk thai culd never take by force
nor yet the cruikit Sinith [?] quho did Inchain thy dame
nor am I he quho first both saw and shew hir att hir game
no chest I polita I nor ane off dians reace
nor did I ever yit ganistand thy caus in anie caise
how oft heve I proclaimed thy praise in vearse & proise
how oft heve I thi benner borne against all foraine fois
Quhat moves the then puire me to martyr on this vayis
And quhill I vald heve send the rest my toung to spek denyis
For ten thousand thoughtis att anes my spech debars
Quhilk never salbe vas nor is and bath no the thai varre
Quhyles think I giff I var a king quhat wald I do
And then I think a princelie stait I hed atteind into
then think I how to sheak the auld renowneit Rome
and thair to daint the Turkish pryde as heichlie I presume
with great godifredo Quhyles I am in skirmish schoitt
Quhyles admirall and Chiftane Cheiff off the Venetiane Floit
Quhyles am I heir quhyles thair and quhyles into my mynd
Frome English men and Spanyeith both to reve thair new found ynds
With rageing Rolland quhyles I lykvayis do Complaine
Regraitting my angelicall disloyall coy disdaine
Quhyles think I that quhyles this quhyles nether this nor that
Quhat vatt I quhat I think and quhyles I think I vatt not quhat
Thus am I vexit soir with monie a cheingeing fit
Imageing sick as mey becum a frantick lovers uitt
Even as the haggerit halk quhilk off no aries taks cure
Bot wereit and foirflowen at last sho lichts into the luire
So thois my rangeing thoghts quhilk did me so commove
Att last thai did returne into ther wountit subjett love
and as my thoughtis befoir did mak my plaints giff plece
So thois my peteous plents againe my thirling thogs doth chess
Yitt douffull vas the fecht quhairin my fanceis fled
Bot peteing both my reuthfull hert send sighs the
Quhilk with a furious force and villing to be vrekin
Did virrie up my warsling uoirds quhil as I vald heve spokin

f. 6v

And quhill that both off thois did stryve quha suld be first
my trinkling teares preveend them both quhilk from eene doun birst
and quhill that fluids off teares frome blumbereit eis hed runn
Then I begane off new againe as I hed els begunn
Protesting alvayis thus that sichs thai suld sих on
and painfull plaints thai suld heve plece quhen sichs and sob vas gone
Then quhen I hed dischergeit ane hundreth thousand schoitt
Off secreit nipping sicks quhilk cause my toung stiks to my thrott
Att last altho to laitt my toung entreit begaine
To challenge hevin to quarrell erth to raill on gods and man
the hevins quhilk did infuse sick vaill into my birth
The erth quhilk houriele did concurr to massacre my mirth
The gods quhilk still poupers thes plags on me puir vreicn
And man because into mishaps no man can be my mach
Thus evrie ane off thois moist rashlie I accused
As onlie thai hed beene to blame that I ves thus abusde
Bot fra I did perceive such plents for to repeatt
Culd nether chenge my bad desinks nor better my esteat
Then lyk the langspurd hors quhom tyme to tyre doth tech
Altho just caus hes both lent reanes and spurs unto my spech
So I beginn to soift and bytteing on the bitt
Advysedlie I did counterpaise my wilfulnes with witt
Witt said itt was no skill that I suld tak on me
To labefacteit or controll the destineis decriei
Nor curse that Cative king with his lascivious dame
As aither founders first as […] or fosterers oft my flame
Nor blame the Rolland Roundsweirds forttones nor the gods
Nor fatall stars nor frivoill faits nor horoscop nor ods
no naine off thois allace off all my wois I wreitt
saiff onlie with the Flinted faire my purpois is to wreitt
Prepair vith patience then thy self for to receve
Such indiscreit discourtessie thy Creweltie doth creve
Thow sall both heir and sie the vorst that I can vreitt
And knaw giff in effect or not my thundring pen can threatt
I sall onloik belyve the cabinn off myne hert
And all the secreits off the same to all the varld impert
And in my voodnes now I uow for to reveill
that I hed sworne into my sawll I ever suld conceill
Bot quhat is this alace that rashelie I heve woweit
Iff euil off the my dearest deir quhou trew I to be troweit
No latt thois vaine vaine vows and evill advyseit aiths
Pass with with the vind I rath eir die ten thousand thousand deths

f. 7t

Or onie suld object to my eternall scheme
Lo the[...] the dog that so doth bark againis his mestres name
Therfoir I sall conceill my vois and eik thi vrangs
Eternall scilence sall schoutt wp my secreit sichts & songs
and yit to be thy dog salbe my Cheiff deleyt
Quha darr not Quhimpe att thi vrang much less to bark or byt
Maist lyk the Spainyeald kynd quha onavars dois grip
his mesters fitt qahilk quhen he kneis he gentlie latt itt slip
and creiping to him cums for humblie fauneing grece
as nator techith him puire beist for to procure his pece
So trampeit one by the advysdlie vith thy will
I grant I meid a mint to quhinge and yit I held me still
And now behauld on fece I fall befoir thy feitt
And flatlings stoupeing darr nocht steirr och saif me then deir sweitt
Or I vill swelt I swear els qahilk is worsum voud
O calme thostorme thy brow doth bear mak cleir that crewell cloudd
And shau sum signe of grece call clapp me or att lest
Cum clak thy finger on thy thoumbe and cry ist ist pure best
And so thou sall both saiff tho thou therto be leathe
Thy self frome being cald onkynd & me thy dogg from Death

FINIS Ameenn quod Murravius
Listine Lordings by the dayis off Arthure
Was Britan in grett honoure
for in his tyme as he ane quhyll
he sojurneit att coomelie carllile
& hed with him monie ane aire
As he hed oftymes els quhair
Off his round table the knyghtis all
with muche mirth in bourc & hall
off evrie land in world so wyd
that came to him in eich syd
young knichtis & squyours eik
& bald baichlers came him to seik
for to sie the great Nobilines
that was into his court alaways
for he geve rich gifts & treassour
to men of war & gret honour
with him ther was ane baicheleir
And hed beene ther monie ane yeir
Ane young knyght makell off micht
Sir Lamuell forsiuth he hecht
This Lamuell geve gifts michilie
& spaireit not bot geve lergelie
& so libralie he it spent
miche moir nor he hed in rent
& so onvyselie he itt fett
that he came makkell into daitt
and quhen he sau weill all was gaine
the he began to mak his meane
alas he said vo is that mann
that na gud heth not na gud cann
and I am far in ane straing land
and na gud hes I understand
men wald me hald for ane wrache
quhair I be puir certes ne riche
he lapp upon ane fair coursoure
with outin Chyld or yit squyoure
and raid se furth in great murning
to dryve away his soir languing
his way he tuik toward the west
betuix ane Vater and ane forest
the sone vas then at eveningyd
he lichtit doun & wald abyd
for he vas haitt in the Wather
he tuik his mantill and fald to giddier
And laid him doune the knyght so free
Onder the shaddou off ane tree
Alace he said na gud I heve
Nor quhair to go so god me saiff
And all the knichtis with ther feires
Off the round table that be my peeres
Eich on to heve me vas full glaid
Nou will thai be off me full sadd
Nou wallaway this is my song
with soir weiping his hand he wrang
with sourou and cair he did yell
Till hevion a sleip he fell
& all to soipeit and forweipt
Quhen he vaknit out off sleip
Tuo off the fairest maids sau he
That ever he did sie with ee
Come out off the forest & to him drau
Faire before he never sau
Kirtis thay hed of purple sendill
small laceit setting fall ane weill
Mantils thay hed of rid velvet
Frenyeit with gold ful veill vas sett
Thai vaire abowe that over all
upon ther heds a joilie curnall

f. 11v

ther faces as the snou was quhyt
with lufesum cullor of gret delyt
fairar befoir he never did sie
he thoght them Angels off hevins he
The on buir ane goldin baiseing
The uther ane touall off alifyne
Thai Came him both tovard twaine
he vas courtess vent them againe
Welcumme he said Madams so frie
Sir knyght that anserreit him Velcum be ye
My Ladye that is bright as floore
The grathethe Sir Lamuell paramour
Sho preyth the cum & speik with hir
Giff it be nott thy plesor Sir
I am full faine with you for to fair
for troulie such as you so rair
On the ground sau I never go
Washit his face & hands also
& with the maids did gladlie gang
As merie as marie in hir song
within the forest ther did sie
Ane rich Pavillione ther picht sal hie
Ewrie pom [here the fragments breaks off]

ff. 26r-71r

[Murray’s supply to Lydgate]

The Ancient Historie
And onely trew &
sincere Cronicle of the
warres betuix the Greceanes
& the Trojanes & subsequentlie off the
first versione off the Ancient & famous
Cittie off Troye onder Laamedone
the King & last onder Priame
vrettine By Daretus a Trojane
& Dictus a Graciane present
in Latine by Guido & nou in Englis
wers By ihone Lidgat monk off burye
in Ingland anno 1451: […] 1612
Tibbermure […] James present.
murray

f. 71r

FINIS

Sic explicit Lib 5us et ultimus

all quhilk befoir it vantet this 40 yeiris ago now latlie
eikit addit & copeit out off the print the beginning and end that off
this holl storie as the breik beareth be me James Murray
with my hand in all hest that for the present hes the samyn of
my father Jhone murry off Tibbermure most Justlie
anno 1612 the 24 off Maij.

f. 71v

Quhen feirce Achilles att the sege off Troye,
Be fatall slicht, was so decreit and slaine,
Ane suddaie stryffe arreaste quha suld injoyes,
The Armour off that umquhill Greecian
Ajax ellegd the Ermes he suld obteene.
And be the sword to winn and wear them wouitt
Wlisses said thai suld be his againe
And he them wann giff Storeis mey be trouitt
Bot Lo the ermes var loist by seas ve read
And dreven be stormes far fra Vlisses sicht
Quha dreu till Ajax graiff quhair he ley dead
To signifie that he hed grettest right
So quhen this Tombe sall end thir tears off myne
Than sall thou greitt & say thou suld beene myne
Sen so itt is that quho so ever tuik lyffe
Man be the Death unto the same portend
To pass his lyff out throu this vaill off stryffe
In halines with Cristianes contend
Leive still in awe the God for to offend
Cleive to thy Cryst with faith onfenyeitly
Repent thy sones thy vickit lyff amend
And daylie think on Deth for thou man die
Cast not thy caires on Vordlie Vanitie
Quhois plesors ar with paines so deirlie boght,
Bot prest to pley thy pert, with honestie
And use the worlrd, even as thou usd itt noght
Latt ay this sentence in thy saull remaine,
Leive heir to Die, & Die to Leive againe

Leve me o love quhilk rechis bot to dust
And thou my mynd aspyre to heicher things
Grou rich in that quhilk never takith roust
Quhat ever feedis butt feading plesour brings

f. 72r

Drau in thy beames and humble all thy miht
To that sueitt Yoik quhair lesting fredoomes be
Quihich braiks the clouds & opins furth the lycht
That doth both shyne & giff us sight to sie
O tak fast hold Latt that licht be thy guyde
In this small course quhilk birth draus outt to Deth
And think hou evill becomith him to Slydde
Quho seiketh hevin and cums off hevinlie breath
Then fairveill worlde sen thy utter most I sie
Eternall Love menteen thy Lyff in me.

f. 74v

Kathrin Morton with my hand
Marie Moorray with my hand

marie moray with my hand

Marie

[five small monograms appear here, all spelling Marie Moray]

f. 75r

Begone sueit Night & I sall call the kynd
Quher dois thou duell sence nocht upon myne ees
Its moir not tyme that I my way suld find.
Begone & quhen thou cums againe cume tuyse
Away, away For I must go & meitt my Love
be the peip off day
Bot thou to deth thou art so neir off kin
To cum and go quhat our desyres heth been

Aryse Bricht day its tyme to cleame thy richt
Disperse the clouds & with thy goldin beames
Lat us injoy the still sueit gentill night
Qhich we surveit in thois plesant dreams
Aryse Ariuse
And Vithe thy rosie fingers point me quhair sche lys
Teche me bot anes & set me in hir sicht
That I mey dout quho yeilds the greter lycht

Bot giff thou will to day resing thy deu
And so devorse me from my fairest fair,
In secreit scilence sall my hert go reu
Wissing the day warre gane iff I var ther
That sho That sho
And I might spend the secreit nycht as ve var vont to doo
Fair praittling day dois never moir appeir
Nor yitt presuimes to vrang my deirest Deir

f. 75v

The nicht is gon yit absent is my Love
Day doith aryse secure yit sleips my deir
O then hou myndful is sho quhorn I proue
Qhill Phebus shynes yit dois sho nocht appeir
Alace, Alace,
That absence suld devoirce me from so sueit so fair a face
O then approche deir nimfe by quho m I breithe
Giff me to leive bot to recoird my Deithe

Finis

f. 76r

Heich Architectors wouderous wouttit rounds
huge Oiste off Hevine, in restless rolling Speirs
Firme fixit Polls, that all the extree beares
Concors discordant sueitt hermonie sounds
Boueid Zodiak circles, belting Phebus bounds
Celestial sings off Moneths making yeires
Bricht Titane to the Tropiks that reteirs
Qhuois fyrie flames auld chaos face confounds.
Just ballanced Ball amids the hevin that hings
All creature that Natoure creatt cann
To serve the use of moist onthankfull mann.
Admeire youre maker onlie King off Kings
Praise him o man his mercies that remarks.
Qhuois merceis farr exceed his woundrous warks

I am the sevint I was the fyft off tuelve
My brother auld is younger then am I Julian
My father follous Titan throu the skye I: Carre
Bot not so fondlie as the soull that fell
My grandfather Quhois seinyour vas him self
Quho by als manie fatall wounds did ty
As halff off thois vald father on me cry
Giff thai culd Speik geste quhat I am and tell
To quhilk giff ye this constant thing conjune
quhilk hard and fast hir rakles mestres binds
Quhilk uther vayis vald vaver with the Vinds
According to the Motions of the moone
Thryse happiest & blistest heth he beene
Quha gets & geshis quhat thes lynes can meene

f. 76v

Capitane Capitane
James Lyell James Lyell

[graphic design inserted here, three overlapping circles side by side]

f. 77r

Loip varlie on be sicker syne to sitt
heve ay a suire and staidfast brydle hand
Iff I be hett riddin use the bitt
Iff I be slau then tuich me with the vand
Iff I be yauld and redie att command
Ryd soift and faire and sumtyme lycht & leid
Rin nocht bot raik me throu the thirlit land
For oft onytymeles spurring spils the speid
Neid[?] gall me nocht nor spurr me quhil I bleid
Be var your sadle sitt not in my bak
Bot trait me iff I be a hors of deid
Mestress altho ye steall[?] a read quhat[?] raik
Ryd on iudg iff yow leive & puts no dout[?]
off courtessie ye vill grant me read about[?]

Mestress ye bad me thryse putt on my spurris
And thryse ye bad me spurr with all my speid
Our dyk ouer den ouer feild ouer firth ouer furrs
And heve no feir of onie foraine feid
Suirlie my vill sall to your vill succeed
And I am radie quhen ye lyke to ryd
Bot I most heve a brydle in your head
For sundrie sayis that ye can leip a syd
Bot breist I anes your buist I then conyfd
To ruitt yow rycht iff quhen I strik ye stand
or iff my revell chance to raitt your syd
Be soift and fair and radie att command
The hirds cheiff[?] that doth veitt the slonk is ill
I most leip on altho I heve no skill

Quha vald cum speid latt him imployn his pen
And suissie nocht suppois the peper sink
For scho this vindraucht appil[?] can nocht ken
Nor yit destene [?] the difference off Ink
Tho scho seeme bleat and blush at evrie blink
beath vyld vilyeard and vald vin away
Do [...] and ly [?] and pance nocht quhat sch[o] think

f. 77v

a secreit yea is virth a subteill nay
and pance nocht ye tho in a rage scho say
Ye ar ower peart that dar presum to steir hir
I trow ye vatt nocht quhome uth all ye pley
bot answer ye as giff ye did not heir hir
Then as I said iff that pres to speid
Employ your pen latt hir the letres reid

Cidippe reid and reidding reslie suier
Then brav aconcious plainlie did protest
That him to love scho presentlie profest
Diana hard the vow & vitnes bure
Swa Sacred Sir I Challenge & conjure
Your majestie by them quhom ye love best
By your imperialis voidr quhilk [?] by the rest
Is as I dout nocht constant prince [?] & suire
That ye of your fre gree vichest to do
Even quhil the sumtyme speik & spak bevor
And Diane quhom off dewtie I adore
Quhilk ves that ye suld change my fortton to
And mowit [?] me hier in effect ye mey
bot royall Sir put hadging [?] out of pley [?]

First I beleived the erth suld turne in Assh
By his decree quha gydis & governs all
I firmelie tho icht the firmament suld fall
And evrie thing that aither is or vas
Suld chenge in lothsum chaos uglee Mass
So that ilk rever lytle brok & burne
And fluidis into thair fontones suld returns
Befoir ae jott off firmeit faith suld pass
Then revers ye turne bak into your vals
Then firmament to fall be nocht on fain
Fyres burne the earth for vateris drouned itt els
Auld Chaos tak thi sheples sheip againe

f. 78r

So all in on confusedlie rin areir
Sence Contrair Chance hes chenged my panis seir [?]

Owerquhelmeit in vois & drouned in deip dispare
Quhom contrair chances crewltie intraits
To quhom thy vraith O fortoun blind yet thraits
The accomplishment of all mischeiffis and mair
Amid thais cairles tho nocht caules cair
Amid thois sich thois sob & sad regratis
Most voful vearse moir voful I yit vreitis
unto the fairest Sueit & sueittest fair
quhom tho both love & forton heve extold
thought princelie pens hir praises do proclame
Tho royal registration heve inrold
In everlesting lynes hir enles fame
Yet scho sweit scho vill tak into gud part
The simple offering of a loveing hert

Mestres quhen last ve twa did part asunder
Nothing ye said that I culd onderstand
And nothing moir nor that culd mak me vunder
Then Speireit giff ye nothing vald command
Nothing Sir ye anwerit me fra hand
Then knew I ye said nothing for the nanes [?] 
For nothing is moir inorth nor gold or land
And nothing vars the price off precious stones
And a thing ves off nothing creatt anes
And nothing to your self may be compaird
And nothing lykvais can find out the meanes
Thoch ye a ladie and I may be a laird
Then sence that nothing can ws so avance
Mestress on onlie a think latt ws pance

Lyk as the litle emett heth hir gall
the sle bansticle heth hir fin ve see
Laich treis hes toips howbeit thai be bot small
the vran heth vinges vith wther foules to flie
Flint is a stane sappois into the ee

f. 78v

Itt seems no half so precious a the perle
Ther is a droninge song into the bee
Suppois I grant it mey nocht mach the merle
As Mantua is nocht so fair ve find
As Royall Rome yit ar thai both bot tounes
As Small Schalloips sails als veill a ships by vind
And penneis pass als veill as goldin crounes
And as small strypes as veil as fludes hes springs
So love is love in pure men as in kings
First in the orient Rang the Assiriene Kings
To thois the sacred perciane prince succeedes
Till he by quhom the varld soir vundit bleids
Erth crouns to Greice vith bloudie blead he brings
Then greice to Rome the reanes off staitt resigns
So fra the michtie Monarchs of the Medis
To this vast varld successvelie succeedes
This great and fatall period off things
Till vereit vith broils & lang Alarumes
Erths majestie hir diadame layis doune
Befoire the feit of thi on conquerit croune
And throws himselfe great Monarch in thi armes

Ther most scho stay faits hes ordaind it so
Nor hes scho quher nor farder for to go

Nocht Orientall Indus Christal streemes
Nor fruitful Nilus quhich na banks can thoill
Nor goldin Tagus quhois bricht Titanes beames
Ar hurled hedlongst to vew the antartik poll
Nor Ladon quhom sueit Sidney dois extoll
Quhill it Arcadias bewtie doth imbrace
All theis mey not the nameles the controll
Bot with gud richt suld rande & giff plece
Now quhill sueit scho vitcheffs to schaw hir face
and with hir presence honours the ilk day
Thow slyding semest to use a slawer pace
Aganis thi vill as iff thow vent away
    So loth to leve the sycht of such a on
    Thow still imparts thi plents to evrie stone
Then the birds *vit* boldin throts
against his visage scene
and seth a rewle ouer the day
In voods & gardeens grene

Then up breid the cairfull housbandman
his cornes & vynes to sie
And evrie tymous artisain
In buith virks bissilie

The shaddow o the erth anone
removes & drawes by
Then in the east *quhen* it is gone
appeires a cleirer sky

The pastor quyts his slumbring sleip
and passis furth *vit* speid
His litle coming nosed ship
and rowtting ky to keip

Then evrie beist nocturnall beist
no langor dois abyd att rifts thai ar in vine
The glanceing fainis & vitre brych
Thai hy away both moir & less
themselves in h..s to hyd

Tha turne ther songe lyk nato
And evrie leiveing creator
taks confort in the day
Ouer midow mure & stryp.

The subteill motive ryais lych
Then evrie beist nocturnall beist
no langor dois abyd att rifts thai ar in vine

The mistie roiks and cluds of raine
fra toips off montaines skailes
Cleir are the hiest hils the plaine
the vapors tak the vails

Except the glistering aster brycht
Quhilk all the nycht var cleir
Afoxit *vit* a grettar lych
no langer dois apeir

Then the goldin glob incontinent
seth wp his shyning hed
And ouer the erth & firmament
displayis his beames abrod

The ample hevin off fabriks suire
in cleanes dois surpass
the cristall or the silver puire
or cleirest polist gless
f. 79v

10 the tyme so tranquill is & still
that naquhair sall ye find
saife on a hich and bare hill
ane air off pypeing vind
all trees simples great and small
that balmie leaff de beare
nor thai var payntit on a wall
no moir thai move or steir

15 The burneing beames sa ferventlie
doune frome his face can beat
That man and beast nou seiks a plece
to saiffe then frome the heatt
The breathless flok draws to the shaid
And fresher off thair fauld
The startled noutt as thai var meid
Runs to thair revers cauld

11 Calme is the deip and purpur sea
ye smuther nor the sand
The walls that valtering was wunt to be
Ar stablist lyke the land
Sa silent is the ceaseall air
att ewrie cry and call
The hills & deals & foreste faire
Againe repeats them all

16 The hird beneath sum leafifie tree
amids the floures the lys
The stable ships upon the sea
Stente up thair sailys to day
The hert the hynd the fallou deere
ar tapist at thair rest
The foules & birds that meid the beir
Prepairs thair prettie nest

12 The revers fresh & callor streams
ower roks can soiftlie rinn
The water cleir lyk cristall sheenes
And maks a pleaseand dinn
The fields and erthlie superfice
with vertor greene is spred
And naturallie butt artifice
In prettie cullors cled

17 The ryones doors descending doune
all kendlit in a gleid
In citie nor in Borestoune
mey naive sett furth thair herd
Mak frome the blew paymentit quhin
on eruik plester wall
The heatt refleching of the sun
Inflames the erth & all

13 The florishis and fragrant floures
Throch Phebus fostering heatt
refresht with dew and silver droips
caste wp a ne odour sweitt
The cloggit bissie bummyng bees
Quha never thinks to droune
On floures & florishes of trees
Collects thair licour broune

18 The laborers that tyme thai rease
al verid faint & vaik
for heat doune to thair houses gois
Noone meatt and sleip to tak
The callor vyne in cover is socht
mens brotheing breists to cuille
The water cleir & cauld is socht
and sellets stipeit in oil

14 The sunn moist lyk a speedie post
with ardent course asends
The beutie of the hevinlie oist
up to the zenith tends
Nocht gydeit be no Phaeton
nor treneit in a Cheir
Bot be the hich and onlie one
Quhilk dois all[quhai]r Impyer

19 Sum plucks the hunnie plumb & peare
The chirrie & peist
f. 80r

19 Sum pluks the hunnie plumbe & peare
   the Cherie and the peich
   Sum like the reame and lundon beir
   the body to refresh
   Furth off thair scaips sum ragein beis
   Lyis out and vill not cast
   Sum uth er Swarmes hyves on the treis
   And knots togider fast

20 The corbies nor the kecling keas
   mey scarce the heat abyd
   Haks pruinyes on soume breas
   And wadders bak and syd
   uith gilteend ees and opin vings
   The cok his curage shaws
   Uith claps off joy his breist he dings
   And tuentie tymes he craws

21 The dow with Quhisling wings so blew
   The vind can fast collect
   Hir purpure pennyis turnes manie a hew
   Aganis the sone direct
   Noon is now gone vent is midday
   the heat doth slaik att last
   The soone discends vast away
   fra thre a cloik be past

22 A little quhirle off bratheing vind
   Now softlie can arys
   The wark thoch heat that ley behind
   now men mey interprys
   Furth faires the floik to seik thair fud
   On evrie hill and plain
   The laborer as he thinks gud
   Stips to his turnes againe

23 The ryons of the soone be sie
   diminist in hir streth
   the shadow off evrie toure and trie
   Extendit is in lenth

24 Ther firdoning the bonie birds
   In banks thai do begin
   with pyps of reis the jolie hurds
   Halds wp a mirrie dinn
   The mevis and the Philomen
   The Stirling Quhissils loud
   The cuscett on the breaches grene
   Full Quyetlie cum croud

25 The day is Spent the glomeing cums
   the soon gois out of sicht
   Now peyntit is the occident
   with purper Sangwen bricht
   The Scarlat nor the goldin thred
   wald not thair bewarties try
   Ar nothing lyk the culler reid
   And bawtie off the Sky

26 Our wast horizon Circuler
   fra tym the soone be sett
   Is all with rubees as it war
   Or roses rid owerset
   Quhat pleasir war to valk & sie
   endlong a rever cleir
   The perfyt forme off evrie trie
   Within the deip aper

27 The salmont out off cruves & creils
   wphaillat into scouts
   The bels and circles on the veals
   Throch loiping of the trouts
   O then it var a perfyt thing
   Quhill all is still & calm
   The perfyt praise of god to singe
   with cornett and with salme

28 O then the hird with monie a shout
   cals uth er be thy name
Go billie turne our guds about
for tyme is to go hame
Throch all the land great is the gild
off rustik folk that cry
off Bleating sheip fra thai be fild
off calves & routinge ky

FINIS

Cupid quhom sall I vyt bot the
Off all the sorows I susteene
Lang hed I leiveit at libertie
hed I Eschwet thi arrows keene
Thy doubleines that day vas seene
Thou Smyllen shott me or I vist
And off my hert bereft me cleene
Thou tuik me trator onder trust

Thou did releis the shaft of lyed
and left the heid within my hert
O wingeit god it mervels me
hou thow prevels in evrie part
To cuire thy vinds avails no airt
Thy dairts so poyseynet ar of kynd
The moir we seik to cuir our smert
The moir molestde is our mynd

For me I thocht the parrell past
off all thi huiket arrows fyve
Till fortune moveit me att last
To veiwe the virth of a lyve
Fra tyme I mycht no langer stryve
as thi perfectiones meid me thrall
And shortlie did my hert depryve
off former libertees and all

My hert and freedome I confess
to be bot vardit quhair I vald
O crewell Cupid nocht the less
Thy frienship I heve earnd [?] bot kald
Quhair I vas free you hes me thrald
And so hes metamorosd me
My onlie joy is to behald
The causer of my miserie

Bot sen I sie hou monie herts
Thou his subdewd vnvirtilie
For sic as of the aven deserts
Can scantlie merit curtessie
I count my bondage villinglie
Mair fredome nor I can requyr
The clauer of my hertis ee
Qurat wertews vin cast my desyr

Sen so it is I rest content
Your thrallit freind for to remain
Ye ar the last that sell frequent
my hert with sic oppresing pain
Your weillfair is the onlie gain
mey gled maist for al my greiff
To vis you mair it var bot vaine
For this my onlie hertis releiffe

Lyk as the Dum, Solsequium, vith cair overcum, doth sorrou quhen the sone goth out off sicht
Hings doune his head, & droups lyk dead, & vill not spread, bot luirkes his leves throu
langour all the nycht
Till foolish Phaeton arise vith Quhip in hand, to cleire the cristall skyis & licht the land
Birds in ther boure, vaits on that houre, & to ther prince, a great gudmorou giffes.
from hence that floure, lists not ane houre Bot lacht on phebus lousing farth his leves

so stands with me, Except I be, quhail I mey sie, my lamp of licht my ladie & my luiff
fra sche deperts, ten thousand derts, in sindrie airts, thirls throu my hevie hert but rest or raiste
My countinance declares my invairt guide, Guid hoip almoist dispaires to find releiff
I die I dvyne pley doys me peyne I loth of evrie thing I sie alace
I spring I spoth my leves lysis out my cullor changes in evrie helthsum hou
No mair I loutt bot stands up stout Als glad of hir for quhom I onlie greu
till Titan myn upon me shyne yit I reveive throu favor of hir face lang desyreit face
fra scho appeirs & in hir spheir begins to cleir the dauing of my lang desyreit day
then curage cryis on hoip to ryise fra scho espyis the noysum nycht of absence vent avay
No vois mey me awaik nor yet impash bot on my staitlie stalk I florish freshe
I spring I sprout my leves lys out my Cullor chenges in evrie helthsum heu
No moir I laut bot stand up stout als glaid of hir for quhom I onli greu

O happie day ga not avay Apollo stay thy Chear from going doune into the vaist
Off me thou mak thy Zodiak yit I may tak my plesur to behald quhom I love best
Quhais presens me restoire frome Deth ta lyfe Quhais absens lykvayis shoires to cutt my breth
I vish in vaine the to remaine sen primo mobile sayis alvayis nay
Att Last I veene turne shooine againe fairveill vith patiens perforce to Day

Cupid & dead togider luvd all nycht
than interchengeing dairts throch fault of sicht

   finis quod thomsone With my hand

f. 81v

Quhen I vay [?] in my mynd the lyff of all sorts
that most leives att eass vith daylie disports
The lyffes off ane schipird admire above all
With princelie command obeyit all his call
His flok both great and small
doth harkin his vill
And he pleysis wpon ane bagypype wpon a grene hillo
Trandillo trandillo drandill[…] did dell
And he playis wpon ane bagypyp wpon a green hillo

his gudlie [?] eis ar faire & […] mentit ticht
with soone syne on all ech his vindois ar bright
with flowers off all hewes stroweit onder his feitt
in fairest greene midois with pleasuris [?] repleitt
So he is not impassit and thinks on na illo
And he pleysis on a bagypype wpon
Trandillo etc
And he playis etc

He ryses ilk morrow quhen his starr [?] dois appeir
the sangs off all byrdis his hert doth cheir
the lark & meviss sings sweitt in his eare
So he laks no fyne musick [?] & is void off all caires
Quhen [?] he heares all hir sueit tuines [?] he […] att thair skillo
And he pleyis etc dra[…] dilllo etc. and he pley etc

His fuid and his faire is helthsunm indeid
His bag and his basket doth serve him att neid
Hes cauks [?] of cheise ar both thik and auld
he drinks quhen he listis of the valspring cauld
With his bread of fyne meill meid in a millo
and he pleasys etc dra[…] dilllo etc and he pleyis

His vyff prettie vinch thinkis lang evrue day
to vishit [?] hir sueit joy and heir him pley
sum [...] dish & a drink of cauld aill
scho [...] [...] closlie & preysis[?] for his heall[?]
scho danses he drinkis lest [...] suld stillo
and he pleys etc drand and he pleys

Quhen he tyres off hes travell throw heatt of the soone
He lyis doune to sleip and heiret[?] no din
He vakins att his vill[?] & luiks round about
Giff his flokis scatter or stray throch out
[...] licht[...] he crayis with a shout vunder[?] stillo and he etc

Giff anie cums by[.........] can dans
and all that do see him begins to[.......]
his mester and thai gett
[here the song breaks off]

f. 82r

Disple sor with his deadlie dairt
so horrablie hes hurt my hairt
with sik a head, that no remeid,
saiff onlie dead, mey cure my smairt
the poisonoit poynit me priks
quhilk in my stomak stiks profound
Quhois vennem raines thou all my vaines
No sall can mak me sound.
I count not off my lyff a cuitt
My hairt hes biddin sik rebuit
Gods knaus in hevin that it vald even
vish to be reven, out be the ruit
It is so croist vith caire
that it can never mair reveive
then velcum Deth to cutt my braith
I list no langer Leive
Hes hevins hes erth hes gods hes air
Determinat that I dispair
hes all in ane my contrair taine
for me alaine that ar to saire
sence ther is no remors
my paciens perforce hes been
off evils I use the lest to Chuse
I mey not murme bot meane
Micht my mishap luik for releiff
I mey not murme bot meane
or yit culd I digest my greiff
Then var I vysse for to disgyse
Bot lo quhair lyis all my mischeiff
I wraik giff I reveill
I smoir giff I conceill my hurt
Judge ye that heires quhat burden bears
Thy stomak stuff with scorne

for quhill I fra Caribdis flee
I slyd in Sylla ye mey see
I saill itt seemes tuix tua extrem
That danger deems my ship sall die
Then sone sence I most smart
Thou off my edge that art the staff
Ewen Murray myne
Len me a lyne to eik my Epitaff

Quhat mey be compared tuix labour & luiff
This luiff is a labor that luiffers do prove
This luiff is labor a labor in vaine
the plesor is mixit vith over much paine
the the plesour is mixit vith etc
The sea that is deipest is cosiest past
the fruit that is hiest is suitest of tast
A blossom of beutie is brigt to behald
a ship full of love vill sink or it be sauld
vill sink or it be sauld

Johne thomsone
with my hand
Quhat giff a day or a nycht or a yeir
Croune thy delyts with a thousand vist contentings
Mey not the chenge off a month or ane houre
Cross thy desyres with als monie sad tormentings
forton, honour, beutie youth ar bot shaddous fleeing
Wanton pleasures dotting love, ar bott blosumis deeing.
All our joyis, ar bot toyis, idle thoughtis disceaveing
Non heth power, off ane houre in thair lyffe bereveing

The erth is bot a poynt off a poynt and a man
Is bot ane poynt off the erthe compared zenter
Suld then a poynt off a poynt be so vaine
As to triumpe in a sillie poynts advenir
As is haserts that ve heve, ther is nothing byding
Dayis off pleasours ar as streams throu fair mediuous slyding
Weill or vo tymo doth go in tymo no returneing
Sacred faith gydes our steats both in mirth and murneing

Quhat hes thou then sillie man for to boist
bot of a short and a soroufull lyff perplexit
Quhen haipe and hoip & thy saiftic is moist
Then vo & vraik disparaires and deth is annexit
Blossums bibles shis erth thy steat resemble
Fear off seiknes danger death maketh the to trimble
Evrie thing that do spring shoone ryp is shoone rottin
Pomp and pryde shoone doth slyd and is shone forgottin
Table 1: Content of NLS MS 15937

Abbreviations in the notes (full details in bibliography):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ayton</td>
<td>The English and Latin Poems of Sir Robert Ayton, ed. by Charles B. Gullans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantus</td>
<td>Cantus: Songs and Fancies, [ed. by Thomas Davidson] (first edition, printed 1662)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig</td>
<td>Poetical Works of Alexander Craig, ed. by David Laing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMV</td>
<td>English Madrigal Verse, ed. by E.H. Fellowes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>Merry Songs and Ballads, ed. by John S. Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>Musica Britannica XV, ed. by Helena Shire and Kenneth Elliott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomerie</td>
<td>Alexander Montgomerie: Poems, ed. by David J. Parkinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSc</td>
<td>Musica Scotica II: Sixteenth-Century Scots Songs, ed. by Kenneth Elliott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percy</td>
<td>The Percy Folio Manuscript, ed. by John W. Hales and Frederick W. Furnivall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roxburghe</td>
<td>The Roxburghe Ballads, ed. by William Chappell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott</td>
<td>The Poems of Alexander Scott, ed. James Cranstoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone</td>
<td>The Pont Manuscript Maps of Scotland, ed. by Jeffrey C. Stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td>Collected Poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt, ed. by Kenneth Muir and Patricia Thomson</td>
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All references are to page numbers (e.g. EMV 397, Montgomerie 120) unless otherwise indicated. Sources are more fully discussed in Chapter Four.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folio</th>
<th>First line / Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</table>
| f. 2  | ‘I dreamed a dreame I wishe my dreame wer trew’  
        [‘Sonnatt 1’] | Also in EUL Laing.III.447, f. 70r |
|       | ‘Quhat sall I say I sie nothing bot change’  
        [‘Sonnatt 2’] |       |
| f. 3  | ‘Quhy loue I hir that loues not me againe’  
        [‘Sonnatt 3’] | Craig 110 |
| f. 4  | ‘I wis yow weill altho I want my will’  
        [‘Sonnatt 4’] |       |
|       | ‘Soe sueitt a kiss restrein from you I reft’  
        [‘Sonnatt 5’] | Montgomerie 120 |
| f. 5  | ‘Suet blame me not thought I nothing can wret’  
        [‘Sonnatt 6’] |       |
| f. 6  | ‘Arcadianes ladie silentlie did slyd’  
        [‘Sonnatt 7’] |       |
|       | ‘Thy staitelie graice since still I must adore’  
        [‘Sonnatt 8’] |       |
| f. 7  | ‘Sould I throw loue in bondage be soe long’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 9’]  
|       | ‘Sall a weared mynd allace conseill his woe’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 10’]  
| f. 8  | ‘O that I wer transformed into a flea’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 11’]  
|       | ‘Helpe hairt the hairt that helpless doeth remaine’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 12’]  
| f. 9  | ‘Quhat a lyff is it to be led in loue’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 13’]  
| f. 10 | ‘Hairt hoipes for hairt and hairt is my desyre’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 14’]  
|       | ‘Is it yor will I sorrow in this sorte’  
|       | [Sonnat 15]  
| f. 11 | ‘Goe sonnat sweitt my sweittest santt vnto’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 16’]  
|       | ‘Quhat grieff is thair more great then quyet caire’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 17’]  
| f. 12 | ‘Loue gentill death dispatch my loathsome lyff’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 18’]  
|       | ‘Ofte hes thy loue I know not how intysd’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 19’]  
| f. 13 | ‘Deare to my hairt Receave thir sorrowing lynnes’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 20’]  
| f. 14 | ‘Presoomeing pen darr thow prouire [?] sic smairte’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 21’]  
|       | ‘I patt my hand by hazard in the hatt’  
|       | [Sonat 22]  
|       | Craig 108  
| f. 15 | ‘He that in fredome lives may proudlie boast’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 23’]  
|       | ‘I bid fareweill both to the world and the’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 24’]  
|       | No source, but cf. Bartholomew Yong’s translation of del Polo:  
|       | Enamoured Diana (1598)  
| f. 16 | ‘Law are the planneitis of this pleasant plaine’  
|       | [‘Sonnat 25’]  
| f. 17 | ‘Thus quhill I luve I live to the’  
|       | ‘Lyke as the purest gold in fyrie flame is tried’  
|       | From William Painter, The Second Tome of the Palace of Pleasure (1567)  
|       | ‘I pray the paper tak the paines for me’  
| f. 18 | ‘Now must I as of lait unto my plainte returne’  
|       | [‘Ane deere’]  
| f. 19 | ‘Giff Argulus cause haid’  
|       | [‘Deere’]  
| f. 22 | ‘Och aye I murne for loe my name includis my fate’  
|       | [‘Deere’]  
| f. 26 | ‘Giff he desyres to die quho can noe wayes deny’  
|       | [‘Deere’]  
| f. 28 | ‘For the frome the furies of this plaice’  
|       | [‘Amintas Ghoste’]  
<p>| f. 32 | ‘My deire Parthenia ressauve’ |</p>
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Also in Margaret Wemyss manuscript (NLS Dep. 314/23, f. 71v)

EMV 397

EMV 402

EMV 674

MB song 33; Cantus song 29

MB song 60; Cantus song 53

EMV 521

EMV 520

EMV 523

EMV 457; Cantus song 47

EMV 455

EMV 459

EMV 463

EMV 462

EMV 460

EMV 454

EMV 463; Cantus song 60
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<td>‘Awake sueit love thou art returned’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Intill ane May morning’</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Sein in hir is no asperance’</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘On dangers doubtles I may compleane’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>‘Support your servand peyriles paramour’</td>
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<td>‘Woe with such lawes I say’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>‘My love band me with a kisse’</td>
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<td>‘The faire morning sunshine bright’</td>
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<td>‘Woe worth the tyme and aik the place’</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>462</td>
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<td>‘Sinc that my sighes does eik the tender air’</td>
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<td>‘How now schepheard quhat means that’</td>
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<td>429</td>
<td>‘Will thou unkynd thus reave me’</td>
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<td>426</td>
<td>‘I saw a nymph vpoun yon plaine’</td>
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<td>‘Ane lustie youthfull gallant’</td>
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<td>422</td>
<td>‘In though the window of myne eyes’</td>
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<td>420</td>
<td>‘My Ladye quhat let yow my love to injoy’</td>
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<td>415</td>
<td>‘Wuhat give I seik for love of ye’</td>
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<td>412</td>
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<tr>
<td>410</td>
<td>‘Wuhen frome my love I took for love’</td>
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<tr>
<td>405</td>
<td>‘Sillie boy its full moone’</td>
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<td>400</td>
<td>‘Wuhat that most flame is with apt full fed’</td>
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<tr>
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<td>372</td>
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<tr>
<td>344</td>
<td>‘My love is forsaikin me’</td>
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</table>

1 This first stanza is mistakenly inserted here. The poem appears in full on ff. 109-10.
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<tr>
<th>Page</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>f. 144</td>
<td>‘Men seldom thrives in all thair lyfes’</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 145</td>
<td>‘As on a day Sabina was asleep’ Also in Oxford, Bodleian, MS Rawlinson poet 172, f. 2; Roxburgh, III, 644-47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 146</td>
<td>‘Poor heart with paine oprest’</td>
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<td>f. 147</td>
<td>‘Sir I thought good to send yow a bukell’ Also in Percy, IV, 102-3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 149</td>
<td>‘Methought my loue was in hir bed’ Also in Roxburgh, III, 644-47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 150</td>
<td>‘Ane puritane of latt’ Cf. Tobias Alston’s Commonplace book (Yale University Library, Osborn b 197, p. 33), and Commonplace book (Osborn b 200, p. 363); also printed in Merry Drollery (1661), see Farmer I, 133-34</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 151</td>
<td>‘When Phoebus adrest’ Also in Percy, IV, 7-8. Music also in Friesche Lust Hof, 1621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 153</td>
<td>‘Walking in a medow faire’ Also in Percy, IV, 3-5. Also in Yale University, Beinecke Library, Osborn shelves b 200, p. 370</td>
</tr>
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<td>‘Yow louers all giue ear now’ EMV 397</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 157</td>
<td>‘If love loves treuth then veman doeth loue’ ‘If any have the heart to kill’ EMV 417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 161</td>
<td>‘It fell on a sumeres day’ EMV 658</td>
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<td>f. 162</td>
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<td>f. 163</td>
<td>‘Be thou then my beutie named’ EMV 402</td>
</tr>
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<td>f. 164</td>
<td>‘As at noone Dulcina rested’ Also in Roxburghe, VI, 164-69.</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 166</td>
<td>‘Faine wald I wed a fair young man’ EMV 419; Cantus song 58</td>
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<td>f. 168</td>
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<td>f. 169</td>
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<td>f. 171</td>
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<td>f. 172</td>
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<td>f. 176</td>
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<td>‘An coutrier and a countrie lass sitting vnder a schad’ EMV 565</td>
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<td>f. 179</td>
<td>‘Eyes leaue off your weeping’ ‘Come now sueit let us proue’ EMV 399</td>
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<td>f. 180</td>
<td>‘What is it all that men passes’ EMV 502</td>
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<td>f. 181</td>
<td>‘Goe my flockes get you hence’ EMV 411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 183</td>
<td>‘Love me or noucht love her (I) most or die’ EMV 359</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 184</td>
<td>‘Methought this other night’ EMV 562</td>
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<td>f. 186</td>
<td>‘Now what is love I pray ye tell’ EMV 565</td>
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<td>f. 187</td>
<td>‘Faire women lyk faire jewels are’ EMV 568</td>
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<td>f. 188</td>
<td>‘To sighd and to be sad’ EMV 571</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 189</td>
<td>‘Unto ye temple of thy bewtie’ EMV 522</td>
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<td>f. 190</td>
<td>‘Go passions to ye cruell fair’ EMV 524</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 191</td>
<td>‘Since first I saw your face I resolved’ EMV 525</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 191</td>
<td>‘Ther is a lady sueit and kynd’ EMV 525</td>
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<td>f. 192</td>
<td>‘I can not injoy peace’</td>
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<td>f. 193</td>
<td>‘Remember me my deir’</td>
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<td>f. 195</td>
<td>‘How sall I then discrrib my love’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>‘If wemen could be fair and never found’</td>
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<td>f. 196</td>
<td>‘How should my feeble bodye fur’</td>
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<td>f. 198</td>
<td>‘Quho ever thinkes or hoopes of love for love’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>‘Goe to bed suct love tak ye rest’</td>
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<td>f. 199</td>
<td>‘Doe not o doe not thy bewtie’</td>
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<td>f. 200</td>
<td>‘Ther was a willie lad met with a bonie lasse’</td>
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<td>f. 201</td>
<td>‘Come havie sleep ye Imag of trew death’</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 202</td>
<td>‘My father fyne wald have me tak’</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 203</td>
<td>‘Come love lets walk into ye spring’</td>
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<td>f. 204</td>
<td>‘Lyk as the doul solsequium with care overcome’</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 206</td>
<td>‘Quhat mighty motioune so my (many) my mischeves’</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Joy to the persones of my loue’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 208</td>
<td>‘Quher fancies found his pleasure pleades’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 210</td>
<td>‘My loue is bright as enbur bone’</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 212</td>
<td>‘Giff thow wald love or loveit thee’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘The feare of the Lord is the beginning of visedom’</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Tak tent in tyme and not deferr’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>‘Upright to liue I sett my mynd’</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 214</td>
<td>‘On onlie one both day and night I pance’ ['Sonnatt’]</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 215</td>
<td>‘Remember man as thow goes by’</td>
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Table 2: British Library MS 24904

The following table contains all the poems Peter Buchan copied from Margaret Robertson’s MS X while at Pitfour Castle. Corresponding folio numbers for MS 15937 are given.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folio</th>
<th>Title and First Line</th>
<th>MS 15937</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f. 256r</td>
<td>‘For the frome the furies of this plaice’ ['Amintas Ghoste’]</td>
<td>f. 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 258r</td>
<td>‘Woe worthe the tyme and eik the plaice’ ['Woe worth the tyme’]</td>
<td>f. 43 / f. 105</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 258v</td>
<td>‘Caire away goe thow frome me’</td>
<td>f. 44</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 259r</td>
<td>‘Quhen Cala sighing sadlie satt’ ['Cala and Philemone’]</td>
<td>f. 46</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 260r</td>
<td>‘O quhat a plague is loue’ ['The Lamentatione of a Scheepe-heard’]</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 262v</td>
<td>‘Samtyme haue I sein whein the world hes bein mirrie’ ['Its a wonder to see how this world does goe’]</td>
<td>f. 62</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 263r</td>
<td>‘One did I loue the fairest lassie’ ['Once did I loue’]</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 263v</td>
<td>‘Woe worthe the tyme and aik the plaice’</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 264r</td>
<td>‘Rest aquhille yow cruall caires’ ['Rest aquhyle’]</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 264v</td>
<td>‘Sleep wayward thoughtes and rest yow with my loue’</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 265r</td>
<td>‘Come away come sweet love’ ['Come away’]</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 265v</td>
<td>‘My love band me with a kisse’ ['James Heruie’]</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 266r</td>
<td>‘Allace I die and dar not tell quhairfor’ ['Allace I die’]</td>
<td>f. 111</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 266v</td>
<td>‘It was the frog in the wall’ ['The Frog and Mouse mariag’]</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 267v</td>
<td>‘My father fyne wald haue me tak’ ['My father fyne’]</td>
<td>f. 202</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 268r</td>
<td>‘Giue loue loues trueth, then vemen doe not loue’ ['Giue loue loues truth’]</td>
<td>f. 39</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 268v</td>
<td>‘Quhen frome my loue I look for loue’ ['Quhen’]</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 269r</td>
<td>‘Sir I thought good to send yow a bukkell’ ['Sir I thought good’]</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 270r</td>
<td>‘I catiue curate languishes’</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. 275r</td>
<td>‘Vpright to liue I sett my mynd’</td>
<td>f. 212</td>
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Table 3: Index of English Song Books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Author/Composer, Title</th>
<th>MS 15937</th>
<th>EMV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1618?</td>
<td>Thomas Campion, <em>The Third and Fovrth Booke of Ayres: Composed ... So as they may be expressed by one Voyce, with a Violl, Lute, or Orpharion</em> [ca. 1618]</td>
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<td>397</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>f. 40</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>f. 84</td>
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<td>ff. 107, 109</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>f. 119</td>
<td>405</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>f. 183</td>
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<td>1601</td>
<td>Philip Rosseter, <em>A Booke of Ayres, Set foorth to be song to the Lute, Orpherian, and Base Violl</em> [1601]</td>
<td>f. 43</td>
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<td>f. 161</td>
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<td>f. 172</td>
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<tr>
<td>1607</td>
<td>Thomas Ford, <em>Mysicke Of Svndrie Kindes, Set forth in two Bookes. The First Wheroft Are, Aries for 4. Voices to the Lute, Orphorion, or Basse-Viol, with a Dialogue for two Voices, and two Basse Viols, tunde the Lute way. The Second Are Pauens, Galiards, Almaines, Toies, Iggges, Thumpes and such like, for tow Basse-Viols, the Liera way, so made as the greatest number may serue to play alone, very easie to be performde</em> [1607]</td>
<td>f. 62</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>f. 91</td>
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<td>f. 189</td>
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<td>f. 195</td>
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<tr>
<td>1597</td>
<td>John Dowland, <em>The First Booke of Songes or Ayres of fowre partes with Tableture for the Lute: So made that all the partes together, or either of them seuerally may be song to the Lute, Orphorion or Viol de Gambo...Also an inuention by the said Author for two to play upon one Lute</em> [1597]</td>
<td>f. 64</td>
<td>464</td>
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<td>f. 65</td>
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<td>f. 67</td>
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<td>f. 88</td>
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<td>f. 93</td>
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<td>f. 129</td>
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<td>f. 198</td>
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<td>f. 201</td>
<td>466</td>
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<tr>
<td>1601</td>
<td>Robert Jones, <em>The Second Booke of Songs and Ayres, Set out to the Lute., the base Violl the playne way, or the Base by tableture after the leero fashion</em> [1601]</td>
<td>f. 100</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>f. 184</td>
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<td>f. 186</td>
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<td>f. 187</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>f. 188</td>
<td>571</td>
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<tr>
<td>1606</td>
<td>John Bartlet, <em>A Booke of Ayres With a Triplicitie of Musicke, Whereof The First Part is for the Lute or Orpharion, and the Viole de Gambo, and 4. Partes to sing, The second part is for 2. Trebles to sing to the Lute and Viole, the third part is for the Lute and one Voyce, and the Viole de Gambo</em> [1606]</td>
<td>f. 102</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>f. 119</td>
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<td>f. 183</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Pages</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 1600  | Robert Jones          | The First Booke of Songes & Ayres Of foure parts with Tableture for the Lute. So made that all the part together, or either of them severally may be song to the Lute, Orpherian or Viol de Gambo [1600] | f. 103 552  
                    |                       |                                                        | f. 118 557  |
| 1605  | Robert Jones          | Vltima Vale, with a triplicity of Musicke, Whereof The first part is for the Lute, the Voyce, and the Viole Degambo, The 2. part is for the Lute, the Viole, and four partes to sing, The third part is for two Trebles, to sing either to the Lute, or to the Viole or to both, if any please [1605] | f. 106 581  
                    |                       |                                                        | f. 198 574  
                    |                       |                                                        | f. 199 573  |
| 1610  | Robert Dowland        | A Mysicall Banquet. Furnished with variete of delicious Ayres, Collected out of the best Authors in English, French, Spanish, and Italian [1610] | f. 122 500  
                    |                       |                                                        | f. 181 502  |
| 1600  | John Dowland          | The Second Booke of Songs or Ayres, of 2. 4 and 5. parts: With Tableture for the Lute or Orpherian, with the Violl de Gamba... Also an excelent lesson for the Lute and Base Viol, called Dowland’s adew [1600] | f. 123 471  
                    |                       |                                                        | f. 171 473  |
| 1600  | Thomas Morley         | The First Booke of Ayres. Or little Short Songs, to Sing and Play to The Lyte, With The Base Viole [1600] | f. 124 624  |
| 1588  | William Byrd          | Psalmes, Sonets & songs of sadnes and pietie, made into Musicke of fiue parts: whereof, some of them going abroad among diuers, in vntrue coppies, are heere truely corrected, and th’other being Songs very rare and newly composed, and heere published, for the recreation of all such as delight in Musick [1588] | f. 131 48    
                    |                       |                                                        | f. 195 45    
                    |                       |                                                        | f. 208 43    |
| 1606  | John Danyel           | Songs For The LYTE Viol and Voice [1606] | f. 143 452  |
| 1609  | Alfonso Ferrabosco    | Ayres [1609]                                                          | f. 169 517  
                    |                       |                                                        | f. 171 512  |
| 1610  | Robert Jones          | The Muses Gardin for Delights, Or the fift Booke of Ayres, onely for the Lute, the Base-vyoll, and the Voyce [1610] | f. 200 607  
                    |                       |                                                        | f. 202 608  |
| 1608  | Henry Youll           | Canzonets to Three Voyces [1608]                                      | f. 203 332  |
Transcription of NLS MS 15937

Preliminary note:
This is a complete transcription of the manuscript, with the exception of those items that are printed in *English Madrigal Verse* (henceforth *EMV*): for these poems, only the first line is given, and the relevant page number in *EMV*. Catchwords appear throughout in the manuscript, but are not transcribed. The quality of MS 15937’s transcription of Robertson’s MS X leaves much to be desired. Many mistakes have been made by the scribe (or were copied from the original MS X), and frequently the scribe has left a question mark to indicate obscurities; these have all been reproduced. All information offered by the anonymous scribe of MS 15937, such as explanations of words in Scots, or scribal idiosyncrasies, is within round brackets. To differentiate from these, my own incidental editorial remarks are enclosed within square brackets, except on f. 177 where the scribe used square rather than round brackets.
f. 1

Margarat Robertsoune
with my hand
1630.

This buik perteenes to a verie
honourable womane

Margarat Robertsoune
Relict of umquhill Alexander Steuart
of Bonskeid

Anno Domini
1630.

f. 2

Sonnattes.

Sonnatt 1.

I dreamed a dreame I wishe my dreame wer trew
I thought my mistres to my chalmer came
And with her harnes handis the courteines drew
And softlie said and cald me by my name
O sleipe ye sir awaik now fy for shame
Is it not said that Loweris gettis noe Rest
I ansuerit hir, trueth it is madame
I sleip not sound I ame soe sore molest
And evin with this hir night gowne aff schee custe
And lightlie lappe and lay doune one my arme
Hir rosie lippes me thought to myne schee thruste
And sayes may this not ease yow of your paine
Mercie madame as I begoud to say
Quhen I awook allace schee ves away.

finis

Sonnatt 2.

Quhat sall I say I sie nothing bot change
Change will I not for nothing that I sie

f. 3

Sie quhat I will since that I loueit hir anes
Anes schee me louiet or anes deceavit me
Desaueit by hir I hoipe newer to be
Be as it will I’l [?] ewer judge the best
Best it is for one thing to agrie
Agried I am and soe resolues to rest
Rest still will I for quhy sould I remoowe
Remoowe I feare altho against my will
Will death I vowe sche’s be my onlie loue
Loue schee me not I’le tak my long faireweill
Quhat sall I say I sie no thing bot change
Still sall I loue quhair that I loueit anes.

finis

Sonnatt 3

Quhy loue I hir that loues not me againe
Quhy ame I freindlie to my frameit foe
Quhy doe I waire my waiting one in waine
In serwing hir that hes desauet my soe
Quhy sall I thus my freedome sweitt forgoe
To pleasure on that plagues me with disdaine
Or wische hir weil that ewer wrought me woe
And wald not sigh suppoise schee saw me slaine
O foolische I and hapeless I alane
Noe then a faitheleles and disloyall scheo

f.4

Whoes tryed vntrueth thus make me to complaine
And wis before the fixit day to die
Bot now tynt tyme and trawel makes me suire
I played the foole and schee playit the huire ?

finis

Sonnat 4.

I wis yow weill altho I want my will
My will is your will, ane will is my woe
My health, my hape my weilfaire does yow ill
I ame your friend ye are my frameit foe
I sute I serue I loue you and noe moe
And ye reward your seruand with disdaine
I still proclame your praise quhair ewer I goe
Ye pas your tyme and playes with my paine
I sigh ye sushe ? not to sie me slaine
I long for yow scarce will ye look againe
I plead for peace I follow and ye flie
  Watter sall burne the fier it salbe froasen
  Or I repent or change quhome I haue choisen

finis

Sonnat 5.

Soe sueitt a kis yestrein from yow I reft
With bowing doune my bodie in your bedd
That ewin my lyff within your mouth I left
Since syne from yow my spirit could newer schedd

f. 5

To follow yow yt from my bodie flead
And left my corpes als cold as any key
Yitt from the danger of death I dread
I send my hairt to fetche my spirite from thee
Yit it wes soe enamoured ewin with thee
And still with the and likways does remaine
And keipeth captiwe of all theise thrie
More glaid to byd nor to turne back againe
   Were not your breath theise places haid supplied
   Ewin in your armes doubteles I haid died.

Sonnet 6.

Sueett blame me not tho nothing can wreitt
 Looke in your glas for thair appeares a face
 That owergoes my blunt inventioune quytt
 Beautie conuoyit with chastnes and with graice
 bot were I als wise as ye are faire ewin than
 your eyes sould sie the secreittis of myne hairt
 Bot farr ye pas the limite of my braine
 For worth it selff aught worthines desert
 Then stryweing to amend wer not my pairte
 To wrong the object that before is veill
 And always past inventiounes airte
 That myndis can not expres nor tongues can tell
   But thus I sveare and newer sall Recall
   Haid I a thousand hairtes ye might command thame all.

f. 6

Sonnet 7

Arcadianes ladie silentlie did slyd
 Owerschadowit with painles majestie
 Bot the phoeleas ? beautie did dewyd
 Theise silver streames in twiges from tuo or three
 Bot they in joy could not compair with thee
 One letter changeing maketh heawin
 And doth salute that hous of Magistie
 Whose walles inscrywes theise matcheles muises sewine
 And doeth wouchsaiff thair presence ewerie day
 And aft in the doth dye their daintie handis
 Quhilk makes the now soe loath to pairt away
 Thow rather chuse for to be tyed in bandis
   And to thy grieff since thow must neidis begone
   Thow doth impairt thy plaint to ewerie tumbling stone

Sonnet 8

Thy staitelie graice since still I must adore
Quhill lyff and breath in me sall ewer last
Yit schoe disdaines and knowes not els quhairfore
And leawes my saull with sighes sore opprest
Thy comelie faice my sillie spirit adascht
And slew me then with Cupides fierie dairte
And cuist his boult within my mynd possest
Sensyne from the cauld newer sched my hairt
Yit grant me graice wnto my wearied thought
Since I ame pudlit in the streames of loue
And all my sorrowes yit sall turn to nought
As witenes sall ye heawingly poweres aboue

f. 7

Then sall I say quhen all my grieffis are gone
O happie I that euer loueit suche a one.

Sonnat 9.

Sould I throw loue in bondage be soe long
And darr not seik noe helpe for feare of death
whome sall I wytt or quho doth bread my wrong
Allce vnhappie I as ewer yit did breath
Heir I beginne to waill my hard mishape
And in my sall I crie for helpe with speid
Att thy sweitt handis that doth my youth intrappe
Nae joy att all I find in my great neid
To mak me fall from off my hie desire
Noe piticing eye lookes back wpone my snaires
Bot my weak winges presumeing to aspyre
My hairte is drowned in ocianes of my teares
And still must beare the lytill of my wrong
That caused is by thee the sweittest fairest one.

Sonnat 10.

Sall a wearied mynd allace conseill his woe
Haueing a hairt doune-beattin with dispaire
Rejectit of loue quhilk forst me thus to goe
In sorrowing streames to die azelmanes[?] aire
Since this my suite and loue ewin thy degree
To mak me patrone father of all grieff
Ewin to reject a serwantt wes to thee
A suddaine end will purchas my Relieff

f. 8

Now come thow death and mak my sorrowes brief
My hairt releiwe of Cupides fettered bandis
Or els procuire and purchas my relieff
Relieue my lyff ewine att hir sacred handis
    Rather nor kill thy slaue as I may prowe
    And mak me curs that ewer I learned to loue.

Sonnat 11

O that I wer transformed in a flea
To hant the scheittis my dearest deare lyes in
Quhyles heir quhyles thair to play me to and frae
To loupe and skippe athort hir milk quhite skinne
Beneath hir nawell wpe to hir chirrie chinne
Wpone hir lint quhyte lyre lightlie thair to leape
Syne turne againe and doune directlie Rinne
In richest roomes quhair fleas wald fainest creipe
Then round about my compas wald I keipe
Betweine her thees to thrust me be some traine
And syne quhen that my saull were sound a sleipe
To be reformed into my scheape againe
   Then sould schee know that I my Ladie quhyte
   Sould stryke hir deiper nor any flea would bite

finis

Sonnat 12.

Helpe hairt the hairt that helples doeth remaine
Helpe hairt the hairt that hes noe helpe bot thee

f. 9

Helpe hairt the hairt that pynes in peirceing paine
Helpe hairt the hairt that nowayes cane the flie
Helpe hairt the hairt that willing is to die
Helpe hairt the hairt quhois favoure cannot find
Helpe hairt the hairt that craiffes remaid of the
Helpe hairt the hairt that drounes into the deipe
Helpe hairt the hairt that fries into the flame
Helpe hairt the hairt that meanneth aye in sleipe
Helpe hairt the hairt that tempest haith owertaine
Helpe hairt the hairt that dolourous death haith slaine
   Helpe hairt the hairt that vowit hes to serwe
   Thy hairt, o hairt vntill they tyme it sterwe
finis

Sonnat 13

Quhat a lyff is it to be led in loue
Who may with all theise toyes and froyes comport
Quhat may a man find best for his behoue
Quhat for his proffeitt, or to be schort
Quhat ather for his pleasour or comfort
But sighes and sobis himselfff for to distroy
Giff he be sadd then sall schee play ane sport
If he be courteous then sall schee be coy
Be he in sorrow schee sall be in joy
Giff mirrie he schee salbe malecontent
Preas he to pleis then sall sche preas to noy
And alwayes contrair to his gude intent
Except incaice he will vnconstant be
I grant schee will thairto with him agrie
finis
Sonnat 14.

Hairt hoipes for hairt and hairt is my desyre
Hairt than giff hairt your servant sure to me
Hairt is I craiffe and hairt is I requyre
Hairt than giff to me o hairt frome thee
O hairt since that my hairt would faine truelie
Hairt efter hairt giff hairt for hairt againe
And your hairt rueing one my hairtis miserie
Then hairt for hairt for ever sall remaine
O hairt latt not my hairt be catiwe slaine
Be the o hairt bot latt me end my gieff
By word o hairt or wreitt as best ye can
That this o hairt my hairt may haue Relief

And giff sueitt hairt ye turne your hairt from me
Then hairt my hairt sall end in miserie
Finis

Sonnat 43 15

Is it your will I sorrow in this sorte
Hes will the rowme quhair Reassoune wont to be
Will ye that thus my sorrowe haue support
Or will ye kill your catiue cowardlie
Quhatewer ye will is veilcome vnto me
For I haue vowit for to obey your will
I will seik noe refuge I will not flie
Bot as ye statute I will stand thairtill
I will not look for eas wnto my ill
But frame my will according to my weird

And willinglie I will await aye quhill
your will haue maid me onelie wretch one eird
So will be said quhen sorrow hes me slaine
That ye bot mercie murdrest hes your awine
Finis

Sonnat 16

Goe sonnat sweitt my sweittest santt vnto
Nought sweitt I say for ought thow does conteine
But rather sweitt becaus that sweitt sweitt schee
Sould the infold her fingers faire betueine
Syne view with hir faire bereaweing eyne
And with hir soul sweitt wordis pronownce the to
Then sonnatt sweitt would goe that I vnseine
Ware changit in thee quha watt quhat I would doe
Noe veyning I sweit mistres not bot this
Till ye haid read ilk letter in a lyne
Syne sweitlie I and hairtfullie would kis
Theis sweitt rede quhyte allureing lippes of thine
   Syne in the end my former schape ressaue
   Soe doe the thing that sweitt sweitt kisses craiwe.
   finis

Sonnat 17.

Quhat grieve is thair more great than quhyet caire
What woe is warr nor is the want of will
Quhat danger may be equall with dispaire
What wight so weill that newer fand some ill
What murder is ane faithfull friend to kill

f. 12

What treasone var it ane stranger to betray
What sooner spurres than spieth ane man to steal
What latt soe great in loue as is delay
What guyd soe guide that newer vent astray
What moowes the mynd soe muche as inward paine
What soould insew to him that vould assay
What mercie is it giff cruell schee remaine
   Since now bot one may ansuerir me in this
   Not haiffing hir I am content to wische
   finis

Sonnat 18.

Come gentill death dispatch my loathesome lyff
Since neither rewth nor pitie can haiue plaice
Put end vnto my daylie start and stryff
That sometymes theise my sighes and sobes may ceas
For loe my deadlie paill and withered faice
For nothing els remaines bot skinne and bone
May weill bear witnes to my cairfull caice
Since thair is nought may mend my murning moanes
Since sighes and sobbes and all ar spent in vaine
Come gentill death come and dispatche me anes
With spied I pray thow putt me out of paine
   For better is it to die without delay
   Than piece and piece for to consume away.
   finis

Sonnat 19

Ofte hes thy loue I know not how intysd
My mynd within to wisch the for my awine

f. 13

Ofte in thy sight with wordis I haue dewysit
My ruethles tormentis truelie to have schawin
Thy mynd to me allace it was vnknown
Judgeing the best I cannot now Refraine
Latt not the seid that in thy loue is sawine
Be droun’d into the deipe of thy disdaine
My sorrowes sore sweitt latt thame be thy paine
My mirth thy joy conforme thy selff to me
Speak anes the word that I quhom thow hes slaine
May liwe ane speciall servant vnto thee
   Ane honest mynd I beare quhom thow does loue
   Chairge as thow will I sall obedient prooue.
   finis

Sonnat 20.

Deare to my hairt Receaue this sorrowing lynnes
That thy vnkindnes makes me to impair
I find allace thy loue it now declynes
Quhilk breidis in me a sea of voefull smairt
Bot thow deire thow sall sie my constant pairt
Thy change noe change nor chance sall it Remoowe
Yea I sall sigh to death ane faithfull hairt
That thow may sie how deire buy I thy loue
My sobes my teares sall newir ceas to moane
With sorrowing groanes till they haue vorn my eyne
The teares the cros the sorrowes that I prowe
Sall bring my death or moowe the to be kind
   Heirfore deire hairt prewent my dying breath
   Or come sueitt loue and sie me sighe to death
   finis

f. 14

Sonnat 21

Presoomeing pen darr thow procuire sic smairte
whois lookes giffis lyff to euerie pregnant mynd
Darr thy tormenting presence haunt that pairt
Where vertues deirest jewelis are confynd
Is not hir breist and bodie heir propynd
To be the gloirie of the heavenes decrie
And is schee not by destynies dewyne
The vertues wonder of this world to be
How can I then from discontentis be frie
That feares the los of this soe precious gaine
Quhen in this world this world of worth I sie
Attendit still by torturing tyrrane paine
   Quhen schee alone may challenge by desertis
   For to be serueit with twentie thousands hairtis.
   finis

Sonnat 22

I patt my hand by hazard in the hatt
Where many names did intermiscit lye
With hir and hir and yow and this and that
A fortoune blind or niewienak to trie
A soe it wes my lukelie luke that I
Amang soe many fand thy noble name
And one my heid that thow and all may spie
I weil avow the wearing of the same
I sall inferr noe soile into thy name
That thow art borne wpone soe bas a head

f. 15

Ane begger findes a stone of curious frame
And yet the stone remaines a stone indeid
So thow art thow and of more worth to me
Deir Vallantyne nor thow wes vont to be.

Sonnat 23

He that in friedome liwes may proudlie boast
Yit latt him not be caireles of his staite
Fyer is ane instant loue may make him crost
And doune his fortoune and his cruel faitt
For ones I wes frie bot now I doe frequent
The agonying desert of the mynd
Thair to Reweise sichts tearis and endles plaintis
Conwoyit with sorrowes in a gracious kind
That now my friedome is ewine bound and chain’d
That I must attend quhatever schee decries
And willinglie content I ame constrain’d
To hold my peace my hairt to agonie
And is ewin owerflowit with greif and tost soe sore
That for schipwraik feare darr seik noe kynd of schoire.

Sonnat 24.

I bid faireweill both to the world and the
To the becaus thow art extreame vnkind
And to the world becaus the world to me
Is nothing since I cannot moowe thy mynd

f. 16

Were any pitie in thy saul insrynd
Could sighes or teares mak safte thy flintie heart
Perhapes I might more glaidlie be inclynd
To live with the and newer to depairt
Bot since I sie that Cupidis fiery dairte
Is onelie woundit with a schaft of lead
I think it foolie for to pay that pairt
To seike for fawo quhair I find bot feade
Burst heart and break that all the world may sie
Thaires none soe bound but death may mak him frie.

Sonnat 25
Law are the planeitis of this pleasant plaine
Bot lawer farr the boundis of my estaite
Hiegh are theise hilles with swelling tops againe
Bot hiegher farr the scope of my conseate
With thence the spirite my desoluand debait
My chance is low my choise is fixit hie
With deith disgraiuce to cower aboue this threate
Which deith disdaines ewer to martyr me
Yit it appeares impossibilitie
Bot yit farr greater wonderis hes beine wrought
To sie theise disagrieing thinges agrie
Ane law estaite and hiegh conseattit thought
Then anher thoughtes flie lower then ye doe
Or fortoune change and change my fortoune too.
finis.

f. 17

Thus quhill I luve I luve to the
And quhill I luve I sweare
My liff salbe noe liff to me
vnles thy loue be thaire
Bot giff it be that I die for the
Soe sall my death declaire
Death brings noe discontent to me
giff thow contentit are

No phisick hearbes the grieff of loue can cuire
Nor yit noe droagg that paine can weill assure

A man that liues in miserie
He newer heares noe melodie
Bot it addis his melancholie
finis

Lyke as the purest gold in fyrie flame is tried
Evine soe is faith of friendis in hard estaite descryed
Giff hard missape doe mak ye affrayit
Each of thy friendis doe flie away
And he which erst full frendlie stood to the
A friend noe more to thy poore staite is he. finis

I pray the paper tak the paines for me
And carey to my loue hir last adew
Bid hir faireweill and tell hir openlie
That ewer I loueit from my hart I Rew
Haid schee beine either constant traist or trew
My lyff and loue haid endit both together. finis

f. 18

Ane deere

Now must I as of lait into my plainte returnne
And quhail I thought to find ane end I must beginne
to murne
All ye that weipes for me your eyes to me resign
All ye that sighes and sobbis for grieff your bosomes to me bring
Come help me to distill in Lumbox ? of myne eyes
A floode of quintessentit teares in saltines lik the seas
In clearenes like the glas In bitternes like the gall
in thicknes lik ane schoure of haile from raynnie cloudis that fall
All ye that murnes I say or drawes a sobbing breath
Come and assist me quhen I sing the obsequies of death
Ewine as the singing Swane prognosticates hir fall
Degorging ane exequall sang quhilk fatall foiresight send
Soe know I by theise notes and fey endytes of myne
That I ame at the heighest poynt and period of pryme
I sayle in seas of loue schiploadit with despair
Before me lyes the bankes of love, behind the mind of caire
Sua that noe pyllottis skill can stay my barke to break
The starr of destynnies disdaine heir out doth soe direct
And I ame glaid content deathes captiwe me to yeild
Dispaird to mak the challange guide perforce I flie the field
As one of lawfull pryse to prissoune lead away

Awaitting till the Lord of loue my Ransome for me pay
And gif that he refuiss for to Refound the same
My servise sworne must neides desist and yit not grievwe my Dam
Ewine as I wist that all hir servantis war alywe
Yit I ame to weak against the streames of loue and death to strywe
And thought schee quhome I serue would willinglie me saue
Yit frouneing feattis would haue my bones for to inriche my graive
And this att my depairt throw fatcherie that I feill
Becaus I cannot say I sighe a long fetcht wpe fairweill.

Deere

Giff Argulus cause haid
To murne to weipe to waile
And mak a swallowing sea of smairt
His breathles breist to seall
Quhill as he look’t and saw
His faire and daintie deire
Berefte of all the beauties braw
Quhilk schee sometymes did beare
which haid gude cause to murne and als to moane
Quhen he wes left in dying grimwe
To lead his lyff alane
Whoise comfort wes bot cross
Accompanyed with caire
His teares wes oft tymes seallit with sighes
His hoipe wes bot dispaire
Giff thoice and suche mislukes
Might cause him justlie cry
And call himself vnhappie once
O thrice vnhappie I
Whoise luike hes beine allace
To live and sie the day
Quhilk sall denownce my last adew
To the my deire for ay
For thoice my eyes must sie
That seemelie schadd declyne
Quhilk once I hoipit for till injoy
And trowit till haue maid myne
Bot fortoune hes soe changit
My small and stakering staite
That dark dispaire hes cleine obscuired
The scope of my conseate
And loue hes maid me trie
That loueres haue thair loss

As ewerie pleasoure hes a paine
Eache comfort hes a cross
Quhairfore since soe it is
And soe perforce must be
I must quytclyme the littill rycht
That first I clammite to the
Yit will I boldlie begg
At the godis abowe
Since that thow wilt not loue me more
Yit thow would love my loue
And I sall sweare my sweete
Thair sall noe world off woes
Nor forren force of loue constraine
Me for to change my choise
Appollos warbling harpe nor Cirens charming song
Sall my Wlysses eares enchant
To think or doe the wrong
And quhill my lyff sall last
Ile vow to loue my faire
Thow sall be still my Horescope
My hoipe my cross my caire
And thus Resolu’d to love
Altho amidis decay
I sigh, I sobbe, I weipe I waile
And sayes faireweill for aye

finis
Deere

Och aye I murne for loe my name incluidis my fate
My anagrame does weil bewray my sorrowing Sadd estaite
For I darr sweare the sonne did newer one me schyne
Att morne, bot I or nyght myht say some kynd of cross wes myne
Nor newer yit the night hir sabell schadow schew
Bot I wes forceit with bitter teares my plaintes for to renew
Not forgoing teares lik thoise of Lipsick [?] loueing men
Nor begged plaintes proceeding from a proud and vicious pen
Sence noe sick plaintis nor teares may servue as I suppone
To purchais praise vnto my pen nor mendis vnto my moane
I neither craife the first nor look I for the last
All expectatioune is bot vaine for hoipte of healthe is past
And soe it not awailles my woes for to Reweill
Bot that it seemes more seemelie for to suffer and conceill
Why sould I then allace with these my wailling veirs
To mak the wondering world admire quhen I my harmes Reheirs
O noe it vere bot much I myght be veill content
Giff that they would not skorne my skaith or laugh quhen I lament
Bot latt thame laugh who list or weipe quho ewer will
The ane can neither paire my paine nor wther elk my ill
And soe I stand in doubt since nought can stay my sturt
Quhither to murne and may not mend or laugh and hide my hurt
Can faintlyit sighes then servue to overwaile my woes
Can sorrow in hir chiefest pride owerschadowit be with thois
Noe surelie, surelie noe I cannot bot complaine
It is noe manlie thing to murne and yit it is humane

Bot how can I expres with paper or with ink
Quhilk sairecelie my confuisit thought imagine can or think
Impossibill it is my paines for to Repeate
Nor langour cannot lend me spaice my dolour to delaite
Nor can my pensieue pen put furth my patient pairt
Nor can my trembling tongue Rehears the horrouris of my harte
Nor can my bastard thoughtes break furthe my bitter vaile
Whilk saull consoomeing sighes and sobbes soo scharpelie me assaill
Nor can my breatheles braine quhilk is confuisit soo
Imagine tho it were diwyne wordis equall withth my woe
Quhairfoire I will giff plaise to all that vreitt in veirs
Since newer yit my piteous plaint could haue noe pith to peirs
Bot as in staitely styl they flie aboue me farr
Ewine soe in hardnes of mishappes latt none of thame compaire
For they doe bot bewaile thair sweete I watt not quhat
I warr thame in all wther woes and equall thame in that
Not that I strywe in art for then ye me mistak
Bot that I preas to pingill thame in suffering for hir saike
Quhilk is to farr presoom’d and that I darr compaire
For I haue followit ane als fals als feckles and als faire
Whoe quhyles would loathe, quhyles love, quhyles love, and loath againe
And wse me as hir honour (humour) serwit with love and with disdaine
Bot it may be Replyit wronges ar as they are thought
And I vntuicht with loues extreames esteem’d haitrent nought
And soe not plagued a lik bot for to be bewitchit
Stark madd, frenatick and I watt giff that to be tuitchit
Bot tuitchit I wes indeid into the suirest sorte

And yit with all hir cruelties I could not bot comport
Suche wes that great Respect hir honour in me wrought
All hir ingrate ingratitude I buried in my thought
And giff I knew my saike were privie to the same
I sould committ it to be cast into some fierie flame
I will diwyd theise wordis my purpoise to procurie
Some fauour from that framed friend quhoise look does me alluir
Noe that sall newer be quhile I may furneisch breathe
I’le rather play my hindmost acte upone the stage of deithe
And yit giff ever it chance schee happine for to heire
Because the whisperring winges of fame this bill to hir may beare
For all my serwice long my woes, my plaintis, my teares
Quhairof my secreitt sighes and sanges most woefull witnes beires
I craife bot onlie this this gracious great Rewaird
That schee wouchsaiﬀ to len theise lynnes ane louelie
sweet Regaird
Or giff schee steal a sigh quhen of poure me schee speakes
Or with ane selff accusit bluische to lit hir daintie cheikes
Then wer I guardon’d weill for all my passit paine
Nor sould I think my waiting one for to be waired in waine
Bot giff disdainefull schee as out of doubt I dreid
With hir accustomed crueltie sall Rywe before schee read
Qhhat restis bot patience then against the streame to strywe
It not awailles yit it may be schee read before schee rywe
Becaus that now and then at mettinges I and schee
Will speak and look conferr and crack and do as wheris doe
Soe schee to kythe her crafte both courteous seemes and kind
And I putt one ane maske of mirthe upone ane murning mynd

Thus quhill we disaguyse our humour with our airt
From wheris we haue hieght to hide the haitrent of our hait
Thairfoire it may weill be that schee will read and think
No thee hir honour and my hait lay bothe wpone ane blink (bink?)
So mortall is the feas (fead) in hait to me schee beares
Schee neither will wouchsaiﬀ to lend hir eyes nor yit hir eares
bot read securelie read read saifiﬀlie thow may find
Faire nympho no fainyeit flatterie to moove ane marble mynd
Sence thow hes vowit to love my Jewell bot Remead
And sworne in secreitt to they sedull to heat me to the dead
Thoe thow be in extreames the midst I hoipe to hold
I’le neither heat as thow deserues nor loue the as I would
Sence that thy pride my paine bothe powerfullie doe proowe
Ane monster thow and martyr I of nature and off love
Latt theise then serue all theis and mak the world to kno
That I may be a match and more to all the world in woe
And in all wther griesfes I know non is one lywe
Soe careyit with their awin conceittes with wretchit me will strywe
Whoise birth day wes the first quhairin my vaill wes bread
when sorrow then and I shooke handis sence synwe
newer schead
And quhill my buriell be I look for noe Relieff
For as my birthe begoud my graiwe sall end my grieff
Quhairone some friend sall wreit, Loe heir he lyes allaice
That lik as vnbeloweit he liued and died in deipe disgraise.

finis

f. 26

Giff he desyres to die quho can noe wayes deny
Heawines, earth and fortoune all his foes that haples he am I
To quhom the fatall loue the veardis hes done suche wrong
That I must choise the saddest sort of sorrowes for my song
Off voes is all I vreit my subiect is the same
For murning matter best befalles in mirthles muse to frame
Then sacred nymph ressaue this painefull pledge I sveare
Sent frome the truest of ald hairt that ewer breist did beare
My grievous moane giff guyltie fraud it beares
Giff in my sighes thair lookes deceit or treasoune in my teares
Giff in a faithles forme I fainyeitle procuire
Still begging at thy beuties dorr, och heires thow not the pure
Whoe living still lamentes my liff prolonges delay
For commonlie comes aye convoyit the dolour with the day
At morne begins my moane att night opprest with paine
With weiping I doe wasche the scheittis and dryes with sighes againe
All liwing all allace hes tyme somtyme to be
Releiwed with rest Bot all theise tymes are tedeous to me
Whoise sorrowes to assuadge noe succour can be seen
Soe Recent are my hollen thoughtes my grieffis are ewergreine
Quhoise barren brenches nought bot bailefull budding beares
The floreische of for saikin fruit sower secreitt sighes and teares
That somtyme staitely stoode in sommeris braw array
Now with the winter of thy wraithe is cuttit cleine away
For look to me quho listes may bailefullie behold
Consooming paine expelling yowthe bringes age or I be olde

f. 27

How oft haue I Resolu’d my proud attempt to flie
In baneischeing my booteles sute bot och it will not be
How oft haue I cryed out one my contrarious caice
Och bot quhen reassoune sould be Lord loue takes his lordlie plaice
I know my crookit cours how fondlie I pretend
Yit seikes to owersyle my self not knowing quhat I kend
Quhyles wishinge for to want that quhilk I must Requyre
Quhyles loathing liff, quhyles loath againe to die for my desyre
Then try giff ye must trust my trueth giff I may kend
Wherin saue onlie that I loue faire nymph I doe offend
And since that this is all ye justlie may approwe
Giff maire affectioune breidis offence, than puneische love
  with loue
Bot och I sie noe helpe, noe aide, nor comefort none
Bot that its left me for relieff my miseries to moane
Nocht like that loveles sort quho quhill they doe Reheirs
Does mak the world to admire not woes bot vordis and weirs
I sall in desert duell ay quhill the day I die
Accompanied with none at all bot with my muse and me
Qohair non sall be allace my fatall doome to tell
Wnles thy causeles crueltie accuis thy sueittest sell
Nocht pityed by none quhairy ever I sall goe
None sall be neir I sall be bothe the weipare and the woe
None sall attend my teares nor marwell at my moanes
The vonder and the wonderer both I sall consist att ones
I sall be one and all and all salbe that one
Comparable to none one earth bot to my selff alone

f. 28

Then seing no Remeid sall sacrifice my breath
All comfort that I haue or craiff I know thair is a death
I giffing wpe at last my lyff Rewolued ghoste
Whoe perrreled liff to purchais loue syne both at length is lost
To signifie my sadd succes ingraiwed wpoun my
This last love lynne in end I wishe ye would wouschaiff
To signifie my sadd succes ingraiwed wpone my graiwe
whilk vitnes sall thy wrong and all my paines sall proowe
Heir lyes vntymelie lyes allace thy lover not thy love.
  finis

Amintas Ghoste

For the frome the furies of this plaice
  must I returne againe
And death once ending my disgraice
  Sould lyff renew my paine
Ame I returnit allace to trie
  The godes reweangeing wraith
To Renowatt my woes ame I
  Refuisit att from death

And be immortall godes decrre
  Condamned to externall paine
Qohair ewerie moment I may sie
  The fruities of my disdaine
The helles abhorres to latt me stay
  In thair eternall night

f. 29

And heavin to kill me day by day
Haith brought me heir to light.

Earth is the object of my woe
My element the aire
Quhair I ame tossit to and froe
in cloudes of restles caire
Heawiness, earth the aire and hell conspires
To agrevat my grief
And all conjunctlie now desires
To nowreische my mischieff

O cruell heavin that stayit my rest
Curst helles that sett me frie
Woe to the bedd that I possest
Quhen Phyllis died for me
Noe sorrow can my paine Relent
Noe death can ease my smairst
To late allaice I now repent
The rigoure of myne hairt

Ach Phyllis giff thow liwed againe
To sie Amyntas change
Thow might of vndeserueit disdaine
Sie now a just reweange
Quhen thow did to the graiwe descend
With the thy grief did goe

f. 30

And quhen thy crosses maid ane end
Did I beginne my woe

It wes to the a great Relieff
Quhen I beheld thy teares
Bot I my everlasting grieff
But any witness beares
A lasting object of disgraice
For ever sall I be
Thy ornament sall me defaice
My schame sall hono

Strong rigour laite repentance bringes
Which all my woes hes wrought
My guiltie mynd augmentis the stinges
And tormentis of my hairt
Hencefoorth the night sall be my day
And day shall be my night
Betwixt the cloudes and crawes my stay
And horrour my delight.

I liwe but hoipe in helples plaintes
Noe sighing mendis my sore
The more I meane my discontent
I feill my woes the more
Noe crying to the skyes awailles
Noe cursing of the ground
Noe prayeris to the godes prewailess
   Noe sigh noe sobe no sound

f. 31

Consooming fier cannot distroy
   My newer Resting breath
Nor raigeing seas cuire my annoy
   Nor end my woes by deathe
The furies griwed to latt me rest
   Haith sent me to the aire
Quhair damned spirites may me molest
   With terroures of dispaire

My pleasoures ar all paines to sie
   My musick thundering clapes
And I for ewer ame to be
   A modell of mishapes
Still curseing and bewaylling soe
   The Echo in my plaintes
Resoundis to me a dowble woe
   And more my caire augmentis

So quhill the heaviness and earth sall stay
   Amyntas sall remaine
A patrone to all suche that pay
   Thair loweris with disdaine
Faire Phyllis faith sall be extold
   With honor to hir name
Quhen hilles, nor caiwes, nor graiwes can hold
   My ewerlasting schame.
   finis

f. 32

Argulus his Letter to Parthenia
   his mistres

My deire Parthenia ressaue
   Thir lynnes of my complaint
Thy Argulus his vital Spirit
   Throw languor is neir spent
My dayes I doe owerdriue in dule
   In woes my noysome night
Ilk thing seemes sorrow that I sie
   Since that I lost thy sight

Yit with my paine I pleise me still
   Still I ame pleas’d with paine
I haue noe gloire bot in my grieff
   Till we tuo meitt againe
O newer tuo bot ewer one
   Forgiue me loue I lie
Parthenia and Argulus
Cannot diwydit be

For quhy our hairtis our myndes our wittis
   Our lyff and loue is one
And bothe our ghostes att deathes aproache
   Sall bothe alyk begone
A scheitt will cower bothe our corpes
   A tombe will serwe us too

f. 33

In misteries that hes noe doubte
   We doubte not quhat to doe

Yit quhill I heir some happie newis
   My mynd is fraught with feares
My hairt sendis out ane world of sighes
   And sighes provockes my teares
My teares subornes my murning mynd
   To memorie of my moanes
Aye quhill sadd silence smoiring sighes
   With ever grievous groanes

My groanes concludes a cruell cours
   For to secuire my caire
And this is it that they deserue
   To driue me in dispaire
Dispaire as one denud of hoipe
   Does hold the fatall knyff
Syne thinkes that he hes now the field
   Quhen I haue lost my lyff

Bot I frae sick a sentence sadd
   With reassoune does Repell
For quhill I heir Partheniaes will
   I will not slay my sell
Then send me word my deirest deire
   Giff yit thy breast doeth breathe
And saue thy awin dispairing man
   Fra his vntymelie death

f. 34

How mirrie were my muse and I
   Giff anes we might bot meitt
I sweare I newer solace haid
   Bot in thy sight my sweitt
Thy presence I protest my hairt
   Would haist away my harmses
That I might lye as long I did
   Weill lockit in thyne armes

Wnto quhilk wischit tyme aproache
   This present I the send
And soe thir lynnes bot not my loue
quhilk endles heir I end

Partheniaes answier to Argulus Letter

Deare Argulus rejoice againe
   Parthenia yit does breathe
And sendis the comfort to awoid
   The sadd dispaireing death
Lacheses mynd is to lengthe the thried
Bothe of thy lyff and loue
For Atropus schee schowed the knyff
   Thy perfyte faith to proowe

Whoe hes represt with piteous plaintes
   Thy ewer peerles paines
And vnrecowerit quhill yow ressaue
   My ansuer thow remaines

To ease thy sorrowes be assur’d
   My send sall be my sell
And be my presence sall procuire
   Thy passioune to expell

How many schippes hes thow not haird
   Hes sayl’d in tymes before
Tuixt bilia and Charibies goulffis
   And saifflie cam to schoire
Soe I choickit in perrell great
   Suche favour yit hes found
I gatt a daintie one to redres
   My deadlie wttered vound

Eternall justice newer did
   Bot hold the ballance ewine
Then ponder in thy mynd and preis
   Such hapes that comes frome heawine
For be thir presence they percieve
   Death can ws not diwide
And in quhat boundis our bodies be
   Our hairtis in one abide

Than Argulus pluck wpe thine hairt
   Thy tyme in sport thow spend
Since to incourage the frome caire
   This sedull I the send
And I sall haist my presence too
   To haist away thy harmes

Syne to reward thy loyall loue
   Infald the in myne armes
Into quhilk wischit tyme approache
Thy plaintes and paines suspend
Soe with my hairt remembering the
In loue thir lynnes I end
Finis.

Quhen Cynthia vith a sweit consent
Haid callit Titan from his tent
Outthrow ane vildernes I went
My spirit for to repoise
Soe weil I saw it gried in one
The morning and the loueris moane
I vearied and I vanderit one
quhill trees did me incloise
I lookit and at last I sies
Outthrow the tickes of all theise trees
And haue by me schend
Bot frae I know this I wist
He wes ane louer poore and just
For being trew he gatt no trust
and this way did begin
O god of loue allace how lang
Sall wnrwearingit be my wrong
And aye the teares fell doune among

f. 37

And owerflowit his chinne
Sall everlastig be my smairte
Or sall noe pitie tak my pairt
O quhat can help ane helples hairt
Quhair beauties force does feill
God giff schee were resoluit to rew
Wpone my sillie saul schee slew
Then sould I ewermore be trew
To be tormentit still
Curst be the birth that first begoud
That maid the destynies conclude
That martyred me becaus I lou’d
O dismall be the day
Sence lukles loue hes led me heir
In wraithe of my disdainefull deire
And newer ane to come me neire
Bot heir in languishe lye
I rest content for to remaine
Quhill schee haue done with hir disdaine
I spectacle of endles paine
In dollor and decay
Finis

In faith I haue forsworne hir company
Giff that I be delayit
Bot yit hir modest kind ciwilitie
  Makes suche ane oathe affryit
Bot quhen I doe think one my awine wnworthines
  O then I faint and die
And with a schort gaspe pitie, pitie pitie me
  Pitie me ore els I die

I could indure tenne thousand miseries
  Were I bot halff assur’d
That loathing loue and sore calamities
  Might any loue procuire
Bot quhen I doe fall to prattle, kis and play with hir
  Lyff, loue, and all is spent
And schee with a prettie, prettie prettie graice
  Prayes me to be content.

Schee sayes schee loues I know that I doe loue
  Were I bot veill exprest
My thoughtes, my wordis, my tongue can testifie
  That I doe loue hir best
Bot quhen I doe think one the tyme that altereth
  Out wpone all suche toyses
Lat not the faire faice of a prettie taittie [?] foole
  Hinder a wise manes Joyes

For tyme weil spent is blessedlie consoomed
  And is of men regairded
But houris ewill spent in louveris foolieschnes
  Are with disdaines Rewardit

The praise of the ane indureth for ewer
  The wther decayes in ane houre
And quhich is sveitt bot a littill littill littill quhyle
  Is ewer efter sowere.

Giue loue loues trueth, then vemen doe not loue
[EMV 397]

Be thow then  my beautie named
[EMV 402]

Giue by thy absence thow intendis
My sportles trueth to try
I vow to vaitt wpone thy end
Thought I sould end thairby
Bot giff thy veill advyse retreat
Giff thy content may be
f. 41

Performe in haist my joyes are greatt
My lyff dependis one the

Delayes in loue are ewer deem’d
Most dangerous things to be
Bot absence sall not be esteem’d
In suche a kind by me
Lang absence may be cald the fyer
Quhairin trew loue is fyn’d
And loue abhortiwes vaine desire
Extorped from the mynd

By absence theis good meanes againe
That I may vatche my sant
In some clois corner of my mynd
Quhair schee did sometyme hant
And thair with sweete suppoisd delyttis
I doe embraise and kis hir
Yit by the angrie fattes dispysd
I both injoy and mis hir

Stay or Returne, Returne or stay
My faith sall newer fainte
Thoe I be languist in delay
I ame foircit to wayle my wante
My lyff sall end before my love
My love my lyff sall chereische
Bot och giff thow vnconstant proove
Both lyff and loue sall pereische

f. 42

Since absence did from me diwyde
The presence of thy beautie
Noe companie I can abyd
Still thinking one thy rairtie
Lik as the Turtle chast bemoanes
The absence of hir deireste
Soo doe I now with smoaking groanes
The absence of my deireste

Ofte to the vesterne vindes I plane
My grievous goanes to carey
Whoe ansueires me nothing againe
Bot groanes quhilk makes me wearie
Come budding voodis com tak my pairt
And streames that runne most cleirlie
Nothing to doe can ease my smairt
Bot sill doe murne to heir me

Thus spending dayes in sadd complaintes
Ofte in the night I languiesche
That croutcheing houll with me lamentis
Whiche randeris me more anguische  
Quhyles I laugh and quhyles I murne  
Quhen I think one hir fairenes  
Bot I ame forceit with loue to burne  
Confoundit with thy rairnes

O latt not absence change thy mynd  
As it hes done to many

My hairt captiwe thow hes behind  
Whiche newer before haid any  
The heawines sall desist about to raigne  
Quhenewer I offend thee  
The moone sall leawe hir monthlie change  
When I sall not attend the.

Finis

Quhat is a day, quhat is a yeir
[EMV 674]

Woe vorth the tyme and eik the plaice  
That yow wes to me knowine  
For since I did befold thy faice  
My hairt ves newer my awine  
My awine Joye myne awine  
My hairt ves newer my awine

To be refuisit of loue allace  
All earthlie things adew  
My mistres schee is mercieles  
And will not one me Rue  
Me Rue joe me Rue  
And will not one me Rue

Thus ame I lefte all confortles  
And noe remead can craiffe  
My paines they are Remediles  
And all the wytt ye hawe  
Ye haue joe ye haue  
And all the wytt ye hawe

Sometime I liwed att libertie  
Bot now I doe not soe  
Schee hes my hairt soe faithfullie  
That I can loue noe moe  
Noe moe joe noe moe  
That I can loue noe moe  
Finis

Caire away goe thow frome me  
For I ame noe fite matche for the
Thow bereawes me of my wittis
Thairfore I heate thy frenatick featis
Whairoff I will caire noe more
Since thairs noe comforth in thy store

f. 45

And I will sing hey doun a die
And cast away caire, caire away frome me

Giue I want I caire to gett
Maire to keipe it doth me freatt
Giff I haue I caire for maire
The maire I haue methinkes me poore
Thus with grieff my mynd opprest
In wealth or woe findes noe redres
Thairfor I will caire noe more in waine
For caire it haith caused both grieff and paine.

Is not this varld a slipperie ball
And thinkes men strange to catche a fall
Doth not the sea both eb and flow
And haith not fortoune a paintit schow
Quhy sould men tak caire and grieff
Since that in caire is noe Relieff
For thairs none soe vyse bot may be owerthrowne
And caireles may reape the cairefull haith sowen.

Weill, then learne to know thy selff
And caire not for this worldlie pelff
Latt not grieff thy mynd oppres
Whether thy estaite be more or les
Soe then sall thow live at ease
Noe suddane deathel sall the displease

f. 46

And I will sing hey doun a doun a die
And cast away caire, caire away frome me.

Finis

Cala and Philemone

Quhen Cala sighing sadlie satt
Hir pleasoures past Repeatting
Hir tender flockes amasd thairatt
Lefte foode and fell a blaitting

Then comelie Cala smylling veipit
To sie thair brutische dutie
Exceed the swane for quhome schee keipit
The primroise of hir beautie.

For one the pendent of a brae
Quhilk did comfort hir seing
Hir careles schip-heard sleiping lae
Whome Cala then espying

Redoubling thrise thoise troublit schoures
Quhilk kind pairtis pay to pitie
Schee in hir wraithe did wound the flouris
Thus framing dolouris ditie

First puld the beikes vnto the Swane
To signifie hir Kindnes
Nixt seldome schee vhisperit than
Thow sall designe his blindnes

f. 47

Then plucht schee deasies for to schow
His presence did deilty hir
Roisecapione nixt schee did bestow
To schaw he did dispite hir.

Thus fram’d schee furth a noble veirs
To Floras art as talking
The secreitt feates hir hairet did peirs
Syne to the swane came walking

And vnto him schee softlie said
Philemon leaue thy sleiping
Or Cala chaste thy loueing maid
Will droune the with hir weipping

For how can thow thus careles spend
The tyme that altereth al thinges
Reclaime disdaine my plaintis attend
And pitie pitie welspringis

The tyme my worth the plaice Inweittis
Philemon to respect me
Thow knowes I skorne vnchaste delyttis
Yit doe not still neglect me.

Philemon stareing start afoote
And fainyeit feates of seiknes
Att Calaes presence he cries out
To schadow his grieff with meiknes.

f. 48

He pairting nay’d to kis that sweitt
Whilk Pan himselff might schaw the
Loe worth ane rudnes rairelie met
In sweet comfort of duatie

Finis
The Lamentatioune of a Scheepe-heard

O quhat a plague is loue
[see Ault 354]

f. 54

Depart depart depart
Allace I most depart
Frome hir that hes me hart
With hart full sore
Aganes my will indeid
And can not find remeid
I wait the paines of deid
Can doe no moir

Now most I goe allace
From sight of hir sweit face
The ground of all my grace
And soverane
What chanc that ever fall me
I’se never mirrie be
Wnto the tyme I sie
My sweit againe

I goe I wait not wher
I wander their and thair
I weip and sigh right sair
With hart full sor

f. 55

Aganes my will indeid
And cannot find remeid
I wait the panes of deid
Can doe no moir

My sprit doth quaick for dreid
My thirlit hart doth bleid
My paines doth ay exceid
What sall I say
I wofull wight allone
Making a pitteous mon
Allace my gain is gon
For euer and for ay

Throw langor of my sweit
So thirlit is my sprit
My dayis at most compeit
Appendix Four: NLS MS 15937

Fairweill my sweittest
My joy and [blank]
My [blank]
[blank] And earthlie glore

f. 56

Fairweill my ladie bright
And my remembrance light
Fairweill and haue good night
    I say no moir
    Finis

I saw ane nimph vpon yon plaine
I calld on hir and she turnd againe
I lowit hir as ane young man sould dow
And hir ansueur was Sir I loue (not) yow

Maden quoth he I sall yow deck
With gold and silver and perle thy neck
She took a frowne and away she flew
And hir ansueur was Sir I loue (not) yow

Maden quoth he grant me bot thus
Inrich my body with one poor kis
Sir I grant you that bot I grant yow few
And her ansueur was Sir I loue not yow.

I weillit my cap I approchet neir
I put my hand Immagen wher
Bot when I kist sair did she rew
That ever she said Sir I loue not yow.

Good Sir quoth (she) I know your feid
Ye seik to haue my maiden heid

f. 57

If ye it get I sall not rew
Tak thair my hand Sir I loue bot yow

Now haue I gottin that I long sought
My longing is [blank] I gat at last
As ye ansueur me so sall I yow
Adew fair nimph I loue not yow
    Finis amen so be it

Even death [blank] I breath
My death procured my pain
Els D [blank] efter death
sould sleip when I wer slain
Bot Destanies disdaine
Who span my fatall threid
Bot mercie to remaine
A martyre quick and deid
O crewell deidly feid
O rigour but remorce
Since ther is no remeid
Cam pascienc perforce

The saith the frawart faitis
With wickit weards hes wrocht
My stait of all estaitis
Vnhappiest to be thoght
Had I offendit oft

f. 58

Or wrocht againes your will
Bot mercie then the mocht
Conclud my corp to kill
Bot as thair is no skill
Of reassoune nor regaird
The innocent and ill
Recaue allyk rewaird.

My hairt bot rest or ruff
Reuth reasoune or respeck
Cairis fortoune death or lyff
It keipit vnder check
That now thair is no neck
Nor draucht to mak debait
Bot neids most burst and breck
For loue will haue it meit
Retrite ? allac is lait
When I am forst to flie
I stand in straing estait
I loue I duyne I die.

Finis amen so be it

Fairweill peace cair is my cace
Since first I saw that face
Ach that speace woe allace
quho can releaue me

f. 59

Sorrowing smairt woe inwart
Com death and play thy pairt
Dint my hart with thy daiart
Loue and lyf leave me.

Could despair hair and hair
Now and than does repair
Fairweill fair welcom cair
never mair leaue me
For l. and o. v. and e.
Greives me wher euer I goe
Och my dooll and my woe
Sighing will slay me.

Fairest flie or I die
Post haist and pittie me
Louinglie blink thyne eye
Regaird to greive me
Sweittest syne sinc I am thyne
Releaue this hart of myne
Stay my pyne or I tyne
Ryd and releaue me.

Woe begone and my mon
No loue consistes in on
Sweit alon sinc thers non
can pair the fra me
Let l. and o v. and e.

f. 60

Rest ever betuix us twa
And banisch doull a wae
sighing will slay me

finis amen so be it

Impassionate in pensive plyt
My maistreses bemoaning
My meditations all the night
Are interrupted with groning
Lamenting and plaining
With anguish greif and sorrow
I wearrie all the winter night
Still looking for the morrow

Malignant sprites tak delyte
To sie me pleint and pyned
I will not therfor them dispyte
Thair wraith salbe restyned
delaying and staying
to bread me only sorrow
I suffer patientlye all the night
And so I doe at morrow

No earthly joy can me content
It is bot fading pleasour
Nor yet no cros can mak me sad
I alwayes liue in measour

f. 61

No treassour no plessour
No travell toyll or sorrow
Can make me to bevall all night
Nor yet rejoicy at morrow
finis amen so be it

In [blank]
[blank] I am allon
No fellowschip I have
For to remead my mon (?)
Quhich makis me sigh and gren
With teares manifold
Allace allace I ly my len
Quhilk makis me die with cold

O lover Lentules
Mor happie thow then I
Quhar still complaining this
And non to heir my crie
My caus I still denie
Thow thine to Jullie told
Quha so sone as she did aspie
I sayd to cur hir cold

Och I have no familiiar
To be my secritarie
Quhilk makis me aye for to war
And still my greif to carrie

f. 62

The [blank] agie elph and farrie
My witness if they wold
How I doe curs and warrie
Tormented with the cold.

finis amen so be it

Not full twelf yeires twis told a wearrie breath
[EMV 521]

Sumtyme haue I sein whein the world hes bein mirrie
Accepted with melancholly bot now its grown sad
Sumtyme haue I sein whein the world not bein wearie
What toyll or what travell what cros we have had
Now sighing for singing our mynd is confused
Now laughing for louing we loeath that we loued
Rejoycing reposing nothing bot in woe
Its a wonder to sie how this world does goe.

f. 63

The planets ar changed thair contrary cours
And he that was heighest is lowest broght down
And he was was worthiest now is grown worst
Marc Venus and Mercurie yield to the Mone
The heavenes had a hermon bot now is grown heirs
In moving their mover and chainging ther vers
Such changes too strangnes as Neptoun do
Its a wonder to sie how this world does goe

Now fortoun turns mad and venus a wich
Blind Cupid that fondling knows not quhair he flies
 Ther is no man respected but he that is riche
Trwe vaillour and vertue ar sucken in the skys
The gallants ar gayest that gritest can glut
The fellow is fynest that veirs the frence hat
Goe fatlands for hatbands and spaikers [?] also
Its a wonder to sie how this world doth go.

The sillie poor pedders that lives on ther packs
Ar loupen to lordschips and lives on ther rent
Now gallants and greit man ar all gone aback
Thay clap al in catioune for skiprigs thai spent
Now he is ane lord that lait was ane clown
And she is ane ladly [sic] that lait was a lown
Cum hurly com burlie the userer so
Its a wounder to sie how this world doth goe.

Finis amen so be it.

f. 64

Now let us sing Christ keip our King
Christ leip our King sing all together
Christ keip our King syn long to ring
That we may sing lyk faithfull brether

Dam fill and drink and we sall sing
Lyk mirrie men of Mussick fyne
Tak Bachus blissing it to bring
So it be wight as any wyne

If it be small gaue it to the Truble (treble?)
Becaus he sings the cleirest pairt
Small drink and butter maks him able
Such food agries best for his art.

The Counter is the pairt of al
That doth require a mightie voyce
Dam fill and drink ay quhen I call
For I most drink of everie clos.

His golden lockes tyme hath to siluer turmd
[EMV 464]

f. 65

My thoughs are winged with hoope my hoopes with love
[EMV 455]
Onc did I loue the fairrest lassie
That ere on earth had being
Bot fair and constant never was
No never vill be agreeing
Treuie did I love my love
Bot my love trulye loved not
Nor sighes nor teares hir mynd could move
For och allace sche loved not

Yet did I syne others doe
With gifts and protestationes
Bot could by no means mak hir trew
Or move hir to compationes
Then to Diana did I pray
And all the nymphes about hir
That sche might leave to loue in vaine
And I might leav to flout hir

The nymphes among the schadowe growes
Vowde that it sould naught gaine hir
For shee on day ane man sould haue
And that man sould disdaine hir
Thanks to Diana for hir dome
And dentie nymphes adew
Young maides that ar now and to come
In loue learne to be trew.

Praise me as ye think caus quhy
And love me as it lykes your lust
As pleases yow so pleased am I
If noght I find of noght I trust
If ye be trew I will be just
If ye be false flatrie is frie
All tyme and hour evin as ye lust
For me to vse alse weill as ye

If ye doe mock I will not play
If ye doe laugh I will not weip
Quhat ever ye think to doe or say
Such law ye mak such law I keep.

Shaw faithfull love love sall ye have
Schaw dowblenes I can yow quhytt
Ye not doe nor novayes crauie
Bot evin the same is my delyt.

Bot if ye vald be trew and plaine
It wald me please and so content
If ye will not as sua remaine
As I have said so am I bent.

Thairfor tak head and dowbtes eschew
And will ry't [?] weill or that ye goe
As I doe speik it sall be trew
I cair no mor for weill nor woe

Adwyse yow quhat ye list to doe
And vse me as ye list to find
Quhat neides more talking to and froe
Bot as I am ye knaw my mynd

Be just and trew butt varience
And I sall as I said before
Vtherwayes generes discrepance
Yow chuse ye get no more.

Finis

f. 70

Rest aquhill yow cruell caires
[EMV 460]

f. 71

Sleep wayward thoughtes and rest yow with my love
[EMV 461]

Thinkst thow then by thy faying
[EMV 459]

f. 73

Wold my conceat that first enforst my woe
[EMV 463]

f. 74

I catiue curate languishes
Within this cottag hous of clay
Which euerie day demolishes
As fading flowers so I decay
I am forevarned to flit avay
With summondes send peremtorye
Sen it is sua I dalye pray
Jesus receauve my saull to ye
Dispised age hes me overtaine
Meaning to be my mortall foe
Diseases will not let me allone
Bot stayes me both to ryd or gae
My vissage is growne blak and blae
My corps cled with infirmatie
Praised be god sen it is sae
Jesus receaue my saull to ye

My head and beard with quhyt gray haires
ourgrowne and gaustie lyk a gaist
My pow is pild almost gone baire
My physnomie and runckled face
My teeth all tint my chafts ar vaist
Weak is my heart of oratrie
Which justlye makes me crie in haist
Jesus receaue my saull to ye

f. 75

Myne eares and eyen that maid me mirth
My tasting smelling me misgaues
My back is crucked lyk ane girth
My shoulders armes leges and knees
That night nor day lets me tak ease
I am in sick perplexitie
Thairefore I pray that it may please
Jesus receaue my saull to ye.

In stakring staite my feble feete
Tyers this my bodie for to beare
My blood hes lost the kyndly heate
My sinewes shyuers for to steare
My blood is dryed my merch forworne
My vitall breath affrayes mee
My sucit redeemer then compere
Jesus receaue my saull to ye.

The gutte the grauell, and the cruke
the fiuer felt and the Cyatick
The megrine never me forsuk
The cauld the crampe, and the Coaticke
Thes melladies and the atick
sik not to beare mee companie
Sen I am vanquisht doune with sick
Jesus receaue my saull to ye

f. 76

My tedious dayes and vearie night
Now trimbling thought, for tyme is spent
Now restles rest, for vandring wight
Now space overlate for to repent
Now golden youth, thy tyme is spent
Of bewtie strength and brawitie
Now pray whill tyme is to the lent
Jesus receaue my saull to ye

In place of pleasure velcome paine
In place of rest velcome disease
In place of loue velcome disdaine
In place of frendship, everie misse:
In place of paice adversatie
In place of treuth hypocrisie
Finding sic Metamorphosis
Jesus receaue my saull to ye

For good deserving, eveil disert
For kyndlines, ingratitude:
For constantnes, a double heart:
For modest meaknes, reasons rud;
For honest duelling, right eveil lud;
For heartlines, austeritie
Sen so I am alvayes withstud
Jesus receaue my saull to ye

f. 77

O tyme evell tint I the deplore
O tyme so cairleslye overseene
O tyme that will returne no mor
O tym alace I may complaine
O tyme some tyme gallant on greene
O tyme now tell my misery
O tyme give me tyme for to sustaine
While Christ receave my saull to ye.

My former evell refuse of grace
Is now the caus of my distressse,
For I have spent both tyme and place
But sence or feill of godliness
My tongue spare not for to expresse
My preterit impreteritie ?
Which vounds my heart with heavinesse
While Christ receave my saull to ye.

The caus sufficiant is veill knowne
Of all my sorrow greif and paine
It is my sinnes that hath overthrowne
The floodes of force for to sustaine
For why? I haue bot late and aire
Serued but Sensualitie
Lord leaue me not vnto dispaire
Bot Lord receave my saull to ye.

f. 78

Whom to should I seek for refuge
that my misfortune may amend
Or who sall be my frendlye judge
Wherfore against me doe contende
Quho sall my turne tak by the end
That may me saue and justifie
Jesus may onlye me defend
And syne receaue my saull to ye.

O my Creator I me confesse
To thy praise and my publict shame
I can not think or yet expresse
Nor purchas speach for to proclame
My great iniquitie for to blame
Offending thy benignitie
Yet pittie Lord and bring me hame
And syne receaue my saull to ye.

My sinnes in nomber pas the count
As stares aboue and drop of raine
The sands in reackoning thay surrmount
And haires of myne head each on
The fowles and beastes that hunt the plaine
And fish within the floods and Sea
Yet for my sinne sen thow was slaine
Jesus receaue my saull to ye.

The graines of Corne that yearly growes
The seed of everie trie and flowre
The weeddes that the earth overflowes
The dust that frome the earth doeth stoure
The pyles of grasse and vatte vapoure
In count can not compared bee
Wnto my sinnes yet kyth fauour
And syne receauve my saull to ye.

My publik sine the world hes seene
Though thay be blind and fals to see
My secrete sinnes I surely meane
That no man knawes bot god and I
Qherfore I with the psalmest doe crye
Purge Lord mine hid iniquitie
All my presuming sinnes passe by,
Syne Christ receaue my saull to ye.

My vofull sinne makes me to mourne
Against my conscience committed
In thought and deede and everie turne
My Christian duetie I haue slipped
With double dealling I haue gripped
And ful of hid hipocrisie
Which makes me cry in dolor dipped
Jesus receaue my saull (to) ye.
In worldlie wisedome I delited
To circumvent I was full slight
Left no purpose vnperfited
That I thought seamed to be vnright
I was so blinded in my sight
And fled fed with fleshly fantasie
Bot I most now as welcome wight
Pray Christ receive my saull to ye.

My eares me fed with filthie lust
Frome my defilled heart directed
My hands my feete me foreward thristed
To fange before I was abjected
I had no power to corect it
Bot senselesse in securitie
Yet gratious god of mercie mooued
Come and receiue my sall to ye.

My talk, my tongue pestiferous
Readie to everie speach prophane
My filthie lippes and lecherous
Hes filled the aire qhere I remaine
I had no power to refraine
But sineful Sensuallitie
A gratious god haue mercie then
And syne receiue my sall to ye.

Sometyme I was with puirteth pricked
That I for geare thrifted full sore
Where I fand it sueitt, there I licked
And lusted for it more and more
Thereon I trust for constant care
Though it be fals felicitie
Yet saue me, Lord, now frome that snare
And syne receiue my saull to ye.

My ouersight and oomissioun
Hes frequent bene to ilk god think
Therefore in my vocacion
Whereeto I was never condigne
Yet thow my god and grace benigne
Called me there right timouslye
Tred downe my faultes, stay them to spring
And syne receiue my saull to ye.

Good Lord though I with the be plaine
Who knawes the secretes of myne hearte
In all this world none so prophane
Could me conviwt of such airt
For my misdeeds then sould I smart
Bot of grace and lenitie
Hes them restrained for to vpstart
Jesus receiue my sall to ye.

f. 82

I catiue creature, allace
How can I myne estait deplore
Or where sall I derect my face
For to obteane remead therfore
Onlye to ye o god of glorie
Who knawes my fraill fragilie
And hes the strengthe me to restore
Jesus receiue my saull to ye.

Therefore to ye emmanuell
Moouer of earth and heauens empyre
Victor of graue, Sinne, death and hell
Thy gratious Spirite in me aspyre
To knocke, seek, call, and desyre
Purge Lord my sinnes measurelye
And saue me that awfull fyre
Syne Christ receiue my sall to ye.

The fountaine and the liuing spring
Frome which flowes my purgatione
Is frome the death and meritting
Of thy most painfull passion:
Thy blood shadde and effusion
that suffered on the shamefull tree
Is onlye my saluatioun
Therefore receiue my saul to ye.

f. 83

The Jordan where the lipper washed
To poole Bethesda came I then
At Kidron well wauld me refr[e]shed
And purge me Lord I sorie am
Into my bowels infus thy balme
My chyrurginer then for to be
Then sall I sing that joyful psalme
Jesus receiue my saull to ye.

The crown of thornes thrust on thy head
The nailes doune throw thy feet and hands
The speare that pierced thy syd with speed
The cruell Stirps with scurgering wands
The blood that ran frome the lyk strands
Vpon the crosse so pittifulye
Saue me frome Sathans balefull bands
Jesus receiue my saull to ye

I am ane sonne forlorne indeed
Into the world returned againe
Within thyne hous to serue and feed
Hatting my former lyf profane
A sleep was lost, I cannot faine
Bot thow releiued me fatherlie
Within thyne hous for to remaine
Jesus receiue my saul to ye.

f. 84

Frome Pharoes armie me releiued
And with thy archangell me led
Frome my desyrts of dalye greife
To holie Canaan hous with speed
O Chifftaine Josua proceed
Whos lyfe was bot varietie
To bring me to the land but dread
Where I may rest and dwell with ye.

I leaue my bodie to the graue
Frome which it can not be eximed
Sweet Jesus now my soul receiue
As thyne own wight by the redeemed
And quhen thyne great Court is proclaimed
To judge the world with equitie
I beeing on of thy flock expreried
To reigne with the eternallye.

finis

Yong and simple though I am
[EMV 410]

f. 86

Wnquite thoughtes your cruell slaughter stout
[EMV 454]

f. 87

All ye qua love or fortoune hath betrayed
[EMV 462]

Come away come sweet love
[EMV 460]

f. 88

Come again, sweet love doe not invit
[EMV 463]

f. 90

Shall I waisting in dispair
Die becaus a woman fair
Or mak pall my scheikes with caire
Caus ane vther rosiar
Be sche meker then the day
Or the flowres in mynds (mids?) of May
If sche think not well of me
Quheat cair I how faire sche be.

Shall my foolish heart be pynd
Caus I sie ane womane kynd
Or a weill disposed nature
Joyned with a comlye favour
Be sche meik or kynd or then
Turtull dow or pelican
Giue sche be not such to me
What cair I how kynd she be.

Shall a womans vertewes moue
Me to perrish for hir loue
Or hir vorthie merites knawn
Mak me quyt forget my awne
Be she with such goodnes blist
As may invard praise it best
Giue sche be no such to me
What cair I how good sche be.

f. 91

Be she meik kynd, good or fair
I will never the more dispare
Giue sche loue me this beleaue
I will die or she shall greiue
Giue she slight me when I wow
I will scorne and let hir go
Giue she be not fitt for me
What cair I for whom she be
    Finis

Now I sie thy lockes art bot fained
[EMV 523]

f. 93

Awak sueit love thow art returned
[EMV 465]

f. 94

    Intill ane May morning
As Phoebus did vspring
I sawe ane may both faire and gay
Most goodly was to sie
I said to hir be kynd
To me that was so kynd
For your love trewlye

First when I did yow knaw
Ye thirld my heart so law
Vnto your grace bot now be cace
Bereft throw false report
Bot yet in hoop I trew
Ame I for to speak with yow
Whilk doth me confort

Wherfor your mynd or me
Trew love wher ever ye be
Wher ever ye go both to and fra
Ye have my heart full right
O lady faire of hew
I me commend to yow
Both day and night

Sine fortoune false vntrrew
He me exyld from yow

f. 95

On dangers doubtles I may compleane
That causes my lady to disdaine
And lightlye me into sick sort
That with ane look will not support
Out of distres
How may I sleep bot walk and weep
My carfull cativ comfortles

My lady is wyse and werteous at all
My lady is fair bot gent and small
My lady loues me leill I trew
Bot danger will not let hir bow
bot me oppresse

f. 96

How may I sleep bot walk and weep
My carfull cativ comfortles

My sprit vpspring when I hir sie
She will not speik not look to me
Ther is not creatur now on lyfe
That mor vexes my vitts fyve
   Allace Allace
How may I sleep: bot walk and weep
   My carfull cativ comfortles.

On danger that beluffes me soe
Wald god or I she war a goe
Then vald my lady weill I wait
Hear my redres my for regraite
   And my rehers
How may I sleep bot walk and weep
   My carfull catiue comfortles.
   Finis.

Support your servand peyriles paramour
Or dullfull dead and dollour me devour
Since thair is non can send be no succour
To my poor heart overset with sighing sore
Allac allac sueit dasy most decoir
Will ye not help me out of heavines
Sein of my heart ye ar the cheiff mestres.

f. 97

The arkling of your eyne angenicall
So speidily my Sprit to perforat
And to my heart overset with sighing sor
To yow the slair of all womenheid I wait
Qherfor I pray your hie excellant stait
To saw some confort on me in this cais
Seine of my heart ye ar the cheiff mestres.

 Ther was never wertew into voman wrought
Bot plainlye in your persoune does appeare
Except pittie and yet I find it nocht
Dam asperanc hes put me out of wear
That she and ladie mercie into fear
Sall in your heart grant both pittye and grace
Seine of my heart ye ar the cheiff mestres.
   Finis.

Woe with such lawes I say
That keep us tuo in twain
That lout so faithfullye
Allace for woe and paine
My heart with sighing strong
Does suffer patientlye
The caus of all my wrong
Woe with such lawes I say.

Weding goes not be love
f. 98

Nor loue all be weding
As fanticies doth moue
So hes the heart lyking
Love is ane fervant thing
As mo then I doe prove
That trew is this saying
Weding goes not be loue

My freinds does for me thus
Thair doe they play my pairt
And I may not refus
That thing against my heart
This libertie they lock
Fra me or els they glois
My god that I most mock
Or els my parrents lois.

We knaw the sacrament
Be stable set and doune
To tak with frie intent
And not with compultione
Thus god us fridome give
Bot freindes for us doe so
Be boundage for to leaue
Thair dayes in deadly woe.

our bodes an bound ane day

f. 99

Wher hearts does not aply
Then reassoune does decay
And vpstarts fanticie
Then force constrains me
Reassoune for to rewyll
Heirfor ye may weill sie
Dam natur goes by gyll.

Our freinds fra liberti
Allace thus they us bring
Bot natur is contrarie
Whilk is ane stanger thing
My heart thow does discus
Giue ye offend or sine
Our freinds they bind us thus
Thair pairt sall be thair ine.

Many bein of that sect
Giue heir be any such
With such deceat infect
Say litle and think much
And hald yourself content
Giue ye in such wayes be
And wher your tyme is spent
Woe worth such law say I.

And all ye that ar frie
Tak head now frome hencforth

f. 100

And allow libertie
Much mor then boundage worth
For ane halden in weillfair
Is better in this degrie
Then much with woe and caire
Woe worth such law say I.
    Finis

    James Heruie

My love band me with a kisse
[EMV 560]
    Finis est amen
    Quod.

f. 101

The faire morning sunshine bright
That giues lyf to lowes delyt
Everie heart with heart enflames
And our cold effectiones balmes
Coll me and clip me and kisse me too
So so so so trew love sould dow

In this woods ar now bot birds
Thay can speik bot silent words
Thay ar prettie harmles things
Thay will sheed us with thair vinges
Coll me and clip and kisse me too
So so so so trew loue sould dow

Never stryve nor mak no noyse
This for foolisch gules byes
Everie childisch thing do say
    Finis

f. 102

All my wittis hath weill inwrapped
[EMV 356]

f. 103

Sueit come away my darling
[EMV 552]
f. 104

O love quhat sall I quhat sall I call the
Ane furious thing thorw seames to be
Within the heart of me poore me
Thorw printed ar so deip

Thorw makes me in the couth to lie
Sometymes to sigh somtymes to cry
That skairse my cheiks doe I dry
Bot still doe night doe weip.

Sometyme I mus somtyme I say
When sall appeir this dowing day
That onc to her I may bewray
This is my bed cairfull caice.

Sometyme I think she does appeir
With joyfull face and smylling cheir
Lyk Phoebus in his goldin speir
With sueit and comly grace

f. 105

The let I down my plents fall
My sighes and sobes my teares and all
Thus pittiouslye I cry and call
Sueit mercie grant to me

Thy servant poor with wisage paill
Wha for thy saik does suffer vaill
Must at thy hands resaue this haill
Or then of force I die

This I doe waist my plaints in vaine
I love and am not loved againe
Betuix this tuo I suffer paine
I sie no remedie

And this to hir I mak my mon
With many for and grevious gron
For remedie allace is non
Bot patience for me

Finis

Woe worth the tyme and aik the place
That she was to me known
For since I did behold hir face
My heart was never my awne
My awne Joy; my awne joy; my heart was never my awne

Sometyme I livit at libertie
Bot now I dow not so
f. 106

She hes my heart most faithfullye
That I can love no mo.
No moy Joy, no mo that I can loue no mo.

To be refuseth of love allace
All earthly joyes adew
My maistres she is merciles
And will not on me rew
Me rew joy me rew joy and will not on me rew

Now am I left all comfortles
And no remeid can creiv
My paines the ar remeildes
And all the vyt ye haue
Ye have joy ye haue and all the witt (wyte) ye have.

Finis

Disdaine that so doeth fill me
[EMV 581]

f. 107

Fyr that most flame is with aptfull fed
[EMV 400]

My love is forsaikin me
Hey me now
Toyl hes overtaikin me
Sorrow hes spakin me
Wo now does wakin me
Yet I a wow
Since I haue loved on I sall never love too.

f. 108

Wnkyndnes kileth me
Och it is trew
Affectione filleth me
Nothing stileth me
Quhat my love wileth me
That I mast dow
My fancie is tyed to non bot to yow.

She is vnkynd to me
Sore that I rew
Changes her mynd to me
Constancie is kynd to me
Quhat sall I dow
She proves vnconstant I will prove trew.

Compatione moveth me
To loue yow
Repentence proveth me
Though it behoveth me
Yet if she loveth me
    I sould not rew
Trew loue recales ane evill maid wow.

Wrong informatione
    Doth subdew
Ane good inclinatioune
Let no delatioune
Bread allercatioune
    twix me and yow
For vemans thoughtes ar eveill to trew.

f. 109

Then since my affectioune
    To your wow
Does thrall my effectioune
Vnder subjecioune
To your protectioune
    Favour me now
And set a tryst and (I) will meit yow.

Benische desentioune
    Betuix me and yow
Scheild our intentioune
Frome reprehensioune
Or any contentioune
    Quhilk may eschew
For non sall know bot I and yow.
    Finis

Fyre that most flame is with most apt full (fuel) fed
[EMV 400]

f. 110

Bewtie hath my eyes asayled
And subdewed my sauls affectioune
Cupids dairts hes so prevailed
That I most leve in his subjecioune
    Tyed to on
    Quho is machles allone
    And second to non
    In all all perfectioune
Since that fortoune so most be
No love sall pairt my love and me.

Wisdome meekes wertew grace               [in left margin: meeknes]
Sueitnes modestie bewtie but measure
Decketh hir sueit Celestiall face
Rich in bewtie and heavinlye reasone (treasure)
    Woe no smart
    Sall ever depairt
    My most loyal heart
For paine and pleasure
Bot resolved have I now till I die
No chang sall pairt my loue and me.

Tyme nor place sall haue no distance
Altho that fortounes smyl invitted

Ws tuo ever to depert
By such ase sempathy united
  Trew loue heat
      the chang
  Of such as disert
      By prayer or intreatie
Bot recourse in any degrie
No chang sall pairt my loue and me.

Dear let death then onlie finisch
And alter alon ar (our?) chose and electione
Let not love ony wayes deminisch
Or read from constancie my defectione
  Tyme nor place
    Nor distance of place
  Sall ever deface
    Or suddent effectioune
Bot this I resolved and will till I die
Come sueitt love let us decrie
Nothing sall pairt my loue and me.
  Finis.

Alace I die and dar not tell quhairfor
Nor meane my cause to them that may me mend
The morge I meane to bring my schip to schor [in left margin: more]
The mor the furious blaists are ever bend
I rather wish this lyfe of myne should end
Nor in the smock of sorrow for to smore
Quhat pleasure is it my lyf in graif to spend
And dalie dies and dar not tell quhairfore

Fy on the youth that dar not tell quhairfore
That bairmrie taile becomes not for a man
Though thow may not thy former stait restore
Though that they never so rudlie ranne
I reid of sindrie that thair mestres wanne
Through knyghtlye courage in thair armor cled
Trying thair strength in feildes now and then
Bot few for laughter lying thair bed.

He is phazard dar not follow out
Ane fanting heart van never lady faire
Might counsall caus ake coward to be stout
Suith man thow sould not die into dispaire
Fy at that bairnlye tail for euer more
Can thow doe nought bot weep and wring thy hands
Open thy pack albeit thow sell no weare
Ane dumb man to this day wan never lands.

Finis

Quhat heigh offence has my trew love taikine
Chus for to sie me flame
Is thair no hoop bot I most be forsaikine
Rests no remeid for my paine
   Och sillie saul
   Thy hoop is verie small
   Thair rests no remeide at all
So resolued is thair disdaine

Did my eyes sight or my heart tak reasone

f. 113

To sie and schine loves fyre
for why no wayes my plaints can move hir
Once to relent hir desyre
   Hard ar the wayes
   To bring her over sayes
   Yett is all is not a rock sche sayes
Quhat is she may vsay againe

Did ye no then tho she seame to deny the
Sie quhat thy service may moue
Hoop for the best tho delayes doe deac the
Try quhat thy event may prove
   Still be then stout
   Dispaire not tho thou dout
   We may fall
So secret is effectione is loue

Finis.

Since loue and fortoune hath decryed
Vndoe me daylye with disdaine
And all the gods aboue decreed
That I sould perisch in this paine
Since rewth can not thair rage refraine
Doe simple heart yet or thow die
And mak the rockes resound againe
That loue and fortoune frownes on me.

For justlye at thes judges blind
By reasones we may reid

f. 114

That nether qualitie and kynd
Of preince and poor can seame to plead (?)
No not desert in word or dead
Can derogat that bad decrie
O heavines mak hast for some remeid
Since loue and fortoune frownes on me.

How long with loue did I comport
And bare hir crose altho with caire
And thow proud fortoune did exort
Expecting ay that thow wold spare
Bot I find nether quhom nor quhere
To force a lowing smyle from the
Witnes the echo earth and eare
That loue and fortoune frownes on me.

Peace perosoned (?) heart wall not so sor
Pack vp thy patiance and depairt
For loue and fortoune can dou no more
No laughter such a simple heart
Quhat tho thow somtyme suffer smart
sall chang hir my (mind) thoull schortlie sie
Quhen cair hes compast all the cairt
Then schortlie will she smyll on me
Finis

In through the window of myne eyes
A perrallous and open pairt

f. 115

And Cupid hurt my heavie heart
Quhilk never dewynes and never dies
Though poysone of his deadly dairt
I bad him bot sey a schout
I smylled to sie that suckling schoot
Boy with thy bow doe quhat thou dow
I cair the not a cut

Ye ar full pirt good Cupid thow appeares
Syne to this bow he maid a braid
Syne schot him thorough befor I said
Whill all my laugther turned to teares
Now geff quod he if thow be glad
Now lauch at love that paste me prove
Am I ane archer now or nought
His scorne and skaith I baid them both
And get it sicker that I sought

Fra hand I freized in flames of fyre
a brunt againe assoone as yce
My dollour was my awne devyce
Displeasure was my awne desyre
As ar my nature now a vyce
By natur quhen I went not hew
She seames to meatomorphos me
In such a schap, as hes no hap
To further weill or yet to flie.
f. 116

When I was frie I might have fled
I could not let this love allone
Now out of tyme quhen I am taine
I seik some schift that woman lie shed
Because it bytis me to the baine
Bot prus is prime bot wark in waine
It was bot mowes thairat to mean
Fra I be fast that pairt is past
My tyme and truble Mr ar tint
Might I my Aradne now move
To land to hir Thesus a thrid
Hir lealst lover for the leid
Out of the laberneth of love
Then wer I dure of doubt bot duers
Bot she allace knawes not my caire
How can I then the better be
Quhilk I sould have my selfe to saue
The innatur does murdered me.

Goe out by langsome lookes releife
My secreats to my lady sueit
With sighes and sobes for me intreit
That she by sympathie may seik
Pairt of passions of my sprit
Ther give hir grace giv pitie place
Aneuch or bellies she to kill
Let death dispatch my lyf poor wrecch
I wald not leaue against hir will
Finis

f. 117 [blank]

f. 118

What giue I seik for loue of ye
[Smyling on ane holy day
Said Philis to her love
Thow ar a vonder loulye boy
And thow salt wear my love
Esteame it dearely for my saik
For Philis fawors the

f. 119

In all this world thair is not one
That is half so dear to me
And though it be a thing of nought
A trifell as thow sie
It is a taikene of my love
And that the worth most be
Finis

Wuhen frome my love I look for loue
[EMV 354]

Sillie boy its full moone
[EMV 405]

f. 120

Come suet love let sorrow cease
Banisch frownes let be desentioune
Lone war makes the greitest paice
Hearts united by contentioune
Some schyne vaneth efter raine
Sorrorrow easing that it is pleasing
All proves fair againe
Efter sorrow soone cometh joy
Try me trust me prove me love me
Thus will cair away.

Winter hids his frostie face
Blushing to be more vewit
Spring returnes with pleasant grace
Flowres treses is renewit
Summer quhen the sonne is schyning
Lambs rejoicing leaping sporting
Birds for joy doe sing
Let us your Spring of joyes renew

f. 121

Calling claping kisseing playing
And so giue love hir dew.

I sie the bright sonne of thyn eyes
Clouded now with dark disdaining
Sould such ane stormie tempest rys
As to set loves day araining
All ar glad the sky being being cleir
Lightly joying playing toying
With thair loulye feare
All ar sade to sie ane schour
Sadly droping banring pouking
Turning sueit to soure

Then sueit heart dispers this cloud
That procures this scorfull toying
When everie creatoures sings aloud
Filling hearts with over joying
Everie dow doe seik the meak
Joying billing she is willing
The sueitest of love to tak
With such weares let us contend
Duing dowing weding beding
Ans so our lyfe sall end.

Finis

f. 122

Chang thy mynd sinc she doe chang
[EMV 500]

f. 123

If floodes of teares could cleng my folyes past
[EMV 471]

f. 124

With my loue my lyf is vaisted
[EMV 624]

f. 125

My Ladye quhat let yow my love to injoy
The fruits of my service altho I be ane boy
My loyaltie moreles the pleasour of love
I pray the sueit turne the wnto me and prove.

She.
Thy love is bot lustie thy pleasour bot paine
Thy sutt is to schame if I war so waine
My honor my fame I think not losse
Sut quher ye can come speid I am not one of thos

He.
My deir with denyell prolong not my stryffe
My viffe and my weill faire my love and my lyf
I sueit I will sueir ay secreat (?) to be
Thair sall never on know I bot I and ye.

f. 126

She.
The sut is vnfitting of me ye do quyre
And I am vnwilling to grant your desyre
Quhen ye ar contentit your honour is such
How euer yow love now yell heat me als much.

He.
Try me and trust me if I prove vntrew
Trewer then Troilus Ill prove to yow
My constancie is such that death may remove
My bodie frome (you) bot never my love.

She.
Qhat if I content you and so be with chyld
My freinds will forsaik me my mother grow wyld
The kirk will reprove me a pox on that sort
For thay have no pittie on vemans report.
He.
The hazard is bot small ye need not to feare
For al do not parish that goo to weare
Quho climbs for ane chirrie most hazard a fall
And the seed of the fatse floock florishes not all.

She.
Thy words doe bewich me to grant thy desyre
Blind Cupid that fondling hath set me on fyre
Come love (me) and prove and quhiklie dispatch
My mother will misse me that wicked old wreck.

Finis

I saw ane nymph vpoune yon plaine
I cald on hir she turned againe

f. 127

I loved hir as ane young man sould dow
And hir answer was Sir I love not yow.

Madam quoth he I sall yow deck
With gold and siluer and pearle your neck
She tak a frawne and away she flew
And hir answer was Sir I loue not yow.

Maidin quoth he grant me bot this
Inrich my bodie with ane poore kisse
Sir I grant yow that bot I grant yow few
And hir answer was Sir I love not yow.

I vailet my cop and aproched neir
And put my hand imagine quhair
Bot quhen I kist sore did she rew
That ever she said Sir I love not yow.

Good sir she sayes I knaw your feed
Ye seik to haue my maiden head
If ye it get I sall not rew
Tak thair my hand I loue bot yow

Now haue I gotting that I long sought
My loving is gone I sought at last
As ye answered me so sall I yow
Adew sueit nymph I love not yow.

Finis

Ane lustie youthfull gallant
As all the wailes yeildes

f. 128

Did meit ane prettie sueit wench
Was triping over the feilds
He meit hir and he treites hir
And lyes hir all allong
And ay she cryes o sueit sir
o sueit sir o sueit sir
o sueit sir o sueit sir
ye meane to do me wrong.

Be that the last he loved hir
The mor the his loue increast
And sudentlye he dowed hir
Then sudenlye he ceast
He awed hir and he dowed hir
And laid hir all allong
I hoop ye will not doe me doe me do me
Not doe me not doe me not doe me
Not doe me such a wrong.

Be this thay in kissing
Maid hir beleave ther
Some prettie sport in mising
Quhat meanes that quoth the lasse
He awed and he dowed hir
And laid hir all a long
I feare ye doe not pay me not pay me
Not pay me not pay me not pay me
For doing such ane wrong.

f. 129

The lasse was not disdainefull
To try quhat love he had
He loved hir richt painful
Quhat meanes this wanton lad
He awed hir and he dowed hir
And lysis hir all along
And ay she cryed o sueit sir o sir
Come try it o sueit sir o sueit sir
Ye haue downe me no wrong.
   Finis

Will thow vnkynd thus reaue me
[EMV 462]

f. 130

Sheaphird saw thow not my fair lovelie Phoelis
Walking on this mountaine or in yonder plaine
Sche is on this way to Dianas fountane
And hes left me so with hir hie disdaine
Ay me schoe is fair and without compaire
Sorrow come and sit with me
Love is full of fears love is full of cairs
Love bot chose it cannot be
This my passions paines me my trew love hes slaine me
Gentle sheaphird take a pairt
Pray to Cupids mother for I knaw non other
That can help to ease my smart.

Sheaphird I haue seine thy fair lovelie Phoelis
Wher your flockes ar feeding by yon river syd
Och I must admeir schoe so fair exceeding
I surpasseing bewtie sould surpasse in pryde

f. 131

Bot allace I find they ar all vnkynd
Baith knowes ther power full weill
When they list they love when they please they moue
Thus they turne our heavin to hell
With ther faire eyes glancingn lyk to Cupids dancing
Roll about still for to deceaue ws
With vaine hoop deleuding: still thair praise concluding
Thus thay love and thus thay leiue.

Thus I doe dispaire haue hir sall I never
If sche be so fair: lost is all my caire
Yet she is so fair: I will loue hir ever
All my paine is joy: quhilk for hir I proue
If I sould hir try: and she sould me deny
Heavie heart, with will breik
Thought against hir will: come yow most be still
For she will not hear me speik
Then with sighes Ille prove hir: thay sall shaw I love hir
Loulye Wenus be my guyd
Yet thought I complene me: she will still disdaine me
Bewtie is so full of pryd.
Finis.

If feild abod quhair trumpetes schill doe sound
[EMV 48]

f. 132

Sinc that my sighes does eik the tender air
And air againe does did me for to braith
Air sould againe imploy it self the mair
For to prevent the terror of my death

f. 133

Air sould and might giue air wald only heir
And sound my sigghes bot in my lades care.

And sein the teares of my tuo weeping eyes
Abondanlie the water does agment
The rainy cloudes ar witnesses wha sies
The floodes of teares that gusch when I lament
Sould in hir presence pours my tears to greif
And move hir heart to match me with releaf

And sinc my wretched heart in flames againe
And my effectioune fyre it for hir loue
The element of fyre, as I suppone is bound
Thus much to doe for my behoue
To fyre the heart of my most loyall dame
And let hir feill the furie of flame

And if thow air be sounding in hir eares
My grevious grones procure me any grace
Or if the water puring out my teares
May purchas to my pained heart sueit peece
Or if thow fyre by thy sueit flame can move
My ladies heart for me to burne in love.

Then sall I sing o yow most happie aire
O Watter blist and yow most blissed fyre
And happie I in love for evermair
Who be your meanes atcheawes my hearts desyre
And happie she quhas heart whas eyes whas ears
Ar moued to know my sighes my flames my tears.

Bot if my sighes resoundit be the air
Bot giue my teares distilled be floodes raine

f. 134

Bot if my flame that sueitest flame declair
Can not prewaill for to prevent my paine
And that the world can not my ladye move
With (my) loyall service to acquyt with love.

Then dulest earth then deadly tomb prepair
My buriaall braith and body to resaue
That she of it that set at nought my cair
My glorie to wow the grones of graue
And in disdaine with smyling say on hie
Heir lyes the man that deed for love of me.

Finis

How now shepheard quhat meanes that
Quhy weares thow willo on thy hat
Ar thy charsses of rid and yellow
Turned to brenches of grein villo.
Thay ar changed so am I
Sorrow liues the joyes do die
Tis my Philis tis only she
Which makes me wear the willo trie.

What! thy Philis that loved the long
Is it she, that hath done the wrong
She that loved the long and best
Is hir trew loue now turned to jest
She that loved me long and best
Bids me set my heart at rest
She a new loue: loues not me
wich makes me weir the willo trie
f. 135

Sheepshirld then be ruled by me
Cast of greif and willo trie
Thy disgraces breiis hir content
She is weill pleased if thow lament
Sheephird I’ll be ruled by the
Ill cast off greiff and willo trie
And hence I will doe as thay
Love a new love every daye.

Finis

In May I rose to doe my observance
As Phoebus bright out of his chamber threw
Intered (I entered) in ane gardein of pleasance
Quhair silver dropses hang of balmie dew
Sittand alon quhair pleasant flowers grow
Richt sor I hard a voyce disgest and clar
Ane woefull wight doe sing in this maner.

O Venus queen and mestres of deylt
Have reuth on me and let me not forfair
As ye that the precious perle perfyt
Of wisdome well in beutie but compair
Prences love the veritie declaire
To my dear heart if I be trew or nought
And if she be maist speciallye in my thought.

I wofull wight in dollour and distres
Marit in mynd with servant paine and caire
Remembring on my lady and mestres
Vpon the night I did myself forfair
Walking allon in sight sorrow and cair

f. 136

Remembring on hir pearles portratour
My lyf frome death may no longer indure

Thought my deair heart whilk is the worlds floure
Suspecth my treuth no mervell is to me
So many fals ones to thair paramour
That reckes not to flatter fleich nor lie
O Lord of loue whilk knawes I am he
That may not last no space out of hir sight
Caus me (her) to rew on me hir wofull wight

O fragrant flour well of faith and fame
Precellant wight caus of my woe and smart
M sall I prent in honnour of hir name
Syne doe it grave right sadly in my heart
Whill deadful death both saull and body pairt
And strenght doe fall my body for to walk
In word and work quhill that my toung may talk.

Finis.
Quha list to leive or that law proue  
Let him beleive his lyf to leid  
His mynd sall move but rest or roue  
With diverse dollours to the dead  
He sall tyne appetyte  
Of meat and sleeping quhyt  
And want to way perfyt  
To find remead.

He sall not witt wither that it  
Be pleasand painfull weill and woe

f. 137

To gang to sit: to moue or flit  
To lay to stand, to byd or goe  
No wit salbe disgaist  
To heir sie smyll or taist  
Bot as ane brutall beast  
He salbe so.

Flie though he wald loue sall him hald  
With the danger of dispair  
Whylls heat quhills cold and thowsand fold  
Hir purpos salbe heir and thair  
He sall think vertew vyce  
And wisdome of no pryce  
Bot lyke ane fool vnwyce  
So sall he fair

This is quhy, and caus that I  
Compleane so petiously in paine  
I loue the may: will not apply  
To grant to if me grace againe  
The more service I doe  
The frommitter is she  
Without respect vnto  
My cruell paine

Sume lovers sie: give this may be  
Ane lyfe that all good men malings  
I say for me: it is to flie  
As frome the pest and plague that rings  
Quhilk is bot curious  
Sueit wemen superious  
That non doun brings

f. 138

Ye mon forbeir: my breithreine deir  
And frome this full deceat avoyd us  
Let bissines stear: your hearts inteare  
And not with lightlye loue to lead us  
Quhilk is the verie net
That Sathan for us sett
To caus us quhyt forget
The man that maid us.
Finis

Right sor opprest am I with pains smart
Both night and day making me woful mone
To Venus quein that lady is my heart
Put in sick great distres with woe begane
Bot if that she send me remead anon
I list no longer my lyfe to indure
Bot to the dead bonie cairfull creature
Bot to the dead bonie cairfull creature.

Thought I dar not to doe daylie observance
Till hir that is the floor of weman head
Jelousie is the caus of this mischance
And changes all my gaine in wo & dread
Bot if that lady sueiter then the mead
Helpe me or doules may not indure
Bot to the dead bonie cairfull creature
Bot to the dead bonie cairfull creature

O plent of loue quhat pleasour infinit
The lustiest that ever was or salbe
Thair can no toung discryve or pen can wrytt
The beutie of my lady speciall
What may I mor bot vpone comfort call
Till that hes my heart haill hir cair
And to the dead bonie cairfull creatore
And to the dead bonie cairfull creatore

f. 139

Wuhat then is loue sings Coridon
[EMV 521]

f. 140

It was the frog in the wall
[EMV 242]

f. 142

Awak Caliope now frome sleep
Come is the month for musick meat
Now sings the lark before the day
The Philomell the mirle so sueit
Through gladnes of this lustie May

Now Cerese spreads hir mantle greine
With various flowers lyk Arges eyne
The proper dassie and prymrois gay
With thowsand moe to spead are seene
Through gladnes of this lustie May.

And Phosfurus that is full bright
And woefull hearts the casts alight
Right pleasantlye before the day
Till Phoebus fair appeires in sight
Through gladnes of this lustie May

Now everie heart that is in cair
Wnto the feildes the most repaire
In May morning befor the day
Wher zewpher blawes with temperat air
Through gladnes of this lustie May.

Of all the monthes in the yeir

f. 143

With mirthfull (May) what can compair
The palme the pyne the laurall gay
To floorisch pleasantlye appeir
Through gladnes of this lustie May

On herbes the balmie liquor sueit
Bedewes the virgines hunteres feett
With subtill shoures before the day
Rejoyes lye lyk the sprit
Throw gladnes of this lustie May.

Till Phoebus with his golden beames
Inlight the land and cristall strimes
Then Cinthia she steilles away
And right to rin his race he clines
Through gladnes of this lustie May

The dew lyk diamonds appeir
Redubling Phoebus rayes most cleir
This pleasantlye now springs the day
Let us rejoy with heartlie cheir
Through gladnes of this lustie May.

To god we giue all praise for all
Father sone sprit celestiall
Preserve the kirk the king we pray
And us on quhom thy nam doe call
Through gladnes of this lustie May.

Finis

I die quhen I doe not sie
[EMV 452]

f. 144

Men seldom thryves in all thair lyfes
That wants good wyffes to please them
And all men grants that live no sanctes
That husbands wants to ease them
Yet thought she die bleir, not your eyes
Let gods decree the cary
For I had on quhom god hes taine
And yet Ill mowe and mary.

Get we a lasse we play we passe
We glaik hir thus so roundlye
We waill we wisch we ban we blisse
We clap we kisse hir soundlye
We now thryst over we never gif ouer
Till up goes four all fairlye
Fra sche goes back vp goes hir lap
Weill mowe and then well mary

f. 145

With leges abrod hir maidenhead
Slipes on ane rid so cleirlye
For all hir ruffes and gifit ?, gloves
She buyes the broed full dearlye
Hir belly rys the kirk outcryes
The sesone tres hir fairlye
Scars pays hir fies hir penalties
And yet we mow and mary

Then we proved for our sueit bryd
Some geir to gund [?] the babie
Both cheis and beif with a mischief
And all relief that may be
And every day she bostes away
Schell nether stay nor tary
Till on our knees we mau hir please
And heigh hir for to mary

Finis

As on a day Sabina was asleep
Into hir bour I by stealth did creep
And first spak soft then loud into my deir
And still Sabina hard bot walde not hear
Then to my self I did more curage tak
Fra I persaued she did both wink and wak
Ans schew hir self a stranger unto me
And still Sabina saw and walde not sie
At last I lay downe by hir on the ground
And still awak asleep Sabina found

f. 146

Then touched I each part from head to heell
And still Sabina felt and walde not feill
Quhen I had left no way ontryed bot one
I looked about and saw my self allone
Then thought I it best the best way for to wow
And still Sabina did bot wald not dow

Wnto the doer quhy sould she then hyd it
If it be trew that once Sabina did it
Bot she sayes nay yea Ill sueir and say so too
She did both heare and sie and feill and dow

Finis

Poor heart with paine oprest
Be gled becaus thowll doe
The lady I loued best
I am sur she favoures me

Let fanting feares no rest
In trew tranquilitie
the lady I loued best
I am sur she favoures me.

Let crossing caires making haist
And bid fairweill to ye
The lady I love best
I am sure she favoures me.

Let louers poor distres
With toylling Jelusie
Thair martered mynds molest
I am sur she favour me.

f. 147

Let no malignant breast
Suspect hir honestie
My dame she is most chast
Bot yet she favours me

She is vertewes wyse and modest
My wittes vnworthie be
To reach into the rest
Bot yet she favoures me.

She is gud she is fair she is best
She is not ill to me
I think the man wer blist
By hir disdain wald die

Hir grace hir good express’d
By mortallis cannot be
She is quinticens of best
Bot yet she favours me
Sur center of my rest
The pairt quhair I wald be
Till death I do me rest
She finds no faults in me.

My loue so oft profest
Its weill repayed by the
So long as lyfe may last
She is ay the best to me.

Finis

Sir I thought good to send yow a bukell
Both daintie and delicat such as ye sie

f. 148

Faltes (faultless) Il warrand if it be not to bruckell
With cunning composed of mettall most frie
A jewell most fair for a prince a propyne
Quhois praises to pen doth passe my ingine
A subject of poyetes mor meet to sing
Bot hey me my bukell it laikes a toung

No blemisch at all my Bukell hath more
The muld it was matchles in quhilk it was castine
Altho it be toungles it lack not a bore
To wich a guid craftsman perhappes might on faschione
For qhat doth availl a schath but a sword
A quaver but schafes a cag but a burd
The dainties instrument being vnstrung
Great losse war this bukell sould want a string

This task to vndertak if ye dar adventure
Of maxing of meatalles the most have good skill
The better the toung is the harder the temper
It bevit and byding it cannot be ill
Of laton and copar it most not be chosit
Bot of the sam mettall the bukell composed
Syne closely put in and cuninglye hung
Great losse war this buckle sould want a toung

If the metall be dour and ill to dantane
A thowsand sad straikes and more it will crave
The craftsman most be young lustie and wanton
A ferce fyre fyre man the labour most have

f. 149

Ane old cresit craftsman will tyne bot his travell
Yet better he cannot be purged of the gravell
It most be weil beaton dintit and dong
Great losse war this buckle sould want a toung

Bot I feare that my bukell be badlie bestoued
Your worklomes are worne and forgett force of fyre
Your tempring brouch is als dead
Of such a fair labour gray hares will sone tyre
If your borel be bluntit my bukell send back
A toung frome my self perhaps it will tak
Bot frend I suppone that when he was young
He wald not send back my bukell to toung

Finis

Methought my love was in hir bed
Quhair was my chang to tak hir
Hir leges and armes abrod wer spred
She sleep I durst not waik hir
Hir creases on hir goldin heare
Did kisse hir downe pillow
Pittie it war that on so faire
Sould croune hir head with willo

Methought hir belly lyk ane hill
Most lyk ane mount of pleasure
At feet thairof thair was a wall
The deep no man can measure
About that wall beloe that spring
Thair groves an lynlie thickit

f. 150

Quhairin two begelles travellet
To rous the lyvelie prickit

My hundes did hund with cheerfull crie
About that pleasant montane
Till an for heat was forced to flie
And leip into the fontaine
My begells followed to the bank
At him ful fast thay bait
He plunget he lap yet no wayes sank
His coming out thay wait

Thus come he out then at the last
All verie watt and tryed
And lead his head betwix the begells
As rest he had requyred
Then thay begoud to rous againe
And she frome sleep revived
And dreamed she had me in hir armes
And she was not deceaved

Finis

Ane puritane of latt
And also ane holie brother
In catischisame seat
Full faine he wald haue usit hir
As his maik

Bot she ane bab of grace
And child of reformatione
Held vsing in disgrace
Ane line of profanatioune
    For that place

f. 151

He swore thought she said no
He wald of no denyell
The sprit ordined so
That she most byd a tryell
    Before she goe

Quhy swear ye thus quoth she
In troth my dearest brother
He might perjured be
Gif I had beine ane other
    Not to me.

With this he layed hir doune
The sprit it fell in vorking
Hir zeall it fell in sound
He edified hir mercin
    Vp and downe

Then up againe she rose
Quhen that the sprit fantit
The people did supose
Hir holines was tempit
    Beneath the clothes

Our elders thought it meit
That privie meditatioune
For holines sould weep
And suffer still tentatioune
    For the sprit
    Finis

When Phoebus adrest
His course to the (west)
And tain vp hir rest beloe
And Cynthia apeared

f. 152

In hir glestring weed
Hir light in his stead to bestoe
I walked allone
Attended be non
And sudently hard on cry
Och doe not doe not kill me yet
For I am not prepared to die

At last I drew near
To see and to hear
Still straight did appear ane shaw
The mone was so bright
And if such a light
Quich fittes each wight sould it know
A man and a maid togidder was laid
And ever she said o fy
Och doe not doe not kill me yet
I am not prepared to die

The youth was so ruffe
He plucked up hir stuffe
To the blindmans buff did thay goe
Yet still she did ly and still she did cry
And putes him bot by ane noe
Bot she was prepared I did regard
Hir voyce quhen he hard hir crye
Och doe not doe not kill me yet
I am not prepared to die

Thus in vain with pleasure and paine

f. 153

She swore to remaine his foe
She kepit such a koyle quhen he give hir foyle
Till greater the broyll did goe
Bot he was so strong and she was so young
She listed long to cry
Och doe not och doe not kill me yet
I am not prepared to die

At last he give over
And solemlye suore
To kill hir no mor night
And bad adew for weill he knew
She sould tempt to ane new day
Bot quhen sould pairt it went to hir heart
And taught hir more art to cry
O kill me kill me once dear heart
So sueit it is for to die

Finis

Walking in a midow faire
Sueit floores for to gather
Quhair primrois bankes grous all in rankes
To welcome commeris hither
I hard a voyce wich maid me mus
And thairto I attendit
I hard ane lasse say to ane lad
Once more then on can mend it
Sitting in ane bankes of floores
Imbracing ane ane other

f. 154

More cruell loue was never found
Betuix Cupid and his mother
She revished with ane companie
Quho never wald haue endit
Bot kissed his eyes and to him sayes
Onc mor then on can mend it

Thay war so clos togethier
wich maid me much to vonder
I know not quho was ouer
Till that I saw it in hir
Then as he can he blushed for chame
That he so soone had endit
Bot she replyed and to him said
Once more and non can mendit

Sitting by ane butrie busse
To schaw Apollo his beames
Or bankes of rew abundant growes
Wich floweth all with streames
I hard ane lass say to ane lad
Quho never wald haue endit
Hes bot a gusse that bringhes yow in vs
With mor then he can mend it

Then boldly did he ventor
Thinking the fit was on him
Bot quhen he came to enter
The poynt strack bak vpon him
Stay stay sueit stay goe not away
Thought it be now disbendit

f. 155

Strech it againe and hit the wame
Onc mor and non can mend it

She took him in hir armes twa
And kyndlie did she kisse him
Bot he could not persuaded be
For all the gud she wisht him
Till in hir hand she maid it stand
So stiff that non could bend it
Play ye the play cald in and out
Onc mor and non can mend it

Adew adew myne awne sueit heart
It is tyme I war at home
In faith good sir ye doe me wrong
To leave me heire alone
Away he went when all was spent
Quhairat she was offendit
And maid ane vow lyk ane trojan trew
She sould haue on to mend it.

Finis

Yow lovers all gie ear now
To hear my right in love
For tho I need not fear yow
My mestres will remoue yow
Yet I will preas to proue
She doe belong
To me to me and non but me
Saue thos will doe me wrong

f. 156

Giue oathes giue vows of wisches
May mak hir love on still
If sueit and secret kisses
May mak hir keep good will
Then I am sure that still
To me she doe belong
To me to me tc.

Hir oth to me was euer
Most constant for to be
Hir vow this that never
She sould loue non but me
Hir wish was for to sie
She might to me belong
To me to me tc.

Then ceas to sutte hir favoure
For that to me is dew
I vant it with great labour
Yet will I never rew
Bot I my dam be trew
To me she doeth belong
To me to me tc

Then gallants leaue in tyme now
To rob me of my right
Or els quhair ye do clime to
For quhen att your light
Then this salbe your songe
Ach ach alas quhy did I so
To doe ane gallant wrong

Finis
If love loves trewth then veman doeth love
[EMV 397]

How can I bot lament
Ane accedent befell
Ane young things clothes was rent
Eye witness I my sell
That holy day he did assay
To gane his long desyre
Faine wald I go bot still said no
Being brunt with equall fyre

I did against my heart
Most foolishlye seek aid
Quhilk since hes bred my smart
Bewailling I was stayed
Loue vold me goe tho I said no
Ane dismaill day I swore
I was neer smord the fortoune shord
To break my heart for feare

My brother bad me goe
Thair was not tyme to stay
I silentlye said no
My lookes did loue bewray
And then did goe tho I said no
As fancie did me force
In hoop to joy my suettest soe
I frie went perforce

With that hir mother cryed
Achon quhat sall I doe
My daughter is betrayed
I los my husband too
My husbands lyfe I fear hir stryffe
Sall quicklye bring to end
So he war weill I wish the devill
Sould sonest hir defend

Bot quhilest doun stair we went
My brother did me gud
Fearing my clothes to rent
He fastlye steared that tyd

My brother drew and still I rew
His grippes I feill as yet
Bot loue and feir maid him forbeire
I feared not ane quheate
And comming to the streit
The alarme did beginn
Swords halbarts did me meit
Thair we gane to runne
Bot I did fall for fear of all
And said that I was gone
Then did he say och on this day
This he begane this mone

Unhappie fatall night
That first my hoopes bereft
Whow can I sie the light
Seing that all joyes are left
I losse my loue pitie doeth move
Affectioune breides [?] compassioune
Then welcome death com cut my breath
And eas my endles passione.

What can the world else say
Bot that I forced her loue
And so I did assay
Hir mynd for to commoue
And trew it is that myne she is
By promis faith and othe

f. 160

And heiring told sche sould be sold
Judge ye gaue I was worth

To se ane sanct so sueit
So yong tender so fair
To plant to sich to greit
Almost into dispair
That all hir lyff was woe and stryff
And was before onc sold
To ane old man who had no can
To keep hir frome the cold

And feiring least againe
Hir fortoune proue no better
She feared and noght in vaine
Hir mother wald we settir
Lyk to ane doug and other thing
And rop hir at the cross
Could I forbear for any feare
To sie that yong thing lost.

Hir plaints my mynd did moue
She did injoy my heart
And hir I wowed to late
Till deatth sall eas my smart
In spyt of feare and wondroues heart
Hir fall I let most dearlie
Till that I die hirs sall I be
And sall hir love hir heartlie

f. 161

And hir I did awow
Quhillist that my lyf did last
Quho euer sall hir let I
Most set his mynd at rest
That he sall die or els kill me
And so be fred of tryffe
And yet againe to ease my paine
I heasar sall my lyfe.

Finis

It fell on a sumeres day
[EMV 658]

f. 162

O ho the moone the moone so mirrilye schynes the moone
The may sheat quhair she lay
She hald not such wit to tak it at hir foot
Or it to cary it awaye

She callit o randall for to lyt the candell
The dore for du and du and du
For she had sheaten ane barrow full & also a plater
Hir hose full & hir shoes full too.

Orandall was so slow the fyr for to blow
The candle then for light
The maid she cryes againe orandle with ane pine
Orandle I schyt I schyt I schyt

Up the maid she start with that she lut ane fart
The dirt stak fast to hir earse
All thay that saw abrod maid it goe
And maid wors then it was

It was poyson the schittine hoor had eattene
The hous stoud all in quhelles

f. 163

And all the way she vent she tought hir ears was rent
The dirt ran so fast over hir hiles

Wp the maid she ros and to the wall she goes
Bot water she could haue non
And all beschytin as she was she tint the staple of hir ears
And so come beschittine home

Finis
Be thow then my beutie named

[EMV 402]

f. 164

As at noon Dulcina rested
In hir sueit and schaddow boure
Thair come ane schiphard and requested
In hir lap to sleep ane hour
  Bot frome hir look
  A frowne he took
So deep and frome a fardar Boone
  The nympes he prayes
  Quhom to she sayes
Forgoe me now com to me soone

Bot in waine she did conjure him
To depairt hir presence fro
Haveing ane thousand looks to allure him
And bot on to say him no
  Hir lipes in wo
  And eas delyty
With cheikes alse frech as ros in June
  Perswades delayes
  Quhat bot she sayes
Forgoe me now com to me soone

Love sueit hoop hath much invyed
Him to let Dulcina sleep
Could a mans love combined
Or a maid a promis keep
  Bot be her waist
  Held alse fast

f. 165

As she was constant in hir toone
  Bot still she spak for Cupids saik
Forgoe me now com to me soone

Bot no promis nor professione
Frome his hand could purchase chop
Quho will sell the sueit possessioune
Of such bewtie for ane hoop
  Or for the sight
    of langering night
Forgoe the pleasant dayes of noone
  thought non so fair
    Hir speakes wer
Forgoe me now come to me sueit

  The secund pairt

With greaue of heart the schipard slepted
Up the mantanes to his flookes
Then he took a rid a (&) pipit
Echo soundit throught the roockes
    Thus did he play
    And wished that day
Wer spent and night wer com or noone
    Then silent night
    Yields loves delight
Ill goe to fair Dulcina soone.

f. 166

Bewties darling fair Dulcina
Lyk to Venus for hir love
Spent lykwayes the dayes in passiones
Murning lyk the turtle doue
    Melodiouslie
    Notes law and hie
She wrakles furth this dulfull toone
    Och come againe
    Sueit schepard swane
Thow canst not come to me too soone.

Day was spent and night aproched
Venus faire was louers frind
She enterit bright Appollo
That his steades thair race might end.
    He could not say
    That goddes nay
Bot granted loues fair queen hir Boone
    The schiphard came
    To that sueit dame
Welcome dear swane both night and noone.

How at lenth agreed tthes lovers
She was faire and she was young
Toung can tell quhat eye discoueres
Joyes wnsen ar sinell [?] song
    Did she lament
    or yet relent
Except he might or grant she non

f. 167

    Left hir a maid
    Or no she said
Come to me now stay not till soone (noon)
    Finis

Faine wald I wed a fair young man
That day and night may pleas me
Quhen my mynd and bodye greaued
That had pouer to eas me
Maids are full of longeing thoughtes
That bred a bloodnes [?] sicknes
And that of I hear men say
Is onelye cured by quicknes.

Oft I haue bene owed and prayed
Bot never could be moued
Many for on day or so
I haue most dearely loued
Bot this folisch mynd of myne
Straight loathes thing resolued
If to loue be sinne in me
That sinne is soone absolued

Sur I think Il sall at last
Flie to soone holie order
Quhen I am once sealed thair
Then can I flie no farther
Yet wald not die a maid
Becaus I had a mother
As I was by on brought foorth
I wold bring furth ane vther.
Finis

f. 168
If any haue the heart to kill
[EMV 417]

f. 169
Sall I seik to eas my greif
[EMV 517]
Hir faire efllaming eyes
[EMV 415]

f. 171
Dear quhen to the my sad complent I mak
[EMV 512]
Whit as lillies was hir face
[EMV 473]

f. 172
My love he will forsaick me
[EMV 656]

f. 173
This partiall world so gevin is
To flattring and abitiosnes
It prayes (praises) things of small desyrtes
And leaves throughout all better pairtes
We red and see each day and houre
That bewtie is ane fading flooure
And we may lykawayes dalye see
It advanced admired of each degrie
The object of each countrie gill
Quhairat each cloune may gaise his fill
Thatfor I mynd now for to sing
The commend due of a thing
More worthie of praise altho it ly
In darknes and obscuritie
The onlye cheifest joy it is
The staitlie still of bewties blisse
Affectione frome ane utward schow
Be frome ane place thats doune below
Sueit ladies all with this place
That gentill patience I wald imbrace
If ye wald not offendit be
I meane no bady thing trewlye
A creatur dearer then gold or mony
A Spanish ane french and Inglish cunie
This treasure it goes but doubt
In Scotland in Ingland in Irland in France
In Spaine Pickardie and Orleans
In Holland in Barland [?] in frickland also
In Capernain and Africo
In Dutchland and Pamphilia

In Muscove and Constant-tenople
And also among the Turkes people
In everie place thay doe it vse
Among the Gentles and the Jewes
For euerie woman most neidfull it is
At night when she goes to pupil hir ruffes
For giue ane week it eydle lye
The world will ceas to multiplie
A goddess it can no doubt bot be
To win men canes so far and me
Thay put that offering in that box
And clos it vp with stonie rockes
The purrest and the chaist devyne
Is glad to offer to that schrine
To all the world it is knawn full weill
That in the blak airt she hath great skill
She will ryse ane spir at hir command
Sall blazinlye before hir stand
She will lay him agane in hir awne mynd
Without ather tempest storme or wind
Altho hir natur be bot small
Scars lenth abrod of ane herring at all
Such quhenched qualities lyes in this
That morover ane paice maker she is
Bot let thair be debait and tryffe
Betuix ane man bot and his wiffe
Thought all the day thay brable and fight
f. 176

Yet this makes all good frind at night
Then old frindship may renew
With kissing clapping and holding tow
Such frendly waging such prettie toging
Such wiffeme and such wantone joging
So wanton so willing so nimble so prettie
So mirth lyk this in toune or citie
Such mouping lyk ane liltill ape
It beares more coloures then ane can schap
A wylie cunnie: A wantone cunnie
A nimble cunnie: a schage cunie
A narrow cunnie: a deep mouth cunnie
A vyd mouth: and ane onseamlie cunie
A yellow cunnie: a broune cunie
And old and ane young cunnie
Ane grein garrd rid haird schag hard cunie
A mooping cunnie: and a mirrie cunnie
A mug mouthed: and a mekle cunie
A long cunnie and ane large cunie.
Finis

Though everie thing doeth change by tyme
Now in the wane quhyles in the pryme
Yet all the world sall clearlie sie
The tyme sall bread no chang in me

The soone the moone the planetes all
Ryse now and straught thay fall
f. 177

Bot my effectione placed on the
By tyme sall never altered be
Then sueitest sueit since I am so
Haist thow to help and hail my woe
And let not heavines nor the sie
A hinderance to thy hasting be.

Leander had an sea to suome
Yea that from herod stayed not him
Then lyk Leandre com to me
Tho I lyk fortoune visch not the.

Tho fortoune first our love did cros
And us lyk babes did blindlie losse
Yet let not that the mak to be
Vntrew to thame is trew to the.
Quhen nightingalles and larkes sing dum
That vinced [?] joyes with stormes ar doune
Then doe my notes mount vp on hie
To shew the love I bear to the
I loued yow once I loue yow still
I joyed sueit joy to doe your will
And quhat I did for loue of the
Thair is non sall gaine also much of me
And quhat thow was proue thow the same
Let tymes encres not queanch [the flame] [the square brackets are in the manuscript]
So thow be tyme sall cleirlie sie
That I am quhoylye ruled by the.

f. 178

Then unto tyme past thy returne
And mak thy love leave off to murne
That heavines joyes may end to the
The sorrowes quhillk I byd for the.
Finis

An courtier and a countrie lasse siting vnder a schad
He kist her oft hir lippes was soft as ever natur mad
He owed her in his countrie phraise this maid began to mus
Guid sir quoth she complements your countri does not us
He was yong and to hir flung then she cryes is this
that I byd then he replyed it is ane countrie kisse
Ach prettie bird did hyd his head seiking for to discover
The secretes that doe hiden lye belonging to each lover
Each leavie beught did bend his head seiking to overschad
Quhill he vpone faire floores bed did tosie and touse this maid
Quhen she feils then she smyles and said quhat more of this
Thair was never mad injoyed she said so sweet a countrie kisse.
And then thay hudght that kist and smugd quhill both for breath lay panting
He thrist she blusht and all was hust he give hir quhat was wanting
She not forsook bot kyndlie took all that was put vpone hir
She yeilding lyes and then she cryes ay me ye wald undone me
Bot at last sport was spo past and he grew fant and werie
And frome hir fled o sueit she said wilt thow no langer tary.
So in hir armes she held him fast hir cheikes war roses rid
With that she sighed and cryed allace ay me my madinehead
Gud sir quoth she ye haue tane frome me I had of my mother
Quoth he sueit heart I played my pairt and gottin such another
Bot his vest she held fast and cryed grant me this
That ye haue tane restore againe with ane other countrie kisse
Finis

f. 179

Eyes leave off your weeping
Appendix Four: NLS MS 15937

Love hath the tongues in keeping
That may content yow
Let not this misconceaving
Or comfortes are receaving
Causes torment yow

Cloudes threatine bot a shower
Hoope hes his happie houre
Thought long in lasting
Tyme needes most be attendit
Love not most be offendit
With too much hasting

Bot the painefull pleasure
Quher loue attendes the leasure
Of loues wretchednes
Or hoop is but illusioune
And fear is but confussioune
Of loves happines

Bot happie hoop that seeth
How hoop and hap agreeth
Of lyue depreyve me
Or let me be asured
Quhen lyff hath death indured
Loue will reveive me.
Finis

Come now sueit let us prove quhill we may the sueites of loue

f. 180

Tyme will not be ours for euer
He at lenth our guid will seuer
Spend it not then this gif in vaine
Sunnes that sett may ris againe
Bot if we onc los the light
It is with us perpetuall night

Quhy sould we defer our joyes
Fames and romor [?] ar bot toyes
Can not we delud the eyes
Of a few poore houshald spyes
Or hes easier eares beguille
That remoue by your wyll
It is no sine loves feates to steal
Bot the sueit thiff to reveal
To be takin to be seene
Thes haue crymes accounted beene.
Finis

What is it all that men passes
[EMV 399]
f. 181

Goe my flockes get yow hence
[EMV 502]

f. 183

Love me or nought love hir (I) most or die
[EMV 411]

I wald thow wart not fair or I war wyse
[EMV 359]

f. 184

Methought this other night
[EMV 562]

f. 186

Now what is loue I pray ye tell
[EMV 565]

f. 187

Faire women lyk faire Jewels are
[EMV 568]

f. 188

To sigh and to be sad
[EMV 571]

f. 189

Wnto the temple of thy bewtie
[EMV 522]

f. 190

Go passions to the cruell fair
[EMV 524]

Since first I saw your face I resolved
[EMV 525]

f. 191

Ther is a lady sueit and kynd
[EMV 525]

f. 192

I can not injoy peace
And yet I haue no weare
I burne I friz with cold
I hoop and yet doe feare
I mount the heavins aboue
The lawer is my fall
I nothing hold in hand
And yet I compasse all.

At ane selfe tyme I doe
Both rejoy and lament
I still am pleased lykwayes

f. 193

And yet liues discontent
Loue somtymes seames a god
Somtymes a foolish boy
Somtymes I sink in woe
Somtymes I sume in joy.

Loue will not that I liue
Nor yet will let me die
Nor will he hold me fast
Nor yet will set me frie
I liue your boundin slaue
Whos neyther freind nor foe
Who will not hold me fast
Nor yet will let me goe

I want both eyes and young
Yet can I sie and speik
I daylie wish for death
Yet efter liue I seik
Sua that twixt death and lyfe
Small differance I mak
And thus I doe indure
Dear dame for your sueit saik.
   Finis

Remember me my deir
I humble yow requeyr
For my requeist that loues yow best
With faithfull heart inteir
My heart sall rest within your breist
Remember me my deir

f. 194

Remember me allace
Bot let all rigour pas
That I may proue in yow some loue
To my joy and solace
Trew loue to moue it most behoue
Remember me alace.

Remember me in paine
With wnyndnes neir slaine
Through the delay of cruell way
That in yow does remaine
Constraind to stay allace alway
Remember me in paine.

Remember me deir hart
That of paines haue my pait
Your words wnynd sinkes in my mynd
And does increse my smart
Yet sall yow find me trew and kynd
Remember me deir hart

Remember me me in thrall
Redie quhen ye do call
With trew intent I doe consent
Hart mynd body and all
Neir to repent bot stand content
Remember me in thrall

Finis

f. 195

How sall I then describ my loue
[EMV 526]

If wemen could be fair and never found  [pencilled in left margin: ‘Vere? 1587’]
[EMV 45]

f. 196

How should my feeble bodye fur
The double dolor that I indure
The murning and the great malure
   Can not desyne
It doth my bachfull [?] breast combure
To sie ane vther haue in cure
   That sould be myne

For weill I was never wight
That could inforse his my and might
To loue and serue his ladye bright
   And want hir syne
As I doe martyre day and night
Without that onlye thing of ryte
   That sould be myne

War I of pissance for to proue
My lawties and my heartlye loue

f. 197

I sould hir mynd to mirrie (mercy) moue
   With suche propine
War as (all) this world at my behove
Sche sould it haue be god aboue
   For to be myne

Quha sall my dulled sprits raise
Since not for loue my ladie gaise
For and good service might hir mis
   she wald inclyne
I drie both dolour and desseas
and vthers haue hir as thay please
   That sould be myne

Now quho to sall I mak my mon
Since treuth nor constancie find I non
For all the faithfull love is gone
   Of feminine
I (it) wald opres me (a) heart of stoune
To sie me lost for hir a loue
   That sould be myne

For nobles hes not ay hes not ay renowne
Nor gentles ay the gayest gowne
Thay cary victall to the towne
   That worst does dwyne
So bussilie to busk I bune
And vthers eates the verrie doune
   That sould be myne

Quho can not of youthhead dant

f. 198

Let him to lowes curses do hant
And him as Venus subject grant
   And keip hir tryne
Perchance he sall find mercie skant
And able hir revard to want
   As I doe myne

    Finis.

Quho ever thinkes or hoopes of love for love
   [EMV 454]

Goe to bed sueit love tak the rest
   [EMV 574]

f. 199

Doe not o doe not thy bewtie
   [EMV 573]
f. 200

Ther was a willie lad met with a bonie lasse
[EMV 607]

f. 201

Come havie sleep the Imag of trew death
[EMV 466]

f. 202

My father fyne wald haue me tak
[EMV 608]

f. 203

Come loue lets walk into the spring
[EMV 332]

f. 204

Lyk as the doul solsequium with care overcome
Deed sorrow quhen the sune goes out of sight
Hangs downe hir head and drops as dead & will not come
Bot luik her leaues through languor all the night
Till foolish Phaeton aryse with whip in hand
To cleir the cristall skyse and light the land
Birds in ther bour waits on that hour
And to ther king a glad good morrow giues
Frome hence that that flour lykes not to lour
Bot laughs on Phoebus opening out hir leaues.

So stands with me except I be wher I may sie
My laimp of light my lady and my loue
When she depairts then thowsand dairts in sindrie arts
Thirles through my heavnlye (heavy) heart bot rest or roue
My continance declares my inward greif
And hoop almost dispaires to find releife

f. 205

I die I dwyne play doth me pyne
I loath on everie thing I look alace
Whill Titan myne upon me schyne
That I reveiue through favour of hir grace

Fra she appeare, into hir sphear, begines to clear
the dawning of my long desyred day
Then courage cryes (tries) on hoop to ryse fra she as pys
The noysome night of absence went away
No woe cane me awak nor yet in posch
Bot on my staitley stalk I flourish fresch
I spring I sprout my leaues lyes out
My callours hanges in ane heartsome hew
No mor I lout bot stands up stout
Alse glad of hir on quhom I only grew

O happie day goe not away Apollo stay
Thy cairt frome goinge doune wnto the west
Of me thow makes thy Zodiacke that I may tak
My pleasour to behold quhom I loue best
Hir presence me restores to lyf frome death
Hir absence also schoures to cut my breath
I wish in vaine ye to remaine
Sinc primum mobile doth say me nay
At least thy vaine haist soone againe
Fairweill with patience perforce till day
Finis

f. 206

Quhat mightie motioune so my (many) my mischeves
What uncouth cair through all crops doe creip
what restles rage my reassoune so bereaues
That makes me loeth of meat and drink and sleep
I know not now quhat continuance to keep
For to expell the treasons that I proue
Alace alace that ever I learned to loue.

And (ane) fanting fevere through my self I feil
I feill ane passioun of cannot be oprest
I feill ane byll with(in) my bosome veill
No cataplasme can weill remeid this pest
I feill my selfe with seiknes so oppresst
All mirrines makes frome me to remoue
Allace allace that ever I learned to loue.

My haples heart vnhappiest of all hearts
Is healed and hurt with Cupids luckes leides
And thirlit though with many dead darts
Quhilk inwardlie within my bosome bleeds
My fantacies and full effectione leads
And makes me say this ay but rest and roue
Allace allace that ever I learned to love.
Finis

Joy to the persones of my loue
Altho she me disdaine
Fixt are my thoughts so that I may not moue

f. 207

And still I doe liue in paine
Sall I leaue the sight of my joy and hearts delyt
Or sall I leaue my suit
Sall I stay to touch to neir it war to much
She is forbiddine fruit
O woe is me that ever I die sie
The bewtie that did me bewitch
For och allace I most forget hir face
Hir favour I esteme so much

Och sall I rang into some daill
Or to the montanes murne
And echo sall resound my taill
Or whither sall I turne
Shall I buy hir love that no loue will to me give
Bot deiplie wounds my heart
Give I rine away och she will not cry stay
My sorrowes I will convert
O no no it most not then be so
Bot comfortles I mast begon
Yet altho she (be) so froward wnto me
I love hir or I sall love non

A thousand good fortouunes falles to hir skeir (share)
Altho she hes rewerit me
And fild my said heart full of dispaire
Yet euer sall I constant be

f. 208

Earth sall be hir dame, that my toung sal never --
Faire brench of modestie
Choyse of heart and mynd and war bot hald so kynd
Then sould I constant be
Sueit turne at last, be kynd as yow ar chast
And let me in thy bossome duell
And we sall gaine the pleasoure of loue paine
Vntill my dearest dear fairwell.

Och then bot let me vnderstand
The reassoune of hir heat
Then sould I leave at hir command
In lyfe in loue and stait
Then sould I no mor in heart be greved so sor
Nor feed with discontent
Bot ever allace I loved, a maid that hath beine proud
And worthilie I doe repent
Sure some such kynd is setled in hir mynd
Which causeth hir to leaue me so
Sueit scant [?] of mynd and wer bot false so kynd
As let this occasioun know
Finis

Quher fancies found his pleasure pleades
[EMV 43]

f. 210

My loue is bright as enbur bone
Ane fairer saw I never none
Sall now be found hir waikes moe
Except this onlie falt alone
She seames good and is not so.

To seik out through the world quyt
Ane fairer forme of more delight
Sall no man find wherever he goe
War not I know ane thing perfyt
She seames good and is not so

Wnder the rose both rid and quhyt
May be ane serpant of dispyte

f. 211

Wuhilk never will depairt them fro
In earth ar all thing infinit
She seames good and is not so.

My lady goes not out of kynd
of others mo she takes a
Fairrest and false she is bot tho
So weill I know her bruckell mynd
She seames good and is not so

For causes thrie I loue hir noght
Ane caus that she is light of thought
The secund she is door and thro
The thrid it needs not (to) be sought
She seames good and is not so.

f. 212

Giff thow wald loue or loveit bee
Kiepe in thy mynd thir thinges thrie
Be secreitt true, and pacient
To father and mother obedent

The feare of the Lord is the beginning of visedom
But fooles dispise knowledge and instructioune

Tak tent in tyme and not deferr
Quhen tyme is gone ye vill doe warr

Margaret Robertsoune with my hand

Wpright to liue I sett my mynd
I never loose quhair anes I link
I ruise the foorde as I it find
I plainelie speik ewin as I think
I searche no fyer beneath the yce
Nor courtis with thoise that makis it nyce

f. 213

For earthlie chance for joy or paine
I nather hoope nor does dispaire
In sicknes healeth no loise or gaine
My god I praise and does not caire
For vealthe for vant for veill for voe
I force no friend nor feares no foe

I sicke not quhair I com not spied
Att vill I walk and frie of chairge
No lyff I haite no death I dried
I doe not laike nor hes to lairge
I caire no speitche quhair I doe liue
I tak no vrang nor nane I giue

Quhair I mislyke I doe not kise
I toyle not for no gried of gaine
I send not quhair I favour mis
I irke not quhair I doe remaine
My vord my vreitt my heairst my hand
Accordis alvayes in one to stand

No beautie brawe my mynd can vinne
I doe disdaine noe louesome face
I knock not quhair I vinne not inn
I friendlie love quhair I embraise
I svey not for no storme may blow
Mo I mount not hiegh nor stoupes to law

Extreames are counted most unsure
The meanest mynd is best of all
The greattest carie the greatter caire
The hiegher vpe the lower fall
Betuixt theise tuo quho lives content
Haith more nor great King Creseus rent

Quhilk great contentment I yow wis
And all your sower translaite in sweit
I vould be glaid to heir of this
I long bot hes no hoope to meitt
Yitt friendis ar friendis thought fortoune mooue
Nought will dissolue a loyall love
finish

[ geometrical
design here ]

Sonnnatt

On onlie one both day and night I pance?
On onlie one soe satled hes my thought
On is my choice thought non haiff beine my chance
On is my hap albeit my hope be nought
The worthynes of on my woe hes wrought
On hes me maid the most vnhappiest shee
The bluisching blinkis of one deir haiff I cofte
On sies me sighe and sob, and will not sie
I liue for one one liues to sie me die
One onlie one knowes my cairfull caice

f. 215

One better luiffes ane other on nor mee
One lookes and laughs at my mishape allaice
One onlie on that luiffes one alone
That onlie liues to loue hir onlie one
Finis

Remember man as thow goes by
As thow art now, soe once ves I
As I ame now soe must thow bee
Remember man that thow must dye

All men think on the houre of death
And the great god above
Its sweet to die thoucht ye be loath
Syne liwe vith Chryst your love.

Margaratt Robertsoune with my hand
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