MAKING ENGLISH MEMORIAL LITERATURES, 1500–1700

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A DISSERTATION

in

English

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania

in

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2016

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation charts a literary and cultural history of memorialization in England between about 1500 and 1700, a period when writing assumes a more socially and symbolically central role in responding to loss. Attending to the material practices of mourning and commemoration as they take place through writing alongside other media including cloth, stone, jewelry, and physical displays of grief, this project describes the shaping influences of a larger material culture on poetic practices and forms. Occasional, brief, even routine memorial poems, I argue, are invested with a distinct form of premodern literary value tied to these texts’ ability to overlay intimate social networks with the largest historical and political imaginaries. By focusing on unfamiliar or unexpected archival survivals alongside the canonical elegies and epitaphs of major authors, this dissertation revises and expands our categories of both “text” and “literature.” The broadly diffused culture of memory it describes traverses boundaries of class and gender as well as of the exceptional and the everyday.
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Introduction:

Making English Memorial Literatures

... rlde all wrapped in wretchydnes
... hy pompes so gay & glorious
... easures / and all thy ryches
... y be but transytoryous
... to moche pyteous
... e that eche man whylom dred
... by naturall lyne and cours
... s alas lyeth deede

So reads the first stanza of the first surviving broadside ballad in English. As it descends to the present, this poem, a 1509 lament on the death of Henry VII, palimpsestically records the shifting social values and categories that have militated both for and against its survival. It is a proof printed on the verso of another proof, subsequently cropped and used as wastepaper binding, before being discovered and disbound in the eighteenth-century, when it passed into the hands of an antiquarian owner who scribbled over its blank space in ink. Nor does its history end there: a twentieth-century discovery of a manuscript copy of its full text has rewritten its place in literary history, displacing it to some degree as a citable “source.” I will have more to say about this text and its double history as fragmentary and reconstituted text in my first chapter. I begin with the printed fragment here, however, to highlight some of the interlocking problems that animate a study engaged with a body of writings that are largely occasional and often highly ephemeral: that is, the material basis of our knowledge of the past, the conjecture that sustains historical reconstruction, the visibility of what has been lost, and the shifting systems of value that determine not only what survives but also what modern scholarship continues to read and cite. In what follows I will explore the ways attending
to these questions may complicate and expand our inherited conceptions of “text” as well as of “literature” or “lyric.”

I also start with this textual fragment because it so clearly emblematizes the fraught entanglement of persons and genres, of social memory with the material text. This poem is a propaganda piece, a popular song, and also an epitaph (“here lyeth”); it makes a claim to universal Christian truths (“transitorious”) and articulates the fiction of consent that reproduces enduring social hierarchy (“alas”) while inscribing itself in one of the most ephemeral of material media (the single page). Its social “meaning” and effectiveness, indeed its claim to historical and political representation, stem from its status as writing, as a material presence that emanates a penumbra of performative and readerly possibilities, but that is itself highly fragile, even evanescent.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were highly aware of the philosophical and interpretive problems this text emblematizes, in particular the close relationship of historical representation with the written record and the fragility and uneven social distribution of writing itself. Early modern audiences knew that much of what they knew of the past came from its surviving written responses to loss, including, in significant part, its tombstones. Indeed, still today much of our knowledge of the social world of antiquity derives from its epigraphy. Early modern audiences knew that the tomb texts of the Classical and early Christian world recorded the lives of all social stations, not to mention of men and women in almost equal numbers. For the period, historical (self) representation was conceptualized in part as a contested body of commemorative writing in genres of “epitaph,” “complaint,” or “elegy,” and in material forms that expand beyond but also compulsively return to the site of the tomb.
A woodcut included on the title page of Peter Apian and Bartholomew Amantius’s landmark printed collection of ancient epitaphs and inscriptions offers another illustration of contemporary conceptualizations of commemorative writing as a space of potentially contested access to social memory. *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis non illae qvidem Romanae sed totius fere orbis* (1534) is a seminal “universalizing” work anticipating encyclopedic collections like the European costume books that become popular later in the sixteenth century. Its monumental folio publication was made possible through the financial support of the banking Fugger family, itself prominently inscribed on the title page, who were themselves also important founders of universalizing and museum-like Old and New World “collections.”¹ The woodcut illustration that occupies much of the printed title page, executed by Hans Brosamer after a design by Dürer, shows Mercury facing the representatives of four estates: an aristocrat, a cleric, a soldier, and a poor man (fig. 0.1).² Mercury appears in his guise as a representation of *eloquentia*, dressed in a coat of tongues or Pentecostal flames. From a ring piercing the god’s own extended tongue, a set of chains runs across the image to the ears of his audience. Of the four classes, it is only the poor man who turns towards Mercury in response; stepping forward out of the group, he extends an arm into the aureole of light from which the god appears.

The poor man of the *Inscriptiones* appears in torn rags, barefoot, without hat and with disheveled hair; he is an “uncivilized” or even a “savage.” Almost certainly this title-page image is intended to make a visual-verbal pun alluding to the widespread generic theorizations of late Classical, medieval, and early modern poetic treatises in which epitaph and elegy are classed as the lowest of all literary forms, of a decorum belonging to the “miseri” or “miserabiles,” that is, the “miserable,” those who speak in a voice of complaint, but also those who are simply “poor” or “low.” In the poor man’s appearance as a “savage” there is perhaps even a hint of a secondary visual pun relating to the Spanish empire’s legal classification of its indigenous New World inhabitants as *miserables*. Since the emblem of tongue and chains was adopted in the royal iconography of France and appears in emblem books from Alciati’s onwards, it is possible to compare the representation of this poor man with other versions of the same image; in later versions, divorced from the context of a collection of memorial writings, the poor man appears as a more recognizable European peasant with shoes and hat and other identifying implements like an axe.

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Apian’s image points to a paradox at the heart of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century commemorative writing: it is elite, exclusive, Classicizing, erudite and at the same time trivial, low, and potentially open or available to all. It is a form caught between a function of articulating and reproducing social hierarchy and its availability as a means of social advancement and “civility.” As this dissertation will show, while it is possible to write a history of memorial writing as a history of elite concerns, it is also the case that traces of written commemorations survive wherever there is evidence of the ability to write. If literacy does not always correlate with imaginative writing, there are strong suggestions in the early modern period, and perhaps more broadly in European history, that there is a close relationship between the social incidence of literacy and the social incidence of commemorative literature.

Commemorations and memorials saturate English and European writings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It might be tempting to take this profusion as a Christianizing inversion of Classical systems of decorum or value. (Nietzsche saw Christianity itself as a tasteless violation of Classical decorum, in its attachment of the “lyric” New Testament to the “epic” Old.6) Indeed, there are powerful attempts to revise inherited Classical values in the early modern period, notably in the Italian theorist Tommaso Correa’s *De Epigramma* (1569) and *De Elegia* (1571), treatises in praise of small form that go so far as to claim the epigram as representative of all branches of rhetoric and *elegia* as the paradigmatic condition of all lyric. In England such revisionary attempts often take place at the level of memorial writing’s generic hybridization rather than the inversion of inherited hierarchies. These experiments include Spenser’s

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6 *Mixed Opinions and Maxims* 95; *Beyond Good and Evil* 52.
ambitious fusion of lyric and narrative styles—the subject of Chapter 3—as well as the more delicate synthesis of Classical and Christian ideals of Milton’s “Lycidas.”

Perhaps the most surprising claim this dissertation makes is that occasional, even trivial memorial writings are widely invested with what we can call literary value. Recovering the social investment in these poetic forms means reading against what Virginia Jackson has described as the modern institutionalization of lyric, locating poetic purpose in small, local, or occasional social investments as they intersect with and overlay expressions of the concerns of the larger social imaginary. It also means reading against recent calls to locate an early modern “literary” in unfettered discursive autonomy, as Pierre Bourdieu has shown, the autonomy of the literary field is only ever relative. Rather, the “literary” or “lyric” quality of memorial writings may reside precisely in their ability to register dense networks of intimate social relations, even as


8 Sean Keilen, Vulgar Eloquence: On the Renaissance Invention of English Literature (Yale University Press, 2006).

they point at broader social imaginaries and cultural ideals. Works of mourning and commemoration are particularly well adapted to bridge these functions, as they stage a confrontation between the most intimate and occasional details of personal connection and the ultimate universal that is death.

There is now an ample body of literature on the social history of death in the early modern period, as well as on English genres of epitaph and elegy, other literary forms that grapple with the topic of loss, and even the art history of tomb monuments. My project takes an interdisciplinary approach to these distinct discourses, bringing them together to chart a literary and cultural history of mourning and commemoration. Much work on the social practices of mourning and remembrance has already adopted similar interdisciplinary approaches; my aim is to strengthen our sense of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in part by drawing on excellent scholarship integrating social and literary analysis from surrounding fields. This includes especially work on the death cultures of the late middle ages and early Colonial New England, which presents specific examples as well as general scholarly models relevant to this study.

This dissertation’s methodological departure from earlier models is in its focus on material practices and material texts, or on poetry as a craft of “making” (poesis). In what follows, I read memorial writings as direct participants in a larger material culture of death and remembrance that includes clothes, cloths, jewels, paintings, and a wide variety of ritual paraphernalia as well as of physical displays of bodily grief. These memorial writings are also, of course, “literature” that may circulate with some distance from that material culture. I suggest, however, that we cannot attend to the function of these texts in a larger literary economy without first attending to their place in a material economy of
mourning, monuments, and funerary performance. Or in slightly different terms, in order to understand the distinctiveness of the written word as a medium of mourning and remembrance, we may paradoxically first have to de-emphasize writing as a memorial medium, recognizing the ways it may take on social roles alongside or even subordinate to the mourning that takes place through cloth, speech, gesture, and stone.

As anthropologists have long recognized, death rituals are a site where matter matters: persons confront their status as things; the social imaginary confronts its subsistence in goods and bodies.¹⁰ I take this into account not only in my study of objects and material texts, but also through an examination of how early modern memorial texts are marked by recurrent reflections on their own material status as appendages, surrogates, or substitutes, linked ineluctably to the performance of mourning, the tomb, the social gathering, even the dead body itself. As I explore in Chapter 4, memorial writings even take on a distinctive set of visual conventions involving prominent displays of black ink that not only distinguish them from other categories of text but also highlight the material processes of their manufacture. In this insistent materiality, memorial texts perform even as they reveal and reflect on the fictive or “ritual” constitution of imaginary relations through material things. Their “meanings” thus emerge from their material natures, as well as the social contexts in which they are produced and circulated.

As perhaps the most significant contemporary material medium for the presentation of mourning verse, tombs feature recurrently in the discussions that follow. The attention I devote to tombs partly responds to the literary critical and art historical

oversight of the large body of writings and verses these material texts present. If several important studies have now shown the deep interdependencies of manuscript and print as media for cultivating a body of vernacular writing in the early modern period, a comparable study exploring their relationship to the medium of the tomb is, perhaps surprisingly, lacking. I will make some provisional contributions to such an account, especially in Chapters 2 and 5. At the same time, this dissertation’s focus on tombs as bearers of writing reflects a deep concern in the early modern period with the intersection of memory and sacred space. I take the relationship of literary commemoration and specifically Christian values both before and after the Reformation as an ongoing question or even a fraught relationship, not a resolved identity. The potential tensions that emerge between the social rituals of mourning and the expressions of Christian faith are a topic explored in Chapter 1 as well as 3.

Psychologists, anthropologists, and cultural theorists have repeatedly suggested that cultural production might be reducible to a response to human mortality.\textsuperscript{11} I strenuously reject this thesis: following Deleuze and Guattari, I resist the impulse to reduce the multiplicity of human drives; and following Nietzsche, I see creative acts as marked by powerful joy, not fear.\textsuperscript{12} At the same time, I suggest that the conceptualization of culture as a response to death is longstanding and recurrent, and appears in the early modern period as a particular influence on its literary production as well as on the new form of the printed book.

\textsuperscript{12} For another rejection of the “denial of death” thesis, see Jonathan Dollimore, \textit{Death, Desire and Loss in Western Culture} (New York: Routledge, 2001), 119-27.
The derivation of new features of print from monumental sources is often noted but perhaps remains yet underexplored. The double meaning of *titulus* as both “title” and “epitaph” has a particularly important influence. The visual arrangement of early printed titles and colophons in short, tapering, visually centered lines, a convention that departs from manuscript models, is derived from the revival of Classical epigraphy, the monumental borders that appear alongside draw on the Classicizing “aedicule” model for tombs. Other features derive from Classical tombs as well: lightweight “titling” fonts, for example, or the vine-leaf ornament still widely used in modern typography as a symbol of division, which derives from its function in Classical inscriptions as an interpunct or word divider. (That sixteenth-century English tomb inscriptions sometimes employ leaves and flowers to divide words suggests that audiences did not cease to remember the typographic leaf’s origins.) Monumental lettering often appears as though conceived of as paradigmatic of other written forms. Though Roman or “antiqua” scripts have a complex history in manuscript, print, painting, and other artforms that draws on influences from Carolingian and Greek manuscript sources as well as surviving Classical

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15 For example, on the 1587 monument of Clara Clark in the parish church of St. Cuthbert’s, Wells. *Cf.* Wood, *Forgery*, 297 for what appears to be an image of another early modern tomb presenting vine leaves.
inscriptions, from the fifteenth century onwards artists, typemakers, and authors of writing manuals all returned repeatedly to Classical inscriptions for direct models.\textsuperscript{16} Though there are undoubtedly other cultural influences at play, that Roman scripts enter English use for typography and monumental inscription around the same time in the mid-Elizabethan period is suggestive, and may overlap not entirely by chance with a surge of investment in and production of epitaphs in paper and stone forms, a historical moment that is the focus of Chapter 2.\textsuperscript{17} In general, if tomb monuments have borrowed from the visual design and layout of the written page throughout their European history, in the Renaissance and early modern periods the direction of influence is often, perhaps even predominantly in the opposite direction.\textsuperscript{18}

This dissertation suggests that the energies driving the formation of English literary production emerge in part from a focus on the tomb as a site of “untimely” or anachronistic collapse of historical significations. If tomb monuments are lieux de mémoire or repositories of collective (often retrospectively invented) memories, in the early modern world such monuments frequently disturb or resist what Pierre Nora has called the division between memory and history and the subsumption of the former by the


\textsuperscript{18} Petrucci, \textit{Public Lettering}, esp. 16-61.
latter.\textsuperscript{19} As I will show, early modern audiences actively read and engaged with tombs and their texts. Memorial writing in paper as well as stone forms returns repeatedly to the symbolic and sacramental presence of writing in the church space as a source of identification with broad national, religious, and historical imaginaries. As Leonard Barkan and Christopher Wood among others have shown, the energies driving Renaissance and early modern cultural production derive in extraordinary part from the encounter with the material remains, as well as the absences, of the past.\textsuperscript{20} In early modern England these remains consisted in large part of the tombs not only of antiquity but also of a receding yet intimately felt pre-Reformation middle ages. The literary and cultural poetics that emerges is one that is often uncannily “postmodern” in its collapse or conflation of historical styles and traditions.\textsuperscript{21}

This dissertation is in part a work of literary history, approached, as Jonathan Culler suggests, at the level of form.\textsuperscript{22} However, this project is not a narrowly conceived genre study of elegy or epitaph: I take memorial writing broadly as a discourse encompassing a range of material and formal possibilities. Rather than tracing lines of influence between canonical texts, my dissertation follows the formation and codification


\textsuperscript{20} Leonard Barkan, Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999); Wood, op. cit.


of new genres and conventions, many of which persist into much later periods, while attending to the continuity as well as change that spans its two centuries and beyond.

Approaching these materials in this way, as flexible embodiments of confining yet historically mutable forms, prompts this dissertation to revise some received narratives and definitions. While earlier studies of early modern elegy and epitaph have largely defined themselves by a seventeenth-century period concept, this chapter opens with two chapters focused on the ample and largely overlooked body of sixteenth-century memorial writing. One point this temporal and conceptual reorganization opens up concerns the little-understood genealogy of form: the body of “elegy” with which we are more familiar is a direct derivative of an earlier tradition of “epitaph” writing. The sixteenth-century broadside “epitaph” becomes the seventeenth-century broadside “elegy”; verses displayed around the dead body in the funeral, called in the sixteenth century “epitaphs,” transform into seventeenth-century “elegies.” This point not only complicates received literary histories that assert the emergence of English elegy in the seventeenth century, pointing to deeper continuities in the presence of memorial writing, but also challenges how we conceive of the poetic forms of elegy and epitaph as distinct entities and in relation to one another. The genetic relationship between these forms suggests we reconsider the close relationships that persist between them, that is to say, the ways in which the work of mourning and memory continue to implicate one another.

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23 The only earlier formal study of elegy to note this terminological shift is Dennis Kay, in *Melodious Tears: The English Funeral Elegy from Spenser to Milton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). Kay, however, restricts his study of sixteenth-century “epitaph” elegies to texts published in lyric anthologies, which is precisely to reproduce the categories the formal and material fluidity of elegy and epitaph challenges us to reconsider. See Chapter 2 for consideration of the relationships between different material and formal instantiations of the sixteenth-century epitaph.
whether through nostalgia, trauma, or psychological sublimation. Moreover, it challenges us to reconsider formal definitions that have divided inscriptive texts from expressive lyrics, or “subliterary” epitaphs from “psychological” elegies. As I will demonstrate especially in Chapter 2, the substrates of memorial writing fluidly encompass stone and paper forms as well as intermediary forms including wooden and parchment “tables.” The stylistic or rhetorical value attributed to such writings traverses these distinctions of material form.

Each of the chapters that follow engages with some aspect of a particular poetic form and its material manifestations. Two of these—Chapters 1 and 3—engage more closely in reading specific texts by canonical authors, while the others—2, 4, and 5—deal more broadly with analyses of specific forms. Chapter 1 opens with a reading of works by or attributed to Skelton. By drawing a set of pre-Reformation texts into a discussion of sixteenth-century forms of mourning, I challenge crude periodizations that have divided early sixteenth-century literary experiments with the presentation of memory from later engagements with epitaph as a memorial form. At the same time, I aim to show how new influences on epitaph writing stemming from the introduction of print and the humanist rediscovery of Classical epigraphy radically reshape the possibilities for commemorative literature at the turn of the sixteenth century.

Chapter 2 deals more broadly with the material and poetic possibilities of epitaphs in sixteenth-century England. Focusing attention on a spate of epitaph production across different paper and stone media in the Elizabethan period, I trace a provisional account of the influence of epitaph writing on other cultural forms including an emergent print culture of lyric. In seeking to describe the social incidence of epitaph writing in the
Elizabethan period, moreover, this chapter opens up methods for recovering the presence of highly ephemeral media once widely used to display epitaphs in the church space, including not only ephemeral paper and parchment verses but also the now forgotten but once ubiquitous form of painted “tables.”

Chapter 3 turns to the historical moment of emergence of “elegy” as a term for English mourning poetry. Spenser’s *Daphnaïda* (1591) is an ambitious attempt to elevate the status of memorial writing to high literary genre. It also emerges from and depends on a developing and ongoing culture of commemoration circulating around the 1586 death of Philip Sidney, an event whose meaning only unfolds gradually as the Protestant interventionism he had supported recedes from influence at court. Spenser’s “elegy” is a sophisticated attempt at elevating a trivial literary genre, but it also registers widespread cultural anxieties about the potential blasphemy or idolatry involved in fulsome expressions of grief. The paradoxical result, I suggest, is a profoundly “un-Protestant” poetics fractured by competing impulses to contain and exclude the affect of loss.

Chapter 4 focuses on a later historical moment that sees another, different kind of emergence, that of a set of visual conventions for marking and signifying loss. The 1612 death of Henry Stuart, the heir to the throne of King James, is received as a catastrophic loss. In response to his death, printed books begin to appear incorporating prominently black pages, woodcuts, and borders in their design and layout. These visual conventions exert a long hold on subsequent memorial or “mortuary” print. In the case of the Henry memorials, they emerge directly from the imitation and simulation of a range of other uses of black color in the funeral ceremony, including black cloth and clothing as well as black stone panels.
My last chapter, Chapter 5, draws attention to a category of surviving manuscripts particularly prevalent in the tumultuous political years of the late seventeenth century. The group of texts I am calling “family memorial albums” represent an important attempt to work out belonging and inheritance in the context of family loss. Moreover, they reveal the continuing question of uneven social access to media of historical representation, opening up even as they potentially delimit the participation of female family members in social rituals of mourning and commemoration.

This is ultimately a project about how we manage loss. Acknowledging, compensating for, or living with catastrophic loss confronts us as a central ethical dilemma of our time, whether framed as a matter of racial melancholy, queer feeling, archival absences, or environmental collapse. Even a close relationship to death itself may be among the losses ascribed to modernity. Since Philippe Ariès’s magisterial study, social historians of death have repeatedly critiqued the withdrawal of death and dying from the consciousness and social spaces of modernity. I am more skeptical about the final desirability of the past’s relationship to death, which I see as including its own forms of coercion, yet it is undeniable that the early modern period’s heightened


consciousness of mortality evades some modern pathologies—and may offer us models for how we approach our own pressing ethical challenges.
Chapter 1

Skelton and the Arts of Commemoration

When the Bels be merrily rung,
   And the Masse devoutly sung:
   And the meat merrily eaten
   Then shall Robert Traps his wife
   and children be forgotten.26

This dissertation begins with two chapters on sixteenth-century English cultures of epitaph writing. Together, they describe a set of formal conventions, material possibilities, and social uses that broadly traverse the sixteenth century. The next chapter provides a more detailed account of particular material possibilities and social practices involving the use of epitaphs, and focuses on the Elizabethan period, a historical moment when the production of epitaphs in both paper and stone underwent a rapid growth and exerted a powerful influence on other cultural forms. This chapter focuses on another, earlier moment for the growth and formal expansion of English epitaph in the opening of the sixteenth century. It centers on readings of two particular texts, each of which sparks new configurations of social, political, and literary uses for the epitaph that overlap with its specifically religious functions.

This chapter’s focus on pre-Reformation writings is intended to deepen our understanding of continuity and change in memorial culture over the course of the sixteenth century. Broadly, it aims to supersede crude periodizing schemes that have

26 Epitaph of Robert Traps or Trappis, d. 1526, formerly in the church of St. Leonard’s, Foster Lane. This text was frequently copied in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and appears as well in nineteenth-century anthologies of epitaphs. I reproduce it here from the manuscript collection compiled by the herald antiquary Peter Le Neve, BL MS Add. 30499, 1r.
divided pre-Reformation forms of “epitaph” from literary studies of later sixteenth- and seventeenth-century “elegy.” Of course, I take for granted that the Reformation marks an epochal rupture in the social technologies of mourning and commemoration. The elimination of the concept of purgatory and the practice of prayers to the dead was a social revolution involving not only a conceptual reorganization of life and death but also the destruction and reorganization of institutions and physical spaces: the chantries endowed for recurrent prayer, the lay confraternities that had opened up memorial practices for a broad spectrum of middling society, the monasteries that not only organized prayer but also sold and distributed printed indulgences. The formulae of tomb inscriptions and other literary commemorations also underwent an epochal shift, as they abandon—albeit in uneven stages—their invocations of intercessionary prayer. Yet unlike other pre-Reformation technologies of remembrance, tombs and tomb inscriptions remained in widespread social use, as did other forms of literary commemoration. Moreover, it is not clear that their social function of propagating and preserving memory—a social function that always overlapped with and arguably exceeded their specifically religious function of entreating intercessionary prayer—underwent such a radical change.

The last generation of historical scholarship, including works by Ralph Houlbrooke, David Cressy, Peter Marshall, and Vanessa Harding, has argued for important continuities as well as change in cultural attitudes and practices surrounding

\[27\] Among the vast literature on the changes to social rituals of mourning and remembrance wrought by the reformation, I rely in particular on Eamon Duffy, The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), esp. 301-376; and the works of Ralph Houlbrooke, David Cressy, Peter Marshall, and Vanessa Harding, cited infra.
death and burial over the course of the sixteenth century, marked by what Harding has called a continuing reciprocal relation of the living and the dead. This dissertation proposes a related literary-historical narrative. I take commemorative writing as a fundamentally social form marked by strong continuity in its negotiation of social memory across its different historical manifestations. The changes wrought by the Reformation perhaps increase the relative standing of literary works, but do not radically alter their basic social function as repositories of memory.

Recent work has sought to align a turn-of-the-seventeenth-century growth in production of elegiac writings with the changes induced by the Reformation, in which writings of mourning and commemoration take on a new and socially more central role of compensating for the lost late medieval “traditional religion.” Such a narrative of Catholic-Protestant transition adapts rather than fundamentally revises the longstanding “secularization” narrative, itself still deeply entrenched in the social history of death in early modern England, in which both funerary rituals and tomb monuments have been taken as emptying out religious content in the wake of Reform. The perception of seventeenth-century growth is based in part on a set of interlocking category errors: restricting commemorative writings to a particularly literary genre of “elegy”; treating

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printed and manuscript commemorations as distinct and separable from the large body of verses inscribed or painted on tombs; and failing to take account of the general growth in the distribution (and survival) of printed and other written media from the end of the sixteenth century. If, in contrast, we take commemorative writings as a broad social category that encompasses different related poetic genres as well as a different material forms, a different history becomes apparent, one that emphasizes subtle transitions and adaptations in the place of sudden rupture and its compensation.

In fact, as I will suggest in the next chapter, there is an important increase in paper and stone “epitaph” writing in the Elizabethan period, but that historical moment, however significant, is only one episode in a much longer history of the growth of commemorative writing extending both earlier and later. In England, a steady increase in the rate of production of commemorative texts dates to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This historical shift is perhaps most noticeable in the steady social diffusion of memorial brasses, which by the mid-fifteenth century were adopted widely not only by elites but also by the middling classes of merchants and guildsmen, and began to display a wide variety of English vernacular verses.31 Such changes can be linked to broader or more specific social circumstances including increased literacy rates and the wealth stemming from the wool trade.32 This English growth of memorial writing is nonetheless linked to a much broader European pattern. As Philippe Ariès and Armando Petrucci have discussed, the reappearance of individual epitaphs around the twelfth century and their gradual subsequent growth and social diffusion throughout Europe marks a

fundamental change in the use and social incidence of writing that develops into the modern period.  

From this larger perspective, the aberration of the sixteenth century in England may be less the increase of epitaphs and elegies towards the end of the Elizabethan period than the slowed rate of growth in the production of monuments and memorial texts in response to the Reformation that immediately precedes it. Rather than a static “cause” of such writings, then, we may have to take the Reformation or “Protestantism” or even “Puritanism” as a shifting set of cultural impulses that may militate against the writing of commemorative texts as well as for them; and it is only one body of cultural energies among others stemming from the spread of literacy and written matter, to which it may ultimately be subordinate.

This chapter focuses on a different but related pre-Reformation moment of cultural foment in the production of commemorative writing. My focus here is on two works: Skelton’s *The boke of Phyllyp sparowe* (ca. 1505) and a broadside lament on the death of Henry VII (1509), possibly but not necessarily also written by Skelton. My purpose is not to provide a unifying authorial study but rather to explore the possibilities of contemporary epitaph writing in part through works associated with one of its most

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active contemporary experimenters. Each of these two texts reflects on the possibilities of its own form while addressing the social and political uses of epitaphic writing. Moreover, each engages the question of how the epitaph registers or intersects with the specifically religious rituals of masses and prayers for managing loss. Like the epitaph cited at the head of this chapter, these texts take these religious forms as intimately and proximately related. Yet also like that epigraph, which opposes its inscribed text to liturgical rituals as a medium of memory, these texts suggest that epitaphic form offers a potentially distinct social form for mourning and remembrance.³⁵

Taken together, these two works suggest that already at the turn of the sixteenth century the epitaph was a familiar literary form, one whose use and social incidence crossed boundaries of class and social station. From a king and his national public to a young girl and her pet sparrow, the epitaph is a mobile form, one adaptable to the specific circumstances of its general occasion of loss. From the largest imaginary relations to the most local, it is also intensely social, a medium of both public and personal expressions of commemoration. Rather than the poetic “dead end” Skelton’s poetry has often been taken to be, the epitaph of Phyllyp sparowe and the broadside epitaph for Henry VII represent an opening up of commemorative form—as well as of questions about the religious impact of literary commemorations that continue to resonate beyond the post-Reformation.

³⁵ In exploring this relationship, I draw heavily on Dennis Kezar’s earlier scholarship on Skelton’s poem, though I hold reservations concerning his (indirect) suggestions that Skelton’s work inaugurates a historical moment when poetry displaces liturgy. See Guilty Creatures: Renaissance Poetry and the Ethics of Authorship (Oxford University Press, 2001), 17-49.
Both this chapter and the next take inspiration from Scott Newstok’s study of the prevalence of epitaphs in early modern literary culture, which provides a ground for much of this dissertation’s inquiries into the ways consciousness of death saturates early modern reading and writing across a range of forms and genres. Newstok has suggested that the poetics of epitaphic form derives from a “locative” function registered in the ubiquitous variations on the formula “hic iacet” or “here lies.” For Newstok, the point to emphasize is the early modern proliferation of non- or pseudo-inscriptional epitaphs in which “location” is displaced or deferred, a historical emergence he ties to a newly modern representational practice and the advancing lockstep march of secularization and the individual in the post-Reformation. In this regard his narrative of epitaph form is related to the earlier study of Joshua Scodel, who locates the emergence of a distinctly literary tradition of epitaph writing in poems that extract themselves from and critically comment on the social rituals of burial and commemoration linked with the physical tomb. In this chapter and what follows, I want to complicate these narratives: I reject the notions that sophisticated play with deictic reference is necessarily a preserve of “modern” or post-Reformation texts; or that “literature” is to be defined in opposition to social ritual. Moreover, rather than focusing on epitaphs as points of departure from the tomb, I take them as texts that are enmeshed in a material culture of mourning and commemoration, and which, indeed, often return compulsively to the site of funeral and

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burial. The close material and imaginary relationships binding tomb, text, and dead body result in widespread and intensive play with poetic possibilities of space, voice, and medium; the tomb and burial site provide at once a source of authority for writing, a site of surplus symbolic meanings, and a physical location around which reading, writing, and recitation practices take shape.

This dissertation began by citing a fragment of a text on the 1509 death of Henry VII, a text that can and perhaps should be called England’s first surviving “broadside ballad” (fig. 1.1). Indeed, in presenting its text in two columns with a row of woodcuts at top, the layout of this sheet uncannily anticipates a format for the ballad that does not become quite standardized for almost another hundred years. I want to return to this text in this chapter not only as an anticipation of the later “ballad” and “broadside elegy” but also as an example of the literary, political, and religious sophistication of writing circulating in the funerary context.

The broadside for Henry VII has been attributed tentatively to Skelton since its discovery, though there is no firm evidence he is its text’s author (nor that he is not). It

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38 Bodleian Library Douce frag. e. 20.
39 Carole Rose Livingston catalogues this sheet as the second, not first surviving English broadside ballad, but since the sheet she (conjecturally) describes as earlier in date is wholly xylographic, largely taken up with image rather than text, and evidently related to a tradition of wallpaper woodblock printing, there are strong arguments for taking this sheet as the earliest exemplar of what is later a widespread form. See British Broadside Ballads of the Sixteenth Century: A Catalogue of the Extant Sheets and an Essay (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1991).
40 The attribution to Skelton was evidently first made (and annotated on the copy) by the broadside’s earliest documented owner, the antiquarian Richard Farmer (1735-97). The catalogue of the Douce collection repeated the attribution (Catalogue of the Books and Manuscripts Bequeathed by Francis Douce, Esq. to the Bodleian Library (Oxford: The University Press, 1840), 306), and Alexander Dyce printed the fragmentary text as a doubtful work in The Poetical Works of John Skelton (London: Thomas Rodd, 1843), 2.399-400. Scammell and Rogers (op. cit.) suggest the alternative authorship of Stephen
survives as a fragmentary print, evidently a proof containing a conspicuous stanza-sized blank space presumably intended for a typeset imprint or woodcut publisher’s device. It is printed by the shop of Wynkyn de Worde on the verso of another proof, two pages from a vernacular romance. The fragmentary broadside poem’s text also survives complete in a closely contemporary manuscript copy rediscovered and published by G.V. Scammell and H.L. Rogers in 1957. In addition, fragments of an additional, distinct, yet closely related broadside poem also on the death of Henry VII survive in the form of scraps of paper that were reused for wallpaper printing. These fragments were discovered and (unusually) carefully preserved during building renovations in the early twentieth century.

Regardless of the broadside poem’s authorship, it is a sophisticated creation drawing syncretically on a wide array of influences, all while exploring the new potential of the printed broadside form. Most obviously this text develops a late medieval vernacular English tradition of inscribed epitaphs and manuscript laments on the deaths of public figures, which themselves typically circulate under the title of “epitaph.” At the same time, however, it fuses these inherited traditions with new humanist or Classical

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41 “An Elegy on Henry VII,” The Review of English Studies 8.30 (1957): 167-170. Though Scammell and Rogers do not note it, the manuscript copy of this poem had been published earlier, prior to the broadside’s first (partial) printed transcription in the catalogue of the Douce collection; apparently the link between these texts was not made in the nineteenth century. Cf. James Raine, Saint Cuthbert: With an Account of the State in Which His Remains Were Found upon the Opening of His Tomb in Durham Cathedral, in the Year MDCCXXVII (Durham: F. Humble for Geo. Andrews, Durham, and J.B. Nichols, London, 1828), 166-67.

42 Livingston, No. 3.
influences as well as the particular new propagandistic forms of the Tudor dynasty, all while exploring the potentially radical social and political impact of the broadside print’s capacity for reproduction and dissemination.

A late medieval vernacular tradition of laments or “epitaphs” circulates not only on tomb monuments but also in manuscript, sometimes in newsletters, as political propaganda or critical comment on the deaths of public figures.\textsuperscript{43} The most basic pattern for such texts is to fuse exigent political concerns with the broad literary tradition of the “fall of princes” literature, tying example closely to precept in the form of generalized complaints on the mutability of fortune and the folly of sin.\textsuperscript{44} Such poems take one of two most basic narrative forms. In the first, closer to the familiar later third-person form of elegy, the voice of a poet-narrator offers praise, lament, and moralizing apostrophies to the English nation or nobility. The second type opts for a different narrative strategy drawn from the rhetorical figure of \textit{eidolopoeia}: in this form, in a synthesis of the \textit{de casibus} tradition of Ovid, Boccaccio, and Lydgate with the specifically Christian


tradition of the sinner’s complaint and admonition, the dead speak on their own past lives from beyond the grave.\textsuperscript{45} Both these narrative forms also appear, albeit typically more briefly, on tomb inscriptions: the third person form appears in the formulae derived from “here lies”; the first-second person form is adopted in the many variations of “stay, reader,” or “such as I am, so shall you be.” The general interchangeability of these narrative patterns points to the foundation of the category of death poetry on the circulatory potential of affect and a broad conception of memory as socially produced through the relations of the living and the dead: it is not the directionality or subject and object of lament that is most crucial, but rather the affective postures of lament and remembrance themselves.

Third-person laments for the dead eventually predominate as both an inscriptive and literary form, in part through the advent of the new set of conventions for the Latin inscriptive epitaph derived from the imitation and adaptation of Classical models. In this new form, which emerges in Italy around 1420-1440 and is gradually adopted throughout Europe, medieval hexameters are supplanted by humanist elegiac couplets; the name of the dead is addressed in the dative rather than stated in the nominative; Roman capitals replace Gothic script; the inscription begins to incorporate notices of its own composition and dedication; and lists of prose attributes begin to arrange themselves in a “lapidary style” of short, visually centered units of meaning.\textsuperscript{46} The resulting form

\textsuperscript{45} For discussion of poems employing this figure, see Tromly, \textit{op. cit.}; and Wayland, \textit{op. cit.}

becomes a more overt register of the networks of social relations that go into the making of the memorial, while also taking on a cultural function as a dedication or offering to or for the deceased, or to or for his or her “memory.” In England, most of these conventions, including the presentation of text in Roman script, only become widespread in the Elizabethan period, but “humanist” epitaphs in elegiac couplets and bearing notices of their composition and dedication appear at least as early as William Caxton’s epitaph for Chaucer (a text I will discuss in the next chapter) and Skelton’s Latin epitaphs.

Earlier and alternative traditions of epitaph writing, however, especially in the vernacular, never disappear, but rather coexist or even hybridize with these specifically humanist or Renaissance models. Imagined first-person laments of the dead, for example, if they are now unfamiliar or less prominent in the canon, continue to represent an important tradition of elegiac and epitaphic writing in the post-Reformation. (Indeed, as Diana Fuss has shown, they continue in use into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as an important available poetic strategy for imagining and responding to death.47) Their role in sixteenth-century lyric and broadside culture is crucial for understanding the formation of a broadly socially distributed culture of memorial poetry. Broadside complaints of traitors and fallen princes, either before or after death or execution, appear alongside third-person “epitaphs” and play a complementary role in cultivating a Christian political and moral discourse of death. Before the term “elegy” is applied to laments for the dead, it is used for laments of the dead: the astonishingly popular


“Tychbourne’s Elegy,” supposedly written by the conspirator in anticipation of his execution in the tower, not only circulated widely in print and manuscript but was set by three different composers and probably sung in popular versions as well.⁴⁸ “Elegy” survives as a term for such poems well into the seventeenth century, for example as the title for the poem supposedly written by Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford in anticipation of his 1641 execution.⁴⁹ One of the most popular and influential “epitaphs” of the early modern period was such a first-person text spoken in the voice of Edward IV on his 1483 death.⁵⁰ As published in the widely influential Mirror for Magistrates, it appears as an “oracion” attributed to Skelton, and recited by one of the interlocutors from memory;⁵¹ the text is copied and published in other sources at least as late as 1633, when it appears as an “epitaph” under Skelton’s name.⁵²

While the broadside on the death of Henry VII is spoken for, not by him, it draws generally on the conventional themes and concerns of the larger tradition of late medieval laments and epitaphs. From the manuscript copy, the broadside’s partial text of the first stanza, cited at the beginning of this dissertation, can be reconstituted:

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⁴⁹ “An Ellegy written by himselfe a little before his death,” in *The true Copies of the three last Letters, written by the late Earle of Strafford* ([s.n., s.l.], 1641), sig. A4⁺⁻.
⁵² The date of Edward IV’s death rules out Skelton’s authorship, despite the widespread attribution. The 1633 publication is in Thomas Nashe (not the Elizabethan poet), *Quaternio or a fovrefold way to a happie Life* (London: John Dawson), pp. 239-40. Nashe’s manuscript source, where, he notes, the poem is erroneously attributed to Lydgate, is almost certainly John Stowe’s BL MS Add. 29729 or a copy thereof.
O wauering Worlde all Wrapped in Wretchidnes
What auales thy pompes so gay and glorious
Thy pastimes thy pleasors and all thy riches
Syth of necessitie they be but transitoryous
Example but late o to moche pyteous
The puyssaunt prince that yche man Whilome dred
maugre thy might by naturall lyne and cours
henry the seuenth alas alas lyeth dede (1-8)

This opening is an almost formulaic convention of English vernacular epitaphs, as can be seen in comparison with those of some of the laments on and spoken by dead public figures gathered in Humphrey Welles’ ca. 1530 personal collection, Bodleian MS Rawlinson C 813:53

Musyng vppon the mutabilite
off worldlye changes & grett vnstablenes…54

When I reuolue yn my Remembrance
Thys lyfe fugytyue & the world transytorye…55


O dere God beholde yis worlde So transytorye…

In the lament for Henry VII, this tone of generalized complaint against mutability sustains itself throughout the first three stanzas. It reaches a kind of climax at the end of the third:

O what is this worlde but vanyte and all vanyte  
For henry the seventh alas alas lyeth dede (23-24)

Arcite’s lament from the “Knight’s Tale” and the voice of the Ecclesiastes Preacher converge in de casibus application to present death.

This tone of lament is built into the repeated refrain—“Henry the seventh alas alas lieth dead”—and pervades the whole course of the poem. The fourth and middle stanza, however, can be taken as marking a shift from a central organization around the mutability topos to a focus on the more immediately public and political concerns of the funerary performance. In neat rhetorical succession, each of the following stanzas presents a particular aspect of the collective social work of mourning as a theme: in the fourth, lament and prayer for salvation; in the fifth; prayer for salvation and fame; in the sixth, consolation and succession; and in the seventh, remembrance and the establishment of a monumental remainder.

The opening lines of the fourth stanza mark the shift into new public concerns as it transforms the first-person speaker of the earlier lament into a collective, exorted “we”:

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57 “The Knight’s Tale,” 1919-21; Ecclesiastes 1:2.
Come we therfor his subgeites and make lamentacion
For the losse of one so noble a gouernowre
To god with our prayers make we exclamacion
his soule forto guyde to his supernall toure (25-29)

Unlike later post-Reformation elegies, which confidently assert the salvation of the persons they praise, this poem allows doubt as to the precise place of Henry’s soul. Earlier, in the third stanza of the lament section, the poem articulates this point more clearly:

he is now gone withouten remedie
The soule Where god will, the miserable bodie
Closed in stone and in heuy lede (20-22)

As a result, a central part of the work of the poem becomes the exhortation of a collective public to prayer. Both the fourth stanza, in the lines cited above, and the fifth turn around the invocation of prayer.

The sixth and penultimate stanza turns to what is always a central concern of royal funerary performance and literary commemoration, the legitimacy of succession. In this poem the continuance of rule is offered as a consolation that may temper the bitterness of loss:

But yet agayne a cause most comfortable
We haue wherin of right reioys we muste
his sone on lyue in beaute force and lust
In honour likely traianus to shede
Wherfore in hym put we oure hope and trust
Sith henry his fader alas alas lyeth dede (43-48)

As Scammell and Rogers note, the reference to Henry VIII here strongly suggests that he has not yet acceded to the crown and that this poem was written—and almost certainly
also published—in the liminal moment of the period of mourning and the funeral celebrations running between 21 April and 24 June 1509.\textsuperscript{58}

The poem’s final stanza turns the most explicitly towards the scene of the funeral performance and burial. In the broadside, this stanza appears above a blank stanza-sized space probably intended for a device or imprimatur. I quote the text as it appears there:

\begin{quote}
And nowe for conclusion about his herse
Let this be grauyd for endeles memorye
With sorowfull tunes of Thesypenes verse
Here lyeth the puysaunt and myghty henry
Hector in batayll / Ulyxes in polecy
Salamon in wysdome the noble rose rede
Creses in rychesse Julyus in glory
Henry the seuenth ingraued here lyeth dede.
\end{quote}

The piling on of Classical typologies lends this putative inscription a similarity with the new style of Latin Humanist epitaph, which emphasizes the listing of commendatory attributes and epithets in short sequence (a convention probably intended to simulate in verbal form the piling up of triumphs or trophies). Also derived from Classical or possibly humanist sources is the presentation of the imagined inscription itself. Alastair Fowler, Joshua Scodel, and Scott Newstok have each discussed the tendency of later lamentatory texts (“elegies”) to turn at their end to the recitation of such real or imagined epitaphic inscriptions.\textsuperscript{59} This formula has a notable Classical pedigree in sources including Virgil’s fifth Eclogue and Ovid’s \textit{Amores} II.6 (a lament for a dead parrot), but surviving medieval English laments and epitaphs, although many orient themselves spatially around the tomb or dead body or adapt phrases from the burial liturgy, do not

\textsuperscript{58} Op. cit., 167-68.
incorporate the recitation of tomb texts. This Classical formula is revived in humanist sources at least as early as Politian’s 1473 epicede for Albiera Albitia, a text widely circulated and employed as a literary model as late as 1612 in England. The 1509 broadside for Henry VII offers one of the earliest examples in English, almost certainly the earliest surviving in which the imagined inscription is in the vernacular and integrated into the stanza form. It is probably only preceded by the Latin epitaph included in Skelton’s Philip Sparrow, to which I will turn shortly.

If the broadside’s concluding inscriptive recitation is something new in English poetry, it reflects this passage’s larger self-reflexive turn on its own possibilities of use and performance. Read closely, the apparent confident finality of the final stanza’s epitaphic recitation gives way to some vagueness about the precise mechanics of its writing and performance. If the epitaphic text is to be “graved for endless memory,” it is also to be sung “with sorrowful tunes,” a phrase either referring to what may have been the text’s own musical performance or more allusively invoking the pagan funerary performance of the epicede or musical epitaphion. (“Thesyphene’s verse,” i.e. Tisiphone’s, underlines the Classical associations of this performance, while perhaps also pointing to Lydgate, Chaucer, and a tradition of tragic narrative.) Moreover, this text is not precisely to be inscribed on the tomb but rather to be sited “about” Henry’s “hearse,”

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60 For the focus on the dead body, see, for example, the poem attributed to Skelton on the death of Edward IV, Thomas More’s on the death of Elizabeth of York, or the anonymous “Epitaphium Dicis Gloucestrie.”
62 Troilus and Criseyde 4.24; Troy Book 3.5446.
a term that might refer to Henry’s dead body but which most commonly in this period refers to the displays erected to house the body prior to its interment, elaborate but ephemeral architectural structures that were commonly decked with coats of arms as well as mottoes and verses.\textsuperscript{63} “About his hearse” might even stand for a literal translation for the particularly vague and adaptable spatial and symbolic relationships of “epitaph,” \textit{epi} + \textit{taphos}, “on,” “above,” or “around” the tomb.

In other words, this is a text that reflects self-consciously on its own use within a funerary context while pointing at the production of enduring memory out of the temporary performance of mourning. These conflicted investments are emblematized in the play of sound and sense in the phrases “graved for endless memory” and “ingraved here lyeth dead.” “Graving” or “engraving” carries particularly heavy symbolic weight as a primary biblical figure for the action of memory; in early modern discourse, “carving,” “writing,” or “printing” in the heart or mind are particularly prominent descriptors for the act of memory in devotional literatures and elegiac texts. In discourses of loss, it acquires additional meaning through homophones and interchangeable spellings with “grave” (the burial site) and “ingrave,” the latter a widespread word meaning “inter” that appears in the final line of the broadside for Henry VII. To “ingrave” (entomb) in the heart is perhaps almost as common a figure for remembrance in elegiac writing as is to “engrave” (write or carve). Later elegists and devotional writers often play with slippages between

these two senses, as well as their conflicting suggestions of writing as both inscription
and erasure: Francis Beaumont’s “An Elegy on the Lady Markham,” for example, turns
on the ability of worms in the grave to “grave” an epitaph on their subject’s body;64
Anne, Lady Southwell’s meditation on the moral accounting of penitence enjoins the
reader, “ingraue thy sinnes before they thee ingraue.”65 The 1509 broadside for Henry
VII offers an early example of play with these doubled meanings, both invoking physical
inscription and pointing to larger cultural symbolic investments in writing and memory
that exceed the physical site.

The broadside for Henry not only figuratively “ingraves” (inters) Henry while
“engraving” (writing) his name, it also literally “engraves” him in the form of a woodcut
portrait. At the top of the page, surrounded and divided by rows of florets, three separate
woodcuts display a royal coat of arms, a crowned Tudor rose with IHS monogram, and,
in the center, a wider block depicting the dead body of the king lying in state.66 Another
closely related woodcut image of the dead king’s body survives on the title-page of the
print of the sermon preached at Henry’s funeral by John Fisher, which shows the king’s
body—or rather, his effigy, which marked the site of and remained not quite yet fully
separated from his natural body—surrounded by funeral attendees listening to Fisher in

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64 Poems: By Francis Beaumont, Gent. (London: Richard Hodgkinson for W.W. and
Luarence Blaikelocke, 1640), sig. H2v-H3v. According to William Ringler, Jr., “This is
the only poem in 40 whose attribution to Beaumont is adequately substantiated from
other sources.” Cf. “The 1640 and 1653 Poems: By Francis Beaumont, Gent. and the
129.

65 Folger MS V.b.198, 37v; BL Lansdowne MS 740, 156v. Cf. Jean Klene, ed., The
Southwell-Sibthorpe Commonplace Book: Folger MS. V.b.198 (Tempe, Arizona:
Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1997), 61 and 144.

66 Cf. Edward Hodnett, English Woodcuts 1480–1535 (Oxford: The University Press,
1935), no. 884.
the action of preaching.\textsuperscript{67} Both these images were printed by Wynkyn de Worde, but that appearing on the broadside for Henry appears to have been produced and printed first. Whereas the funeral sermon represents the moment of the funeral service, the broadside represents an earlier stage of Henry’s funeral celebrations, the nine days he “rested” in state in a series of “hearse” erected in the great chamber, hall, and chapel of Richmond Palace.\textsuperscript{68} Again, this print appears to have been produced in the liminal moment of Henry’s funerals, perhaps not only prior to Henry VIII’s coronation but also prior to the interment of Henry VII’s body. Placed in this context, and in relation to the woodcut image, the last line of the poem acquires new meaning: its attention-grabbing variation of the earlier refrain, “Henry the seventh\textit{ ingraved here} lyeth dead,” can refer to the broadside’s own setting out of a carved image of the king lying dead.\textsuperscript{69} Or, in other words, the paper sheet can serve at once as an appendage to the tomb or hearse (“Henry the seventh lies dead here by the site of this inscription”) and as itself a tomb, a container for the display of the king and his memory (“Henry the seventh lies dead here on this ephemeral page”). The tempting suggestion is that this text was written in awareness of its layout and accompanying decoration. Certainly, the skillful compression of the essential political and religious points of the funerary performance in seven neatly


\textsuperscript{69} To be sure, “engrave” is not used in a specific sense in this period for processes of image production, but it is widely used as a term for writing, cutting, stamping, and impressing. The early German terms for the woodcutter, \textit{Formschnitt} and \textit{Formschneider}, point to an association between the printed woodcut and the action of “engraving.”
ordered stanzas that arrange themselves with space remaining for a publisher’s device strongly suggests that this text was written for its particular layout on the broadside page. Indeed, in comparison with the late medieval “epitaph” tradition from which this text derives, what distinguishes this text is in part the comparative brevity that makes possible its printing in broadside format.

The broadside for Henry VII is a visual-verbal assemblage that exploits the broadside print’s potential for dispersion and display. That this text was printed at all suggests the intent it should be widely distributed in the manner of official proclamations, another medium making a transition from earlier oral and manuscript forms into print. Its inclusion of a “burden” suggests that it may have been performed or sung. That it includes a visual image additionally suggests that it may have been intended for posting in public on pillars and walls, perhaps specifically on the interior of churches. The Tudor dynasty’s consolidation and extension of royal power and presence took place in part through textual and visual projection within the public and liturgical space of the church. Surviving evidence of these propagandistic efforts to shape church interiors includes, among other elements, particularly mural forms such as posthumous hagiographic painted wall portraits of Henry VI; arms of Henry VII and VIII sculpted or painted on walls, ceilings, and pulpits; and hung wooden “tables” painted with the arms of Edward VI and Elizabeth I, imitated by later monarchs of succeeding dynasties into the eighteenth century. Broadsides probably played a part in this extension of royal power into

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71 J.P.D. Cooper, Propaganda and the Tudor State: Political Culture in the Westcountry (Oxford University Press, 2003), 34-46; Diarmaid MacCulloch, The Boy King: Edward
religious space: a century after the broadside of Henry VII, engravings or woodcuts of
Elizabeth’s tomb and effigy were posted on the walls of parish churches around the
country. Although none of these prints now survive, they were still visible in churches
throughout London and the countryside for decades subsequently. It is quite possible
the broadside for Henry VII was employed similarly.

Such putative public citation and display of the broadside for Henry VII finds
support through the indirect evidence of the surviving texts. The manuscript copy of the
broadside I have cited survives in a monastic record book of Durham Priory, where it was
copied, in a sequence relating to events in 1509, immediately following a copy of the 28
April Accession Pardon of Henry VIII. As mentioned earlier, fragments of a second,
distinct broadside poem on the death of Henry VII also survive, the surviving lines of
which show some correspondence with the basic themes and investments of the
Durham/Douce text. At least two distinct copies of this latter print were recycled for
reprinting on the verso with a wallpaper design along with additional copies of the 23

_VI and the Protestant Reformation_ (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2001),
163; Dale Hoak, “The Iconography of the Crown Imperial,” in _Tudor Political Culture_,
72 “Her Corps were solemnli interred under a fair Tomb in Westminster; the lively
Draught whereof, is pictured in most London, & many Countrey Churches, every Parish
being proud of the shadow of her Tomb; and no wonder, when each Loyal Subject
erected a mournfull Monument for her in his heart.” Thomas Fuller, _The Church History
of Britain_ (Oxford: J.S. Brewer, 1845), 5.258. This passage is cited and discussed in
Nigel Llewellyn, “The Royal Body: Monuments to the Dead, For the Living,” in _Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, c. 1540-1660_, ed. Lucy Gent
and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, 1990), 218-40; 229-30; Llewellyn’s
discussion and footnotes point to additional ways in which images and texts of
Elizabeth’s funeral and later tomb were distributed throughout England. The now lost
print of Elizabeth’s tomb and effigy is probably that copied in Henry Holland’s
_Heroologia Anglica_ (Arnhem: Jan Jansson, 1620).
73 Durham Cathedral Archives, DCD Registrum Parvum IV, ff. 176v-77r; Scammell and
Rogers, 167-68.
74 Livingston, no. 3.
April royal proclamation and a copy of another 10 April proclamation; scraps of these papers were recovered from wall beams where they had been pasted face down in the Foundress and Masters Chambers of Christ’s College, Cambridge, during college restorations in May 1911.\(^{75}\)

The transmission of broadside and proclamation to Durham might be explained by the presence of John Ruthall, from June 1509 Bishop of Durham, at Henry’s funeral.\(^{76}\) Their conveyance to Cambridge may rest on Christ College’s close links with both Margaret Beaufort and John Fisher.\(^{77}\) Nonetheless, it is suggestive that both poems traveled considerable distances outside of London alongside proclamations that were intended to be read aloud and posted in public. The implied use of both these texts for public reading and display is perhaps the more surprising given that the Cambridge fragments appear to have been written considerably later than the Durham text, some time after the coronation of Henry VIII. Both texts were printed by Wynkyn de Worde, and it is possible that the Cambridge text points to perceived needs both for a text updated to the political present and for a continued posture of lament and commemoration to uphold the legitimacy of the succession. Later surviving broadside epitaphs on the deaths of Edward VI and Mary I appear to have been used in this way: the surviving prints are new or expanded editions printed months or even a year after the accession of the succeeding monarch.\(^{78}\)

\(^{75}\) Charles Sayle, *Cambridge Fragments* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1913). This is the last revision of an essay published in several earlier formats.

\(^{76}\) Scammell and Rogers, 168.

\(^{77}\) Sayle, 9.

\(^{78}\) Livingston nos. 51 and 55.
Haphazard survivals must of course not be mistaken for points of origin. Very likely a culture of public broadside poetry, perhaps even of broadside memorial poetry, predates these texts. The 170 “balets” sold by the Oxford bookseller John Dorne over ten months in 1520 point to a whole world of texts and textual communities that are now lost. At the same time, the death of Henry VII marks a major political interruption, and it is possible that the surviving fragments from its aftermath point, if not to new uses, at least to a new intensity of the political use of occasional poetry that begins to realize the broadside medium’s powerful potential for quick, wide dispersion and interlocking visual and verbal display.

*Whose Epitaph?*

Whether or not we include the broadside for Henry VII among them, Skelton’s works offer some of the most lively and innovative engagements with epitaphic form of his period. In “Uppon a deedmans hed” Skelton reflects on the visual iconography of the transi tradition as well as on a form of late medieval mourning jewelry that has largely failed to survive. Both the “Epitaphe” on Adam Uddersale and John Clarke and “M. D. XVIII. In Bedell, quondam Belial incarnatum, devotum epitaphium” draw on the satirical epitaph tradition of continental epigram books. The more elaborate “Epitaph” on the death of the Earl of Northumberland develops a rich epideictic rhetoric of praise and lament. Together, these texts present an active working out of distinct material and

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formal possibilities for a literature of mourning and commemoration that intersects with yet remains distinct from the widespread religious rituals of lament.

Some of the firmest evidence that Skelton’s working out of epitaphic form took place in part through engagement with continental humanist models comes from the set of “tables” he erected in sequence between 1512 and 1516 in Westminster Abbey, one on the death of Henry VII, one on that of his mother Margaret Beaufort, and one reflecting on the legacy of Henry VII’s reign. William Camden’s anonymously published collection of the epitaphs of Westminster Abbey (1600, 1603, 1606) transcribes and prints these three lengthy texts, described as located in the Chapel of Henry VII, each incorporating the signature of the poet Skelton, and each “in a hanging table” (“In tabula pensili”). I will say more about the table epitaph form in the next chapter, but it is worth noting here how these texts together would have served a powerful propagandistic function of display, one evidently related to but obviously also more powerfully distinguished than that of posted broadsides. In their location in Henry VII’s Chapel and near his elaborate Renaissance tomb, not far from the later burial site of Mary, Queen of Scots and Elizabeth I, these tables were at the center of a hub for touristic and antiquarian practices of monument reading.

Skelton’s tables appear in rhetorically accomplished Latin elegiac verse and comprise some of his most carefully crafted compositions. Their function is not only to commemorate the dead, but also to register and advertise the social relations that went

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80 For an overview of the debate concerning Skelton’s complex relation to humanism, see Carlson, The Latin Writings, 7-12.
81 Reges, Regine, Nobiles, & alij in Ecclesia Collegiata B. Petri Westmonasterij sepulti, vsque ad Annum reparata salutis 1600 (London: E. Bollifantus, 1600), D1'-3v.
into their production. The superscription or “title” of the first of these tables, on the death of Henry VII, frames itself at once as an occasional text and as a monument:

Orator regius Skeltonis laureatus in singulare meritissimumque praeconium nobilissimi principis Henrici Septimi, nuper strenuissimi regis Anglie, hoc epitaphium edidit, ad sinceram contemplationem reverendi in Christo patris ac domini Domini Iohannis Islip, Abbatis Westmonastericii optime meritii, anno domini. M. D. XII., pridie divi Andreee Apostoli, etc.

Skelton laureate, orator royal, produced this epitaph, in singular and most merited praise of the most noble prince Henry the Seventh, late England’s most valiant king, for the devout meditation of the reverend father in Christ and lord John Islip, the most meritorious Abbot of Westminster, in the year of the Lord 1512, the eve of the feast of Andrew Apostle.  

This is a text for “contemplation” or “meditation,” and for no less a figure of authority than Islip himself. The densely allusive lines (“elegos”) that follow invoke the tragic muse Melpomene and gesture in the direction of generalized vanitas complaint:

Sed quid plura cano? Meditans quid plura voluto?
    Quisque vigil sibi sit: mors sine lege rapit.

But why sing more? Why ponder more in meditation? Let each be watchful for himself: death takes all, lawlessly. (21-22)

It immediately reveals, however, that any generalized lesson on mortality returns to the necessity of prayer and intercession:

Ad dominum qui cuncta regit pro principe tanto
    Funde preces, quisquis carmina nostra legis.

Pray for so great a prince to the lord who rules you all, you whosoever read our verses. (23-24)

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82 I cite text and translations as in Carlson, “The Latin Writings,” op. cit.
Having turned from the patron Islip to the general reader who stands before the tomb, an appended set of lines suddenly concludes with reflection on the ways that contemplation and imagination of the tomb can draw Henry’s life and deeds, as well as the favor God showed him, into mind (25-28).

That Skelton was aware of and exploited the expanded social possibilities of humanist epitaphic form clarifies his use of a recited pseudo-inscriptional epitaph at the climax of his most thorough reflection on the possibilities of commemorative form, The boke of Phyllyp Sparowe. The Latin “epytaphe” included there marks the end of the first and main section of the poem. Sometimes labeled the “Lamentation,” this section is spoken in the voice of Skelton’s real life acquaintance, the young girl Jane Scroop, as she mourns the death of her pet sparrow Philip. While attending a burial service led by a nun (“Dame Margery”), Jane develops a range of digressive and amplificatio-like meditations and prayers for her dead pet, sparked by the liturgical phrases that repeatedly break into the stream of consciousness of the poem. Following the triple “amen” that concludes the burial service, Jane notes that these liturgical formulae and her personalized prayers cannot on their own satisfy her mourning and commemorative desires:

yet one thynge is behynde
That now commeth to mynde
An Epytaphe I wold haue
for phyllyppes graue (603-606)

The perhaps surprising suggestion of this statement is that the epitaph is a familiar cultural form, one known, accessed, and potentially desired by female writers and readers, and potentially composed for or displayed even in contexts that diverge from proper religious use.

The lengthy deferral or *digressio* that follows Jane’s invocation of an epitaphic text plays wittily with the difficulties of a woman’s access to poetic learning and inspiration as well as the fundamental rudeness of the English language, while offering up a catalogue of Jane’s extensive reading in romance genres and praise of the English authors Gower, Lydgate, and Chaucer. Finally, however, Jane concludes that she herself will write the memorial she desires:

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but for my sparowes sake
Yet as a woman may
My wyt I shall assay
An Epytaphe to wryght
In latyne playne and light
where of the Elegy
foloweth by and by (819-25)
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The term “elegy” is here brought in as a term for elegiac verses, that is, the poetic form that had become standard for humanist epitaphs. Indeed, the joke of the Latin lines that follow is that they closely approximate elegiacs that have been broken up into short Skeltonic trimeter-like lengths.

There is some ambiguity about what counts as the terminus of the epitaph for Philip, so I quote the full set of lines extending to the bottom of the (recto) page, what marks the end of the first section of the poem:

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flos volucrum formose vale
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Philippe sub isto
Marmore iam recubas
Qui mihi carus eras
Semper erunt nitido
Radiantia sydera celo
Impressus[ue] meo
Pectore semper eris
Per me Laurigerum
Britanum Skeltonida vaten
Hec cecinisse licet
ficta sub imagine texta
Cuius eris volucris
Prestanti corpore virgo
Candida Nais erat
formosior ista Joanna est
Docta corinna fuit
Sed magis ista sapit
Bien men souient\(^84\)

Fair flower of birds, farewell. Philip, you now lie beneath this marble, you who were dear to me. Shining stars shall always be in the bright heavens, and you shall always be impressed upon my breast. Through me, the laureate bard of the Britons Skelton, these woven texts could be sung from beneath a fashioned image. She whose bird you shall be is a virgin of surpassing body. The naiad was fair, but this Jane is more beautiful; Corinna was learned, but this one knows more. I remember it well. (826-44)\(^85\)

The Latin lines have conventionally been understood as dividing into two parts consisting of the epitaph spoken in the voice of Jane and the paratextual signature and dedication of the poet Skelton. The continued address to the sparrow (“Cuius eris volucris”), however,

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\(^84\) I reproduce the lines as they appear in the 1545 edition (STC 22594). “Vaten” is evidently an error for “vatem.”

\(^85\) Gordon Braden interprets “cuius eris volucris” as referring to the earlier “imagine,” thus resulting in the slightly different translation “concealed under a fictitious image of her whose bird you shall be.” Without punctuation both readings are possible, though Braden’s has the disadvantage of dissolving the ambiguity whether “praestanti corpore virgo” refers to the Virgin Mary or to Jane Scroop, and rather problematically requires that pronominal reference should extend across the closure of the elegiac couplet. *Cf. Sixteenth Century Poetry: An Annotated Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 25. Alexander Dyce also failed to understand the possibility of “cuius” referring to the Virgin Mary, amending “eris” to “eras.”
blurs this boundary; this sequence of Latin has to be taken as a single unit of two interrelated parts.

The question of this epitaph and its *mise-en-abîme* is precisely one of possession, ownership, and presentation. The dissolving of Jane’s authorial voice into Skelton’s reasserted presence has been taken as a foreclosure of the possibility of female authorship the poem had up until that point enticingly encouraged, but it might be possible to read this text quite differently as a representation of real opportunity for women to participate in a culture of literary commemoration.  

Indeed, epitaph writing represents an area of compositional activity that remains relatively open to women in England’s restrictive sixteenth-century literary economy. While it has often been noted that only one work in the Latin language is published by an English female author in the entire sixteenth century, if we were to include inscribed Latin epitaphs among the category of “published” texts, that number would increase slightly. Jane herself reveals that her authorship of a public epitaphic text would have Classical precedent in her allusion to “Sulpicia,” the name of at least two distinct Roman female poets, “Whose name registered was / For ever in tables of bras” (150-51). Though the precise source of this reference to epigraphic record is unclear, it neatly binds the authority for female authorship with the presence of inscriptive text. As Jane Stevenson suggests, in a Renaissance culture often otherwise marked by powerful barriers to female literary activity, readers familiar with the epigraphic inscription collections or *syllogai* that

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proliferate in print and manuscript from the fifteenth century onwards would have taken women’s authorship in the inscriptive medium “for granted.”

The function of the reappearance of Skelton as author at the end of Latin epitaph most obviously provides the text with a way to record its own creation, much in the same manner of Skelton’s “tables” in Westminster Abbey. It is a variation on the humanist “two-part” epitaph that blurs the boundary between the lament and its paratext, and asks us to take seriously even as it pierces through the fiction of a text presented to the reader in the voice of a female mourner. In fact, what is remarkable about Jane’s lament is precisely how learned it is: not only is it composed in elegiacs, but the Latin lines in her voice contain perhaps the closest direct allusion to the Classical source inspiring Skelton’s entire poem, Catullus’ *Carmina* 2 and 3. The declaration “impressusque meo / Pectore semper eris,” “you will always remain impressed / printed upon my breast,” is evidently a transformation of Catullus’s repeated descriptions of his mistress Lesbia’s sparrow as held closely or clutched in her lap or against her breast (“in sinu tenere”; “nec…a gremio”). The allusion transforms its source into a subtle reflection on presence and absence, memory and wounding, and the mechanics of printing or writing itself. If Stanley Fish is right that Skelton’s poem is a “drama of style” confronting Jane’s rhetorical performance with the poet’s, in the epitaph this distinction breaks down to some degree.

Alexander Barclay’s attack on Skelton’s *Philip Sparrow* in his appendix to his translation of Sebastian Brant’s *Ship of Fools* is imprecise, but likely was motivated by a

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sense that Skelton’s departure from the strictly prescribed rituals of liturgical commemoration veered into blasphemy.\textsuperscript{90} Whether or not Skelton’s poem crosses the line of socially acceptable literary play, it offers an inventive exploration of the boundaries between religious ritual and social acts of commemoration. The tension between these social and religious uses of commemorative writing persists past the boundary of the Reformation, as Chapter 3 will discuss. Although the following decades’ assault on the liturgical architecture of remembrance dismantled the framework out of which Skelton’s poem emerged, the sense his poem cultivates that the epitaph may serve as a distinct social form preserves its widespread use throughout different social strata. The social incidence and material possibilities of a later sixteenth-century culture of epitaph writing is the topic of the following chapter.

Chapter 2

Lyric, Ballad, Tomb Text:

Elizabethan Poetry and the Early Modern Epitaph

An epitaph is not a proud writing shut up for the studious: it is exposed to all—to the wise and the most ignorant; it is condescending, perspicuous, and lovingly solicits regard; its story and admonitions are brief, that the thoughtless, the busy, and indolent, may not be deterred, nor the impatient tired: the stooping old man cons the engraven record like a second hornbook;—the child is proud that he can read it;—and the stranger is introduced through its mediation to the company of a friend: it is concerning all, and for all…


omnesque tam parietes a me, quasi a limace videas oblitos argumentis variis et titulis.

(and so you can see walls everywhere smeared all over with my inscriptions as though by a slug.)

This chapter seeks to provide an account of the early modern epitaph’s social distribution and negotiation of symbolic value, with a particular focus on Elizabethan England. This sixteenth century sees an expanded production and proliferation of prose and poetic epitaphs in print, manuscript, and stone. Across these different media, the epitaph takes on a central role in the social performance of mourning and commemoration. Poetic epitaphs also circulate in these different media as an object of study of an emergent antiquarian and popular historical culture, and as a key component of a new body of lyric production.
Epitaphs are the predominant early modern component of the writing category Armando Petrucci calls “public lettering.” Whether cut in stone, painted, or even in many of their print and manuscript forms, epitaphs serve a highly visible function of display and announcement. The “public” aspect of epitaphic writing is intrinsic to its conventions: the Classical address to a generalized “lector” or “viator,” widely revived in the sixteenth century; the devotional pieties of “such is life,” “as I am now, so shall you be,” “disce mori,” the Classical-Christian “pulvis et umbra sumus,” or other universalizing truths presented in a hortatory or sermonic mode. When they are presented as monuments (monere, to point out, instruct), epitaphs’ function of interpelling a general audience is heightened by their tomb medium: such monuments present some of the most elaborate, visually imposing, and symbolically programmatic artworks of the early modern period. These monuments and their writings surround and occupy the space of the church, society’s symbolic point of gathering and incorporation.

Several major earlier studies have explored categories of public inscription closely related to the epitaph as key aspects of early modern writing worlds and public culture. Roger Chartier’s work on the different categories of texts and images that plastered the public walls of sixteenth-century France on civic and official occasions, what in an English context would be called “broadsides,” describes these ubiquitous prints as a key feature of a new public market for the written word as well as a driver of the “typographic acculturation” of early audiences. Tessa Watt’s survey of English

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broadsides as texts that covered the walls of private homes and public inns identifies these productions as a key means for the dissemination of a broadly shared “popular” culture. Juliet Fleming, in showing that such writing on the walls consisted not only of prints but also of a range of texts drawn, painted, chalked, carved, or even written in smoke stains, challenges us to reconceive of the category of “text” and the possibilities of access to and experience of the written word in the pre-modern world. Through their overlapping concerns, each of these authors engages with the ways in which the visibly displayed quality of these writing categories helps produce a “public” or “popular” culture, and, in turn, how the diffusion and shared uses of these writings complicate and diversify “literacy” as a social category.

This chapter advances a broadly related inquiry. Early modern epitaphic writing constitutes a category of “public” and indeed even, in a limited sense, “popular” writing. Epitaphs circulate through a continuum of different material media, encompassing graffiti, wall paintings, manuscript slips, broadsides, brasses, floorstones, parchment tables, hung painted boards, printed pamphlets, stone mural tablets, and freestanding stone tombs. Though these different material forms are each marked by distinct formal tendencies and functional possibilities, epitaph writing broadly encompasses a shared set of conventions and concerns that circulates through all. This chapter takes a broad approach to the early modern epitaph exploring the relations among these different material manifestations. Reading the evidence of the past in this way reveals a ubiquitous poetic form that broadly shapes popular conceptions of social and historical belonging.

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Its widespread familiarity does not mean its production and social circulation are necessarily consensual, however: if the epitaph is widely invested with social and literary value, it is also marked by shifting conflicts over the relative value of particular material media and poetic styles, conflicts that directly or indirectly reflect the social tensions endemic to a participatory form.

Since many of the media through which early modern audiences experienced epitaphs are highly ephemeral, a robust approach drawing on a wide range of contemporary and later scholarly sources is required to reconstruct the social place and prominence of epitaphic writing. Texts that do survive, in stone and paper, represent an “archive,” that is, a corpus historically constituted and maintained through shifting principles of inclusion. Literary scholars have come to be more aware that early modern books survive disbound, rebound, with pages cropped or washed, with images and title pages added or removed, and otherwise gently or more assertively sophisticated, whether for reasons of profit or of taste. Comparably, early modern tombs that survive do so repaired, repainted, rebuilt, physically relocated, or even “copied” from new materials; some categories of monument survive barely or not at all. The early modern poetic commonplaces that tombs too “shall be crumbled unto dust,” that neither “brass nor stone nor earth” withstands mortality, are not merely rhetorical postures; they accurately record a contemporary written culture that rapidly produces and destroys tombs and tomb texts. Indeed, producing is often equivalent to destroying, as the setting up of

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97 Herbert, “Church Monuments”; Shakespeare, Sonnet 65.
monuments and texts rewrites the finite space of the church, in the manner of a palimpsest or perhaps even an erasable writing “tablet.”

Epitaphic writing constitutes what Pierre Bourdieu calls a “field,” or more specifically a “subfield” of cultural production, marked by “positions” and “position takings” reflecting and reproducing competing systems of economic and social value.

Inscriptions may take the form of carefully crafted prose biographies, drafted by heralds or other professionals with an intensity of progressive revision otherwise almost unattested for literary texts of the period. Or they may take the form of amateur or even impromptu meditative verses composed by friends and relatives; these two forms may appear alongside one another on the tomb. Tombs themselves vary from elaborate professional monuments to cheap local inscriptions: elite freestanding stone tombs may be produced at costs running up to thousands of pounds through a multi-stage process including drafting in color on paper and modeling in clay, production in separate pieces in professional workshops outside London, and shipping for assembly on site up to

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100 For heavy revisions on drafts for monument inscriptions, see, e.g., BL MS Egerton 3864, William Dugdale’s epitaph for Sir Thomas Herbert and his first wife Lucia, with heavy marginal and interlinear additions and alterations in three main stages; and BL MS Add. 72439, ff. 165-71, the royal secretary George Rudolph Weckherlin’s epitaph for Dudley Carlton, in five successive corrected drafts, one with emendations in Carlton’s hand, one written out in block capitals.
hundreds of miles away. Mass-produced brass plates, in contrast, might be purchased locally for a few shillings, sometimes even in the form of English or imported continental pre-Reformation plates flipped over for reuse. Brasses and stone slabs might be inscribed locally in urban workshops, or by a book illustrator, or by an itinerant mason, or even ad hoc by a local writing master. Printed epitaphs vary from elaborate vanity prints commissioned by families to cheap broadsides sold to the public. Across all these different formal and material possibilities there are competing hierarchies of social, religious, and literary value, some of which diverge from or even directly contradict the hierarchy of material worth.

Two major literary studies of early modern English epitaphs, by Joshua Scodel (1991) and Scott Newstok (2009) have laid a groundwork for understanding their formal qualities and social iterations. As discussed in the last chapter, however, both these studies have sought to extricate the epitaph from its site at the tomb. For Scodel, the “literary” quality of Jonson’s epitaphs resides precisely in their ability to detach

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102 Llewellyn, The Art of Death, 111-12; idem, Funeral Monuments, 164; Sherlock, 11.
103 Nathaniel Freind, a Restoration writing instructor in Westerleigh, Gloucestershire, notes that he cut the lettering on one of the markers for his son’s Oxford tomb; he also records commissioning another writing master and previous acquaintance to cut a gravestone for his brother, which he subsequently travels to visit. See Bodleian MS Top.Oxon.f.31, discussed infra and in Chapter 5.
themselves from, and critically comment on, the social rituals of burial and commemoration. For Newstok, the widespread citing of epitaphs in literary texts beyond the tomb marks the inauguration of a proto-modern, self-conscious or even deconstructive awareness of the linguistic structure of loss. In the last chapter I suggested there might be reason to revise these critical formulations in the evident tendency of early epitaphs to materialize themselves at the site of the tomb and funeral. In this chapter, I will explore another reason why we may want to reconceive the literary text’s relation to the tomb: the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are a period of proliferation not only of printed and manuscript texts, but also of tomb monuments. In England, as on the continent, the sixteenth century sees, in uneven stages, the re-establishment of V-cut lettering, the arrival of Roman script, an expansion in length and number of inscriptions, and an increasing turn towards verse for inscriptions displayed in the church. If the Reformation introduces new anxieties about the status of tomb monuments, these are, at least from the early Elizabethan period, compensated for by expanded production of new and often historically hybrid monumental forms. Though Protestant, Puritan, and Catholic sensibilities exert powerful influences over the specific form of tombs and tomb texts, as well as in some cases their absence, the increased production of monuments and epitaphs is, broadly speaking, a European phenomenon, and reflects the spread of civility discourse and diffusion of written matter much more directly than the impulses of any particular confessional identity.\textsuperscript{105}

\textsuperscript{105} On these broad historical changes in a European context, see Petrucci, \textit{Public Lettering}, op. cit.; idem, \textit{Writing the Dead: Death and Writing Strategies in the Western Tradition}, trans. Michael Sullivan (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1995), in Italian as \textit{Le scritture ultime: Ideologia della morte e strategie dello scrivere nella tradizione occidentale} (Torino: Giulio Einaudi, 1995), esp. 76-86; Philippe Ariès,
As Peter Stallybrass has shown, the introduction of print in Europe, rather than resulting in the demise of the earlier manuscript traditions it has often been supposed to supplant, actually produces an explosion of new kinds of manuscript writing.\footnote{106}

Something perhaps comparable happens with the expansion of monumental writing, which actually predates the introduction of print, but which subsequently develops alongside print’s general diffusion of the presence of written material. To adapt Roger Chartier’s earlier-cited phrase, epitaphic writing, in all its various media, may represent another key means by which public audiences were “acculturated” not only to print but also more generally to “literacy” or the written word. Indeed, since monumental writing often takes on a status that is paradigmatic of other types of writing—it is particularly closely imitated by the printed book—epitaphs may be said to be a particular vehicle for establishing and reinforcing of what Juliet Fleming has described as the distinctively materialized, localized forms of premodern writing that later haunting modes or an “idealizing tradition” have forgotten.\footnote{107} Already for Quattrocento Italian humanists, the

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revival of Classical learning was seen as “proportional” to the visibility of monumental lettering.\textsuperscript{108}

Can we extend discussions of early modern “public” and “popular” culture to tomb monuments, though, when they so obviously tend to register the wealth and power of social elites? It is certainly true that monumental forms and epitaphic writing are marked by significant social barriers to access; the costs associated with monumental writing extend not only to the erection of the tomb but also to the obtaining of church burial space. As Vanessa Harding has shown, access to church burial is marked by repeated conflicts as well as a “geography of desirability” or hierarchy of placement that is generally shared with the pre-Reformation.\textsuperscript{109} It might be possible to argue for a significant opening of access to monumental forms from the sudden and widespread late-seventeenth-century proliferation of churchyard gravestones, a historically new form noticeable from about 1665 onwards in both England and America that corresponds historically with a marked increase in literacy rates. This historical shift is, however, dialectical: churchyards develop their own hierarchies of space and monumental form, and, indeed, if anything, increase the precision with which relative burial positions are marked.\textsuperscript{110} For earlier periods, moreover, if we expand the archive of monumental forms...

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\textsuperscript{110} The sudden advent of stone churchyard stelae has to my knowledge not been accounted for, despite several extensive art historical studies of New England stones; on
writing to include the ephemeral texts and media that are the focus of this chapter, it is clear that cultures of epitaph writing have their own relatively more open points of access, as well as sites where the allocation of both cultural and economic capital is actively contested.

The social values attributed to epitaphic writing stem not only from the predominantly elite concerns motivating its production, but also from its forms of social display and its modes of consumption. To paraphrase Chartier’s seminal work again, specific social forms do not correlate neatly with specific social cleavages; the “meanings” of texts and artworks arise out of a complex interplay of content, medium, and reading acts.111 Early modern readers were capable of being highly critical of tombs and their texts, as the repeated complaints against ostentatious display or falsely flattering inscriptions attest.112 Even the most conservative monumental forms are available to appropriation, inversion, and pastiche. The earliest surviving funerary “hatchment” in Scotland, for instance, is in fact a critical subversion of the form, in which the expected coat of arms at the center of the plaque has been supplanted by a grinning figure of death.113 In a half-satirical guide to comportment in St. Paul’s, Thomas Dekker suggests

the European context, see Ariès, 337-341, and, on the shift towards socially acceptable cemetery burial generally, Harding, 123-24.
112 See Newstok, 145-49.
that the gallant may quickly and cheaply obtain an epitaph for himself by carving his name in one of the many already available brasses.\textsuperscript{114} A variety of church graffiti do survive from the medieval and early modern period, and even from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; as mentioned above, “palimpsested” brasses and stone slabs are also widespread. These forms of public (re)inscription were commonplace and not necessarily seen as transgressive.\textsuperscript{115} Their interaction in the church with more elite forms was at least potentially a site of conflict, however: John Stowe records a critical graffito written on the ostentatious St. Paul’s monument of Christopher Hatton, a satirical distich complaining the space might better have been occupied by a tomb for Philip Sidney.\textsuperscript{116}

Most of the abundant evidence of early modern monument reading concerns practices that are less directly critical or subversive. The traces of these practices point to widespread investments in inscriptional forms as literary texts, as historical records, and as points of access to elite or educated culture. If the circulation of anthologies of inscriptions is probably continuous from late antiquity through the middle ages, from the early sixteenth century a new genre of heraldic visitations and surveys more directly gathers inscriptions from their source in English churches.\textsuperscript{117} Collections of epitaphs compiled by English tourists abroad follow soon after. Thomas Hoby’s 1540s manuscript

\textsuperscript{114} The Guls Horne-booke (London: R.S., 1609), 19-22.
\textsuperscript{115} Fleming, esp. 34-36.
autobiography and travelogue is largely taken up by copies of foreign church
inscriptions;\textsuperscript{118} Protestant Hoby shared inscriptions with the Catholic William Barker,
whose collection of Italian epitaphs, both “antiquae” and “modernae,” is published in
England in 1554 and 1566.\textsuperscript{119} Foreign visitors collected English epitaphs in turn; in 1575
an English translation of a foreign account of travel in England publishes the Latin
inscription from the tomb of Henry VII translated into rhyme royal.\textsuperscript{120} In 1589 George
Puttenham gives an anecdote about being locked in a church while reading a lengthy
epitaph.\textsuperscript{121} Around the same time the so-called informal “Elizabethan Society of
Antiquaries” launches its scholarly exchanges in part by compiling notes on English
epitaphs.\textsuperscript{122} As Scott Newstok has shown, in the Elizabethan period the public theater
also begins to incorporate numerous scenes involving the performance of epitaphs.\textsuperscript{123} In
1593 Thomas Eliot’s French textbook includes a dialogue involving an imaginary tour of
St. Paul’s; the interlocutors pause at Philip Sidney’s monument to read out his epitaph,
which is cited in the text.\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{118} BL MS Egerton 2148, “A Booke of the trauaile and life of me Thomas Hoby,” in
Hoby’s autograph; \textit{The Travels and Life of Sir Thomas Hoby, Kt. of Bisham Abbey,
Written by Himself. 1547-1564}, ed. Edgar Powell (London: Offices of the Royal
Historical Society, 1902).
\textsuperscript{119} \textit{Epitaphia et inscriptiones lugubres} (London: John Cawood, 1566). The 1554 edition
is lost: see George B. Parks, “William Barker, Tudor Translato,” \textit{The Papers of the
Bibliographical Society of America} 51.2 (1957): 126-40, 129. Hoby and Barker met each
other in Rome and sought out antiquities with others (Hoby, 26). Their collections of
Naples inscriptions overlap particularly closely.
\textsuperscript{120} \textit{The Traveiler of Ierome Turler} (London: William How for Abraham Weale, 1575),
175-76.
\textsuperscript{121} \textit{The Art of English Poesy}, ed. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca and
\textsuperscript{122} Thomas Hearne, ed., \textit{A Collection of Curious Discourses} (Oxford, 1720).
\textsuperscript{123} Newstok, Chapter 5.
\textsuperscript{124} \textit{Ortho-Epia Gallica} (London: John Wolfe, 1593), 162-71.
From the seventeenth century descriptions of monument tourism and epitaph reading survive more abundantly. In 1600 William Camden publishes the first printed collection of Westminster epitaphs, which is sold in the church by the verger.\textsuperscript{125} In 1610 Prince Henry leads his uncle Christian IV of Denmark in a tour of the monuments of the Henry VII Chapel; in 1612 Princess Elizabeth conducts the Elector Palatine similarly.\textsuperscript{126} In 1611 Henry Peacham lists the Westminster monuments among the attractions (or vanities) that Londoners may visit for a penny, suggesting that tomb visiting was already somewhat regulated and institutionalized, as well as popular.\textsuperscript{127} Around this time, within the span of a few years, German visitors Georg von Swartzstät, Justus Zinzerling, and Valentin Arithmaeus all record their separate tours of St. Paul’s and Westminster monuments, and all purchase copies of William Camden’s published transcription of Westminster epitaphs.\textsuperscript{128} Arithmaeus states that German visitors in London invariably pay to go look at tombs, and complains Camden’s guidebook is overpriced; he later publishes his own collection of London inscriptions in Frankfurt, possibly for travelers to

\textsuperscript{125} Reges, Reginae, nobiles et alii in ecclesia collegiata B. Petri Westmonasterii sepulti (London: E. Bollifantus, 1600). Later expanded editions are published in 1603 and 1606.\textsuperscript{126} John Nichols, The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First, His Royal Consort, Family, and Court, 3 vols. (London: J.B. Nichols, 1828), 2.87.\textsuperscript{127} ‘To the famous Traueller,’ in Thomas Coryate, Coryats Crudities (London: W.S.), 1611, K4v.\textsuperscript{128} Von Swartzstät, Baron von Hopffenbach (or Offenbach) records his visits in Folger MS V.a.316, [24v]; Zinzerling’s and Arithmaeus’s accounts are translated in William Brenchley Rye, England as Seen by Foreigners in the Days of Elizabeth and James the First (London: John Russell Smith, 1865), 129-35 and 175-78. The particular interest on the part of Germans may reflect English Protestant immigrants’ work in monument construction, which brings some particularly Northern influences into England in the Elizabethan and Jacobean period; see Esdaile, 17 and 20.
carry abroad.¹²⁹ Foreign tourists were not the only visitors: in 1633 John Earle alludes to “the fellow of Westminster” as a guide who will recite tomb inscriptions.¹³⁰ A ca. 1640 manuscript poem describes “that snoveling worme that liues by tombes” and “earne[s] my pence, and thanks for spelling ore / His Kings and Queenes.”¹³¹ Such paid monument readers, whose knowledge was evidently uncertainly coded at once as an exclusive preserve and as a contemptible trade, would have deciphered unfamiliar scripts and epigraphic abbreviations; perhaps their ranks included impoverished students or aspiring poets. Such monument reading practices diffuse socially and geographically beyond London and the elite, and intersect with already present everyday practices of remembrance: in the Restoration, the rural Lancashire apprentice Roger Lowe notes that it is his “common custom” to go into churchyards to look at graves; his diary records not only repeated visits to the grave of his parents, which must have had some kind of marker, but also a particular visit to Ormskirk to see the tombs of the Earls of Derby.¹³²

Whether in paper or stone, epitaphic writing is a ubiquitous and indeed central aspect of early modern literary social and religious life. It is also a body of writing attributed specifically “literary” and even “lyric” value. As I will show, in the Elizabethan literary economy, epitaphs are claimed as conferring authority and dignity on the lyric collections that contain them—not the other way around. Some aspects of the

¹²⁹ Mausolea Regum, Reginarum, Dynastarum, Nobilium, Sumtuosissima, Artificiosissima, Magnificentissima, Londini Anglorum in Occidentali Urbis angulo structa (Frankfurt: [s.n.], 1618).
¹³¹ Robert Wild or Wilde, “Vpon certayne bottles of wine buried in sand in a sellar,” in British Library MS Egerton 2725, fol. 11r. This poem is the first of a back and forth exchange on the subject between Wild and Thomas Thaine.
“lyric” quality of early modern epitaphs are readily recognizable from the perspective of later aesthetic schemes: the basic function of these texts is, indeed, a paradigmatically lyric one to stage and reflect on the encounter between the most powerful universal (death comes for all) and the deepest particular (here lies). Other aspects of their social value and literary categorization, however, require that we suspend modern systems of aesthetic judgment, recognizing the worth that inheres in poems that rely on the conventional and commonplace, or that even function as collective social or public properties reiterated across multiple different (tomb) sites rather than proceeding from any originating personality.

The cultural value invested in the early modern epitaph is also a function of its physical presence, like other sacred objects and artworks, at society’s symbolic site of incorporation in the church. These texts gesture at once at the transcendent and at the crudely material; they are untimely or uncanny “palimpsests” or “anachronisms,” not inert or atrophied memories but active negotiations of possible pasts and futures. In the early modern period the capacity for the epitaph to collapse history is keenly felt. Indeed, one of the defining features of the aesthetics of the early modern English tomb monument is that it lacks a clear progressive development of style, instead recursively drawing from

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and conjoining a variety of different earlier historical elements.\textsuperscript{134} The same may be said of the poetics of the early modern epitaph, which freely ranges between and conflates Renaissance, medieval, and Classical styles and formulae.

This chapter is organized to confront three main overlapping and competing social categories of early modern epitaphic writing: as tomb text, as funeral text, and as lyric. Each of these categories has its own possibilities of form and function, though, as I will show, their material possibilities and social uses are contiguous and sometimes overlapping. In the chapter’s first section I focus on a mostly overlooked though once ubiquitous form of tomb text, that of the parchment or wooden “table” hung up by the gravesite. Recovering these ephemeral “tables” challenges us to reconceptualize the cultural possibilities for early modern tomb writing, and reveals a form once widely used for displaying mourning and commemorative verse. In the following section I focus on another category of text that was once widespread but has largely failed to survive, and that may likewise challenge us to reconceive of the possibilities of epitaphic form: the manuscript and printed broadside verses that were presented and displayed at the funeral. These funerary “epitaphs” were a key component of the routinization of epitaphic writing in contemporary culture. In a brief concluding section I turn specifically to the poetry of the early Elizabethan period, a historical moment when epitaphic writing exerts a particularly strong influence over the form and content of a developing print culture for vernacular “lyric.”

The sixteenth-century broadside “epitaph” becomes the seventeenth-century broadside “elegy”; verses displayed around the dead body in the funeral, called in the

\textsuperscript{134} Llewellyn, \textit{Funeral Monuments}, 90.
sixteenth century “epitaphs,” transform into seventeenth-century “elegies.” This broad terminological shift has important implications that current literary history and theory have failed to recognize. The much more widely studied literary tradition of English elegy is in fact a derivative of an earlier poetic culture of epitaph; indeed, as a widespread social form, occasional elegy arguably comes under formation through the Elizabethan corpus of public “epitaph” writing. This is not simply a literary historical point; it is also a challenge to how we conceive of these poetic forms as distinct entities and in relation to one another. The genetic relationship between elegy and epitaph suggests we reconsider the close relationships that persist between these forms, that is to say, the ways in which the work of mourning and memory continue to implicate one another, whether through nostalgia, trauma, or psychological sublimation. In turn, monumental texts have never been bound by stone, or by the distant past. For early modern audiences, epitaphs are a familiar, mobile form of writing, read and recited in part because they offer fleeting spaces of encounter between the social collective, individual emotion, and history.

_Tomb Text and Table_

George Puttenham’s multiple attempts to define the epitaph in his 1589 _The Arte of English Poesie_ reveal some of the overlapping and conflicted contemporary investments in the form. The epitaph is given two separate chapters in his taxonomy of poetic types, which is arranged in a rough order of decorum or precedence. Each appears as a note of clarification or addendum to the chapter that immediately precedes it. The first appears towards the beginning of the taxonomy, immediately after a chapter on epic
or “historical” poetry and as a counterpart. If epic serves as a register of the life of great men, then the means of commemorating the “inferior” or “mean” sort—the means by which they claim access to historia or historical representation—is the epitaph.135

In a later chapter on “The form of poetical lamentations” (135-37) Puttenham excludes mention of the epitaph, focusing instead on the Classical funerary epicede and monody (for death) and the elegy (for love). Instead, he places a separate chapter “Of the poem called epitaph used for memorial of the dead” (144) just before the end of the taxonomy, though its position is determined again by its purpose of providing clarification. This chapter on the epitaph immediately follows his discussion of the epigram, a form defined as used for inscription on tables, walls, and windows (142-44). As Puttenham makes clear, this second, fuller description of the epitaph is as a subcategory of the epigram’s materialized inscription:

An epitaph is but a kind of epigram, only applied to the report of the dead person’s estate and degree, or of his other good or bad parts, to his commendation or reproach, and is an inscription such as a man may commodiously write or engrave upon a tomb in few verses, pithy, quick, and sententious, for the passerby to peruse and judge upon without any long tarriance.

In this description, the epitaph’s poetic form is inseparable from its specific array of material possibilities. In contrast with his earlier encoding of the epitaph as a poetic form appropriate to the “mean” sort, it here appears as general vehicle for preserving the memory of all estates. It is also described as a vehicle of blame as well as reproach, thus

135 *The Art of English Poesy*, ed. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2007), 131-32. This is a comparison later repeated by Samuel Johnson (“to afford a subject for heroic poems is the privilege of very few, but every man may expect to be recorded in an epitaph”), and it is possible both derive from a common, earlier, possibly continental Latin source.
as a branch of epideictic rhetoric, the means for transmitting exempla in contemporary systems of education. Finally, the epitaph is classified specifically as a “kind of epigram,” thus a (short) text defined by its materialization and material presence.

As Puttenham’s discussion of the epitaph continues, it shifts from descriptive to prescriptive modes. The personal preferences expressed may provide an example of the idiosyncratic opinion for which Puttenham’s poetics has often been discounted. Yet in venturing into polemic, Puttenham gives us a vital account of contemporary cultural practices:

So if it exceed the measure of an epigram, it is then (if the verse be correspondent) rather an elegy than an epitaph, which error many of these bastard rhymers commit, because they be not learned, nor (as we are wont to say) their craft’s masters. For they make long and tedious discourses and write them in large tables to be hanged up in churches and chancels over the tombs of great men and others, which be so exceeding long as one must have half a day’s leisure to read one of them, and must be called away before he come half to the end, or else be locked into the church by the sexton, as I myself was once served reading an epitaph in a certain cathedral church of England. They be ignorant of poesy that call such long tales by the names of epitaphs; they might better call them elegies, as I said before, and then ought neither to be engraven nor hanged up in tables. I have seen them nevertheless upon many honorable tombs of these late times erected, which do rather disgrace than honor either the matter or maker. (144)

Puttenham’s insistence on distinguishing the generic labels “elegy” and “epitaph” anticipates the classificatory shift whereby “elegy” emerges as a standard title term for lengthy poems of lament and commemoration, a shift I will have more to say about in the following chapter. His distinction draws on antiquarian formal definitions of the epitaph,

in particular the widely repeated and generally ignored insistence on brevity. It also betrays some confusion: long commemorative poems may apparently only properly be called elegies “if the verse be correspondent,” begging the question what happens in the English vernacular; and it at least complicates if it does not quite contradict his earlier definitions of the elegy as an amatory genre (134, 137).

What is arguably most important about this point of dispute over terminology and function, however, is the portrait Puttenham gives us of what he reveals is a commonplace contemporary social practice: that of hanging up lengthy poetical commemorations in “tables” on, above, or alongside church tombs, texts that contemporaries would have identified as “epitaphs.” That Puttenham describes these texts as written by “rhymers” strongly suggests that they were commonly or even predominantly in the vernacular; it also suggests they were commonly composed by third parties as a means of inserting themselves into the public discourse of mourning and remembrance. In other words, the contemporary category of the “monument” includes a set of relatively cheaper, more ephemeral or even temporary tomb texts whose material form specifically served the function of opening up participation in the social rituals of commemoration through displays of verse.

Puttenham’s description of these texts as “hanged” and as “written” (rather than “engraven”) indicates that he is thinking specifically of a subcategory of the wall monument consisting of texts written on wood boards, canvas, or parchment, often but not always within a wooden frame, hung as a supplement to or substitute for more permanent tomb monuments. Such “tables” or “tablets” are widely described in accounts extending at least as early as the fourteenth century. Numerous late medieval chronicles,
church accounts, and wills indicate it was common practice for late medieval royal and
ecclesiastical burials at Windsor and Westminster, as well as more common burials in
parish churches, to be marked with hung “tables” of wood or parchment.\textsuperscript{137} The
sixteenth- and seventeenth-century proliferation of new wall monuments partly
functioned to displace earlier “table” monuments, but also filled church walls with new
examples of the form. Increasingly, it appears, these later “table” epitaphs functioned not
as self-commissioned monuments but as third-person tributes erected by friends, clients,
and family eager to display their participation in the social performance of mourning and
commemoration. Skelton’s 1512-1516 table epitaphs for Henry VII and his mother
Margaret Beaufort in Westminster Abbey were alluded to in the last chapter. Later
references are often fleeting or elusive: for example, a published epitaph written by a
female author, possibly Isabella Whitney, frames itself as a response to the “rime ruffe”
written by “I.H.” for one “William Griffith,” which “hangs at Pawles as euery man goes
by”; this hung text is not otherwise recorded.\textsuperscript{138}

Art historians have sometimes noted but mostly overlooked the presence of these
“tables” in post-Reformation churches. Katherine Esdaile and Sachervell Sitwell’s
standard \textit{English Church Monuments 1510–1840} (1946) mentions the existence of the
form, but suggests, wrongly, that none survive.\textsuperscript{139} More recently, Nigel Llewellyn’s
magisterial \textit{Funeral Monuments in Post-Reformation England} (2000) points to the

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{139} \textit{English Church Monuments} (Oxford University Press, 1946), 46 and 130.
\end{flushleft}
scattered survival of post-Reformation examples, and suggests that “hundreds” of these once must have existed.\textsuperscript{140} Even that large number may be a low estimate, even for the post-Reformation. Recovering the presence of these hung “tables” requires a robust approach drawing on later antiquarian scholarship as well as contemporary references and descriptions—as well as, of course, attention to what actually survives.

From comparison across different sources, the antiquarian surveys of the seventeenth century can be shown to be internally inconsistent as to how or whether they record hung tables or note the materials on which texts are inscribed: wooden tables are evidently a common enough form that they are often not catalogued or not described as such. (Nor are later nineteenth-century surveys necessarily consistently descriptive in this regard.) As Christian Steer has shown, early monuments collectors are also highly selective, typically recording monuments deemed of value for particular artistic, heraldic, or historical reasons; an early heraldic record of Greyfriars copied by John Stowe in his \textit{Survey} catalogues less than one in five monuments actually present in the church.\textsuperscript{141} Still, early monuments collections do record the presence of “hung” or “wooden” tables. Both Henry Holland’s (1614) and William Dugdale’s (1641) collections of St. Paul’s epitaphs reveal that a number of these texts would have filled the walls of the church.\textsuperscript{142} In both their volumes it is clear that some of these “tables” are supplements “adjoining” or “next to” (\textit{juxta}) a stone tomb, including some apparently added to much earlier tombs, probably in the sixteenth century, to provide identifying information. Dugdale’s images

\textsuperscript{140} Llewellyn, \textit{Funeral Monuments}, 204.
\textsuperscript{141} Steer, \textit{op. cit.}, 32.
of the church show some of these, and some not mentioned in his text, as square boards projecting from walls and columns. Other tables described by Dugdale and Holland, including a number of Elizabethan date, are independent memorials. Holland transcribes eight “hanging” monuments; Dugdale’s later and fuller collection, out of a vast number of texts described simply as “on tables,” the majority of which are probably wall plaques of stone or brass, specifies twelve as “hanging” (pensilem, pendentem), some additionally as “wooden” (ligneam). These terminologies are applied inconsistently, however: Holland’s and Dugdale’s collections only partly overlap on which texts are “hanging.”

Turning to later antiquarian collections reveals many more examples. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century chorographies, guidebooks, and commissions record epitaph tables erected at dates extending into the eighteenth century and in churches across Britain and Ireland, including texts connected to some of the most important literary and political figures of the period. Among others, the vanitas epitaph attributed by local tradition to William Shakespeare, written on the death of his family acquaintance Anthony Underhill, was painted on boards and hung in the church at Ettington, a few miles from Stratford. The two-part verse epitaph on Lettice Knollys signed by her grandson Gervase Clifton, formerly by her tomb in Warwick Cathedral, was painted in gold on black boards. The original inscription marking the burial site of Walter Ralegh’s headless body in Westminster, perhaps only erected in the eighteenth century, was a painted wooden

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143 Dugdale, 80, 92, and 102.
144 E.P. Shirley, “The Underhills of Warwickshire,” The Herald and Genealogist 2 (1865): 127-32, 129. As Shirley notes, Dugdale, in The Antiquities of Warwickshire, notes the existence of this text but does transcribe it. Dugdale also does not state that it is wooden.
board. The verse epitaphs written for the Acton tomb of Anne, Lady Southwell by her husband Henry Sibthorpe and the local curate Roger Cox were painted on wooden tables that flanked a central stone panel in the manner perhaps suggestive of a triptych or hinged wax writing tables. All these examples have disappeared or been transformed: the Knollys epitaph disappeared in the nineteenth century; the “Shakespearean” text may be seen in a nineteenth-century “restoration” created after the original was lost; a brass plate for Ralegh now on display in Westminster Abbey is an 1845 replacement for a copper or tin plate that had already replaced the earlier wooden table. One (but only one) of the Southwell wooden boards is recorded as surviving in a twentieth-century private collection; the set of verses that once hung in the church may also be seen reproduced in the Folger manuscript of her poems, where their layout replicates their visual appearance on the wall.

Two of the most famous literary epitaphs of the early modern period were erected on wooden tables: those for Geoffrey Chaucer and Philip Sidney. Both these texts have been the topic of some critical discussion, if their shared form has not. The use of a “table” for both their monuments reflects the relative ease with which such monuments can be erected. While it is clear that in some cases hung tables functioned more or less interchangeably with more permanent stone tombs or stone mural monuments, the wooden table was also available as a relatively inexpensive means of laying claim to memorial space within the church. In contrast with sometimes laboriously drafted stone

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148 MS V.b.198, [73r] and [74r].
inscriptions, painted wooden tables offer a relatively accessible and informal means for swiftly erecting and displaying the third-person poetic tributes increasingly commonly composed on the deaths of public figures and writers.

The first monument erected for Chaucer in Westminster Abbey, and thus the origin of what subsequently became known as “Poets’ Corner,” was a table epitaph commissioned by England’s (and Chaucer’s) first printer William Caxton. Chaucer himself devoted careful attention to obtaining Westminster burial. His grave site was probably marked by an inscribed slab: Thomas Dart mentions such a slab as having been destroyed to make space for Dryden’s tomb, though it is possible the stone Dart was familiar with was a later creation or copy, possibly dating to Nicholas Brigham’s 1556 only partially understood shift of Chaucer’s remains.\(^{149}\) Brigham set up the stone tomb for Chaucer that may be seen in the form of a partial nineteenth-century restoration today.

Prior to Brigham’s monument, however, Caxton was the first to appropriate Chaucer’s gravesite and the sacred space of the church for the declaration and propagation of literary fame. According to his description of this epitaph, published at the end of his 1478 edition of Chaucer’s *Boece*, it was “wreton on a table hongynge on a pylere”; John Leland later describes it “in nivea tabella,” a “snow-white” table perhaps suggestive of the written page.\(^{150}\) Caxton transcribes the epitaph with a title advertising it


as the composition of the contemporary humanist scholar Stefano Surigone, but at the end of the printed transcription, following a line break, four lines refer the reader to Caxton’s commission of the monument:

Post obitum Caxton voluit te vivere cura
Willelmi . Chaucer clare poeta tuj
Nam tua non solum compressit opuscula formis
Has quoque sed laudes . iussit hic esse tuas.

It was the eager wish of your admirer William Caxton that you should live, illustrious poet Chaucer. For not only has he printed your works but he has also ordered this eulogy of you to be here.  

Since Norman Blake, scholars discussing Chaucer’s epitaph have skeptically questioned the veracity of Caxton’s account, taking these last four lines as additions created specifically for the printed text, arguing that Caxton sought to appropriate a table Surigone himself set up, or even suggesting that the whole “table” was only ever a literary conceit. However, as discussed in the last chapter, it is conventional for Renaissance epitaphs to counterpose poetic commemorations with “paratexts” or “colophons” describing the monument’s commission. Caxton’s description of himself as having “ordered” (iussit) these praises simply suggests that this quatrain was included along with Surigone’s text on the church monument as a public statement of his commemorative labors, as well as a public theorization of the close relation of printing and monumental construction as commemorative acts. As Alexandra Gillespie observes, the double sense of the text’s “here” (on the monument / in the printed text) actually


functions to collapse the distinctions between these forms, since Caxton’s shop itself was on the property of Westminster Abbey, and the book would have been produced and purchased close by the monument it transcribes. While we can of course never firmly demonstrate the presence or precise contents of Caxton’s table, to read his printed statement as an instance of play with the endless deferral of reference is precisely to read against its most evident purpose: to collapse sacred space into eternal literary fame; to raise the printed book to the status of the physical monument.

Caxton’s table epitaph disappeared later in the sixteenth century, possibly at the time of Brigham’s 1556 stone tomb, but other table epitaphs proliferated in English churches. As transcribed in both Holland’s and Dugdale’s collections, as well as in numerous other contemporary sources, these “tables” included the monument erected for Philip Sidney:

England, Netherlands, the Heavens and the Arts,
The Souldiers and the World, have made six parts
Of noble Sidney; for none will suppose
That a small heape of stones can Sidney enclose.
His Bodie hath England, for she it bred,
Netherlands his Blood in her defence shed,

The Heavens have his Soule, the Arts have his Fame,
All Souldiers the grief, the World his good name. 

The text, as first pointed out in print by William Camden, is in fact a close translation of the French text of an epitaph written in Latin and French versions by Joachim Du Bellay; this English epitaph was itself imitated by other later commemorations for Sidney,

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153 I copy the text as it appears in Dugdale, 109; cf. Holland, C4. Holland does not mention that this text is a wooden table.
including an epitaph by Walter Ralegh.\textsuperscript{154} The reuse and reapplication of epitaphic verses was a common feature of contemporary monuments, stemming from the mass production of brasses in the fifteenth century. Still in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries popular verses appear on monuments at multiple geographically disparate sites; the famous inscription guarding Shakespeare’s bones is likely simply a formula used by local stonecutters.\textsuperscript{155} Some later examples of reused verses and inscriptions, of course, may be due to the manuscript copying and circulation of texts rather than their production at a single source.\textsuperscript{156}

In Sidney’s case it is probably possible to trace the precise source for the table epitaph’s text: Du Bellay’s French epitaph is published in England in one of the first works to assert Sidney as representing a symbolic center for a new corpus of English literary production, Abraham Fraunce’s \textit{The Arcadian Rhetorike}.\textsuperscript{157} Since the French poem appears there simply as an example of good writing, without direct application to Sidney, the table can probably be dated to a few years after Sidney’s 1586 death, between Fraunce’s 1588 publication of his rhetoric and the first mention of the table’s existence in St. Paul’s in 1593, which is also the year of the publication of the new memorial anthology for Sidney that includes Ralegh’s imitation.

\textsuperscript{155} J.L. Wilson, “Allesley Church,” \textit{The Times Literary Supplement} (1 June 2012).
\textsuperscript{156} Some notes on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century epitaph verses that appear on monuments in multiple locations are helpfully included in Thomas Ravenshaw’s anthology, \textit{Antiente Epitaphes} (London: Joseph Masters & Co., 1878), 5, 8, 14, 17, 29, 33, 39. For other instances of reused epitaphs in print and manuscript culture, see Newstok, 89-90.
\textsuperscript{157} \textit{The Arcadian Rhetorike} (London: Thomas Orwin, 1588), E2\textsuperscript{v}-E3\textsuperscript{f}. 
Like Caxton’s epitaph for Chaucer, Sidney’s table epitaph reflects consciously on its own form in relation to other material media of commemoration. Unlike that earlier text, however, it displays a much greater anxiety about its own status in relation to the more durable stone monument, reflecting a culture in which grand persons are increasingly marked with ornate and imposing tombs. Despite the elaborate pageantry of the return of his body to England and the subsequent funeral, Sidney’s burial site never received a stone tomb. The hung epitaph functions at once as a substitute for and, paradoxically, a negation of such monuments. Wittily reinventing the epitaph’s conventional note of the division and distinct allocation of body to earth and soul to heaven, the table epitaph scatters Sidney’s various “parts” through estates, nations, and all “the World,” explicitly opposing this mobility of “fame” and “name” to the fixed spatiality of the “heape of stones.” As Joshua Scodel has discussed, a number of early modern English tomb inscriptions explicitly comment on the inadequacy of the tomb as a vehicle for representing the deceased.\textsuperscript{158} The Sidney epitaph’s figure of \textit{membra disiecta} participates in this tradition of opposing textuality or “fame” to the fixed monument, though it raises, rather than resolves, the question of whether its own textual status is more closely related to the scattered diffusion of memory or the fixed status of the tomb. Unlike its French source, which never would have circulated except in paper medium, Sidney’s table epitaph is in fact a church monument, indeed a compensation for the stone tomb it disavows. Though the table’s text is swiftly and widely reproduced in print and

\textsuperscript{158} Scodel, Ch. 1.
manuscript, its early printed copies insistently remark on its physical location in the church.\textsuperscript{159}

Such “tables” were not only a widespread feature of the internal space of the church; they were also, at least in one instance, represented on the stage. In Shakespeare’s \textit{Much Ado about Nothing}, two allusions to the practice of “hanging” epitaphs (4.1.217-18, 5.1.297) lead up to and culminate in the dramatic scene in which Claudio penitentially “hangs” an “epitaph” for Hero on the Leonato family tomb. The text of the epitaph is printed in its early editions, apparently indicating that Claudio also reads or has this text read out loud for the audience.\textsuperscript{160}

\begin{quote}
Done to death by slanderous tongues
   Was the Hero that here lies
Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,
   Gives her fame which never dies.
So the life that died with shame
   Lives in death with glorious fame. (5.3.3-8)
\end{quote}

Though Claudio states his wish for this text to remain when he is “dead” (Q) or “dombe” (F), he also states his intent “Yearly will I do this rite” (23), perhaps meaning he will hang up a new epigram every year or perhaps that he will return specifically to recite and meditate on this text.


Critics have often found the epitaph text itself unsatisfying, reading its passive constructions as a deliberate evasion on Claudio’s part of his responsibility for Hero’s (imagined) death, or even seeing its recuperation of Hero’s virtue as a reproduction of the patriarchal order that had produced violence against her in the first place. These points are vital, but they may pass too quickly over the symbolic power the play accords to the action of hanging the epitaph itself. Claudio, like Caxton before him, positions himself as a commissioner or propagator of memory, and asserts the Leonato family tomb as a site of living speech. Whether the play’s conclusion merely recapitulates an unjust order, or whether it offers the possibility of more radical repair and recognition, these actions take place through the ritual gesture of placing the epitaph as well as its text, and hinge on the value we attribute to Claudio’s curation of materialized “fame.” Indeed, Hero’s post-mortem assumption of a public identity in the church, one based on the “fame” that is wittily revealed as according with her given name, is at least arguably a loosening of some of the social strictures that surrounded her gender in life.

Claudio’s epitaph has been staged and imagined in a wide variety of ways, but we can gain a sense of the basic possibilities for its material form from visual representations of “table” epitaphs as well as scattered surviving examples. Already in the nineteenth century scholarly editors linked Claudio’s scene of epitaph hanging, as well as the mention of a “paper” or “waxen” epitaph in Henry V, to contemporary descriptions of paper epitaphs displayed in the funeral setting (practices I will discuss shortly). While

it’s possible that Claudio’s epitaph may have been written on a loose piece of paper or
parchment, the repeated description of it as “hanged” slightly more likely indicates a
framed table, possibly one painted out on wooden boards like surviving examples in
Southwark Cathedral (fig. 2.1) and St. Albans Cathedral (fig. 2.2).163 Other examples of
such wooden epitaph tables, perhaps all post-1700, typically in square frames, and
typically displaying a coat of arms, survive in churches throughout Britain, though they
have never been catalogued or studied in detail.164

In their material form and visual appearance these tables are evidently closely
related to other visual emblems and texts that would have filled the walls of the church:
framed royal coats of arms and tables of divine commandments, displayed by royal
de cree; later eighteenth- and nineteenth-century commemorative “hatchments” or
lozenge-shaped armorials hung in commemoration of the deceased; tables outlining the
laws governing consanguinity in marriage; “endowment” tables listing bequests to the
poor; even other texts, such as the letter from Charles I in praise of Cornish loyalty both
printed and apparently erected in all Cornish churches as framed wooden “tables.”165

163 While “hang” “hanged,” or “hangings” are sometimes used generally as terms for
decorating or furnishing an architectural space, with tapestries and by extension with other
decorations, its use here with a single, specific object seems to suggest the now more
164 Llewellyn, Funeral Monuments, 204 and note 296, 74, and 83.
165 On the Cornish tables, see J. Charles Cox and Alfred Harvey, English Church
Furniture (London: Methuen & Co., 1907), 355; also Emma Dent, Annals of
Winchcombe and Sudeley (London: John Murray, 1877), 264-66, which includes an
image of a still surviving example. On royal arms, see Cox and Harvey, op. cit., 351-57;
H. Munro Cautley, Royal Arms and Commandments in Our Churches (Ipswich, N.
Adlard & Co., ltd., 1934); Diarmaid MacCulloch, “Royal Arms in Suffolk Churches,”
Some of the officially mandated displays survive in slightly different media, as wall
paintings or as inscriptions carved in wood, but hung, framed, and painted “tables” seem
to have been the most common. (See fig. 2.3 for a visual example of such wall
furnishings). That these different hung visual and verbal wall furnishings were seen as
potentially belonging to a common category is indicated by a surviving example of
Elizabeth I’s arms that has been augmented with an attached wooden “table” presenting
an epitaphic poetic quatrain added at some point in the seventeenth century.166
Endowment tables, which appear in brass as well as on framed and painted wood boards,
also commonly doubled as monuments for their givers.167

Wall hangings sometimes may have been produced informally or ad hoc but most
likely typically involved commissions with the painters-stainers’ guild; examples bearing
coats of arms were the specific if contested prerogative of the herald-painters, who had
representatives probably in every English town. Herald-painters were also responsible for
the cloth hangings and coats of arms employed in the funeral setting, which I discuss in
Chapter 4. Despite surviving archives and accounts, and even though some of England’s

King: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation (Berkeley: The University of California
Press, 2001), 163.
166 St. Peter’s, Great Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire. See
October 15, 2015).
167 As Vanessa Harding shows, late medieval traditions of offering a donation to the
church in return for burial space transform in the fifteenth century into regularized fees
(122); later bequest tables are divorced from this function, and are thus rarer. On the
overlap between bequest tables and epitaphs in the late medieval period, see Ariès, 277-
81; for medieval and early modern English examples that double function in this way, see
Ravenshaw, 21 and 24; Camden, Reges, H1r-v; and Anthony à Wood, Athenae
Oxoniienses, ed. Philip Bliss (London: Lackington, Hughes, Harding, Mayor, and Jones et
al., 1813-1820), 2.93 (on Christopher Elderfield). A surviving late-seventeenth-century
framed wooden endowment table is that recording the gifts to the poor of Robert
Yeamans and, subsequently, his wife in St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol.
most important antiquaries, including William Camden, hailed from herald-painter origins, this key social group and their craft have never been studied in detail or extensively.\textsuperscript{168} The obvious reason for this historical and art historical lacuna is also likely the reason so few examples of these epitaph tables survive: the products of the early herald-painters fail to conform to later periods’ criteria of aesthetic value, while also falling outside of the purview of “popular” art.\textsuperscript{169}

The extremely low survival rate of painted wall furnishings indexes these historical shifts in tastes and values, in addition, of course, to the regular deterioration of materials over time. The extensive church renovations of the Victorian period, both motivated by and reacting against the Oxford movement and its associated ecclesiology, may have been a particularly intense period of loss. Writing in 1907, J. Charles Cox and Alfred Harvey describe a careless, unsystematic, yet also apparently wholesale destruction of formerly ubiquitous sixteenth- and seventeenth-century wall furnishings as having taken place over the course of their lifetimes.\textsuperscript{170} Such casual destruction extends much earlier and encompasses a variety of other causes, however. A rare early-nineteenth-century description of the removal of an epitaph table, a 1658 text for Richard Hunt, Dean of Durham Cathedral, pithily reveals these furnishings’ vulnerability to shifting tastes:

\textsuperscript{168} See Llewellyn, \textit{Funeral Monuments} 185, note 150.
\textsuperscript{169} For a useful study of Italian Renaissance painters as involved in a social “craft” of often-overlooked wall painting and interior decoration, however, see Bruce Cole, \textit{The Renaissance Artist at Work: From Pisano to Titian} (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1983).
his epitaph was inscribed on a tablet of wood, fixed to the adjoining pillar, which not being esteemed ornamental, was taken down and thrown into the vestry-room.\footnote{William Hutchinson, \textit{The History & Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham} (Durham: G. Walker, 1823), 2.201. The same collection records other surviving wooden epitaph tables in surrounding parish churches, however (440, 616).}

More general monument loss can be traced earlier still: William Thomas’s updated 1730 edition of William Dugdale’s \textit{Antiquities of Warwickshire} notes hundreds of monuments that had already disappeared since Dugdale’s 1656 volume. On several recorded occasions, eighteenth-century English cathedrals and churches undertaking restorations paid for workers to destroy or strip monuments from the whole church or one section, in at least one instance offering a flate rate per monument destroyed.\footnote{Herbert Macklin, \textit{The Brasses of England} (London: Methuen and Co., 1907), 308-309.}

While large-scale loss of tomb monuments is typically credited to the Reformation or the period of the Civil Wars, it is clear that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century neglect, as well as, paradoxically, renovation, were comparable causes of the loss of stones, brasses, and more ephemeral furnishings, perhaps especially in the case of relatively less ancient sixteenth- and seventeenth-century materials.\footnote{For additional instances showing nineteenth-century awareness of the ongoing loss of monuments, see H.R. Wilton Hall, “Notes and Memoranda on Some Hertfordshire Churches at the Beginning of this Century,” \textit{St. Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society Transactions}, new ser., 1 (1895-96): 29-52, 29-30 and 42-43; or the chapter cataloguing “Lost Brasses” in Cecil T. Davis, \textit{The Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire} (London: Phillimore & Co., 1899), 206-20.}

The surviving St. Albans epitaph table (fig. 2.1) was erected by Robert Maynard in memory of his father Raffe or Ralph (d. 1613), his mother or mother-in-law Margery Seale (d. 1619), and his paternal grandmother Margery Rowlatt or Rowlett (d. 1547), who came from a wealthy and well-established local family. On this table, each family
member is clearly represented with a coat of arms and particulars, a date of death, and a commemorative poem. Ralph’s detailed shield is presented centrally and above, showing nine distinguished families brought together by the alliance of Maynard and Rowlatt; the arms of Robert’s grandmother and mother-in-law appear in lozenges, a form commonly used to signify female bearers. The poems are each titled in the Classicizing dedicatory style (“to the memory of”) and each is followed by a common Latin mot or posy on the theme of virtue and death. That given to Margery Seale, “virtus post funera vivit,” was one of the commonest epigraphs of the period, used as an aristocratic signature or “device” as well as a text for tombstone inscription; the others express similar sentiments. Almost certainly the poems and tags are the authorial work of Robert, who marks himself as the commissioner of the monument at its bottom in a signature written out in a pseudo-lapidary compressed script, particularly noticeable in the conjoined “th”s, which resemble those of the inscription on Shakespeare’s Stratford-upon-Avon tomb.

Robert was a younger son who died apparently without issue, and the memorial with its dedicatory inscription together make a powerful claim to his presence in an enduring familial community of living and dead. As Peter Sherlock has shown, collections of family tombs inevitably present assertive (sometimes even fictitious) statements of succession and belonging. Possibly Robert lacked the financial resources to erect a more imposing or permanent stone tomb, but whether or not that was the reason for his choice of the medium, the table epitaph’s ability to readily display lengthy passages of text is well fitted to his assertion of inclusion. “Here lies” is the oldest and

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174 See the album amicorum of Dietrich Bevernest, Folger V.a.325, 27 and 43.  
175 Sherlock, Chapter 1.
most conventional of epitaph openings, but its repetition on the board has the effect of collapsing generations into a shared space of burial:

The man that’s buried in this toombe
    In heavenly Canaan hath a roome…

Heere lyes entombed a woman worthie fame
    Whose vertuos life gives honor to her name…

Lo here intombed lyes a widdowe worthie prayse
    Who in the feare of God devoutly spent her dayes…

These poems’ visual arrangement with Robert’s father’s poem at the top marks a hierarchy of gender, also reflected in Ralph’s poem’s length of fourteen lines in comparison with the twelve given to the two women. The anachronistic order of texts, however, also works to flatten the linear temporality of a more traditional genealogy, and the inclusion of female family members suppresses any patrilineal line of succession. Another non-chronological and even ungendered hierarchy to these poems unfolds at the metrical level: as can be seen in the lines cited above, when read in their natural sequence, the three poems increase in line length from tetrameter to pentameter to hexameter. This progressive augmentation may reflect an original intent to display the three poems stacked on top of the other in a “pyramid” or “obelisk” shape; or perhaps it offers a visual-aural conceit, not unrelated to that of George Herbert’s “Easter Wings,” in which increasing length represents the spiritual flourishing of the family, which grows in spite of loss.
The Maynard family table is a chance survival, though it may have been aided by three factors: the family’s local prominence; the relative neglect of St. Albans church between the time of the Reformation and its institution as a cathedral in the nineteenth century; and the fact that it takes part in a cluster of family monuments situated together on the north wall of the south aisle of the presbytery (fig. 2.4). This grouping of monuments clusters across from an altar tomb erected in the pre-Reformation probably for Robert’s grandfather John and near to a brass for Margery Rowlatt’s father Ralph. The later monuments, in addition to the wooden table erected by Robert, include a wall painting in memory of Raffe Maynard and a 1665 neoclassical stone wall memorial to a later descendant Charles and his wife Mary. As an ensemble, the collection of family monuments emphasizes the mobility of the epitaph form across different, potentially complementary, highly durable and highly ephemeral material media. The 1613 wall painting, which includes a quasi-effigial portrait of the deceased in prayer as well as a pseudo-lapidary Latin verse inscription, is probably an even more perishable commemoratory form than the wooden table. Very few examples of memorials painted directly on the wall survive today, though this may not have been uncommon practice, perhaps especially in earlier periods. Some early modern wall inscriptions were “graffiti”: the satirical distich written on Christopher Hatton’s ostentatious St. Paul’s monument was mentioned earlier; Isaac Walton records a more traditional admiring

176 On the family, see Natalie Mears, “Maynard, Sir Henry, (b. after 1547, d. 1610), administrator,” ODNB.
178 Lethaby, op. cit; Duffy, 333-34.
epitaph “writ with a coal” on the wall above John Donne’s St. Paul’s tomb. The Maynard family itself once had additional memorials painted directly on the walls of the nearby parish church of St. Michael’s, though only the faintest traces of what was once a lengthy inscription in the south chapel are now visible. According to a partial transcription from 1700, when much of the text had already been lost, it included an epitaph contrasting the provisionality and ephemerality of its own inscription with the eternal rewards of heaven: “Him fairer Arms in Heaven Gods angels have emblaz’d / Never shall his Christian name out of God’s books be raz’d.”

Robert Maynard’s epitaph table may reflect his limited financial resources for making a statement of his inclusion in his family line, but such wooden tables were also employed by wealthy and powerful elites as self-consciously modest commemorative gestures. A sheet of paper among the Hastings and Ellesmere family manuscripts, preserved by the family but viewable in photocopy in the Huntington library, records the Lord Chancellor Sir Thomas Egerton’s erection of a wooden table on the 1598 death of his son Sir Thomas. The sheet was apparently written out by the herald-painter and Norroy King of Arms William Segar and records two monuments erected around the same time: a floorstone commissioned by the Lord Chancellor as a future burial site for himself, and the wooden table for his son placed nearby. Drafts for the preparation of the Latin inscription on the floorstone apparently in the Lord Chancellor’s hand also survive.

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179 The Lives of Dr. John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Mr. Richard Hooker, Mr. George Herbert (London: Tho. Roycroft for Richard Marriot, 1675), 77. This detail is not included in the 1658 or 1670 editions of the life.
181 MS Ellesmere 1004.
alongside Segar’s transcription, and were probably carefully composed at the same time that Segar was creating a commissioned poetic text for his son. The Latin inscription for the stone is unusually restrained, and bears no name or date:

Anchora Animæ
fides et spes in Christo
Orimur Morimur
Sequentur Qui
non præcesserint

(Anchor of the soul—faith and hope in Christ—we are born and we die—they who will not have gone before shall follow)

This is the inscription that survives today in St. Mary’s Church, Dodleston, Cheshire, on the white marble lozenge floorstone marking the site where Egerton was buried in 1617. A nineteenth-century church rector, motivated by the “discredit” of the stone’s brevity and lack of name, set up an additional monument and epitaph alongside, though he also, apparently in consultation with the family, allowed the original stone to stand. In contrast with this stone, the wooden table Norroy describes does not survive in Dodleston church; nor does it survive in the nineteenth-century family chapel in Little Gaddesdon, Hertfordshire, where a number of other early family monuments were moved following its construction by the 7th Earl of Bridgewater. The table epitaph may already have been missing when John Egerton, the Lord Chancellor’s second son and subsequent heir,

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182 MS Ellesmere 1005 (like MS 1004, a photocopy of the original). The three drafts closely resemble the final version, though they shift the relative position of the fragmentary lines and experiment with other tags such as “oblivio” and “in morte vita.”

copied out family inscriptions from Dodleston church at some time in the early seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{184}

Underneath the transcription of “my Lord Chancellors stone,” Segar’s sheet transcribes the text described as “On a table hung upon the wall in the Chancell on the right hand.” As on the Maynard family table, or on Caxton’s tribute for Chaucer, the poetic text is headed by a title and followed by a signature. The signature is Segar’s own (“Will[i]am Segar Norrey Rex Armorum”). The title provides a genre (“epitaph armorial”) and a basic biographical résumé of the sort typically included in inscribed epitaphs:

\begin{quote}
An Epitaphe Armoriall upon the heroicall & thrice renowned knight Sr Thomas Egerton sonne & heyre to the righte honora[ble] Sr Thomas Egerton kn[igh]t Lo[rd]: keep[er] of her Ma[jes]te greate Seale of England
\end{quote}

If there were echoes and intimations of the sonnet form in Claudio’s sestet, or in the twelve- and fourteen-line forms of the Maynard family table, Segar’s painted poetic text is an almost perfect Shakespearean sonnet. It is also an epigram in the Classical mold, a fashionably humanist ekphrasis on the painted coat of arms that it evidently accompanied:

\begin{quote}
In siluer feilde w\textsuperscript{th} Sable Bordered
A Lyon Rampant Gules behould is sett
Between three fatall Phaons Ordered
    Mortall in Couler, & as Mortall whett
To Irish Isle I may Compare this feild
    Bordered wth Boggs, darke woods & danger[ous] parts
The Lyon him y\textsuperscript{th} bore this Martiiall shield
    The Phaons furious Irish w\textsuperscript{th} there darts
But nether Boggs, nor woods, nor darts could daunt
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{184} MS Ellesmere 1003.
This noble Lyons Couraige, till y't death
Takeing the Rebells part made secret Haunt
& w'd his dart depriu’d him of his breath
Oh cruell death Oh Natures greatest foe
what hast thou done to kyll this worthy wight
Thy woe it is past his fame shall over goe
Thy dart in reach, & liue in thy dispight
And in his Ashes shall another Rise
like to the Phœnix kind y't neuer dyes

Segar’s detailed armorial description indicates that this text must have appeared in a visual-verbal ensemble probably resembling those of figures 2.1 and 2.2. The poem records Sir Thomas’s death abroad in Ireland on the disastrous 1599 campaign led by the Earl of Essex. Its conceit of animated heraldic elements offers up a striking reflection on the function of heraldry to record hybrid combinations, turning familial identity and loss into a public declaration of national politics in its image of English elements contesting an Irish “field.” The conflation of heraldic pheon with Irish dart and biblical “sting” even equates Ireland with the threatening figure of Death. In doing so, however, it internalizes this threatening difference, as though in a variation of the commonplaces asserting death’s ineluctable presence (“in the midst of life…”). The death of the younger Thomas Egerton appears not as a private family concern but as a part of a national narrative of colonial expansion at once coded as inevitable and experienced as a national trauma.

Table epitaphs are not a uniquely English form; pre- and post-Reformation examples survive in continental Europe, perhaps predominantly in Northern and Lutheran regions. A 1490 square devotional painting with epitaphic inscription formerly hung above the tomb of prioress Janne Collijns in the Jericho convent in Brussels.¹⁸⁵ Luther’s

¹⁸⁵ This table survives in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin. I am grateful to Patricia Stroop for sharing her work with me on memorial culture in the Jericho convent.
parish church in Wittenberg remains filled with hung epitaphic devotional paintings from his lifetime and after, including several executed by Lucas Cranach the Younger.\textsuperscript{186} Other sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Gemäldeepitaphien or Bildepitaphien survive in churches and museums from Flanders to Silesia, albeit often (if not always) in elaborate sculpted rather than plain square frames, and “affixed” to the wall rather than hung.\textsuperscript{187} These works’ categorization both as “devotional icons” and as “artworks” has, obviously, produced institutional histories and patterns of survival entirely different from those of English tables. (Their status as “paintings” also means they continue to be digitized and reproduced in print almost invariably with their frames and painted inscriptions cropped.) These continental works’ common presentation of devotional iconography also clarifies the specific Reformed character of English tables: in England, heraldic displays supplant what may have been comparable pre-Reformation altar-piece scenes, perhaps in much the same way post-Reformation English funerary heraldry replaces the pre-Reformation display of religious banners and icons.\textsuperscript{188}

Epitaph tables were also a feature of Italian Catholic and humanist culture, where sixteenth-century examples appear to have blended earlier traditions of the “votive tablet” with the new Renaissance investment in the category of the “inscription” and the materialized epigram. Michelangelo illusionistically painted the identifying tituli of the

\textsuperscript{186} Albrecht Steinwachs and Jürgen M. Pietsch, \textit{St. Mary’s, the Evangelical Parish Church in Wittenberg, the Town of Luther} (Spröda, Delitzsch: Edition Akanthus, 2000).


Sistine Chapel ceiling as though appearing on projecting mounted wooden Classical boards or *tabulae ansatae*; similar inscriptive tables often appear in sixteenth-century paintings, sometimes even shown in outdoor scenes as hung from branches of trees.\(^{189}\) A widely copied woodcut illustration first included in Giacomo Mazzocchi’s *Epigrammata Antiquae Urbis* (1521), an early printed collection of ancient Roman inscriptions seminal for its size, scope, and accompanying illustrations, portrays a similar, possibly distinctive Renaissance or humanist style for such tables put to specific epitaphic use (fig. 2.5).\(^{190}\) In Mazzocchi’s image, another oblong Classical “table” hangs from a column on a cord probably resembling the visible “chains” sometimes mentioned in late medieval descriptions of hung epitaph tables in English churches.

The text Mazzocchi’s woodcut table contains is the self-composed epitaph of the second-century-B.C.E. painter and tragic playwright Marcus Pacuvius, which does not survive today in any inscription but is rather reported with admiration in Aulus Gellius’s second-century-C.E. *Attic Nights*. It is described there as an epigram “modest and pure in the highest degree, befitting his most discriminating dignity”:

> Youth, though you hasten, this stone asks you to look on it, and read what is written. Here rest the bones of the poet Marcus Pacuvius. This I desired, that you should not be unknowing. Farewell.\(^{191}\)

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\(^{189}\) Petrucci, *Public Lettering*, 30 and fig. 25. These were in contrast to the earlier epigrammatic *tituli* composed by Pope Sixtus for the frescoes on the chapel walls, which are painted in imitation of stone inscriptions.

\(^{190}\) LXX (L2). On Mazzocchi’s collection, see William Stenhouse, *Reading Inscriptions and Writing Ancient History: Historical Scholarship in the Late Renaissance* (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 2005), 32, 35–41. Mazzocchi was an important early printer of epigraphic calendars as well as collections of the epigrams hung on the statue of Pasquino; cf. Weiss, 160.

\(^{191}\) “Adulescens, tam etsi properas te hoc saxum rogat / Ut sese aspicias, deinde quod scriptum est legas. / Hic sunt poetae Pacuvii Marci sita / Ossa. Hoc volebam nescius ne esses. Vale.” (Gellius, 1.24.) In addition to other minor variations, Mazzocchi’s table
Mazzocchi’s volume describes the illustrated table displaying this text as belonging to a collection of inscriptions present in a house in the Trevi region of Rome. The same collection also contains one of the inscriptions known to have been present earlier in Pomponio Leto’s Academy, a source for other pseudo-Classical humanist “forgeries.”

Mazzocchi’s image thus seems to record a late Quattrocento or early Cinquecento humanist scholar’s imagined recreation of what an ancient Roman monument bearing Pacuvius’s epitaph might have looked like. (An early marginal annotation in one copy of Mazzocchi’s book takes the table as genuine, commenting with wonder on the survival of the inscription.) This instance of materializing a surviving ancient text as an “inscription” would not be unique: Giovanni Pontano, for example, seems to have set up antique epigrams around the tomb of his wife alongside his own compositions.

Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century publications reproduce numerous images of tombs and epitaphic inscriptions described as belonging to Ovid, Virgil, Euripides, and others, monuments that span a spectrum from willfully deceptive forgeries to wishful

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193 Stenhouse, 37. As Stenhouse shows, the annotations that circulated around Mazzocchi’s volume, some of which survive on multiple copies, were also in some instances skeptical about the antiquity of texts.

194 Petrucci, Writing the Dead, 82.
“discoveries” to self-consciously simulative tributes.\textsuperscript{195} Epigraphic forgeries were common, and not only circulated in paper but were also cut in stone.\textsuperscript{196} Indeed, another copy of the Pacuvius self-epitaph derived from Gellius’s text seems to have appeared in material form around the same time as Mazzocchi’s image in Taranto, where Pacuvius is supposed to have died; later references also sometimes also take this Taranto monument as an ancient survival.\textsuperscript{197}

Mazzocchi’s image was subsequently copied and circulated widely, apparently accepted an authentic model for a Classical or Classicizing monument. In Peter Appian’s compendious \textit{Inscriptiones Sacrosanctae Vetustatis} (1534), the hung table appears in a woodcut identified as “Romae Pacuuii Poetae monumentum,” i.e. “the poet Pacuvius’s monument in Rome.” The table is also copied as an engraving by the Wroclaw (Breslau) painter-engraver Tobias Fendt, who, in a coincidence of representation and practice, himself also worked as a painter of epitaph tables. Published in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century editions of the extravagant \textit{Monumenta}, a landmark “art book” of 125 plates illustrating ancient and modern tombs and epitaphs, the hung table appears marked simply as “Romae.”\textsuperscript{198}

\textsuperscript{197} Girolamo Vitelli and Guido Mazzoni, \textit{Manuale della Letteratura Latina} (Firenze: G. Barbèra, 1899), 59-60n.
\textsuperscript{198} Fendt’s mannerist painted epitaph tables survive in the National Museum, Wroclaw. Under slightly different titles and imprints, editions of the \textit{Monumenta}, which Fendt
Discussing the ubiquitous Renaissance Roman practice of hanging epigrams and epitaphs on public and religious statues, altars, and tombs, both David Rijser and Maia Gahtan conclude that the material for such inscriptions must have been paper.\(^{199}\) The repeated self-description of the epigrams hung in the Goritz Chapel at Sant’Angelo, some of which were collected and published as the 1524 *Coryciana*, however, is as “tables,” which suggests a range of possible materials, possibly including framed parchment or painted wooden boards, some perhaps resembling the “table” presented in Mazzocchi’s woodcut.\(^{200}\) Later in the baroque period, we know that “display writing” included wooden, cloth, and papier-mâché forms.\(^ {201}\) (Claudio’s epitaph, too, perhaps lacking a coat of arms, may have resembled the oblong table of Mazzocchi’s image.)

Conversely, this widespread Italian Renaissance epigraphic practice suggests that some English “table” epitaphs were simply written out on paper or parchment. The Beinecke Library’s recent acquisition of a square parchment “table” (in the catalogue, a “placard”) formerly placed on the wall above the tomb of Vincent Corbett illustrates what such more ephemeral “tables” may have looked like in the English context.\(^ {202}\) The exceptional survival of this example stems from its early collection by John Evelyn, probably for the reason that it contains verses signed by Richard Corbett, John Selden, based in part on a collection of drawings by Siegried Rybisch, appear in 1574, 1585, 1589, and 1671.


\(^{201}\) Petrucci, *Public Lettering*, 54-55.

\(^{202}\) Beinecke Library Osborn fb230.
and Ben Jonson. The form itself, while probably not common, may not be exceptional; Anthony Wood describes a very similar set of verses by multiple authors “transcribed” in a fair hand, “framed,” and set up in 1653 by the tomb of Lancelot Dawes.203

The Corbett parchment table exhibits features closely related to the wooden examples discussed above. Like the Maynard family table, its array of verses registers a social community. Unlike that painted wooden example, however, which articulates an imaginary kinship line or community of the dead, the Corbett table is oriented very much on the social networks of the living, and the distinction that derives from the illustrious group of names offering poetic tributes. The poems it contains seem to have been written in awareness of their presentation together: Richard Corbett’s poem refers to its material medium as a “tablet,” and Jonson’s poem describes itself as a commemorative offering that follows after those of the “friend” (Selden) and “sonne” (Richard), what is indeed its place if the poems are read in their evident order.

The unsigned quatrain “To the Reader” at the center of the table more anxiously insists on the adequacy of the table’s material form as a monument, assertively equating text and tomb:

Reader whose life and name did ere become
an honest Epitaph deserv’d a Tombe
Nor wants it here through penury or sloth
Who makes the one so’t be the first builds both.

203 “Besides his Epitaph were made three copies of Verses, viz. one in Greek by the said Tho. Tully, another in Lat. and the third in English by Joseph Williamson and Clem. Ellis Bachelours of Arts of Qu. Coll. All which being fairly transcrib’d, were put in a frame and fastned to the Wall over the grave of the Defunct” (Athenæ Oxonienses 2.99).
Like Philip Sidney’s monument, the Corbett table is unsure whether it occupies the status of text or tomb. The Latinate diction of the first line, with its slightly confusing elided subject “he,” is a style common for tomb inscription; even the presentation of multiple signed verses by different authors on a single table is a feature of some stone mural monuments, if a less common one. If these features point to a circulation of shared models for epitaph writing between page and stone, however, the table also reveals a different mode of circulation through which monument texts can reappear recoded as lyrics. Corbett’s poem is included in his posthumous collections *Certain Elegant Poems* (1647) and *Poëtica Stromata* (1648), titled in the latter as an “Elegie”; Jonson’s epitaph appears in “Underwood,” published in his 1640 *Workes.*

Taken together, these different references, representations, and surviving examples suggest that epitaphs presented on ephemeral media of wood, parchment, or paper were a common or even ubiquitous feature of early modern churches—so common, indeed, that they were rarely commented on even when their texts were read, transcribed, and recirculated. That early antiquarian collections only inconsistently comment on the material form of wooden or other ephemeral tables also seems to suggest that such ephemeral tables and the texts they contain were not seen as occupying a fundamentally

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204 For another example, see the epitaph written by Robert Overton for his parents, discussed in Chapter 5.
205 For example, the now lost 1615 stone mural monument of Maria Bode, recorded in *The Topographer,* Vol. 3 (London: J. Robson, J. Walker, and C. Stalker, 1791 [for 1790]), 152-54.
206 The inclusion of Jonson’s monumental text there confirms the strong internal indications that another epitaph in the same collection, that on Katharine, Lady Ogle, was also intended or used for a similar temporary table or more durable monument. The poem for Lady Ogle also appears in an important manuscript copy surrounded by a monumental frame, possibly a draft for a monument never erected: see Hilton Kelliher, “Donne, Jonson, Richard Andrews and the Newcastle Manuscript,” *English Manuscript Studies, 1100–1700* 4 (1993): 134-73, Pl. 6.
distinct category from stone inscriptions. This silence likely also reflects a value judgment that within a general category of the monument the evidently cheaper material construction of such “table” memorials, lending no obvious dignity to their texts, was typically not a point worth recording.

That ephemeral media for epitaphic inscriptions are both commonplace and rarely commented on may cast light on the uncertainty that surrounds some lost early modern tomb monuments. Spenser’s tomb monument in Westminster Abbey, for example, is a 1778 “copy” of a 1620 stone monument erected by Anne Clifford. The earlier “epitaphia” William Camden records in 1600 in Westminster Abbey, however, a distich and quatrain each reflecting on Spenser’s position “prope” (next to) Chaucer, may very well have been another temporary “table” of wood or even paper or parchment set up after Spenser’s 1599 death and subsequently replaced by the later monument, if it had not already disappeared. 207 Something similar may have happened with the lengthy epitaph of Thomas More, a text he authored for himself and his first wife, but which cannot be traced to a version cut in stone earlier than 1644. 208

It might be tempting to correlate the ephemerality of these “tables” with one of their distinctive formal features: their apparent tendency to present their epitaphic texts in verse and in the vernacular to a greater extent than stone monuments. A persistent if heavily contested commonplace of renaissance culture holds that vernacular language is

207 Reges, I3r-4r.

208 More’s self epitaph was originally published as an epistle; it survives today in the form of a postwar reconstruction of an 1833 assertive “renovation” of a 1644 monument that fills an entire chancel wall of Old Chelsea Church somewhat as though it were a written page. Erasmus, however, only reported seeing a text for More’s wife on a “tablet.” On the known early history of the monument, see Thomas Faulkner, “Sir Thomas More’s Monument in Chelsea Church,” The Gentleman’s Magazine 104.2 (1833): 485-86.
historically mutable and evanescent, Latin fixed and enduring.209 As the examples I have
selected illustrate, however, there is a lively circulation of shared models between stone
and wood or parchment forms. The apparent if not exclusive tendency towards the
vernacular in hung tables likely reflects a different feature of their social use: such tables
may be erected relatively swiftly after the funeral and at relatively low cost, and serve as
an efficient means of conveying their texts to a public reading audience.

Perhaps even more vital to the cultural energies animating the table form is the
evident conflict between the status of occasional text and monument. The Corbett table,
despite its survival, emblematizes this paradox: it is an epitaphic text that asserts its
equivalence to the stone tomb while inscribing itself in a medium certain not to last. This
ambiguous material and formal status also appears in other examples, such as the paper
titulus or epitaph John Aubrey says George Herbert hung on the curtains of a tomb
portrait of Sir John Danvers,210 or the “epitaph” for Philip Sidney Edward Herbert
describes as “to be fastened” on the door of St. Paul’s.211 An “elogie” by John Eliot
describes other authors writing epitaphs that are “pasted” around the tomb monument.212
The boundary between the enduring monument and more ephemeral “announcements” or

209 Richard Foster Jones, The Triumph of the English Language: A Survey of Opinions
Concerning the Vernacular from the Introduction of Printing to the Restoration (Stanford
University Press, 1953); Richard Waswo, Language and Meaning in the Renaissance
210 Wiltshire: The Topographical Collections, ed. John Edward Jackson (Deviezes: The
Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, 1862), 225.
212 Poems (London: Henry Brome, 1658), p. 39; the identity of this John Eliot is uncertain
but he is not the New England missionary of the same name. This poetic passage was
Sotheran and Co, 1875), 9.44-45, a reference used by later scholarly editions of
Shakespeare’s works that discuss Claudio’s “hung” epitaph.
“news” is apparently a thin one. More ephemeral paper epitaphs produced specifically for temporary display in the funerary context are the subject of the next section.

Funeral Text and Ballad

Alongside the tomb monument, one of the primary means by which early modern English audiences would have experienced the epitaph was through occasional verses produced for the funeral. These funerary productions took two main distinct yet complementary forms: manuscript epigrams and broadside ballads. As discussed in the last chapter, England’s first surviving broadside ballad is an epitaph produced for the 1509 funeral of Henry VII; subsequent broadside poems survive on the deaths of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary I, as well as later monarchs. Such royal broadside epitaphs served a particular political function, closely related to that of the effigy and symbolic pageantry of royal funerals, of asserting legal, political, and social continuity across the transitions between reigns. Also as discussed in the last chapter, they likely circulated in a variety of ways, including temporary or more permanent display on church walls. These texts were also, however, offshoots of a more general funerary practice of composing and distributing short commemorative texts. Even before the Elizabethan period such funerary “epitaphs” were a common production in both print and manuscript form. “Ballad” epitaphs were printed for funeral distribution but were also displayed in public and even sold to general audiences, and manuscript funerary epitaphs were also sometimes gathered and issued in print.
The practices involving “funerary,” “ritual,” or “liturgical” use of short manuscript “elegies” have been described in the seventeenth-century English context by John Draper, Matthew Greenfield, and Andrea Brady, and in the Colonial American context by David Stannard, Jeffrey Hammond, and Matthew Brown. As these authors have shown, these texts were commonly presented by funeral participants to be placed on the tomb or more commonly “pinned” or “strewn” on the “hearse,” meaning either the ephemeral architectural structure erected to house the body prior to interment or the later mobile carrier used to transport the body to the grave. Seventeenth-century elegies often refer internally to this practice. It is also represented on the stage: in Thomas Middleton’s *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (ca. 1611-1613) coffins enter on a hearse “with Epitaphes pin’d on’t”; in James Shirley’s *The Witty Fair One* (1633) a hearse appears with satirical elegies attached.

Funerary display of manuscript “epitaphs” or “elegies” was practiced across different social strata, but was perhaps particularly regularized as a practice among the university communities. In the university setting it served as a means of displaying individual or corporate learning as well as the strength of local social networks. From the death of Philip Sidney it becomes common practice for the university presses to issue

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214 Newstok, 161.

215 Draper, 99n.
collections of epigrammatic verses on the deaths of major public figures. These volumes serve as the occasion for the publishing of original verse in Hebrew, Welsh, Anglo-Saxon, and, at least on one occasion, Syriac, Chaldean, Turkish, and Arabic, as well as Latin, Greek, and the more familiar European languages.\footnote{These Middle Eastern languages appear at the opening of one of Oxford’s multiple volumes on the death of Prince Henry, 	extit{Eidyllia in obitum fulgentissimi Henrici} (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1612).} They were satirized in turn by epitaphs written in “Utopian” or “Bermudan” languages.\footnote{John Taylor, 	extit{Odcombs Complaint, or Coriats funerall Epicedium} ([London]: [George Eld], 1613); Taylor evidently drew inspiration from Henry Peacham’s earlier satirical “Utopian” poem included in the 1611 	extit{Coryate’s Crudities} (L1').} Such collections were collaborative efforts through which scholars displayed their colleges’ distinction as well as some of their sense of broader social responsibility. They were a common feature of other scholarly communities throughout the early modern world: on the 1598 death of Philip II, Salamanca held competitions for best vernacular sonnet and Latin epigram;\footnote{Geoffrey Parker, 	extit{The Imprudent King: A New Life of Philip II} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 358.} on the 1625 death of Philip III, the Jesuit college in Manilla issued a volume of verses in Latin and Chinese.

Nathaniel Freind’s memorial for his son John, a manuscript I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 5, contains a detailed description of the proceedings of a 1673 St. Edmund Hall, Oxford funeral and its use of verses from an outsider’s perspective. Having noted some of the preparations for the funeral, including the college’s scholars’ coordinated work to prepare their verses, Nathaniel narrates the eve of the burial service:

The Corps of my poore sonne lay all Thursday Mar. 20, & Friday in his Coffin in his Chamber, about 7 at night Friday I came & took my last leave of him till the Resurrection. & then he was nayled up & removed.
into the Hall where a Blackcloth was laid over ye Coffin & several Copies of Verses tatched to the Cloth.

In the morning, Freind describes the gathering of funeral participants, a shared but hierarchically allocated meal of biscuits and cakes, and a procession led by bellman around the quadrangle and out of the college. At the entrance into the churchyard the verses play another role:

coming to the Gate yt enters into St Peters Churchyard, severall Schollers of other houses tore the Verses of ye Cloth (wch I took to be a piece of Rudenes but it seemses it is usuall.) Then wee followed the Corps into the Church where it was set downe in the Alley. Then Mr Pullen read the Usual Service, wch done Mr John Barrowe a Batchelor of Arts of ye same house (Edmond-Hall) pronounced a Funeral Oration […]\(^{219}\)

Though Nathaniel’s surprise at the particular custom of snatching the verses off the hearsecloth points to the particularly ritualized, even carnivalesque performance of verse presentation in the college setting, it should not be mistaken for unfamiliarity with the general concept of funerary verse production itself. In addition to Freind’s own elegies and epitaphs for his son, his manuscript copies a number of Latin and English verses that his son had written on the deaths of other family members and friends, some of which he must have composed when he was as young as thirteen.

The routine quality of these versifying practices at university funerals is also indicated by what may be an extremely rare surviving original copy of a text used on such an occasion. This text has been written out between pre-printed engraved tomb-monument borders; it is “blank form,” presumably printed in a large number of copies, possibly for general occasional use, but most likely specifically for filling in on funerary

\(^{219}\) Bodleian MS Top.Oxon.f.31, 225-27.
occasions, perhaps even specifically or originally for this funerary occasion (fig. 2.6).\textsuperscript{220}

The inscription on this surviving copy concerns the May 1681 Oxford funeral of James Hyde, principal of Magdalen Hall, who according to Anthony Wood had been the only scholar to refuse outright to sign the 1641 Parliamentary Protestation affirming the Church of England’s Reformed character against “popish innovation” as well as the particular rights the king, parliament, and individual subjects.\textsuperscript{221} The pre-printed borders present ostentatious emblems of the unity of church and state, including a “trophy” of crook and scepter between two columns marked as representing “the house of God” and “the palace of the king.” The manuscript inscription is a “lapidary” epitaph, headed by the slightly less common humanist dedicatory formula “vivo,” “to the living.” At the bottom of the page, a paratextual signature explicitly describes the text as ritually presented as a votive offering: “Hunc elogiorum fasciculum Inter generosos litterarum Patronos Proprie dicat deuouetque P.F.”; “P.F. among other noble patrons of letters befittingly consecrates and devotes this packet of epitaphs.” The self-description as a “fasciculus elogiorum” or “packet” of epitaphs or inscriptions may indicate this text was accompanied by other poems by the same author or perhaps even that it served as a title page to a small pamphlet; or “fasciculus” may serve merely as a figure for the list of laudatory epithets gathered together on the page. The formula “dicat devovetque” transforms the ubiquitous print and manuscript pseudo-epigraphic dedicatory abbreviation “D.D.Q.,” i.e. “dedit dedicavitque” or “dedit donavitque,” so-and-so

\textsuperscript{220} Bodleian MS Rawl.D.912, 177.
“presents and dedicates” or simply “gives.” Both “dicare” and “devovere” are specific vocabularies for pre-Christian ritual oblations: this religiously charged language toes the line between provocative literary figure and “popish” or even pagan sacrifice before the dead. Or perhaps it merely points to the already obvious conclusion that regardless of the Christian or Protestant belief systems that surround and rationalize these practices, poems offered at the gravesite are simply another kind of grave good.

While it is clear that the display of funerary verses at the funeral persisted across different social groups well into the eighteenth century, it was probably at the universities that this practice was most routine and lasted longest. In the New England colonies too, it was around Harvard that much of the elegiac versification for which the Puritan colonies are famous took place. (The Oxford example discussed above highlights the stakes for New England examples to distinguish themselves in their visual presentation as well as verbal content—and raises questions about the effectiveness of “Puritan” as a descriptor for some of those examples.) In England verse presentations continue to be described at Oxford funerals at least as late as 1789, when the ritual of snatching verses was still current. At Cambridge they are recorded even later, in 1808 and 1821, though the author of the account of those occasions, writing in 1861, states that the practice has since ceased. Also in 1821, Boswell’s updated edition of Malone’s Shakespeare is the first to include an explanatory note on Claudio’s hung epitaph. The note’s inclusion suggests the

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222 “Dicat devovet” is an extremely rare variation of the usual formula, though not otherwise completely unattested: Google Books reveals about seven related variations, all later than 1690, and all from continental sources.

223 Brown, *op. cit.*

224 Draper, 106.

practice had by that time lost its familiarity with general audiences, though the French
source it cites describes the posting of paper epitaphs as a convention still current in
continental Catholic countries.\textsuperscript{226}

These practices involving the funerary use of verse have often been described as a
distinctive feature of seventeenth-century English and American “elegy” culture, but their
long history extends much more broadly beyond those temporal and geographic confines.
As Maia Gahtan has shown, such funerary verse displays were in use at least as early as
the thirteenth century in Italy, when they already included vernacular as well as Latin
compositions set around the tomb.\textsuperscript{227} As she suggests, such practices almost certainly
functioned as an extension of the practice of leaving \textit{ex votos} at saints’ altars and tombs.

By the time of the publication of Vasari’s \textit{Lives}, which documents many of these
“epitaphs,” it is clear that it was standard practice in the north of Italy for the deaths of
public figures, including artists as well as political leaders, to be celebrated with
temporary verses placed around the hearse or tomb.\textsuperscript{228} Collections of many of these were
issued in print; manuscript volumes collecting copies of verses presented at the funeral
also survive from the mid-Quattrocento, before the introduction of the printing press, and
are described as existing as early as the funeral of Dante.\textsuperscript{229}

The practice of presenting temporary “epitaphs” at the funeral is also attested in
sixteenth-century England. In 1542, on news of the death of the promising young

\textsuperscript{226} The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare (London: F.C. and J. Rivington et al.,
1821), 7.144.
\textsuperscript{227} Gahtan, 11-14.
\textsuperscript{228} On the practice in Renaissance Italy, see also Rijser, \textit{op. cit.} and Kathleen Wren
Christian, \textit{Empire without End: Antiquities Collections in Renaissance Rome, c. 1350–
1527} (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 142-49.
\textsuperscript{229} Petrucci, \textit{Writing the Dead}; Gahtan, 11-13.
Hebraist, Classicist, translator, and poet John Shepreve, Oxford scholars set up memorial verses on the doors of St. Mary’s; a collection of these was intended to be published but either was never issued or does not survive. In 1551, the young Edward VI records in his diary the 28 February death and 2 March burial of Martin Bucer at Cambridge, noting that at the conclusion of the burial service “all the learned men of the university made their epitaphs in his praise, laying them on his grave.” Some of the poems on Bucer were gathered and published as a printed collection; other mid-century or later sixteenth-century multi-author collections of epitaphs, by university and London authors, Edinburgh authors, and even a group of Welsh authors are almost certainly the product of similar funerary celebrations. At the end of the century, on the 1599 death of Edmund Spenser, William Camden records that the poet was buried in Westminster by Chaucer in a funeral paid for by the Earl of Essex, led by poets, and featuring both “mournful songs” (flebilibus carminibus) and “pens” (calamis) cast into the tomb. (The “calami” or “reed pens” seem to tinge the memory of the occasion with the anachronistic half-fictional

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mode of Spenser’s pastoral poems themselves. No collection of these poems recorded
by Camden was published, but a number of commendations for Spenser appear in
different print sources over the following years, some of which, as Andrew Hadfield
suggests, appear very possibly to have been written for the funeral. A 1939 attempt to dig
up Spenser’s grave, motivated by Camden’s funeral description and the tantalizing
possibility that an elegy by Shakespeare might be found, was unsuccessful.

Alongside such manuscript verses, one of the primary means for displaying and
circulating epitaphs in the funerary setting was the broadside ballad. Sixteenth-century
broadsides survive at a pitiful rate, but it is clear that already by the Elizabethan period
“epitaphs” constituted one of the largest and best-defined categories, perhaps rivaled only
by the emergent category of “news” ballad, with which the epitaph overlaps, and larger in
number than some later familiar categories such as the “love” ballad. This large incidence
of epitaphs in the sixteenth-century corpus has sometimes been noted, but usually as a
factor to be explained away rather than an opportunity to expand our conception of the
broadside ballad form and the “popular” culture in which it is implicated. Carole
Livingston’s catalogue reveals 23 self-described “epitaphs” out of 260 surviving ballad
sheets and fragments from the sixteenth century, 21 from the Elizabethan period, when
they are clustered in the years 1565-90. In addition, several more “mourning ditties” or
poems “on the death of” survive, not to mention a large number of poems celebrating the

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235 The 1630 English translation omits the detail about the (reed) pens: Spenser “was
interred at Westminster, neere to Chaucer, at the charges of the Earle of Essex, his Hearse
being carried by Poets, and mounfull Verses and Pomes throwne into his Tombe.” The
Historie of the Life and Reigne of the most Renowmed and Victorious Princesse Elizabeth
236 On Spenser’s death and funeral as well as the subsequent verse tributes, see Hadfield,
deaths of traitors and heretics, one of which is included among those self-labeling as an “epitaph.” Turning to the Registers of the Stationers’ Company, Hyder Rollins’ index of ballad entries shows 49 self-described “epitaphs” clustered in the same period. This corpus covers major and minor nobility as well as a range of public figures, both men and women, and comprises a number of texts more than twice as great as the total number of broadside “elegies” and other mourning poems entered in the Stationers’ Registers for the whole seventeenth century. Occasional, job-printed epitaphs and elegies are both probably entered at a very low rate. Since only four of the 21 surviving Elizabethan broadside “epitaphs” correspond with entries in the Stationers’ Registers, it is probably safe to say that more than a hundred, possibly multiple hundreds of such texts were issued during the Elizabethan period alone.

The presence of broadsides at sixteenth-century funeral celebrations is not directly described in contemporary accounts but can be inferred from multiple indications. A small single-column slip sheet on the 1562 death of Richard Goodrich not bearing any publisher’s imprint is a likely candidate for funeral distribution. Nicholas Bourne’s epitaph on the 1585 death of the Earl of Bedford concludes with a declaration, “on thy Shrine let these fewe Poems stand,” though it is unclear whether “these few poems” refers to the whole sheet itself or to the short mottos that follow beneath. More

239 On the exceptionally low survival rate of cheap and ephemeral print, see Andrew Petegree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 334.
240 Livingston, no. 65; STC 17145.3.
241 Livingston, no. 212; STC 3412.7.
evidence comes from a double sonnet “epitaph” written by the Scottish court poet William Fowler on the 1597 death of the English ambassador to Scotland, Robert Bowes (fig. 2.7). Two copies of this print survive, one that was collected among the state papers of William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and one that was preserved by Fowler’s nephew-by-marriage and self-styled literary heir William Drummond. Drummond’s collection of Fowler’s literary papers includes two other broadside “epitaphs” issued from the same Edinburgh press, both single sonnets issued on quarter sheets rather than the Bowes epitaph’s half sheet. All three texts, despite the Bowes epitaph’s larger format and highly unusual use of Italic type, are of similar, almost standardized page design and layout, which includes a surrounding “frame” of arabesque lace. These texts are also notable for being the only surviving English-language sonnets issued in broadside form from the period. Comparison between them reveals that for the Bowes epitaph Fowler and his printer Robert Waldegrave have Anglicized their typical Scottish language, grammar, and orthography, particularly noticeably by dropping the third-person plural s termination and by replacing the otherwise standard “quh” with “wh.” That the Bowes print was intended for an English reading audience is confirmed in the title’s description of its subject as “Ambassadour for the Queenes Majestie, to the King of Scotland.”

Presumably the route for distribution of these poems was through the social gathering of Bowes’s Berwick funeral.\textsuperscript{244}

Most broadside epitaphs are identified by author’s name and publisher’s imprint. Many were likely printed as gifts presented by writers and clients to family and friends of the deceased ("shall shaking hand with drilling tears, deliver rural verse?"\textsuperscript{245}). In some cases the family may also have directly commissioned a print themselves: this is apparently the case with another of Nicholas Bourman’s publications, a 1603 pamphlet "epitaph" that describes itself as "Published by the consent of the Executors."\textsuperscript{246} Gifts and commissioned prints likely circulated and were presented in the funeral setting. Yet it is clear that ballad epitaphs were also sold to a general public: about half the surviving sheets appear with imprints including the "are to be sold at" formula describing the location of the bookseller’s shop.\textsuperscript{247} Many of the repeated authors of published epitaphs were known ballad authors, including Bourman, William Elderton, John Phillips, and Thomas Churchyard, who likely advertized their careers in part through the circulation of epitaph texts.

Evidence that ballad epitaphs may have been written, printed, and sold for general consumption in the same manner as other topical or devout ballad texts comes from the

\textsuperscript{244} The route for Lord Burghley’s copy, however, was through one of his Scottish correspondents; some copies must have circulated in Edinburgh as well, either separately or via Scottish participants in Bowes’ funeral. See Calendar, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{245} John Denton, \textit{An Epitaph vpon the death of the honorable Edward Earle of Darby} (London: W. Williamson, 1572).

\textsuperscript{246} \textit{An Épitaph upon the decease of the worshipfull Lady Mary Ramsey} (London: R.R., 1603).

\textsuperscript{247} Livingston 122, STC 18512; Livingston 139, STC 5227; Livingston 155, STC 991; Livingston 166, STC 3414; Livingston 167, STC 3413; Livingston 168, STC 19869; Livingston 184, STC 16620; Livingston 189, STC 19866; Livingston 195, STC 11038; Livingston 212, STC 3412.7; Livingston 244, STC 12929.
career of the minor publisher-author John Awdeley or Awdeley (d. 1575), an early ballad printer whose copies were eventually absorbed by John Charlewood. Awdeley ran a shop described as on Little Britain Street, near St. Bartholomew-the-Great and Aldersgate; he was thus located near the booksellers’ hub of St. Paul’s but outside the city walls in a region densely populated by immigrants and the poor, and on the route that led out from Aldersgate to bustling Smithfield. Awdeley was a younger son of the verger of Westminster Abbey and had an elite education at the Westminster School; presumably his upbringing would have offered involved formative early exposure to the monuments of the Abbey. His father’s and son’s given names “Sampson” as well as his own occasional use of the alias “John Sampson” for entries in the registers of the Stationers’ Company suggests relation with the late-fifteenth/early-sixteenth-century stationer John Sampson. It is also possible Awdeley descended from a line of epitaph writers: a 1478 funeral account records an epitaph composed by “the sonne of John Awdeley gyrdeler”; even earlier in the fifteenth century on the death of Henry V a better-known “John Awdelay” composed an epitaph for courtly circulation.

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250 C. Paul Christianson, A Directory of London Stationers and Book Artisans 1300–1500 (New York: Bibliographical Society of America, 1990), 157. As Christianson notes, “Iohn Samson” appears as one of the names inscribed on Bodleian MS Rawlinson C 86, one of the early manuscripts of Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales.

251 A.F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, The Royal Funerals of the House of York at Windsor (Richard III Society, 2005), 76 and 81; Douglas Gray, “Awdeley [Audley], John (fl. 1417-1426), poet and Augustinian friar,” ODNB.
Awdeley’s publishing output is mainly taken up by erudite as well as popular religious books and pamphlets, and suggest a particular specialization in the topic of death. His ballad output consists almost wholly of “godly” texts and includes a number he signs as his own compositions. His broadsides specializing in mortality include a stunning 1569 woodcut dance of death that circles around an open grave.\textsuperscript{252} Another 1569 oblong verse perhaps intended as a companion piece, “Ecclesi. XX. Remember Death, and thou shalt never sin,” is signed with his own name but addresses humankind through the personified voice of death:

\begin{quote}
The seming braue fine Courtiers, which square it out in gate, 
With Hob and Lob I close in clay, and bring them to one state.\textsuperscript{253}
\end{quote}

Awdeley’s two surviving ballad epitaphs are framed as participants in this general discourse of mortality, addressing the loss of non-aristocratic public figures and drawing generalizable moral lessons applicable to all. That on the 1563 death of the refugee Protestant preacher Jean Véron is one of the earliest surviving ballad epitaphs not on a royal subject; it was probably intended for the Huguenot community who lived near his print shop, as well as other locals who may have been familiar with Véron’s preaching and charitable work.\textsuperscript{254} That on the 1570 death of “citizen and merchant” Francis Benison consists mainly of a general meditation on mortality and includes a striking woodcut image of death bearing a coffin to a standing cross marking a common or poor person’s churchyard burial site (fig. 2.8).\textsuperscript{255} Whatever Awdeley’s early-life exposure to

\textsuperscript{252} STC 6222. Cf. Watt, 163-64.
\textsuperscript{253} Livingston 125; STC 990.
\textsuperscript{254} Livingston 87, STC 992.
\textsuperscript{255} Livingston 155; STC 991.
Westminster and its monuments may have been, he evidently conceived of the epitaph as a form that addressed itself to all.

As Tessa Watt has shown, broadside images and image-text combinations were printed with the expectation that they would be attached to walls. These include a subcategory of texts often self-identifying as “tables” that present diagrammatic or emblematic combinations of text and image intended to provoke religious meditation or acts of practical moral remembrance. Such “table” broadsides include a number of texts specifically focused on the theme of mortality (see fig. 2.9). One “table” example survives pasted on its original mounting, a square wooden board that was either hung from or attached to a wall or post. As Watt has compellingly shown, these broadside “tables” cannot be conceived of as categorically distinct from contemporary wall paintings, which, executed on wooden paneling or on cloth hangings, appear to have filled homes of every social station throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Broadside prints and wall paintings share the same visual, textual, and iconographic repertoire; they serve as patterns for one another; in some cases they were even produced and sold alongside one another in the same print shop.

The preponderance of decorative images on surviving Elizabethan broadside “epitaphs” indicates that some of these texts were intended to serve as “tables” employed for home decoration in the same way as wall paintings or image broadsides. In addition to Awdeley’s epitaph for Francis Benison, mentioned above, and in addition to general illustrated prints on the subject of mortality, three other surviving Elizabethan broadside

256 See Watt, Chapter 6.
257 Ibid, 221-223.
258 Ibid, Ch. 5, esp. 192-93.
“epitaphs” include emblematic woodcut devices on the theme of death, in an era when verse broadsides are only rarely illustrated. Evidence for such a practice of commemorative interior decoration survives from a later period: as Max Cavitch has discussed, an anonymous 1720 writer on the topic of elegies in The New-England Courant suggests that not “one Country House in Fifty” fails to “garnish” its walls with “half of a Score of these Sort of Poems.”

Lyric

In the middle years of the Elizabethan period, epitaphs take on a prominent role in the dissemination of and attribution of cultural value to an emergent print culture of vernacular lyric. The single-author collection of Barnabe Googe, Eglogs epytaphes, and sonnettes (1563), and that of George Turberville, Epitaphes, Epigrams, Songs and Sonets (1567, 1570), each aspire to lay claim to the precedent of Richard Tottel’s landmark Songes and Sonettes (1557) while advertising expanded or updated contents incorporating epitaphs. Even later in the Elizabethan period, the volume appearing attributed to Nicholas Breton (“N.B. Gent.”) and containing texts gathered and edited by the ballad publisher Richard Jones, Brittons Bowre of Delights Contayning Many, Most Delectable and Fine Deuices, of Rare Epitaphes, Pleasant Poems, Pastorals and Sonets (1591), continues to lay claim to readerly interest through its advertised inclusion of epitaphs. For these volumes, which at once “popularized” the courtly Italiante verses

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included in Tottel’s anthology for a wide reading audience and “dignified” them for a print market invested in displays of social and political importance, the epitaph apparently provides a prestigious and widely appealing paradigm for short poetic form.261

In Turberville’s collection, the table of contents at the front of the volume even marks each epitaph with a marginal pilcrow (¶), perhaps to demarcate noteworthy texts, or perhaps even to indicate texts that had already been issued in print.262 In one other known case, the text of a surviving broadside epitaph is indeed reprinted in a popular lyric anthology.263 The collection in which it is included, The Paradise of Daintie Deuices, issued in many editions from 1576, was edited by Richard Edwards, a music master who had access to court songs as well as popular ballad texts. Complex part-music for some of these songs survives, though their meters would have been available to popular ballad tunes as well.264 Edwards’ anthology probably includes at least one other epitaph originally published as a ballad,265 and there are many other possible correspondences with epitaphs listed in the Stationers’ Registers throughout other lyric collections and anthologies of the period.266

262 Pilcrows also appear next to sequences of poems in the table of contents of Thomas Howell’s H. His Deuices (1581), for reasons that are unclear; most of these poems are not epitaphs.
263 Livingston 184, STC 16620; cf. Rollins, no. 765
265 Rollins, no. 737.
An abundance of evidence shows that sixteenth-century epitaphs were commonly set to music and sung as “ballads” or “songs.” Several surviving sixteenth-century sheets list a tune name, including one of the very first surviving ballads to do so. The epitaph that is known to be republished in Edwards’ *Paradice* also survives as one of the only sheets from the sixteenth century to bear any indications of its early provenance, which in this case involve its reuse as a game board and ledger of meal accounts in a public inn; in these two very different contexts it seems occupy positions as “elite” and as “popular” song. Other traces of musical ballads similarly cross social divisions, pointing to a broadly shared musical poetic repertoire. At the beginning of the Elizabethan period, the travelling Tudor minstrel Richard Sheale composed an “epitaph” for his aristocratic patron Lady Margaret, Countess of Derby that he evidently sung and may also have had printed. On Philip Sidney’s 1586 death two lost songs were entered in the Stationers’ Register. (In 1588 William Byrd also published more restrictively elite “funeral songs” for Philip Sidney that were performed at court.) The musical nature of epitaphs is even recorded in poetic theory: in his influential and widely copied survey of the history of English epitaphic writing, William Camden, drawing on a basic knowledge of Greek funerary rites, notes that historically epitaphs “were first song at Burialls, after engraued vpon the sepulchers.”

267 Livingston 121, STC 7562.
269 Rollins, no. 624
270 *Psalmes, Sonets & songs of sadnes and pietie* (London: Thomas East, 1588).
The value of epitaphs as authorizing general collections of lyric poetry is revealed in the late publishing career of the fittingly named Thomas Churchyard (c. 1520-1604). Only one broadside epitaph by Churchyard survives, a 1570 print for the Earl of Pembroke, but over the last decades his career he made a concerted effort to gather copies of his earlier printed and manuscript epitaphs and publish them alongside other earlier or later works, while also indexing his career through lists of his compositions. In *Churchyardes Choice* (1579), he republishes an epitaph on Edward VI (d. 1553) alongside a new epitaph on the Earl of Essex (d. 1577). The following year, in *Churchyardes Chance* (1580), the opening of his personal anthology publishes a sequence of thirteen epitaphs on a variety of noble figures that flaunts a writing career at the center of English public life. These pages of epitaphs are followed, moreover, by a list of additional “Epitaphes alreadie printed, or out of my handes”:

The Epitaphe of Kyng Henry the eight.  
The Erle of Surries Epitaphe.  
The Lorde Cromwells Epitaphe.  
The Ladie Wentworthes Epitaphe.  
The Lorde Graies of Wilton his Epitaphe.  
The Lorde Poinynges Epitaphe.  
Maister Audleis the greate Soldiours Epitaphe.  
The worthie Capitaine Raindalls Epitaphe.  
Sir Edmond Peckams Epitaphe.  
Sir James Wilfordes Epitaphe.  
Sir Jhon Walloppes Epitaphe.  
Sir George Peckams first wiues Epitaphe.  
The Erle of Penbrokes Epitaphe.  
The Counties of Penbrokes Epitaphe.  
The Lord Henry Dudleis Epitaphe.  
Sir Jhon Pollardes Epitaphe.  
The Lorde of Deluins Epitaphe.  
The Epitaphe of Mais tresse Pennes daghter, called Maistresse Gifforde.  

And many other gentilmen and gentilwomens Epitaphes, that presently I neither can remember, nor get into my handes againe.
The list is partly chronological, partly ordered by social precedence. It charts four decades of Churchyard’s life and literary career in the form of an arc of national history from the beginning of the Reformation to the present moment. At the same time, it indexes the wholesale loss of a body of literature recording the social and political attitudes of its time, ending with a vague *et cetera* pointing only to further loss. As a result of this list, modern criticism has sometimes described Churchyard as an obsessive writer of epitaphs, but what is exceptional about his career is perhaps not so much the frequency of his compositions as the extraordinary span of history that they cover: that, at least, seems to be the claim the list itself makes.

Churchyard wrote for another two decades, and issued further epitaphs and memorial poems on Philip Sidney (1586), Francis Knowles (1596), and even on Queen Elizabeth (1603), shortly before his own death. He also reissued a further collection of his earlier epitaphs, including his early poem on the death of Henry VIII, in *A reuyuing of the dead* (1591). Churchyard lived to see his works mocked by Edmund Spenser and a younger generation of poets invested in the new Italianate and Sidneian possibilities of the so-called “Golden Age.” Yet it was precisely his participation, with many others, in the cultivation of a routine and pervasive culture of occasional memorial versifying that made possible a system of difference wherein Spenser’s elegiac experiments, and those of his followers, marked their distinction from what came before. Those ambitious experiments are the subject of the next chapter.
Chapter 3

Encountering Grief in Spenser’s Elegy

And Olympus invented the Elegy, which is the old Hexameter, but how softened! And he played Elegies and Dirges on his flute to the people of Greece. And his flutes sobbed and wept…And this was an age of change, for it was in all strictness a Renaissance, being caused, as all Renaissances are, by the influx of foreign knowledge into a younger and receptive people.²⁷²

Spenser’s ambitious and innovative mourning poems cultivate a new and decorous body of commemorative poetry founded on the imitation and conflation of Classical, medieval, and continental European sources. They also give us the term “elegy” as a genre label for poems of mourning. First employed in Daphnaïda (1591) and repeated in “Astrophel” (1595, dated 1591), the subsequent adoption of this term by other English poets is in part a matter of historical chance. It is fitting, though, that Spenser’s originary use of what becomes an enduring marker of mourning poetry emerges from the developing social response to the 1586 death of Philip Sidney, a landmark event for English poetry the full meaning of which only unfolds as the Protestant interventionism he and his family had supported in life receded more fully from influence at court. Paradoxically, the poetry that emerges offers a distinctively “un-Protestant” poetics that struggles to contain and manage the conflicting impulses of commemoration and religious restraint.

The acceptable bounds of grief are a recurrent and intractable problematic in Christian thought. Think of Tennyson’s prayer at the outset of In Memoriam:

Forgive my grief for one removed,
    Thy creature, whom I found so fair. (Prol. 37-38)

Or the dying revelation of Chaucer’s pagan Troilus, who had sought dimly after an understanding of divine Providence in life:

    …and at the laste,
    Ther he was slayn his lokyng down he caste,
    And in himself he lough right at the wo
    Of hem that wepten for his deth so faste…(5.1819-22)

“To die is gain,” in the words of the apostle Paul (Philippians 1:21), a formulation widely cited over centuries of funeral sermons and adopted by countless tombs and tombstones. To mourn the dead is thus to risk folly, or, worse, sin—of idolatrous attachment to the things of this world, of “will most incorrect to heaven.”

A generation of scholarship ago, G.W. Pigman identified the Renaissance commonplace that grief is pagan, consolation Christian. In the American context, scholars have similarly long recognized that grief and mourning played a key role in the cultural contact between English colonists and indigenous American peoples. Erik Seeman has recently shown just how central death rites were to perceptions of identity and difference in cross-cultural contact throughout the early modern Atlantic world. Crucially, as Seeman demonstrates, intercultural relationships around deathways were

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273 Hamlet 1.2.95.
marked by perceptions of commonality—or desires to perceive commonality—as well as barriers of difference.276

Edmund Spenser’s late mourning poems, *Daphnaïda* (1591), “The Ruines of Time” (1591), and “Astrophel” (published 1595, dated 1591), derive their distinctive energies from the ways they bridge these concerns: they present grief as a tensely negotiated symbol collapsing systems of historical, religious, and cultural difference. Their return to the form and scope of mourning is born out of Spenser’s Irish experience and his own ethnographic writing about Irish mourning practices.277 *Daphnaïda* (fig. 3.1), in particular, offers no comfortable resolution for grief’s troubling aspects. Grief and mourning are presented as an ineluctable inheritance—however fraught or undesirable—of an English nation involved in the processes of inward religious Reformation and outward colonial expansion.

Mourning form had been the concern of the self-described centerpiece of the first work through which Spenser staked his claim to a career as professional poet, the

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“November” Eclogue of *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579), and there is reason to think of the 1591 poems as revisiting and revising that early work’s concerns and construction. The shepherds of the November Eclogue have only the resources of pagan religion to understand loss, but respond calmly and with hope; their transparent anticipations of Christ’s Good News and the Christian afterlife provide a sophisticated if fictitious template for the translation of pagan mourning and poetic traditions into a suitably Christian literary model for consolation. In the later poems, however, and above all in *Daphnaïda*, a very different and disorienting world mingles pagan, Catholic, and Protestant conceptions of death and salvation, refusing such transparent and easy prolepsis. These later poems represent characters stricken by their loss; in *Daphnaïda*, the protagonist never reaches consolation. Grief appears as a central, even consuming problem. If it is something “common” (*Hamlet* 1.2.70), it is also a marker, however unstable, of cultural and religious difference.

Though *Daphnaïda* has often been recognized as one of Spenser’s most ambitious and experimental works, it has been treated scantily by critics. Major formal studies of English elegy have hailed the poem as an origin-point for a later high-literary tradition, but have tended to emphasize its shortcomings from the perspective of later works. Thus for Peter Sacks, the poem is a failed work of mourning; for Pigman, an expression of a soon-to-be-superseded culturally conservative attitude towards grief.\(^{278}\) Within the field of Spenser studies, criticism has been more limited, focusing on the poem either as an

\(^{278}\) Sacks, *The English Elegy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), Ch. 1; Pigman, Ch. 5.
index of Spenser’s social relations or as a case study for his imitation of Chaucer. As I will discuss, however, the dense overlay of symbolic and historical investments in *Daphnaïda*, as well as its peculiar and significant publication history, means it cannot be read simply through the narrow lens of a restricted literary coterie. Moreover, the influence of Chaucer’s *Book of the Duchess* on Spenser’s poem has been overstated: it is clear that Spenser drew on multiple sources. Though both the student editions of Spenser’s short poems in widespread use print notes linking specific passages in *Daphnaïda* to Chaucer’s *Book of the Duchess*, they fail to agree on which passages correspond with which. Most importantly, Spenser’s portrait of a lover so stricken by the grief of loss as to turn to suicidal despair comes not from any Classical or Chaucerian model but from the important contemporary literary model of Thomas Watson and Abraham Fraunce’s *Amyntas*.


280 The allegory of the lion (ll. 85-168), for instance, appears to be based on the correspondent passage in Turberville’s “Vpon the death of the aforesaid Dame Elizabeth Arhundle of Cornewall,” in *Epitaphs, Epigrams, songs & sonnets* (London: Henry Denham, 1567), p. 57.

Resituating Spenser’s mourning poems as an expression of cultural anxieties around national and religious identity means returning to the colonial dimensions of Spenser’s famous cry for a “kingdom of our own language,” as brilliantly studied by Richard Helgerson, as well as Sean Keilen’s more recent demonstration that the formation of a concept of English literature depends on the recognition of “internalized difference.” As Keilen has shown, the English encounter with the past often takes place through the forms and mechanisms of colonial encounter in the present; in Spenser’s mourning poems, I suggest, these two dimensions are inextricable from one another. In what follows I will explore, first, how a religious discourse around the acceptable boundaries of grief turns into a tool for marking difference in the moment of cross-cultural encounter. I then turn to Spenser’s Daphnaïda to explore how he presents a semi-fictional husband’s grief as a socially transgressive yet ultimately unavoidable presence in his complexly historically and geographically layered world. Finally, I will turn to Spenser’s poems’ publication history and their place in an emergent national and nationalist literature to show how they participate in a project to cultivate new and decorous mourning form, a project to which the troubling or alienating aspects of grief had always been internal.

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283 In this way, Keilen reverses a direction of influence accounted for in earlier works that have tended to read English colonial experience as developing from its historical understanding: see e.g. Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); or Anthony Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1992).
Explorations of the socially acceptable bounds of mourning return to the crux of the text of 1 Thessalonians 4:13, Paul’s prohibition, or definition of the bounds, of Christian mourning:

\[
\text{nolumus autem vos ignorare fratres de dormientibus ut non contristemini sicut et ceteri qui spem non habent.}
\]

But I would not have you be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. (AV)

Though this is not the only biblical passage to address the theological or social acceptability of grief, this verse has a particular institutional prominence, due in part to its place introducing a larger passage (vv. 14-18) offering a theologically central statement of the Christian consolation of the truth of bodily Resurrection:

\[
\text{For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.}
\]

\[
\text{For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.}
\]

\[
\text{For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:}
\]

\[
\text{Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.}
\]

\[
\text{Wherefore comfort one another with these words.}
\]

\[284\] Other frequently cited passages concerning the proper form of mourning include Genesis 23 and 25:9-10, Ecclesiasticus 22:11, and Romans 12:15.
Likely because it so neatly harmonizes with the dramatic visions of John in Revelation, the whole passage is cited in the earliest version of the Anglican burial service for the dead. Though this apocalyptic Epistle reading is eliminated from later versions of the service, its sentiments, and a direct restatement of verse 13, remain incorporated in later versions of the final Collect. This problematic verse thus assumes a central place in the ritual performance of English identity and community as it takes place at the site of the grave.

The crux of verse 13 is whether Paul prohibits all mourning or merely the particular category of grief emerging from a lack of internalized faith in salvation. Pigman has emphasized a current of sixteenth-century discourse, with some basis in Patristic authority, that seems to consider an interpretation of the “even as” or “sicut et” (kathos kai) of this passage as prohibiting the category of mourning tout court. Yet even the most “rigorist” voices opposed to displays of grief acknowledge the alternative, more likely interpretation that Paul does not condemn all mourning for the dead but merely the particular category of excessive grief that would amount to an abandonment

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285 The 1549 Prayer Book includes both the reading of this full passage (the Epistle) and the restatement of its central ideas, with the close paraphrase of verse 13, in the Collect. The 1549 Collect is preserved with very minor alterations in the 1559 Prayer Book. See Brian Cummings, ed., The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 90 and 174.
286 Pigman, 27–39. Pigman’s gloss of this crux only briefly touches its nuances, and mistakenly suggests that it is the conjunction “sicut” rather than the construction “sicut et” that is the source of its difficulties. A note in the bilingual edition The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians: Translated from the Greek, on the Basis of the Common English Version, with Notes (New York: American Bible Union, 1856), p. 14, is particularly helpful; kathos kai and “sicut et” are frequently used by Paul in setting up general (often ornamental) parallels and analogies as well as oppositions.
of belief in the saving power of Christ. The gloss accompanying the passage in the Protestant Geneva bible explicitly articulates this position:

He doeth not condemne all kinde of sorrow, but that which procedeth of infidelitie.

The Catholic Rheims New Testament, lacking this marginal note, forcefully translates the passage in such a way that the attentive reader cannot avoid this interpretation.

The dominant interpretation of the Thessalonians passage as allowing faithful Christians a measure of grief, however, produces a reliance on an unstable and indefinite criterion of difference from “others” to define the grief that would be excessive and unfaithful. In its context, especially in relation to the preceding v. 5, these “others” (“ceteri”) are likely to be read specifically as non-Christians: “gentiles,” “heathens,” or “pagans.” Such a reading is supported by the harmony with Paul’s words in Ephesians 2:12 characterizing pagan existence before Christ’s Sacrifice as “without hope.” At least as early as Augustine, commentaries on the Thessalonians passage assume Paul’s “others” are to be understood in this restrictive sense:

He [the apostle] didn’t just say that you may not be saddened, but that you may not be saddened as the heathen are, who do not have any hope.

While relying on Pigman’s learned survey of discourse surrounding this passage (pp. 16-19), and his carefully compiled list of sources, I suggest his model of a historical shift from unrestricted to restrictive interpretation of “sicut et” is of limited use with regard to the history of social attitudes towards mourning.

“And we wil not haue you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that sleepe, that you be not soroweful, as also others that haue no hope.” “As also” is a perhaps overly literal translation of “sicut et” hinging on the secondary, obsolete sense of “also” as meaning “in the manner of” (OED 2).

This understanding of the passage sets in motion a long subsequent history in which the form of grief is taken as marking a defining boundary between Christian and non-Christian belief.

In the Elizabethan period, the authoritative exegetical commentary of John Jewel picks up and repeats Augustine’s interpretation. Like Augustine, Jewel reads St. Paul’s injunction as an attempt to reform the error of mourning in a manner that would amount to “being” “like the heathen, which had no hope.” In this influential statement the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable grief amounts to a matter of cultural difference. Faith and infidelity operate less as a problem of interior “belief” than of outward performance and observance:

Therefore, sayth Paule you may mourn, as did the holy men of GOD: but in suche sorte as the vnafaithful sorrowe for theyrd dead, you maye not mourne. You are the sonnes of the holye fathers: fashion not your selues therefore like to the heathens, do not as they did, neither in feastes, nor in mariages, nor in your attire, nor in your mourning, nor in your pastimes. (161-62)

The manner of our mourning reveals itself as a part of a greater problem of cultural self-definition, one of how and from whom we inherit the past. “You are the sonnes of the holye [Church] fathers” as opposed, implicitly, to Roma mater; Jewel looked on what he supposed was Roman Stonehenge and saw the “disposition” of a “yoke.”

291 Cited in John Craig, “Jewel, John (1522–1571),” ODNB.
Jewel’s sense of the godly community depends upon an articulation of difference—difference that is at once cultural, religious, and historical. In the rhetorical adumbration immediately preceding the passage cited above, Jewel reveals that the delineation of this difference relies on the capacity to construct and imaginatively project the pagan experience of loss in a world without the hope of Christ. Jewel turns to the mode of literary complaint and dramatic personation to invite his audience into the world of pre-Christian despair:

When a Father sawe his sonne dead he thought he hadde bene dead for euer. Hee became heauie, chaunged his garmente, delighted in no companie, forsooke his meate, famished himselfe, rent his bodie, cursed his fortune, cried out of his gods. Oh my deare sonne (sayth he) how beautiful, how learned, and wise, and virtuous waste thou? Why shouldest thou die so vntimelye? why haue I offered sacrifice, and done seruice to my gods? they haue made me a good recompence. I wil truste them no more, I wil no more cal vppon them. Thus they fel into dispayre, and spake blasphemies. (161)

Jewel’s *illustratio* is a recognizable rhetorical effect, and may even derive from a pagan source for the critique of pagan displays of mourning, Lucian’s *De Luctu*. Its “characterization,” however, offers an emphasis on the despair and blasphemy resulting from grief that is in some degree of tension with the literary mode of complaint inviting us to experience or even inhabit the affect of the bereaved father. (Indeed, the introduction of an odd category of “blasphemy” directed against the pagan gods strains the mode of analogical identification.) Such scenes of imaginative, often empathetic

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projection of the sufferings of the other are a familiar and frequently noted feature of later colonial and racial discourse.  

This framework of pagan-Christian difference in mourning practices comes to constitute a powerful means of understanding present cultural difference in the moment of colonial encounter. One of the earliest descriptions of Algonquian mourning practices to emerge from the New England colonies directly applies its knowledge of the Thessalonians passage:

The glut of their griefe being past, they commit the corpes of their diseased friends to the ground, over whose grave is for a long time spent many a briny teare, deepe groane, and Irish-like howlings, continuing annuall mournings with a blacke stiffe paint on their faces: These are the Mourners without hope…

William Wood’s confident definite article, his reference to “the” mourners without hope, reveals an assumed familiarity with a pre-existent category. The comparison he makes between Irish and American practices is commonplace, appearing at least as late as 1674 in John Josselyn’s *An Account of Two Voyages to New England.*

Edmund Spenser may be among the earliest writers to apply Paul’s words in this way, in his wide-ranging ethnographic dialogue on Irish culture, *A View of the Present State of Ireland,* written as a polemical justification for brutal colonial practices. In a

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293 Though such scenes of empathetic projection are not necessarily only violent: see Shameem Black, *Fiction across Borders: Imagining the Lives of Others in Late-20th-Century Novels* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).


tightly compressed passage, a historical and cultural survey of mourning practices is explicitly anchored on the Thessalonians passage’s characterization of pagan despair:

There be other sorts of cryes also used among the Irish, which savour greatly of the Scythian barbarisme, as their lamentations at their buryals, with dispairfull out-cryes, and immoderate waylings, the which Master Stanihurst might also have used for an Argument to proove them Egyptians. For so in Scripture it is mentioned, that the Egyptians lamented for the death of Ioseph. Others thinke this custome to come from the Spaniards, for that they doe immeasurably likewise bewayle their dead. But the same is not proper Spanish, but altogether Heathenish, brought in thither first either by the Scythians, or the Moores that were Africans, and long possessed that Countrey. For it is the manner of all Pagans and Infidels to be intemperate in their waylings of their dead, for that they had no faith nor hope of salvation.\footnote{A View of the State of Ireland, ed. James Ware (Dublin: Society of Stationers, 1633), 39-40.}

This brief description Spenser’s Irenæus gives of practices contemporary Irish and later anthropologists would call “keening” has not received focused critical attention, perhaps because it untypically draws an overlapping and competing discourse of religious identity and difference into Irenæus’s ethnographic survey of customs. Indeed, this passage stands out from the other descriptions of Irenæus’s discourse in arriving, uniquely, at what seems to be a universal rule of culture. Throughout his lengthy discourse of Irish difference, Irenæus carefully traces the transference of cultural practices through genealogical/colonial lines of inheritance. Here, though, this model of descent is brought in alignment with—and apparently subordinated to—a model of fundamental spiritual principles governing outward forms of behavior: “it is the manner of all Pagans and Infidels to be intemperate in their waylings of their dead.” Irenæus had earlier dismissed the theory of Irish Egyptian historical descent (p. 39), but in this moment of trans-
cultural, trans-historical law the analogy of their cultural practices appears freshly relevant.

The result is the surprising branding of Irish culture as spiritually pagan, an unsettling appearance of pagan past in Christian present as a threat equally or equivalently of historical degeneration, cultural miscegenation, and idolatrous habitus. Of course, Spenser’s articulation of cultural difference is overstated. While Spenser makes a point of hinting at a personal familiarity with the rich Irish traditions of commemorative poetry, for example—he has Irenæus declare he has had such poems translated into English—his tract fails to acknowledge what seems to be a discourse emphasizing restraints against grief that runs through Irish elegiac and consolatory literature of the period. As many scholars have found, the boundaries that Spenser would effect between Irish and English cultural practice are much less neat or absolute than his descriptions portray.

Spenser’s description of an Irish negative example is as fascinating and exotic as it is repellent. In a famous passage shortly following his discussion of lamenting outcries, Irenæus introduces an unusually specific piece of historical documentation—what many critics have perhaps too willingly read as Spenser’s interjection of his own objective eyewitness testimony—in describing the grieving foster mother at the 1577 execution of


298 On the discourse around restrictions on grief in contemporary Irish literature, see Tait, *op. cit.*, 26-7, who cites the unpublished research of Katherine Simms and (treating analogous literatures in Gaelic Scotland) forthcoming writing of A.I. Mcinnes.

299 Attempts to reinsert Irish voices into English discourses of Irish identity and difference include Palmer, *op. cit.*, and McCabe, *Spenser’s Monstrous Regiment, op. cit.*
Murrough O’Brien who “[took] up his head, whilst he was quartered, and sucked the blood that runne thereout, saying, that the earth was not worthy to drinke it, and therewith also steeped her face and breast, and tore her haire, crying out and shrieking most terribly” (44).\textsuperscript{300} Such vivid anecdotes cultivate the impression of documentary factuality supporting Spenser’s colonial ethnography’s idealized and essentializing categories of difference. At the same time, however, this difference becomes an object of sensual textual, indeed literary pleasure. The reactions to Irenæus’s descriptions that Eudoxus models for the reader include “delight,” “desire,” “intrancement.”\textsuperscript{301}

\textit{Daphnaïda, Allegory, Loss}

\textit{Daphnaïda} offers a response to the death on 13 August, 1590, of Douglas Howard, the young wife of Spenser’s acquaintance Sir Arthur Gorges. Spenser’s poem intervenes directly in the contemporary moment of political conflict over Howard’s inheritance and the allegations by her father, who had opposed her marriage to Gorges, that the daughter they had together was illegitimate.\textsuperscript{302} Spenser’s poem intervenes directly in Gorges’ legal struggles, invoking Douglas as both heir and wife on its title page, inscribing the close historical relations of the Gorges and Howard families in its

\textsuperscript{300} However distorted this description, it may derive from eyewitness experience or immediate report; on Spenser’s almost certain presence in Ireland in 1577, before the beginning of his term of service with Lord Grey of Wilton in 1580, see Lisa Jardine, “Encountering Ireland: Gabriel Harvey, Edmund Spenser, and English colonial ventures,” in Brendan Bradshaw, Andrew Hadfield, and Willy Maley, eds., \textit{Representing Ireland: Literature and the origins of conflict, 1534-1660} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 61 and note.

\textsuperscript{301} 26-27, 39, 42.

\textsuperscript{302} See Gibson, “The Legal Context,” \textit{op. cit.} and Sandison, \textit{op. cit.}. 
dedication, and bringing the Gorges daughter Ambrosia into the poem under her real name as a ward lovingly passed from the deceased Daphne to the bereaved Alcyon (ll. 288-292). Strikingly, then, the poem shows Gorges’ representative Alcyon as abandoning all responsibility to grief so excessive it breaks down his social relations and sense of courtesy.\(^{303}\) Despite the narrator’s efforts at consolation, he will end the poem not unlike Spenser’s Irish mourners, “rend\([\text{ing}]\) his hair and beat\([\text{ing}]\) his blubbred face / As one disposed wilfullie to die” (551-2).

*Daphnaida* openly displays the ambition of its form and stylistic register. The poem presents itself with an epic title, is composed in a unique variation of rhyme royal, and draws experimentally on elements of neo-Latin pastoral, Ovidian metamorphosis, romance, and Chaucerian poetry; it is also the first English mourning poem to adopt the distinctive pagan term “elegy” as its title-page generic self-identification (fig. 3.1). (“Astrophel,” printed later, goes further in identifying itself as a “pastoral elegy,” a coinage that may have struck readers as oxymoronic, since Classical pastoral is almost by definition never composed in elegiac meter.\(^{304}\) Reforming or recreating available poetic

\(^{303}\) William Oram and G.W. Pigman have each read Alcyon’s “immoderate” mourning as a targeted warning or criticism addressed to the perhaps deeply bereaved Arthur Gorges; see Pigman, *op. cit.*, and Oram, “Daphnaida and Spenser’s Later Poetry.” Gibson responds that Gorges was unlikely to have been particularly touched by this loss.

resources for responding to loss, these poems visibly declare themselves as new, syncretic, even hybrid. This hybridity appears even at the level of the characters’ names and genders: “Alcyon” and “Daphne” are Ovidian characters brought into a pastoral landscape through their echoes with the traditional pastoral figures “Alcon” and “Daphnis.” Alcyon swaps genders: Ovid’s Alcyon (or “halcyon”) is a lamenting wife whose powerful grief ultimately transforms her into reunion with her husband, what commentaries on the Metamorphoses sometimes identified as a rare happy ending.

The poem’s setting replicates this sense it offers something new, uncertain, and boundary-crossing: in an uncanny anticipation of Milton’s Comus, it describes itself as taking place around “Sabrinaes stream,” i.e. the Severn, on the border with Wales (101). Despite some puzzling over the relationships referred to in the poem, critics have been unable to establish any biographical reason for this liminal geography. Spenser’s setting seems to suggest, however, that its shepherd’s lament comes from a cultural position at or even beyond the margins of English identity. Perhaps his poem’s

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Welsh setting reflects a conflation of Celtic identity, or the ways in which contemporary political policies conflated Tudor colonial peripheries.\textsuperscript{308} Perhaps it even reflects an idea that a lyric poetry of extended sung lament is characteristically, even essentially Welsh or Irish: at the time of Spenser’s writing Welsh and Irish commemorative cultures centrally incorporate the use of sung poetry in a manner entirely unlike anything comparable in English culture. Even if we expand our conception of the social place of sixteenth-century English commemorative poetry in the manner suggested in the previous chapter, it is clear that commemorative poetry in Welsh (the marwnad) and Irish (the marbnad) held an even more central social position than in England. Indeed, more commemorative poetry survives in Welsh and Irish than in English from the sixteenth century, even in spite of the fact that the Welsh and Irish bodies of poetry were originally composed orally.\textsuperscript{309} In spite of increasing legal restrictions on their movements, bards likely attended every birth and funeral with song, and in Wales it seems to have become


\textsuperscript{308} Present-day scholars have most typically emphasized differences between Welsh and Irish early modern histories, but contemporaries often emphasized cultural parallels and political programs often advocated the extension of policies from Wales to Ireland. For reconsiderations of this relationship, see Hadfield, 13, and esp. Ciaran Brady “Comparable Histories? Tudor Reform in Wales and Ireland,” in Steven Ellis and Sarah Barber, eds., \textit{Conquest and Union: Fashioning a British State, 1485–1725} (New York and London: Longman, 1995), 64-86; cf. \textit{Strangers within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire}, ed. Bernard Bailyn and Philip Morgan (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 28 \textit{et passim}.

standard to create written copies of orally composed laments. A Welsh account from 1600 suggests “thousands” of such poems were available in written copies.\textsuperscript{310}

Spenser’s poem is organized around Alcyon’s lengthy sung lament, but a frame offers a means for some exposition of the background of Gorges’s loss and provides a narrator who models reactions to Alcyon’s powerful emotions for the reader. Spenser’s narrator first encounters the shepherd Alcyon in a gloomy wintery landscape, wandering without destination. The narrator questions the reluctant and discourteous Alcyon on his evident change of appearance (57-84). Alcyon tells an extended allegory of a lion (the heraldic symbol of the Douglas family): he discovers her playing freely, rapes and enchains her, and “frames” her to his will; together, they care for his flock and become the envy of other shepherds; at last, a wandering and wanton Satyr slays her and he is left to mourn disconsolately (85-168). The narrator, however, fails to understand the meaning of the allegory (169-82): Alcyon explains that it is his Daphne that is dead, and collapses himself at the point of death (183-89). The narrator succeeds in reviving Alcyon, and Alcyon breaks into the extended sung lament that constitutes the bulk of the poem (197-539, comprising seven strophes of seven stanzas of seven lines). Although in the second strophe (the midpoint of the poem as a whole) Alcyon describes Daphne’s dying consoling words, counseling him not to grieve (253-294), he fails to accept her consolations, repeating throughout the song his despairing lack of will to live and his complaints against the senselessness of death. After the song’s conclusion, the narrator makes a brief gesture at comfort that is rebuffed, and the two characters part ways (540-567).

\textsuperscript{310} Suggett and White, 57.
The poem’s density of symbols and overlay of theological error are made clear from Alcyon’s first appearance. The narrator relates his encounter in a description recalling Archimago’s appearance in pilgrim’s guise in Book I of *The Faerie Queene*:

...I did espie  
Where towards me a sory wight did cost,  
Clad all in black, that mourning did bewray:  
And *Jaakob* staffe in hand devoutlie crost,  
Like to some Pilgrim come from farre away. (38-42)

The “Jacob’s staff,” as W.L. Renwick first noted, is not the navigating instrument of that name but rather simply a pilgrim’s staff; St. James (“Jacobus”) is the pilgrim’s patron saint. “Devoutlie crost” likely means “surmounted with a cross”; pilgrims’ staves often incorporate a distinctive hook, but they may also simply be crossed at the top. Within this pastoral setting, and given Spenser’s characteristic concern with the doubled meaning of “pastor,” it is probably impossible not to see/hear also in this passage the dense signifying network *crux*–crook–crosier; the crossed staff, sometimes confusingly called a crosier, is the symbol of office carried by Anglican and Roman bishops when not officiating ceremonies. Whatever the larger ceremonial functions of this over-determined symbol, it evokes idolatrous abuse of the Reformers’ most privileged sign. Indeed, as we discover, Alcyon cannot even claim the pious intentions of pre- or counter-Reformation pilgrims; he ends the poem wandering self-involvedly without literal or spiritual destination (“what of him became I cannot weene”).

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312 See, e.g., the thirteenth-century wall painting of St. James in the Church at Wisborough Green, West Sussex: http://www.paintedchurch.org/wisgreen.htm.
As Alcyon explains to the narrator the reasons he has abandoned his former life, his expressions of grief challenge the model of the circulation of shared mourning assumed by Jewel’s *illustratio* or Spenser’s vivid ethnographic description. After an uncomfortable and discourteous opening, the shepherd Alcyon reveals the cause of his mournful appearance is the death of his wife Daphne:

\[
Daphne\ \text{thou knewest (quoth he)} \\
\text{She now is dead; ne more endured to say:} \\
\text{But fell to ground for great extreamitie,} \\
\text{That I beholding it, with deepe dismay} \\
\text{Was much appald, and lightly him uprearing,} \\
\text{Revoked life that would have fled away,} \\
\text{All were my self through griefe in deadly drearing. (186-9)}
\]

At the moment of maximum emotional intensity and greatest demand for readerly sympathy, a ramping up of archaism, neologism, and uncertain grammar stands in the way of comprehension. “All” may carry the either of the two quite different senses of “even as” or “although.” “Drearing” is a unique form of one of Spenser’s favorite archaisms: he elsewhere uses “drear,” “dreary,” “dreariment,” and “drearhead.” His use of the latter in “Astrophel”—Sidney’s body is “the shape of dreryhead”—indicates that he (like Ezra Pound later) understands the word’s Anglo-Saxon resonances of “bloody,” “gory”; the word seems to evoke a particular horror. No amount of parsing, though, renders the sense of the last line clear. The narrator’s response is equally unclear: perhaps he merely sympathetically experiences grief, perhaps he is physically repulsed by the grief he views, or perhaps he even nearly dies through sympathy with the destructive grief he views; all that is certain is that he recognizes this affect as “deadly.”
This threatening quality of Alcyon’s mourning, its ability to attract as well as repel us, gains explicitly religious meaning in his subsequent extended song of lament. Despite his ability to recount Daphne’s dying words to him, which contain a textbook Christian consolation for death (263-92), Alcyon turns to the resources of the pagan cosmos and pre-Reformation pilgrimage, mortification, and penance to understand his loss:

For I will walke this wandring pilgrimage
Throughout the world from one to other end…
So will I wilfully increase my paine.
And she my love that was, my Saint that is,
When she beholds from her celestiall throne…
My bitter penance, will my case bemone,
And pittie me…
So when I have with sorowe satisfide
Th’importune fates, which vengeance on me seeke…
She for pure pitie of my sufferance meeke,
Will send for me…(372-390)

From a rigorous Protestant perspective, every line multiplies errors: the abolished practices of pilgrimage and the sacrament of penance; an appeal to the pagan fates; a direct moral accounting of repentance and forgiveness. In the notion of “willfully” increasing pain there is perhaps even a trace of real psychological understanding of perverse instincts—instincts that Protestant reformers sought to manage, of course, by turning all experiences of affliction towards God.313

Alcyon’s despair is a direct threat to the religious and cultural principles through which English nationhood defined itself. Suicidal grief is one of the most violently

condemned social taboos of the period; \textsuperscript{314} dissolute emotion breaks down the “civilized” subject of colonial expansion. \textsuperscript{315} Whatever this poem offers, it is not a Protestant spiritualization of Catholic practices along the lines of Bunyan’s \textit{Pilgrim’s Progress}. Nor is it a simple negative model of difference or idolatry to be cast aside, however: if Alcyon’s grief is rife with theological error, it also represents the authenticity of Arthur Gorges’s beset position as bereaved widower and claimant of his wife’s inheritance. Grief persists in the world of this poem in spite of the efforts of other characters to manage it. It comes close to marking what Tzvetan Todorov has called a “social difference” that slips between internalization and externalization—an attribute of marginal groups uncertainly positioned inside or outside of the social collective. \textsuperscript{316}

\textit{Mourning Sidney}

Spenser’s poems participate in a late-sixteenth-century reformation of the national literature of mourning and memorialization. Their contributions to this project become clearer, paradoxically, by recognizing the extent to which they were shaped and even produced by surrounding poets, patrons, and publishers. \textsuperscript{317} As Adrian Weiss has shown,


\textsuperscript{317} I follow Joshua Eckhardt’s notion of the multiple “literary agents” shaping the production and reception of texts: see \textit{Manuscript Verse Collectors and the Politics of Anti-Courtly Love Poetry} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 5. In focusing on the particular shaping influence of William Ponsonby, I follow the seminal work of Zack
Daphnaïda and Complaints (containing “The Ruines of Time”) were published alongside two works by Abraham Fraunce, a new and expanded edition of his popular translation of Thomas Watson’s Amyntas appearing under the title The Countesse of Pembroke’s Yuuychurch, and a new biblical paraphrase on the topic of Christian consolation for loss, The Countesse of Pembroke’s Emmanuel (figs. 3.2, 3.3). All four works were printed simultaneously or sequentially by Thomas Orwin on a single job-lot of paper; the investor and copy owner William Ponsonby “apparently planned the four books as a single project and purchased the job-lot of paper in advance.” Spenser scholarship has picked up on the co-printing of Daphnaïda and Complaints; the Oxford Handbook of Edmund Spenser (2010) productively joins discussion of the two works in a single article.

The full implications of Ponsonby’s publication of his four 1591 works “as a single project,” however, have yet to be addressed. These 1591 publications share the work of cultivating a new ambitious literature founded not in the short, relatively indecorous forms of the epitaph and epigram but in genres of epic, lyric, and romance and composed through imitation of Classical, biblical, and continental models. Reflecting or participating directly in the developing commemoration and mythologizing of Philip

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Sidney (d. 1586), as well as the Protestant interventionism Philip and his family members the Earls of Leicester (d. 1588) and Warwick (d. 1590) had supported, these poems extend a shared posture of lament that is at once a claim to contested cultural and religious legitimacy. They mark their shared concern even in their visual appearance: of the four quarto publications, three have identical, distinctive title-page woodcut borders; at a glance they could be mistaken for one another.

Additionally, all four 1591 works are concerned directly or indirectly with the ongoing efforts of Philip’s sister Mary Sidney, the “Countess of Pembroke” of Fraunce’s titles, to establish herself as his successor as poet and patron. William Ponsonby was central to this project, having published Fraunce’s tribute to Philip, *The Arcadian Rhetorike*, in 1588, and having brought out the authorized collected edition of Philip’s works under Mary Sidney’s supervision, with the title *The Countesse of Pembroke’s Arcadia*, in 1590; in 1592 and 1595 he published Mary’s own works. The four 1591 works participate in this project of developing a Sidney family legacy: both Fraunce’s works openly address Mary Sidney, adapting the earlier title used for Philip’s works, and Spenser’s “The Ruines of Time” is likewise dedicated to her. As discussed, *Daphnaïda* addresses the family of the bereaved courtier Arthur Gorges, but its focus on the

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321 On Spenser’s mingled political and personal hopes in 1591, see Oram, “Spenser’s Audiences,” *op. cit.*
322 These distinctive borders are used for a number of earlier and subsequent works, though the three 1591 works are William Ponsonby’s only publications to employ them. The set came into the printer Thomas Orwin’s possession possibly in 1587 but certainly by 1589. See R.B. McKerrow and F.S. Ferguson, *Title-page Borders Used in England and Scotland, 1485-1640* (London: Printed for the Bibliographical Society at Oxford Press, 1932 [for 1931]), no. 171 (pp. 102-104).
legitimacy of and future care for Gorges’ daughter Ambrosia would have concerned Mary Sidney intimately: Mary was Ambrosia’s godmother, and Ambrosia’s given name was evidently taken either from Mary’s uncle Ambrose or perhaps even more directly from Mary’s lost sister of the same name.

Of the four 1591 publications, Fraunce’s version of *Amyntas* was the already established bestseller, and Ponsonby’s other publications were likely intended to capitalize on its popularity. Thomas Watson’s Latin poem survives only in one 1585 edition, but Fraunce’s translation was printed in 1587, 1588, 1589, and, following the 1591 printing, was published again in 1596. Together, Watson’s and Fraunce’s versions established a model for a new kind of Ovidian poetry widely followed—and acknowledged—by later poets, providing a seminal influence on what has been called the “Golden Age” of Elizabethan poetry. Spenser himself acknowledged the influence of Watson and *Amyntas*, extending almost an entire stanza of *The Faerie Queene* to praise of either Watson or Fraunce’s poem (III.vi.45), and more directly complimenting Watson of either Watson or Fraunce’s poem (III.vi.45), and more directly complimenting Watson

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325 Walter Staton, “The Influence of Thomas Watson on Elizabethan Ovidian Poetry,” *Studies in the Renaissance* 6 (1959), 243-50. The success of *Amyntas* is also indicated in the prequels and sequels published in following years by Fraunce, Watson, and “I.T.”
in “The Ruines of Time.” In between, Watson returned the compliment shortly before losing his life in a brawl over Christopher Marlowe’s debts.\textsuperscript{326}

Watson’s poem offers a display of eloquent erudition and mastery of rhetorical technique. Within its pastoral setting, the eponymous shepherd mourns the death of his beloved Phyllis in a series of eleven numbered laments (“querelae”) over eleven days. Finally, he commits suicide, and in pity of his fate Jove transforms him into the flower amaranth (11.57-83). As a formidable Graecist and translator of Sophocles Watson would have understood this flower derives its name from amaranton, “undying” or “unfading.” Perhaps he would have known, as Thomas Browne later did, that the amaranth flower was strewn symbolically on the grave in Greek funeral rites.\textsuperscript{327} Very likely he was aware that amaranton is used twice in the first Epistle of Peter (in passages among the most frequently cited for Christian consolation) to describe the “incorruptible” crown (1:4) and inheritance (5:4) reserved for the inhabitants of heaven.\textsuperscript{328} (The “amaranthine” heavenly or joyful crown of the early Church is a wreathed, not a metallic crown.\textsuperscript{329}) The “incorruptibility” of heavenly things—of the Resurrected body especially, though the biblical passages describing that body rely on a different Greek word—is the recurrent focus of almost all elegiac and consolatory writing of the sixteenth and seventeenth

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Hydriotaphia}, Section IV.
\end{itemize}
centuries. “For the trumpe shall blowe, and the deade shall rise incorruptible, and we shall be chaunged”; we shall be metamorphosed, made amaranthine. Pagan source materials shadow Christian truths; endurance of affliction concludes in triumphant transfiguration. Such, at least, is an allegorical reading of this conclusion of Watson’s poem—one for which the unusual allegorical woodcut representing the union of Church and state and offering a tag in support of godly living that brackets the poem both at front and at end might seem to prime us (fig. 3.4).

Watson’s Amyntas frames itself as a fiction or allegory, but through its subsequent publication in Fraunce’s translations the story is picked up as a participant in the commemoration of Philip Sidney. Fraunce’s translation appears about a year after Philip’s death. It is composed, ambitiously, in the new English hexameters that had occasioned Spenser’s cry for a “kingdom” of English language; it is written according to the specific rules for determining quantity Sidney has written out in the Cambridge copy of the Old Arcadia. Fraunce’s poem is the first work to be dedicated to Mary Sidney

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330 The translation of amaranth as “incorruptible” is specific to the Geneva Bible: while it translates the word in 1 Peter 1:4 as “that fadeth not away,” 5:4 is given as “incorruptible.” The AV later translates both as “that fadeth not away.”
331 “The Order for the Buriall of the Dead,” 1559 Book of Common Prayer; the biblical source is 1 Corinthians 15:52.
332 I disagree with Franklin B. Williams’ conclusion that the reappearance of this woodblock merely constitutes an example of Elizabethan printers’ careless reuse of old blocks to fill space; see “Thomas Watson and Henry VIII,” The Library 6.2 (1980): 445-56.
following her brother’s death—the earliest memorials for Philip address powerful, male Protestant policy-makers—and appears at a time she was still in retirement in mourning at her husband’s estate in Wiltshire. The dedication openly acknowledges the disruption of its moment of appearance, positioning Fraunce in a bond of sympathy with his mourning dedicatee:

Mine afflicted mind and crased bodie, together with other externall calamities haue wrought such sorowfull and lamentable effects in me, that for this whole yeare I haue wholy giuen ouer my selfe to mournfull meditations.

The implicit suggestion of Fraunce’s preface is that author and dedicatee together share their affect of mourning with the poem—that the poem itself might allow an extension or an amplification of their mourning work.

Fraunce’s 1591 edition of his earlier work makes the link with Sidney explicit, even turning Amyntas himself into an explicit figure for Philip. A new preface included in Ponsonby’s edition alludes to Mary Sidney’s favor, while the work’s new title—The Countesse of Pembrokes Yuychurch—draws its lamentations into the world of the

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336 I rely on Franklin B. Williams, Index of Dedications and Commendatory Verses in English Books before 1641 (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1962), entry for “Herbert (Sidney), Mary.” Mary Sidney had been the subject of dedications in 1581 (by Thomas Howell) and 1583 (by Gervase Babington), but these works scarcely anticipate the series of twenty-five dedications given to her in the years following the death of Philip, nor her formidable role as patron to poets such as Fraunce and Samuel Daniel.

337 The 1587 edition’s preface (John Wolfe for Thomas Newman), which I quote, is republished without significant difference in the subsequent editions of 1588 (John Charlewood for Thomas Newman and Thomas Gubbin) and 1596 (Robert Robinson for Thomas Gubbin).
Arcadia and the ruined monastic landscape of Mary Sidney’s secondary estate at Ivychurch. (It was at Ivychurch, according to Aubrey, that Philip wrote the Arcadia.) This new edition, now classed generically on its title-page as “A Funeral,” is expanded to contain an additional new day of lament leading up to Amyntas’s suicide in which he bids farewell to Ivychurch and a representative of Mary Sidney herself, “fayre Pembrokiana.” In another passage added at the end of the poem, following Amyntas’s metamorphosis, “Pembrokiana” appears in person to name the place “Amyntas Dale” and declare an annual ceremony of commemoration or “monyment.” In 1592 Fraunce publishes a new work, The Third part of the Countesse of Pembrokes Yuychurch. Entitled, Amintas Dale, opening with a description of nymphs and shepherds gathering for this annual commemorative “feast,” i.e. cultic or communion-taking celebration. More than one critic has read these passages not as imaginative fictions but as describing real-world practices of commemoration Mary Sidney engaged in through the kinds of pastoral role-play popular among the nobility of the late Elizabethan era.

The Amyntas story thus establishes itself a central paradigm for the poetry of mourning, one centrally concerned with the Sidney family and its legacy. Spenser undoubtedly knew of this history of appropriation of Watson’s original poem: his own decision to commemorate Sidney in “Astrophel” through a narrative of flower metamorphosis is almost certainly an acknowledgment of the association between Sidney

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338 This new edition is divided into two parts, the first of which is a new translation of Tasso’s Aminta adapted and harmonized so as to provide a prequel of amorous courtship to Amyntas’s loss and lamentations. (Watson’s poem initially had had nothing to do with Tasso’s play, despite some bibliographic catalogue entries that continue, mistakenly, to call it a translation.)

and Amyntas’s amaranth. In its focus on the affective condition of grief and despair, Spenser’s *Daphnaïda* also seems to offer an adaptation and response: the copious expressions of Alcyon’s suicidal grief seems to derive from the despairing song of Watson and Fraunce’s shepherd. One specific plot point makes the debt clear: both Amyntas and Alcyon are consumed by grief to the point of abandoning their flocks to the predations of wolves (10.42-52; 344-350). This shocking gesture is without precedent in Classical pastoral, and violates the fundamentally socially reintegrative ethos of Theocritus or Virgil’s laments. Moreover, it uncomfortably evokes the bad shepherd metaphor repeatedly cited in the Protestant discourse of pre-Reformation clerical abuse. Though this motif seems not to enter continental European traditions of pastoral lament, it is picked up in later English works: a ballad on the 1612 death of Henry Stuart, which establishes the enduringly popular tune “In sad and ashy weeds,” repeats it; Milton’s youthful “Epitaphium Damonis” picks it up as a refrain (“Ite domum impasti, domino iam non vacat, agni”). In these later works the shepherd’s negligence

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343 “Go home unfed, for your master has no time for you, my lambs.” *The Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Hughes (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2003 [1957]). Hughes’s note undoubtedly correctly identifies the ending of Virgil’s Eclogue 7 as a source, but the point is precisely that Milton changes feeding to *not* feeding.
may soften into a familiar trope; in *Daphnaïda*, however, it is a startling and discomforting portrayal of the potentially violent, socially destructive force of despair.

**Inheritance**

“We are to be proud / Of our Elizabethan English,” Seamus Heaney writes, in what might be read as a response to Spenser’s call for a “kingdom of our own language” at once reinscribing that nation-building’s elided history of cultural and linguistic genocide and pointing to the inevitable Irish presence at the heart of putative preserves of English identity. Against the exaggerated construction of Irish mourning of Spenser’s *View* we might look to the ineluctable pagan or Irish presence at the heart of the formation of ambitious new English literary forms at the turn of the 1590s. As Spenser’s works show us, this literary project is bound up with an awareness of the presence of grief.

Spenser’s *Daphnaïda* reveals the presence of a Catholic and pagan past in a manner evidently closely related to, yet distinct from *The Faerie Queene*. If, as James Kearney has eloquently argued, the complex theological and temporal overlay of Spenser’s major work requires the reader to develop a sophisticated ability to judge and discern error, *Daphnaïda* seems to demand a similar attentive labor on the part of its reader. Yet the grief of Spenser’s elegy, however theologically fraught, stands for the personal work of bolstering his associate Arthur Gorges’ legal claims and for the much

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broader, more vital political work of asserting a new, decorous mourning poetry oriented around the commemoration of Philip Sidney and the militant nationalist Protestantism he represents. However marginal, or however disturbing, grief is incorporate in the social world of Spenser’s poem as an unavoidable inheritance of its transformative projects.
Chapter 4

Mortuary Style and the Death of Prince Henry

Sometimes I wonder, laying in a great black stripe on the canvas, what animal bones (or horns) are making the furrows in my picture.\textsuperscript{346}

In 1612 a new use of black color appears in print. Its occasion is the death of the heir to the Stuart kingdoms, Prince Henry, a loss received widely as a national disaster. Among an outpouring of commemorative writing, English and Scottish printers produce a series of innovative memorial prints using black color as a dominant effect in their decoration and layout (figs. 4.1–4.4). Though varied in form and representation, these visually arresting typographic experiments share a common form: thick, solid patches of black ink produced through an unusual technology of printing with uncarved woodblocks or blocks lightly carved in “white line.”

Critics and bibliographers have long noted the unusual typographic experiments appearing among the printed works on Henry’s death.\textsuperscript{347} Catherine MacLeod’s recent exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in London drew public attention to their unusual effects, linking them to the contemporary sense of national emergency:

This was an extremely unusual type of print at this date and its use seems to have been inspired by a feeling that simply creating poetry about Prince Henry’s death was not enough; a new form of visual metaphor also had to

be found that would suitably reflect the literary content of these volumes.348

Although these white-line prints with their heavy black color emerge in this particular, exceptional moment, however, they have a long subsequent history in print. The “heavy,” “mourning,” “negative,” or “mortuary” borders and woodcuts that become a defining feature of the print culture of elegies, funeral sermons, and *memento mori* print from the seventeenth century onwards develop and codify the same thick black color and white-line woodblock technology first established in the memorials for Prince Henry (figs. 4.5-4.7).349 The visual rhetoric being worked out in these prints, then, points not only to the exceptionality of Henry’s death, but also, more deeply, towards a cultural perception of the necessary or intrinsic exceptionality of loss—and of the literary memorial.

Normally in producing a woodcut, which will be printed on the same press and potentially at the same time as type, the woodcutter uses a sharp knife to carve away the design’s empty space, leaving the design itself as a raised, uncarved set of planes and ridges that are inked and printed in relief. In producing a white-line woodcut, however, the woodcutter reverses the artistic process: the desired design is carved directly into the block and it is the design’s empty spaces that are inked and printed in black. In this process, the white-line woodcut anticipates the highly valued nineteenth-century


349 The stylistic and technological continuity linking the memorials for Prince Henry to later print does not seem to have been noted except in passing by John Draper in the introduction to his facsimile edition *A Century of Broadside Elegies* (London: Ingpen and Grant, 1928), xv; the latter volume is a companion to his larger scholarly work *The Funeral Elegy and the Rise of English Romanticism* (New York: New York University Press, 1929), which alludes only briefly to mortuary style in the memorials for Henry (29n).
technology of book illustration, the wood engraving, though its use of a wood grain and
tool capable of less precision, not to mention its production within an entirely different
aesthetic regime, results in an entirely different and typically less refined aesthetic
effect.\textsuperscript{350} It also resembles the relatively more expensive contemporary artistic process of
the copperplate engraving, in which the artist likewise carves the design directly onto the
surface of the matrix—though with the crucial difference that high-pressure roller-printed
engravings carry their ink in their carved-away recesses rather than on the surface and
thus produce their design as a set of black lines rather than unprinted white lines. Like
later wood engravings, white-line woodcuts can be said to represent a fusion of intaglio
artistic process with relief print technology.

In the memorials for Prince Henry, as in later memento mori print, mortuary style
encompasses different strategies of representation. Full xylographic pages take place
alongside varied combinations of woodblocks and type; in addition to “true” white-line
prints, many mortuary illustrations are better described as mixing black and white line or
simply as appearing on black ground.\textsuperscript{351} These different formal strategies are generally
interchangeable in their use, however, and are united in their effect of an unusual excess
of black ink on the page. The thick woodblocks bordering and framing seventeenth-
century elegies and funeral sermons may be solid black, or may be carved with white-line

\textsuperscript{350} The resemblance of white-line prints and wood engravings is emphasized in the first
modern study of Renaissance white-line woodcut technique, Sylvester Rosa Koehler,
“White-Line Engraving for Relief-Printing in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries,” in
Annual Report of the Board of Regents for the Smithsonian Institution for the Year

\textsuperscript{351} These distinctions are laid out, albeit without precise definitions, through the different
terminologies employed in Arthur Hind’s still standard survey of the early woodcut, An
Introduction to a History of Woodcut: With a Detailed Survey of Work Done in the
Fifteenth Century (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1935), 2 vols., 1.18-21, 175-
97, 405-7, 459, 503-6.
bones, spades, and tears; funeral cortèges appear in pure white outline or as black bodies articulated in white line; black borders may cluster around the printed text or, as in later nineteenth-century mourning stationery and handkerchiefs, may turn the edges into a black frame. This flexibility of representational form is a part of what gives mortuary black its effective power: it operates as an adaptable sign of loss and/or mourning, presented through shifting visual tropes of negation, disruption, and aporia. 352 This symbolism is of course still legible today, appearing in adapted present-day forms such as Robert Motherwell’s painted “Elegies”—works originally intended for print and likely inspired by his study of American Puritan memorials—353—or Françoise Mouly and Art Spiegelman’s cover for The New Yorker in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks. 354

The origin of black mortuary decoration in the memorials for Prince Henry has apparently not been noted, perhaps because this link between black color and the material forms surrounding death remains so familiar, even intuitive. But the print culture of loss

353 “Ink Sketch (Elegy No. 1)” was intended as a frame for a poetic text, and includes, in addition to the distinctive vertical bars and ovoid shapes of the later paintings, a solid black border at top. On Motherwell’s work on “The Puritan,” which immediately preceded “Ink Sketch (Elegy No. 1),” see Robert Saltonstall Mattison, Robert Motherwell: The Formative Years (Ann Arbor and London: UMI Research Press, 1987 [1986]). This likely originary influence on Motherwell’s masterwork appears not to have been discussed, though Stephanie Terenzio (op. cit.) points to the constraints of the print medium as a source for Motherwell’s inventive play with white and black.
354 On the collaborative origins of Mouly and Spiegelman’s solid black cover, which (somewhat like a daguerreotype) shows the outline of the Twin Towers when held at an angle to the light, see Jeet Heer, In Love with Art: Françoise Mouly’s Adventures in Comics with Art Spiegelman (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2013). For another example of mortuary style in modern print, see the cover of LIFE magazine’s 1963 memorial edition for President John F. Kennedy.
has no particular association with black color prior to 1612. Death’s-heads, skeletons, and other mortuary symbols litter the woodcut book illustrations, printers’ ornaments, and single-leaf prints produced throughout Europe in the sixteenth century, but they are consistently represented in black outline, are often hand-painted in a variety of colors, and show no attempt to create a dominantly or exceptionally black page. In general, English and European memorial prints of the sixteenth century are not visually distinguished from other categories of text: they employ the same borders, ornamentation, and layout. Conversely, white-line printing techniques and solid, sometimes thick black borders are employed across a range of different kinds of text without any particular association with death or mourning. For example, sixteenth-century English broadsides are often framed with plain black borders, even when treating

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subjects entirely unrelated to death and mourning.\textsuperscript{356} Across Europe, especially earlier in the sixteenth century, white-line woodcut techniques are employed in various kinds of text for ornamental borders, printers’ devices, and woodcut initials.\textsuperscript{357} The death of Prince Henry marks a watershed, a convergence of a particular print technology and a particular symbolic function with powerful and enduring cultural effects. After 1612, printed black color will be tied specifically to the symbolic representation of death, and its display will mark mourning and commemorative prints as a distinct kind of text.

There is of course both continuity and change in the appearance of black-centered printed mortuary decoration in the memorials for Prince Henry. Mid-twentieth-century anthropology, guided by a concept of universal color symbols, has posited a trans-cultural link between death and dark color;\textsuperscript{358} there is the long history of uses of black color in Western death rites extending through medieval liturgical color as far as the Classical Greek use of black mourning clothes.\textsuperscript{359} Looking beyond the print medium, precedents for the Henry memorials’ “negative” or “white-line” effects might by found in such diverse places as Netherlandish painting featuring skulls or skeletons against dark

\textsuperscript{356} For an example of a series of broadsides employing identical black borders and layout, one (but only one) of which is a poetic epitaph, see STC 18512, 21745, and 7555. In “An Epitaph upon the Deth of Kyng Edward” (Journal of English and Germanic Philology 29.3 [1930]: 370-71), John Draper connects sixteenth-century broadside black borders to later mortuary style, a mistake that may have led him to overlook the innovative nature of the prints for Prince Henry in his larger surveys (\textit{op. cit.}).

\textsuperscript{357} For many examples, see the sources cited in note 10 above; also, Oscar Jennings, \textit{Early Woodcut Initials} (London: Methuen and Co., 1908); and Theodore Low De Vinne, \textit{A Treatise on Title-Pages} (New York: The Century Co., 1902).


\textsuperscript{359} St. John Hope and Atchley, 108-25 \textit{et passim}. These inventories also record many instances of non-black late medieval vestments and hearse cloths intended for funerary use; throughout, St. John Hope and Atchley’s inventories list black vestments also used for non-funerary purposes.
ground,\textsuperscript{360} hearse cloths with the figure of death “steynyd” on black,\textsuperscript{361} or even Roman mosaics displaying skeletons in stark white on a black ground.\textsuperscript{362} (The seventeenth-century skeleton, as opposed to the late medieval brown bodily figure of the \textit{danses macabres}, may represent a rediscovery of the ancient figure of death.)

While recognizing the possibility of deeply rooted social and psychological reasons for the death symbolism linked to black, I suggest that we need to investigate the particular cultural factors that attend its historical manifestation in any specific material form. The early modern material culture of death is also often prominently or even ostentatiously colored in ways that may be surprising today, in its red- and gold-painted tombs, multi-colored heraldic displays, gold mourning rings, or often lavishly embroidered funeral palls.\textsuperscript{363} Even the book medium often displays a colorful response to death (figs. 4.8-4.9). Placed within a longer history of material culture in relation to the death ritual, the appearance of a black-centered visual rhetoric in response to Prince Henry’s death might be understood as registering a nexus of subtle yet significant historical shifts in the material production and cultural perception of black color, shifts that work to recreate and recode both loss and writing as more intensely color-coded. The

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[360]{E.g. the outside panels of van der Weyden’s Braque Family Triptych or the left wing of Hans Memling’s “Earthly Vanity and Divine Salvation” Triptych. \textit{Cp.} skeletons on black ground in the manuscript illustrating John Bannister’s 1580 anatomy demonstrations, University of Glasgow MS Hunter 364.}
\footnotetext[362]{Though Roman mosaic skeletons could also be rendered in black on white ground: see Pastoureau, \textit{Black}, 32.}
\end{footnotes}
The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries see the term “black” shift towards the greater specificity of modern usage (while still often being used for dark colors we would now call blue, grey, or brown); materials that prominently display black color and invest it with meaning take on new darkness and, paradoxically, “brilliance,” even as they assume new cultural functions and wider circuits of use.

In what follows, I will focus on three of these important substances—cloth, stone, and ink—as the major material forms in the physical and symbolic making of the Henry memorials’ innovative display of black. The writing practices that make up mortuary style are embedded within, and overtly draw upon, a larger context of the material culture and artistic or artisanal practices surrounding and constituting the funerary performance. Despite contributions from scholars such as Ian Archer and Nigel Llewellyn, the material and economic dimensions of these practices remain underexplored, and their influence on the visual form and material production of printed texts warrants further investigation.

In general terms, my study may thus be framed as a contribution to what Jonathan Goldberg, following Derrida, has called a “cultural graphology”: an investigation of the materials, techniques, and set of psychological investments that make up a culture’s graphie or set of writing practices in the widest sense at a given historical moment.

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364 I leave aside temporarily a number of additional materials worthy of investigation in the Henry memorials’ innovative production of black color, including paper, jet, paste, wax, latten, gems, and tears.
is also an attempt to develop an account of such a writing world through engagement with more recent work on the “materiality of color” and the circulation of technical expertise in the production of artistic forms. The production of mortuary decoration depends on a collapse of real as well as symbolic distinctions between the different material practices of writing, printing, carving, and painting. Mortuary texts present an exemplary case of what Juliet Fleming has labeled, quite deliberately and anachronistically, “graffiti”: that is, the densely visual and material graphic practices that, foregrounding the materiality of writing and printing, elide familiar distinctions between writing and drawing.

Even as I focus on the specific material and historical contingencies of the appearance of a mortuary style in England’s early seventeenth-century print culture, however, I want to extend beyond a snapshot of an “emergence.” The form and focus of my project thus depart to some degree from those of large-scale diachronic models it might otherwise follow, such as a “cultural history of color” as advanced by Michel Pastoureau or the history of “writing strategies” in response to death as analyzed by Armando Petrucci. What is most striking about mortuary style is not that it emerges at


a particular historical moment but that it persists, through changes, adaptations, and rediscoveries, to the present day. Moreover, that a visual vocabulary describing the difference and distinctiveness of memorial texts comes into being with the death of Prince Henry does not mean that that difference itself then comes into being.

Accordingly, while I focus in this chapter on the memorials for Prince Henry, my concerns are with the more fundamental question I read these materials as exploring: what is a memorial text? That is, how does the literary text take on the social and psychological work of mourning? As the persistence of a black-focused mortuary style would suggest, these questions continue to resonate in later attempts to write loss.

Mortuary black turns the blackness of print to the socially performed blackness of loss, highlighting the participation of texts in the ritual performance of the funeral and period of mourning through simulations of black stone and cloth. At the same time, mortuary decoration tends towards abstraction or play with the mechanics of printing itself, articulating loss in terms of a kind of writing that disrupts expected relationships of ink and paper, matrix and print, even presence and absence. Much like Motherwell’s later “Elegies,” the black borders and pages of the Henry memorials and other mortuary print reveal the plane of inscription as a tactile, visible, sensuous surface, as opposed to a screen or window transcended by the illusionistic space of perspective or the dematerialized word. The insistent materiality of these texts is itself an ambiguous symbol of immediacy and distance—either collapsing texts into the realm of objects

circulated and displayed in the funeral setting, or drawing attention to the fraught substitutive work by which the written word remediates the scene of mourning.

At stake in the Henry memorials’ play with simulation and substitution is the literary text’s ability to take on—through poetic and material form as well as social and temporal context of circulation—a social and psychological work of mourning oriented towards consolation and the reconstitution of social order. Theorists of the “ritual function” of memorial writing have perhaps been too quick to take this role as a given. At once ostentatious and apophatic, the Henry memorials ask whether the literary work of mourning may resist as well as participate in the sublimation of grief through ritual—and, indeed, whether ritual performance itself may evade controlling or containing loss. As John Davies, writing on the public performance of Henry’s loss, concludes, “Common-grieffe’s not capable of forme”: the experience of loss exceeds the vehicles of ritual or textual performance, disturbing the most basic mechanisms for the representation and reproduction of social order. The inversions and negations of mortuary black are “formless” in the crucial sense that they may convey a loss not only of persons but also of established means of representation. They show us—quite literally—the margins, the invisible spaces, and the material histories that subtend the production of symbolic order.

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I take mortuary black as caught not only between form and formlessness, or raw materiality and abstraction, but also between private feeling and social ritual. As Hamlet has taught us in his meditation on “Common-griefe” and the commonness of grief, the performance of mourning measures the gap between emotion and the social even as it is compelled to collapse the distance between the two. Elegiac writing and funerary performance face the same predicament. If there are essential differences between textual, visual, and performative registers of the social response to Henry’s death, these different aspects share an investment in working through the potential, as well as the limitations, of a sense of national belonging founded on loss.

Addressing the ways black mortuary decoration marks the function of commemorative texts returns this chapter to some of the basic premises of my dissertation project: that there is a category of broadly diffused “memorial literatures” that warrants investigation as a discourse, rather than through more narrowly confined genre studies of elegy, epitaph, sermon, or meditation; that the often peculiar or distinctive material forms these literatures assume constitute one of their most salient and meaningful features; that these literatures are direct participants in a larger, rich material culture of death but are also texts that may circulate with some measure of autonomy or distance from that material culture. It also returns to one of my dissertation’s central claims about the social place and prominence of memorial writing, that these literary forms are invested as key sites for the negotiation of cultural and literary values: if memorial writings are among the most broadly socially diffused of early modern literary categories, they are also one of those most directly implicated in the demarcation of

\[372\] Hamlet 1.2.70-89.
social divisions; if they offer one of the most trivial or “lowest” of literary genres, they are also subject to frequent attempts at reformation or elevation towards greater literary value, and are repeatedly mobilized to shape popular and elite conceptions of national, religious, and cultural identity.

It may be that continental European precedents for the white-line prints of the memorials for Prince Henry may be found; I am unsure of the actual origin of manuscript black borders. The scale and consistency of these decorative effects in the 1612 prints for Prince Henry, however, and their concurrent production by a range of different printers and publishers, is almost certainly unprecedented in Europe. Among the outpouring of print all across Europe in response to the 1610 murder of Henri IV of France, for example, which compares with or even exceeds the print production in response to the death of Prince Henry, I have found no instance of mortuary decoration. The Henry memorials thus seem to offer an exceptional early case of a major print convention that is established in Britain before spreading subsequently to Europe. For this to happen in Britain’s relatively undeveloped print culture, and its particularly undeveloped culture of

image production, depends both materially and symbolically on white-line woodblock printing’s ability to combine the techniques and effects of both elite and popular print. White-line woodblock printing is in a very basic sense a “low” art form, even though its peculiar deployment of black color allows it to claim affiliation with higher-value forms. Traversing opposed meanings of high and low, power and abjection, “sable” and “swart,” black puts the print culture of loss in relation to what is a central symbolic ambiguity of early modern funeral practice itself: its tense accommodation of the display of social order and its withdrawal.

Text and Ritual

Henry’s death has long been recognized as a formative national trauma of the early Stuart period and a key influence on the development of English elegy. Though only eighteen at the time of his death, Henry had established himself as a major patron of literature and the visual arts, a public embodiment of a neo-chivalric militant Protestant ideal, and a visible proponent of England’s incipient colonial expansion in the New World. His death was met with a powerful sense of lost national opportunity and fear

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376 Classic studies of Henry’s life and influence include Roy Strong, Henry, Prince of Wales and England’s Lost Renaissance (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986) and J.W.
for the future. Writing from the new colony of Virginia, Sir Thomas Dale offers a lament illustrating the mingled religious and political hopes widely invested in the Prince:

> He was the great Captaine of our Israell, the hope to haue builded vp this heavenly new Jerusalem[,] he interred (I think) the whole frame of this businesse, fell into his graue: for most mens forward (at least seeming so) desires are quenched, and Virginia stands in desperate hazard.\(^{377}\)

Through the seventeenth century and long after the death of the Prince would continue to be remembered as a national catastrophe, while also offering a tantalizing marker of possible alternative historical paths for the British nation.\(^{378}\) Politically charged editions of works on Henry’s life and death appear or reappear in the civil wars of the 1640s and as late as the 1745 attempt to restore the Stuarts to the monarchy.\(^{379}\) In Scotland in the

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\(^{377}\) “To the R. and my most esteemed friend M’. D.M. at his house at F. Ch. in London,” in Ralph Hamor, *A True Discourse of the Present State of Virginia* (London: John Beale for William Welbie, 1615), sig. H2r. “Prince Henry” is identified in the margin, the book’s only printed marginal note. Dale’s expression of grief may represent real fears for the future of England’s colony, concerns that seem to have been addressed at least symbolically in the subtle Virginian theme appearing in entertainments for the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth in 1613, the first major series of courtly performances following Henry’s funeral. See Parry, 98-99 and 101-102.


\(^{379}\) Charles Cornwallis’s life of Henry, which I cite below, is issued in print starting in 1641, having earlier circulated in manuscript. Two eighteenth-century pamphlet collections in the National Library of Scotland show how Henry’s memory continued to be adapted into political controversies: in one, a 1703 edition of William Fowler’s 1594 account of Henry’s baptism ceremony is bound up with tracts concerning the 1707 Union of Parliaments and the Union’s Protestant identity; in another, a pseudonymously-printed 1745 edition of the same tract is bound up with works concerning both sides of the Jacobite Rebellion of that year.
mid-eighteenth century, “Did not good Prince Henry die?” may still have been a commonplace consolation offered to bereaved parents.³⁸⁰

In keeping with the general sense of national disaster, Henry’s death provokes by far the largest single episode of English elegiac writing of the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. Michael Ullyot’s recently updated bibliography illustrates the sheer volume of this output: around fifty printed editions of sermons, biographies, broadsides, funeral songs, single-author elegies, and memorial anthologies, as well as numerous unprinted manuscript works.³⁸¹ The international impact of this event is registered in imprints not only from London and Edinburgh but also from Leiden and Montpellier.³⁸² One English manuscript elegy survives only in the Palatinate Library in Heidelberg.³⁸³ Many of the

³⁸⁰ “The Publisher to the Reader,” included in 1745 (Edinburgh: Philander) and 1764 (Leith: A. Robertson) editions of Fowler’s baptism festival tract. This anecdote is cited twice by John Nichols from a manuscript copy of this publisher’s address, the printed source of which he could not identify: see *The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First, His Royal Consort, Family, and Court* (London: J.B. Nichols, 1828), 3 vols., 2.504 and *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth* (London: John Nichols and Son, 1823), 3 vols., 3.353.
most important poets and playwrights of the early Stuart period contribute offerings; hundreds more authors, many of whom are not known from any other work, are represented among the memorial collections. In turn, the readerly response to this literary outpouring is registered in the four Sammelbände or privately bound collections of separately published tracts known to John Nichols in the early nineteenth century.

The memorials for Henry are diverse in form and content, but they are united in treating Henry’s death as the occasion for a national work of mourning. At stake in this collective labor is what Max Cavitch, in reference to a later key moment of national self-definition through mourning, has called poetry’s role in the “formation and deformation of national subjects.” Precisely what this vision of national belonging might amount to is uncertain. Less than ten years into the political union joining England and Scotland, many of the elegists for Henry invoke an expansive geographic imagination, sympatheically blending feeling across the kingdoms joined by the Stuart crown. While some authors are willing to invoke a more ecumenical European fellowship of grief around the fall of magistrates, many turn specifically to Britain’s contested, precarious Protestant identity, offering attacks against Catholicism and continental Catholic

(AM thesis, Bonn, 2000); and for a partial critique, Matthias Miller’s online manuscript description (linked from the cited webpage). On the basis of its watermark, Miller suggests this manuscript was written on the continent.

384 The Progresses...of King James the First, 2.493, 2.505 (under bibliographical entries for Brooke and Browne and for Chapman), and 509 (under entry for Lacrymæ Oxonienses).

385 American Elegy (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 84.

386 William Basse’s elegiac sequence, for example, calls upon a community of mourning nations including Florence, Spain, and France; Great Brittaines Synnes-set, Bewailed with a Shower of Teares (Oxford: by Joseph Earnes, 1613), 18.
powers—what Joshua Sylvester condenses in his image of “Hell’s suborned band of Romulides.”

The collective social work of the memorials for Prince Henry is reflected in their close relationship with the public performance of mourning in his funerals. Historians and critics have often noted the entry of an elegy by John Taylor into the Stationers’ Company Registers the day after Henry’s 6 November death, but Taylor’s work was exceptional: apart from one ballad, albeit one that establishes an enduringly popular tune, no other work appears in the Stationers’ Registers until the week leading up to Henry’s 7 December funeral, at which point commemorations proliferate. In part this fact reflects the general use of literary commemorations as aids and appendages to funeral performance that I have investigated in earlier chapters: some of the memorials for Henry appear to have been offered up or attached at the site of the hearse and burial (Hugh Holland’s); others were pasted up or displayed in public (George Chapman’s epitaph); some were offered sympathetically to the household, friends, and dependents materially affected by Henry’s loss (Christopher Brooke and William Browne’s); many more were donated to noble patrons at the funeral or in its aftermath (John Webster, Cyril Tourneur, and Thomas Heywood’s); some may have been gifted to funeral participants.

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387 *Lachrymae Lachrymarum*, B1r.


(Great Britans Mourning Garment); some circulated within a manuscript coterie as witty comments on the public performance of mourning (John Donne’s response to Edward Herbert’s). Many of these, including Herbert’s and Donne’s poems, were also printed and sold to the public as a virtual extension of the public display of mourning—anticipating, directly participating in, and following, remediating, or commenting on one of the grandest of post-Reformation English funerals.

Unlike major royal funerals before and after, the ritual celebrations for Prince Henry were not organized around a moment of political succession, a fact that likely encouraged both the expression of grief and formal experimentation in the funeral’s performance. From the four-hour procession through the streets of London to the ceremonies marking Henry’s burial and the dissolution of his household in Westminster Abbey, the ritual performance of Henry’s loss mingled tradition and innovation. The collective social gathering in grief was marked both by its unprecedented lavish scale—the procession was close to double the size of Queen Elizabeth’s a decade before—and unusual features including military music normally reserved for soldiers and the participation of German Protestant nobles visiting London for the marriage of Henry’s sister Elizabeth.

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390 As Michael Ullyot points out, elegiac commemorations from earlier royal funerals typically make a point of joining their laments with consolatory celebrations of the succeeding monarch (“James’s Reception and Henry’s Receptivity: Reading Basilicon Doron after 1603,” in Wilks, 65-84, 65). In the memorials for Prince Henry, there are some comparable attempts to turn to consolatory congratulations of Prince Charles (as new heir) or Princess Elizabeth (as soon-to-be-wed), but there does seem to be a relative turn towards more unrestrained expressions of grief.

391 On Henry’s funerals, see Strong, Henry, Prince of Wales; Parry; Woodward, 148-65; and Elizabeth Goldring, “So just a sorrowe so well expressed”: Henry, Prince of Wales and the Art of Commemoration,” in Wilks, 280-300.
As scholars have long recognized, such public funerals represent key moments for the symbolic performance of collective identity. The costs involved were staggering: as Ian Archer has shown, the total crown expenditure on Henry’s funerals came to probably just slightly less than that of Queen Elizabeth’s, but still would have amounted to 25% or more of a typical year’s national tax revenue.\textsuperscript{392} That so much was spent on Henry’s funerals is perhaps more surprising given that they were immediately followed by the extended wedding celebrations for Princess Elizabeth, the single most lavish public spectacle of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with a price tag of around 140% of that typical yearly revenue.\textsuperscript{393} The total national expenditure on Henry’s funerals would of course have been much higher than the crown’s expenses, since public participation in the performance of mourning would have demanded tremendous expenditures on black cloth by individuals and households, in the form of clothes, ribbons, and wall hangings.\textsuperscript{394} Though jewelry, painting, and sculpture were all incorporated prominently and lavishly into the public display of mourning, by far the single largest cost, 90% or more of the total, was for the disbursement and display of black cloth.

In ways that were both heightened and to some degree exceptional, the procession, ceremony, and subsequent reception of Henry’s funeral centered around a conjoined symbol of presence and absence: the effigy or “Representation” of Henry and the “hearse” that housed it. No other English person other than a monarch appears to have been represented by effigy in funeral performance following the accession of Elizabeth in 1558. Shown in procession, Henry’s effigy appears in a woodcut on the title page of

\textsuperscript{392} Archer, \textit{op. cit.}, Table 1 and 165. The percentages I list are not given by Archer but are derived from his figures.
\textsuperscript{393} \textit{Ibid.}, 165-6.
\textsuperscript{394} \textit{Ibid.}, 164.
George Wither’s poetic memorial, where its prominent white color is evidently intended to mark its difference from the surrounding heavy black of mourners, hearse, and horses.\textsuperscript{395} Additionally, as with earlier royal funerals, Henry’s effigy and hearse were represented to the public in a single-leaf print, engraved by William Hole, and evidently sold both separately and as an insertion into the funeral festival book often attached to George Chapman’s poetic memorial. Hole’s print served as a prominent means for distributing Henry’s epitaphs: at the bottom, Hugh Holland’s Latin and George Chapman’s English texts are prominently inscribed on a dark ground.\textsuperscript{396} Their representation is possibly intended to simulate the effect of writing painted upon a black cloth valance, or perhaps on a separate panel of black stone or wood; much like the broadside for Henry VII discussed in Chapter 1, these texts negotiate the ambiguous relation between occasional text and monumental inscription.\textsuperscript{397}

In the funerals for Henry the medieval political-theological origin of the monarchical funeral effigy as a consolatory sign of the continuity of legal-political order was entirely abandoned to the capacity of figural representation for spectacle.\textsuperscript{398} At the

\textsuperscript{396} On the hearse and effigy, as well as the production and subsequent history of Hole’s engraving, see Goldring (\textit{op. cit.}). The funeral account was published as The Fvnerals of the high and mighty Prince Henry, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwaile and Rothsay, Count Palatine of Chester, Earle of Carick, and late Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter (London: T[omas] S[nodham] for John Budge, 1612); Chapman’s poem, under which the funeral account is often listed, is \textit{An Epicede or Funerall Song: On the most disastrous Death, of the High-borne Prince of Men, Henry Prince of Wales, &c.} (London: T[omas] S[nodham] for John Budge, 1612).
\textsuperscript{397} Cf. Petrucci, \textit{Public Lettering}, 52-61.
\textsuperscript{398} Ernst Kantorowicz, \textit{The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology} (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957). See also Ralph Giesey, \textit{The Royal Funeral Ceremony in Renaissance France} (Geneva: Librarie E. Droz, 1960); and Kathleen Cohen, \textit{Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol: The Transi Tomb in the Late Middle
center of a procession organized in a hierarchy rising and tapering in rank and splendor, 
the effigy—recumbent in the robes worn by Henry for his investiture as Prince of Wales, 
with lifelike features carefully molded in wax—was met with extravagant mourning.

According to Isaak Wake, this “representation”

did so liuely represent his person, as that it did not onely draw teares from 
the severest beholder, but cawsed a fearefull outcrie among the people as 
if they felt at the present their owne ruine in that loss. I must confess never 
to have seen such a sight of mortification in my life, nor neuer so iust a sorrowe so well expressed as in all the spectators whose streaming eyes 
made knowen howe much inwardly their harts did bleed.\(^{399}\)

Wake’s reading of this scene within the Protestant-inflected penitential framework of a 
“sight of mortification” echoes contemporary calls from the pulpit to consider Henry’s 
death as England’s punishment for its sins.\(^{400}\) The violent public weeping he describes at 
the sight of Henry’s effigy was a common feature of contemporary funerals, appearing in 
descriptions of the earlier processions for Queen Elizabeth and Philip Sidney, among 
others, but likely in this case attracted particular violence: Henry’s death was a death 
without renewal.\(^{401}\)

Charles Cornwallis’ account offers an even more extreme vision of the mourning 
attracted by the sight of Henry’s effigy:

As it passed along, the whole World, sensible and insensible things, and creatures seemed to mourne, and have compassion, heaven and earth and

\(^{399}\) Cited in Strong, Henry, Prince of Wales, 7.  
\(^{400}\) Sampson Price, Londons Warning by Laodicea’s Luke-warmnesse. Or a Sermon 
Preached at Paules-Crosse, the 10 of October, 1613. Being the first Sunday in Tearme 
(London: John Barnes, 1613).  
\(^{401}\) Cf. Harding, 265-66.
all; There was to bee seene an innumerable multitude of all sorts of ages and degrees of men, women, and children, whose wonderfull sorrow who is able to expresse? some holding in their heads, not being able to endure so sorrowfull a sight, all mourning, which they expressed by severall sorts of lamentation and sorrow, some weeping, crying, howling, wringing of their hands, others halfe dead, sounding, sighing inwardly, others holding up their hands, passionately bewailing so great a losse, with Rivers, nay with an Ocean of teares…

In Cornwallis’s description, the public response to the funeral procession is a collective embodiment of the tropes of elegiac rhetoric. The common trope of *occupatio* or the inexpressibility of loss is transformed into a physical performance of grief understood as a loss of bodily control.

These written descriptions point to a reception of Henry’s funerals that uncomfortably negotiates how it is that a society can come together through a performance of behavior that normally would defy the accepted bounds of conduct. This is precisely the problem explored by the poems on Henry’s death, which describe the experience of loss less in terms of a successful *rite de passage* than through language and imagery evoking frozen liminality or the recursive structure of trauma. Indeed, the question raised by these poems is whether society comes together at all in response to Henry’s death.

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402 *The Life and Death of Our Late most Incomparable and Heroique Prince, Henry Prince of Wales* (London: John Dawson for Nathanael Butter, 1641), 86. See also Cornwallis on the public weeping at the funeral sermons preached at Cambridge (91) and Oxford (92).

William Browne’s “Funeral Elegie” on the Prince powerfully but unstably founds a new sense of collective identity in an unending work of mourning. Written in a pastoral and Spenserian mode, and with an ambitious and innovative stanza structure, Browne’s poem draws inspiration for its violent depiction of grief from the pastoral experiments of Spenser discussed in the last chapter. In his poem’s conceit, the outpouring of an overwhelming flood of tears encloses the nation within its sea walls:

_England stood n’ere ingirt with WAVES till now, Till now it held part with the CONTINENT (D4)_

In the elaboration of this “sceptered isle” conceit, the watery “Zone” encircling Britain turns the repetitive echo of mourning inward, as though dividing off a microcosm of solitary and unending grief (E1). As Browne makes explicit, this national boundary-defining work of mourning is refused progress through the stages of grief: “TIME cannot make our Sorrowes ought compleater” (D4), i.e. cannot bring the process of mourning to an end. This insistence on a work of grief that is refused sublimation becomes perhaps the more surprising given Browne’s text’s repeated republication as a set-piece included in the multiple editions of

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404 “An Elegie on the Never-Inovgh Bewailed Death of the Worthy, Vertuous, glory of these, and wonder for ensuing times, Henry, Prince of Wales,” in Christopher Brooke and William Browne, _Two Elegies, Consecrated to the Never-Dying Memorie of the most worthily admyred; most hartily loued; and generally bewayled Prince; Henry Prince of Wales_ (London: T[homas] S[nodham] for Richard More, 1613).

405 Browne’s image is echoed in Christopher Brooke’s elegy, with which it was originally published: in Brooke’s poem, Henry’s hearse appears “A little Iland compast in with Teares” (C3). In both cases, the image likely points to the influence of John of Gaunt’s speech in Shakespeare’s _Richard II_, Act 2, Scene 1. Though Browne in this line refers to “England,” his poem elsewhere treats of “Brittaine.”
Britannia’s Pastoralls, first published in 1613. In its original publication, as well as in its later place in Browne’s larger work, the elegy for Henry ends with a startling articulation of grief as a structure that itself repeats and reproduces loss. The nation enters into a “LABYRINTH of Woe” on the news of Henry’s sickness, grasping at his “thread of life” as the spool that would lead it out:

But *Destiny*, no sooner saw us enter
Sad Sorrowes MAZE (immured vp in night)
Where nothing dwells;
But cryes and yells,
(Throwne from the harts of men depriued of light)
When we were almost come into the CENTER,
*Fate* (cruelly) to barre our ioyes returning,
Cut off our threed and left us all in MOVRNING. (E2v)

If, as Browne’s poem seems to argue, it is through Henry’s death that a distinct British identity and nationhood are constituted and maintained, this identity is paradoxically and unstably founded on recursive, unending, and even self-destructive forms of grief.

Browne’s poem develops an unusually sophisticated and coherent vision of grief as a collective trauma, but it is if anything representative of the other poems on Henry’s loss in emphasizing just how disturbing or destructive the liminal posture of mourning may be. The other elegies for Henry repeatedly describe the performance of mourning in terms of a breaking of “degree”: loss of bodily and intellectual control (“Mourners keepe no methode in their mones”407), feminization (“I am turn’d woman: watrish teares...”), and

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406 Almost unchanged, the elegy for Henry appears in Book 1, Song 5 (p. 91 in 1613 first edition). Henry is named as the poem’s subject.
benumbe / My Heate: my Masculine existence thawes / To teares”⁴⁰⁸, descent from civility into an unaccommodated state (“rude grief that no adornment beares”⁴⁰⁹). For Christopher Brooke, grief is a collapse of bodily function in humoral confusion, what is also reversion to the elemental Chaos described in Golding’s and Ovid’s Metamorphoses, which earlier political theorists had employed as an image of a universe prior to hierarchical order:⁴¹⁰

…heate and colde, moyst, dry, with all extreames
Fight with Confusion in each troubled brest⁴¹¹

John Davies, in the passage already alluded to, even more explicitly invokes the collapse of order:

O yee heau'nly Spheares, sound so [discordantly], or stay;
And, all confuse beneath the firmament!
For, Common-griefe’s not capable of forme⁴¹²

Such textualizations of shared mourning might be dismissed on the grounds that literary elegies are able ultimately to depart from the public funerary performance in their affective register or tone, or as extravagant rhetorical posturings that occlude the funeral’s real work of reinforcing deeply engrained hierarchical social relations.

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⁴⁰⁹ Great Brittans Mourning Garment, XIX.
⁴¹¹ Two Élegies, C4'. The figure is of course also one of humoral instability.
⁴¹² Davies, C1r.
Nonetheless, they point towards a cultural reception of the funeral as a performance of catastrophe.

Since the foundational work of Roy Strong, European public funerals have been widely understood as culturally central performances of power, rituals that impose and reproduce established hierarchies and controlling ideologies. \(^{413}\) Studies of Renaissance or early modern festivals typically take funerals as one subcategory of a larger culture of pageants, processions, and courtly performances. \(^{414}\) Early work in this field helped shape New Historicist accounts of the operations of power in the theater and more recent research has continued to draw on a “theatrical” metaphor or model for festivals’ performance of hierarchical social order. \(^{415}\) Whether studied separately or as a component


of this larger festival culture, funerals have been widely understood on the basis of the anthropological model of the *rite de passage* as a collectively performed social movement from “rupture” to “reintegration.”\textsuperscript{416} This anthropological model has also provided the basis for literary criticism describing a fundamentally socially conservative “ritual function” of mourning and commemorative writing.\textsuperscript{417}

As Jonathan Parry, Maurice Bloch, and others have argued and amply illustrated, however, if death rites provide a primary site for the performance of social ideologies, they are also where those ideologies face some of their sharpest and overt challenges.\textsuperscript{418} In the funerals for Prince Henry, and in the literary works that respond to his death, there is a marked awareness that loss strains the social fabric, and that even a corporate or collective response may be only provisional or unsustainable. These cultural productions also emphasize an aspect of the public funeral that distinguishes it to some degree from other festival forms: if such performances work to control and redirect the meaning of loss, that is because loss needs controlling, in ways that may be urgent and pressing.

In the last chapter I argued that grief was widely understood through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as marking unstable cultural, religious, and even racial boundaries of self and other. The social response to Henry’s death emphasizes a different

\textsuperscript{416} Van Gennep, *op. cit.*; Turner, *op. cit.*


troubling and paradoxical aspect of grief: that its capacity for binding a body politic is always in tension with its capacity for disruption. Theorists of mourning in the modern period have often emphasized its gestures of anger or refusal, as well as its power to invoke alternative sources of authority or oppositional communities. This, it seems, is the reason why mortuary style has a secondary history as a means of deploying political protest: in a 1698 silver-on-black broadside complaint against corruption and ineptitude occasioned by the destruction of Whitehall; in the 1733 black mourning wrappers (also printed in silver) binding a satire against oppressive new taxes; in the mortuary symbols appearing on Colonial American newspapers in response to the 1765 Stamp Act; in the mourning wrappers and mortuary devices among the print organizing American opposition to British rule in the lead-up to and at the outset of the Revolutionary Wars. (There is also Johnny Cash’s “Man in Black”; or, again, Hamlet’s posture of refusal, a gesture at once deeply personal and bound up with the play’s revelations of broader public political discontent.)


In the funerals for Prince Henry there is some trace of the strain of oppositional Protestant nationalism that produced comparable mourning around the deaths of Philip Sidney and the Earl of Essex.\textsuperscript{422} Rather than a clear oppositional politics, however, the texts mediating and remediating the funeral’s performance point to a broad social exploration of the ways grief may not only refuse but even threaten substitution, sublimation, and social reaggregation. If, as Roy Strong proposes, the essential function of the Renaissance festival is to impose a vision of a hierarchically ordered universe, Henry’s funeral does something different—or at least more complex.\textsuperscript{423} Mortuary black appears in print as a reproduction of the funerary performance’s uncertain meaning, as an ambiguous symbol of display and negation.

\textit{Ink}

What does it mean to speak at once of the social and color “value” of black? Take the following three examples of mortuary style, two seventeenth-century manuscript elegies and a print from the memorials for Prince Henry:

1) The title page of an anonymous manuscript memorial for Sir Edward Coke (\textit{d.} 1634), one of at least two such bound memorial poetry books presented to Coke’s eldest daughter, the antiquarian collector and religious controversialist Anne Sadler or Sadleir (fig. 4.10).\textsuperscript{424} The manuscript, written on folded foolscap sheets by an amateur but

\textsuperscript{422} On the comparisons made between Henry and these other Protestant heroes, see Strong, \textit{Henry, Prince of Wales}, 223-24.
\textsuperscript{423} Strong, \textit{Art and Power}, 39-41.
\textsuperscript{424} Harvard Law Library MS 4125. The other manuscript is British Library MS Add. 37484. On Sadleir, see Victoria Burke, “Sadleir [\textit{née} Coke], Anne (1585-1671/2), \textit{literary}
moderately skilled scribe who is likely also the author and (amateur) illustrator, includes black stained edges and numerous black borders, in addition to large colored coats of arms, a fold-out colored genealogy, and a colorful inserted portrait of death in majesty (fig. 4.9). On the title page, a pen-drawn line marks out the boundary between the black surrounding borders and the text space; the author or artist has filled in the borders with an ink or watercolor wash, and, apparently after removing the masking, has partially covered over this first layer of black color with a second layer of glossy, oil-based ink or paint or possibly a dark or transparent varnish of the sort used to coat paintings, woodwork, metalwork, and statuary, thus lending the black borders a shiny but inconsistent finish with matte inner edges.425

2) An autograph elegiac sonnet and epitaph in the hand of George Rudolph Weckherlin, secretary to Charles I (fig. 4.11).426 Weckherlin mourned the 1624 death of his daughter Elizabeth in a series of four poetic units, one each in Latin, French, English, and German, written on the first and third pages of two folded foolscap sheets. Weckherlin has drawn the virtuosic monumental frame surrounding his English poems using a lighter, brown ink and has written the text in a darker, black ink. That he himself both drew and wrote this visual assemblage is indicated not only by his signature—“Fecit

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426 British Library MS Add. 72439, 137r.
Georgius Rodolphus Weckherling Germanus”—but also by the deployment in both decoration and text of distinctive calligraphic flourishes, a “fermesse” or “S barré” and a quatrefoil device, that he elsewhere uses alongside his pseudonymic signature “Filodor” in correspondence with his family. In addition to these two inks, Weckherlin has filled in two jet-like panels or “tables” on either side of the epitaph with a distinct oil-based ink or oil paint that raises slightly off the page with an almost waxen texture. On top of these black panels, he has traced delicate ornamentation in a fused calligraphic-lapidary style using a fourth color, a silver-gold ink.

3) A copy of the first edition of Joshua Sylvester’s *Lachrimae Lachrimarvm* (1612), one of the first works mourning Prince Henry to appear with black mortuary decoration (fig. 4.12). On this copy, held by the Folger Shakespeare Library, a bookseller or private owner has methodically covered every woodblock-printed patch of black ink throughout the entire book with an additional layer of hand-painted thick black ink or paint. Though the effect drastically improves the darkness, consistency, and luster of the black, its application by hand has the unfortunate effect of obscuring the sharp lines of the printed woodblock, and the painter has left thin grey haloes around the precisely cut lettering and ornament; the final effect somewhat resembles the uneven and blurry-edged double layer of color on the title page of the memorial volume for Edward Coke. The ink or paint used on the Folger copy appears to be oil-based and may be simply a printer’s supply, in which case this second layer of color may have been added under the supervision of the publisher Humphrey Lownes as an experiment in possible means of increasing the marketability of the book. It is also possible this second layer

427 Folger Shakespeare Library STC 23576.
may be the work of a much later bookseller, though its amateurish application seems unlikely to have raised the value of the book very highly. Additional copies of Sylvester’s first edition in the National Library of Scotland and Harvard Houghton Library do not display the same second coat of ink, though on the Houghton Library copy of Richard Niccols’ *The Three Sisters Teares* (London: T[homas] S[nodham] for Richard Redmer, 1613), a double-sided mourning page between signatures [A] and B not present in the British Library copy has been woodblock printed and then covered over to its edges with a similar second layer of ink or paint. Both the Folger *Lachrimae lachrimarum* and the Houghton *The Three Sisters Teares* may have belonged to a single early modern owner, or to a single later bookseller, though the hand-applied ink or paint on the Houghton mourning page appears to be a different solution: unlike the Folger copy, it has stained the adjoining pages.

In each of these three cases, there is not one black but rather multiple blacks; the shade, consistency, and lustrousness of the ink encodes social, aesthetic, and economic value. Adrian Johns has called attention to the importance of qualities, gradations, and material properties of ink as a site of social and symbolic meaning in the premodern world. The three examples above suggest that producers and consumers of texts were keenly aware of the distinctions of meaning built into different qualities of color.

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428 The NLS copy of Sylvester’s work was a part of the collection of William Drummond, which preserves a number of the memorials for Prince Henry, some in unique copies; *cf.* *Avctarivm Bibliothecae Edinbvrgeae, sive Catalogus Librorum quos Guilielmus Drummondus ab Hawthorne Bibliothecae D.D.Q. Anno 1627* (Edinburgh: Heirs of Andro Hart, 1627), p. 35. In future work I hope to devote attention to Drummond’s peculiar role as a collector of printed and manuscript political and literary documents.

Alongside additional examples of multiple and multiply layered black inks, they may even point towards a social expectation that mortuary decoration will call attention to such distinctions, displaying a markedly dark or shiny black.430

The problem with such investments in distinctions of color is that letterpress white-line woodblock printing is a particularly poor technological medium for realizing high-quality blacks. Slight imperfections and variations in the surface of uncarved woodblocks, as well as the decreased pressure at the point of contact between paper and matrix resulting from the larger printed surface area, cause the black ink to print poorly. Unevenly or thinly applied ink can be seen throughout the memorials for Henry as well as in later mortuary printing.431 As Randall McLeod has noted in his study of the self-described “third” edition of Joshua Sylvester’s *Lachrymae Lachrymarum*, many of the mourning pages display through their irregularly and thinly applied ink a variety of textures including paper chainlines and wirelines, the grain of the woodblock, or even the faint impressions of type that was set for another book.432 No doubt this is the reason for the second layer of ink or paint added to the copy of the first edition of Sylvester’s work described above.

Such imperfections in these prints reflect, in part, the limitations of the printing press itself: single-leaf woodcut and metacut prints from the late medieval period to the

430 With manuscript black borders, it is often difficult to tell whether handwriting ink is used or a distinct solution; I selected three examples where it is clear that multiple distinct inks or paints are employed. Prefabricated mourning stationery with black borders probably postdates the Restoration.
431 This general problem of printing with white-line woodblocks has been noted by Hind, 1.20; by McKerrow and Ferguson, in a note to Plate 269; and by De Vinne, 22 and 47-54.
early sixteenth century employ white-line techniques widely because they are printed by stamping or rubbing techniques much better able to transfer ink over the surface of the page. (These white-line carving techniques may actually predate black-line cutting in European use: the earliest surviving European woodblock-printed textile, the ca. 1375 “Sion” tapestry with scenes from the life of Oedipus, prints both figure and text in white line on red and black ground.\footnote{Teresa K. Nevins, “Picturing Oedipus in the Sion Textile,” in The Woodcut in Fifteenth-Century Europe, ed. Peter Parshall (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2009), 16-37; Leonie von Wilckens, “Gemusterte Gewebe durch Färben und Aufdrucken,” in Die textilen Künste: Von der Spätantike bis um 1500 (Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1991), Ch. 6 (esp. 162-3); Richard S. Field, “Early Woodcuts: The Known and the Unknown,” in Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Their Public, ed. Peter Parshall and Rainer Schoch (New Haven and London: National Gallery of Art, Washington and Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg in association with Yale University Press, 2005), 18-35, 21.\footnote{Alfred W. Pollard, “The Transference of Woodcuts,” in Old Picture Books: With Other Essays on Bookish Subjects (London: Methuen and Co., 1902), 82-83; Elizabeth Carroll Reilly, Dictionary of Colonial American Printers’ Ornaments and Illustrations (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1975), nos. 929-31 and 1189-91. Another early example of designs copied in white line is Dürer’s series of “Knot” prints.\footnote{434}.) Since rubbing printing techniques continue in later use for textile and wallpaper printing, that the white-line mortuary woodcuts for Prince Henry were printed on the letterpress may point to a failure in the circulation of expertise—or may simply indicate that printers were unwilling to interrupt their established workflow.

The “crudeness” of the Henry memorials’ application of black is mirrored in their stylistic repertoire. White-line carving is in many ways a technique of convenience, a means of producing blocks quickly and with ease. Even inexperienced woodcutters can produce basic white-line blocks without great difficulty: images are occasionally copied or “pirated” partly in white line as early as the fifteenth century and as late as the eighteenth.\footnote{434 Uncarved mortuary designs can also be printed from wood scraps other
than the expensive boxwood normally used for woodcuts (or in some cases, perhaps, by cast metal pieces). In colonial New England, otherwise image-poor local printing adopts white-line blocks early on due in part to the relative ease with which they can be produced by non-specialist print shop workers. Even Benjamin Franklin, for his first Philadelphia printing job, appears to have quickly and crudely cut a white-line mourning headband in an imitation of New England style. Although some mortuary decoration among the memorials for Henry and in later seventeenth-century English print achieves a very high quality of carving, simulating the high production value of calligraphy, painting, copperplate engraving, or memorial brass carving, such examples are exceptional. More typically, white-line prints display a crude style emphasizing the solidity of the block and the simplicity of its carved lines. In many cases, it is difficult to tell whether an ostentatious, luxurious or deliberately crude, restrained effect is intended: printed mortuary black offers an analogue for what John Harvey has called black

435 For an example prominently displaying the wide-spaced woodgrain of its block, see Josiah Ricraft, A Funerall Elegy upon the most Honored upon Earth, and now glorious in Heaven, His Excellency Robert Devereux Earl of Essex and Ewe, Viscount Hereford, Lord Ferrers of Chartly Bouchier and Lovaine, late Generall of England (London: John Hancock, 1646).
436 Such white-line prints were not restricted to mortuary use: the earliest scientific diagrams published in the American colonies are crude white-line metalcuts with visible nailheads joining the plate to a piece of wood establishing the requisite height of the sort often apparent in fifteenth-century European print. Cf. Keith Arbour, “The First North American Mathematical Book and Its Metalcut Illustrations: Jacob Taylor’s Tenebrae, 1697,” Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 123.1/2 (1999): 87-98. As I hope to show in forthcoming work, Colonial printers made a virtue of constraint, producing a number of interesting innovations and adaptations of European models for white-line woodcut illustration.
437 “The Only Known Copy of Samuel Keimer’s Elegy on the Death of Aquila Rose” (Philadelphia: Carmen D. Valentino Rare Books & Manuscripts, Catalogue 50 [2000]). My thanks to Jim Green for calling my attention to this likely handiwork of Franklin.
clothing’s function as an “anti-fashion fashion,” caught between self-effacement and display.\textsuperscript{438}

Cloth

The Henry memorials negotiate opposing symbolic values of black not only through their display of ink, but also through their deployment of ink as a means of representation, above all of the ritual paraphernalia of black cloth. Though later a common trope of elegiac writing, the link between the blackness of ink and the black of mourning clothing was perhaps first established in the memorials for Henry.\textsuperscript{439} Arthur Gorges’ manuscript tribute draws on the conceit;\textsuperscript{440} Thomas Heywood perhaps even more forcefully articulates elegiac writing as a putting on of mourning:

\begin{quote}
\textit{pity it were that Pen should euer more cast inke, that would not make the whitest paper mourne in so vniuersall a sorrow.}\textsuperscript{441}
\end{quote}

In its printed edition, Heywood’s dedicatory address appears opposite a solid black mourning page emphatically materializing the relationship between the new style of

\textsuperscript{438} \textit{Men in Black} (London: Reaktion, 1995), 14.

\textsuperscript{439} There is a precursor of this trope in one of the important precedents for the Henry memorials’ print effects, \textit{The Blacke Booke} (London: T.C. for Ieffrey Chorlton, 1604), attributed to Thomas Middleton. The book’s valediction makes the link between ink and cloth: “you haue read me I am sure: am I black ynough thinke you, drest vp in a lasting suite of Incke?” (F4\textsuperscript{r}).

\textsuperscript{440} “Others… / In praise of thee haue clothed wth theire quill / The papars whit, in lynes of mourning blacke” (Huntington Library MS Ellesmere 1130 34/B/27, 55\textsuperscript{r}).

\textsuperscript{441} \textit{A Fvnerall Elegie, Vpon the death of the late most hopefull and illustrious Prince Henry, Prince of Wales} (London: William Welbie, 1613), A2\textsuperscript{r}. 
mortuary woodcut and the prominently displayed black clothing of the funeral and period of mourning.

As with ink, so with cloth there is not one black but rather a range of distinguished and graded blacks. Social distinctions vested in qualities of black are of course very old: in medieval English usage, “black” was the positive, lustrous opposite of dull, abject “swart”; both “black” and “blank” derive from a single Germanic root meaning “shine.” The range of meanings embedded in black color, however, shifts over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth century due in part to the increasing refinement of and discovery of new pigments for black dies as well as a growing market for black clothes. Though black had been the liturgical color of death of the medieval Church, a Renaissance rediscovery of lay black mourning clothing spreads throughout Europe over the course of the sixteenth century, in some part through the direct cultural influence and imperial authority of the Valois-Burgundy and Habsburg family line, and in tandem with the more general influence of the Habsburg court on the public performance of courtly festivals and funerals. Though black emerges as the dominant

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444 On the wide influence of the black mourning clothes worn by the Philip the Good of Burgundy and his great-grandson Philip II of Spain, see Harvey, 52-55 and 72-77. On the
color of mourning cloth in England and Europe by the seventeenth century, its expense and uneven diffusion allow local, lower-class, or specialized customs to draw on alternative mourning colors into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some sixteenth-century English testators seem explicitly to have eschewed black color for donated mourning gowns as a vanity. Still in the elegies for Prince Henry black mourning clothing is not entirely a given. George Wither, perhaps adapting and reversing Hamlet’s disquisition on “seems,” declares that he rejects the wearing of black as a merely outward marker of grief “[b]ecause my griefe that Ceremonie lothes, / Had rather be sad in heart, then seeme in clothes”; he thus appears to recognize black cloth as a norm while suggesting that it may not have been available or expected for all. Perhaps George Gerard, echoes the sentiment: “Nor do I, with the fashion, Mourn in Black; / My Sorrow’s in my Heart, not on my Back.” If for these authors refusing black

immense influence of Philip II’s father Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor on Europe’s funeral and festival culture, see Marina Belozerskaya, *Rethinking the Renaissance: Burgundian Arts across Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), esp. 67-75; Schraven, 53-80; Fagiolo, 2.26; Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, “The Early Modern Festival Book: Function and Form,” in Mulryne et al., 1.7; and Strong, *Art and Power*, 18.


446 Harding, 227.


448 *Lachrymae Lachrymarum* (1613 ed.), C-D4'.
might be claimed as a posture of pious authenticity, for John Davies black dress is simply a matter of class lines: “Now; all, we see, of worth, go all in blacke.”

The heraldic account of Henry’s funeral sold both separately and as a supplement to George Chapman’s poem opens with a description of funerary wall draperies, what contemporaries referred to simply as “blacks,” showing precisely how they would have organized a hierarchy of presence:

The body of the said Prince being bowelled, embalmed and closed vp in Lead, there were foure Chambers hung with blackes, viz. the Guard chamber and the Presence with blacke Cloth, the Priuy Chamber with finer Cloth, and that which was his Hignes Bed-chamber, with blacke Veluet…

The clothes worn by the mourners in Henry’s funeral were similarly carefully graded by quality and cost in relation to the rank of their wearer, as a surviving manuscript account shows. Comparable prescriptions of differently graded cloth survive from other funerals, and it appears to have been standard practice for the College of Heralds to organize and enforce these social distinctions through funeral dress. At Henry’s funeral, the range of black cloth would have organized a clear symbolic social hierarchy rising from the poor mourners dressed in plain donated gowns at the front of the procession to the elaborate velvets of the horses and carriage carrying Henry’s hearse and coffin at its climax.

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449 Davies, C4v.
450 Sig. A3v.
451 BL Lansdowne MS 160; published in Nichols, 2.496. Cf. Gregory McNamara, “‘Grief was as clothes to their backs’: Prince Henry’s funeral viewed from the Wardrobe,” in Wilks, 259-279, 273.
452 Woodward, 20.
This use of black cloth to display and enforce the power of elites, however, is at odds with another symbolism of black clothing that threads through the ritual performance of the funeral. The originary function of medieval European funeral clothes, whether defined by their monastic-robe cut or their Benedictine dark color, is to mark a penitential withdrawal from the world in acknowledgment of death as the mark of human sin. This is the function of black garments that is explicitly invoked in the sermon preached by Daniel Price to members of the Prince’s household gathered around his month-dead body at St. James’ Palace on the eve of his funeral. Price draws on an Old Testament type for the loss of the king’s son, David’s mourning for Abner:

*David commands them to mourn, & in a solemn observance, wisheth them to lay aside their purple & princely furniture, their wanton, superfluous, and supercilious sailes of Pride, nay not only lay them aside, but to rent and teare them in peeces, and to put on Sables, mourning Abilments, outwardly to testifie their sorrowing inwardly, because Abner was fallen in Israel…*

Price swiftly directly addresses of his audience, turning historical biblical practice o the present moment, calling on English mourners to adopt these rites of penitential humiliation and abjection:

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453 Taylor, 65-70; Harvey 45-49.
454 Gregory McNamara (*op. cit.*, 268-69) interprets Price’s sermon as a manifestation of the larger, general social critique of extravagant dress, but in this instance the call to reject finery is specifically tied to the traditional penitential function of the performance of mourning.
Not only change your garments, but rent them, teare them to tooters, and put on not only sables, semblances of sorrow, but saccloath hairy, dusky, dusty sackcloath…

Price’s typology depends to some extent on the contemporary interpretation of the Hebrew sackcloth, a rough goathide, as black in color. At a key point in his address he acknowledges that it is of course the putting on of Christ rather than the literal putting on of sackcloth that he exhorts (p. 12). Nonetheless, his tying of the rhetoric of penitence to the symbolic donning of black recurs throughout the poems responding to Henry’s death. Joshua Sylvester, for example, addresses his readers in the tone and mode of Price’s sermon:

Weep for our Sinnes, our Wicked-Prouocations…
In blackest Sack and Cinders shrowded All

A letter from John Chamberlain suggests that public preachers in the aftermath of Henry’s death began to speak with new freedom, presumably directing their moral criticisms not only apocalyptically towards England’s general sins but also, if elliptically, towards the abuses of the court.

An abstracted idea of black clothing is particularly unstable in its meanings. Among the Henry memorials, for instance, it is not social hierarchy but rather the general

456 Ibid, p. 3. The rending of garments remained at this time a common feature of European Jewish funeral practice, and had earlier been an integral part of Italian funeral practice as well, though it is unclear whether this practice persisted outside of Jewish communities in seventeenth-century England or Europe. See Taylor, 78-79, and Erik Seeman, Death in the New World: Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1492–1800 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 25-26. Price’s audience would likely have equated “sackcloth” with the monastic hair shirt.
457 “Sack or sable cloth of haire”; Wither, sig. C4r.
458 Sylvester, sig. C2r.
459 Nichols, 2.490.
penitential value of blackness that seems to be both referred to and represented in the title page of John Taylor’s Great Britaine, all in Blacke (fig. 4.3). With the highly accomplished anonymous sonnet sequence Great Brittans Mourning Garment: Given to all faithfull sorrowfull Subiects, on the other hand, the case is more complicated: though the singular mourning gown invoked in the first part of the title seems to draw the nation into egalitarian fellowship, the subtitle seems to allude to the obligation of the gift and the subjection of poor mourners dressed in donated robes in the funeral procession. Perhaps this title merely offers up a metaphorical mourning garment; perhaps it more specifically and literally advertizes the book itself for a material function as a funeral gift. (If the latter, it is perhaps the earliest surviving funeral gift book to describe itself as such on its title page.)

Contemporary readers of the memorials for Prince Henry would likely have encountered one feature of its black mortuary decoration as a direct representation of black cloth used in the funeral performance. The full-page woodblock-printed “mourning pages” included in Joshua Sylvester’s Lachrimae lachrimarum, George Chapman’s An Epicede, and Cyril Tourneur, John Webster, and Thomas Heywood’s Three Elegies are almost certainly intended to replicate the effect of hung funeral tapestries or “blacks.” The heraldic shields printed in small spaces towards the top of the page in Sylvester’s and Chapman’s works seem specifically to correspond to the imprese and escutcheons hung

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460 This work, one of the finest to appear in response to Henry’s death, could be the work of a well-known professional poet. Samuel Daniel is one of the few notable writers of the period from whom no poem on Henry’s death otherwise survives; Michael Drayton, otherwise another possible contender, writes in “An Elegie upon the Death of Lady Penelope Clifton” that he never managed to produce an elegy for Prince Henry. Whoever the author of this sonnet sequence may have been, he or she was familiar with Shakespeare’s 1609 Sonnets, styling one of his or her tributes for Henry after “Shall I compare thee to a Summer’s day?”
or displayed on such tapestries (figs. 4.13-14). These heraldic and emblematic displays could be constructed from paste or carved in metal and “buckramed” (padded out with cloth?), in other instances, perhaps most commonly, they were simply painted onto the cloth. In Henry’s funeral, “blacks” covered the walls of St. James’s as the Prince lay in state in the lead-up to his funeral and were prominently displayed along the route of his funeral procession and on the walls of Westminster Abbey surrounding the site of his hearse and his burial service.

The two particular emblems that appear on Sylvester and Chapman’s mourning pages also appear in Hole’s engraving prominently displayed on the black cloths covering Henry’s hearse and its canopy. The badge of the Order of the Garter may have stood for Henry’s chivalric pretensions and perhaps even for England’s militant claim to lands abroad. The badge of the triple ostrich feathers, though now familiar as a symbol of the Prince of Wales, was a personal ensign adopted by Henry from a predecessor Prince of Wales, Edward, the Black Prince. The ostrich feathers were already widely associated with Henry in his lifetime, appearing on surviving spoons, ceramic ware, and wall

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462 Woodward, 23.
463 This origin seems to have been widely known: see, e.g., John Webster, A Monumental Columne, erected to the liuing Memory of the euer-glorious Henry, late Prince of Wales (London: N.O. for William Welby, 1613), sig. B1v; and Great Brittans Mourning Garment. Given To all faithfull sorrowfull Subiects at the Funerall of Prince Henry (London: G[eorge] Eld for Arthur Jonson, 1612), sig. A3v.
paintings, and are referred to in many of the poems on Henry’s death as well as being represented in a drawing at the front of Arthur Gorges’s manuscript memorial.

Though Hole’s image shows only the hearse and not its surroundings, we can gain a sense of the appearance of the mortuary tapestries that would have filled the church and other public spaces with repetitions of these insignia from other illustrations of contemporary funerals in England and Europe. The set of engravings illustrating Philip Sidney’s 1586 funeral—the first illustrated funeral festival book published in England, well after its establishment as a widespread form in continental print—opens with an illustration of Sidney’s hearse in situ in St. Paul’s, surrounded by mourning blacks hung with coats of arms on three (implicitly all four) sides. An engraving of the catafalque from the 1622 funeral of Pope Paul V in Rome shows the chancel of S. Maria Maggiore extravagantly hung from floor to ceiling with tapestries mounted with the pope’s coat of arms—with a notable alteration in the replacement of the expected papal keys with skeleton supporters. The celebrations for Prince Henry likely involved a prominent display of cloth along the lines of Pope Paul’s funeral; the drawing of the hearse used in John Islip’s 1532 Westminster funeral, sometimes attributed to Hans Holbein, shows funeral tapestries with coats of arms covering the aisles surrounding the presbytery and even covering the cornice above the high altar.

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465 Huntington Library MS Ellesmere 1130 34/B/27.
466 Thomas Lant, Sequitur & pompa funebris (London, 1587).
467 Lelio Guidiccioni, Breve racconto della transportatione del corpo di Papa Paolo V (Rome, 1623).
The representation of such “blacks” in the poems on Henry’s death would have involved unusual effort and expense. Though scattered mourning pages appear in other works, Joshua Sylvester’s *Lachrimae lachrimarum*, George Chapman’s *An Epicede*, and Cyril Tourneur, John Webster, and Thomas Heywood’s *Three Elegies* particularly conspicuously waste both paper and ink in restricting their text only to the recto of each page, covering each verso in black. Arguably, these works’ most significant units of meaning lie not in verbal structures but in something like the visual effect of the open double page itself.\(^{469}\) When Humphrey Lownes republishes Sylvester’s *Lachrimae lachrimarum* in smaller, octavo format as a part of a sequence of Sylvester’s collected works, he includes all the opposed black pages: the mortuary decoration is a part of what makes the text.

The blackness of mourning textiles thus seems to provide a direct representational model for the new printed effects in the memorials for Henry. In later works, some conceptual link between the blackness of textual mortuary style and the blackness of mourning clothing seems to persist. One page of a 1651 manuscript memorial for Henry Ireton is covered with a piece of semi-transparent black cloth, perhaps crêpe, apparently in an effort to simulate a veil; other traces of adhesive on memorial manuscripts may point to similar lost paste-downs of cloth.\(^{470}\) As late as 1865, a representation of the order of the procession for the Springfield funeral of Abraham Lincoln—a diagrammatic

\(^{469}\) In a very different context, Randall McLeod has shown how early modern writers and readers may have experienced and exploited the open double page as a unit of meaning: see McLeod [pseud.-Random Cloud], “*Enter Reader,*” in *The Editorial Gaze: Mediating Texts in Literature and the Arts*, ed. Paul Eggert and Margaret Sankey (New York: Garland, 1999), 3-50.

\(^{470}\) BL MS Add. 28602, 11\(^v\).
transformation of the older Renaissance funeral festival book—is printed in silver ink on black silk.

Stone

Non-mortuary white-line woodcutting techniques fall out of use in England and on the continent in the latter half of the sixteenth century, though they appear as an occasional specialized effect for articulating black clothing, skin, or ground within black-line woodcuts long thereafter. There are a few important experimental precedents for the Henry memorials’ adaptation of white-line cutting techniques in the lead-up to 1612, however. At least two English sets of title-page borders appear cut in white line or with black ground in the first years of the seventeenth century, though in both cases the borders are copied from much earlier continental European prints, and at least one is apparently intended to appear antique. A continuation of Thomas Nashe’s Pierce Penniless entitled The Blacke Booke, sometimes attributed to Thomas Middleton, appears in 1604 with a white-line xylographic title page that almost certainly influences the style of the later Henry memorials, even though the earlier work’s black is conceptually linked with the devil rather than with the posture of mourning. Even closer to the woodcut illustrations of the Henry prints, and carrying a serious claim to be the first proper instance of a black mortuary style, is a woodcut appearing in Humphrey

471 McKerrow and Ferguson, Plates 249 and 254.
Lownes’ 1608 edition of Joshua Sylvester’s collected works (fig. 4.15).\textsuperscript{473} At the center of a multi-part epitaph for Sylvester’s uncle and patron William Plumb arranged in the shape of a pyramid or obelisk, a solid woodblock prints a black jet-like panel beneath an additional device featuring a skull, itself either an isolated piece of lace or a part of a larger woodcut cut down from earlier use. Though this shape-poem epitaph also appears in a 1605 edition of Sylvester’s translations, it appears there without the mortuary block; later reprints of Sylvester’s works, in contrast, keep the solid black tomb panel introduced in 1608.\textsuperscript{474}

Joshua Sylvester and Humphrey Lownes collaborated again in the memorials for Prince Henry with \textit{Lachrimae Lachrimarum}, entered in the Registers of the Stationers’ Company on 27 November, and one of the few poems likely to have circulated in print in advance of Henry’s funeral. As mentioned above, an elegy by John Taylor is entered into the Stationers’ Registers even earlier, on 7 November. Though surviving copies of the work by John Taylor entitled \textit{Great Britaine, all in Blacke} are decorated with examples of solid black mortuary woodcuts, including a striking tomb monument-shaped title-page factotum frame (fig. 4.3), there is some evidence that the surviving copies of this work were either not printed right away or are the expanded version of an earlier lost print.\textsuperscript{475}

\textsuperscript{473} \textit{Bartas his deuine weekes and workes translated}, Lll3\textsuperscript{v} (p. 165).
\textsuperscript{474} Editions of 1611, 1613, 1621, 1633, and 1641, all appearing under the imprint of Humphrey Lownes, all include the mortuary device.
\textsuperscript{475} The title of Taylor’s work entered in the Stationers’ Registers, \textit{Great Brittyaynes greatest woe or an Elegiacall lamentinge Poem for the Incomparable losse of losses of Henry our late hopefull Prince}, is that of the second poem included in this print, not that of the first. Taylor’s work is registered to Henry Gosson but the surviving prints, STC 237605 and 23760.5, were published by his sometime collaborator John Wright. Perhaps the firmest evidence against these books having been published immediately after the 7 November registration is their inclusion of poems and even a poetic sequence by additional authors besides Taylor.
One of these two works, either Sylvester’s or Taylor’s, thus appears to have been the first among the Henry memorials to appear with mortuary decoration. The social contrast between the two authors is marked: on the one hand, a court-sponsored poet eager to display his learning and loyalty to prospective new patrons in the aftermath of a personally and professionally devastating loss; on the other, a lower-class loyalist but outsider figure proud of his origins as a Thames ferryman. Both their works, however, offer stylistic features that seem to have influenced subsequent mortuary print. On the one hand, black mourning pages derived from Sylvester’s work appear among the other works on Henry’s death and among other seventeenth-century commemorations at least as late as John Quarles’s 1649 *Regale Lectum Miseriae* (not to mention later in Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*); the mourning page likely also influences the style of black mourning wrappers that bind funeral sermons and short pamphlets in later 17th-, 18th-, and 19th-century print. On the other hand, Taylor’s title page provides a model for the factotum frames that show up on a number of later broadsides and title pages concerned with death and mourning and perhaps also the later plain black borders that may derive from these earlier surrounding frames.

Prior to these two works, however, Sylvester and Lownes collaborated in printing symbolic black pages in the epitaph for William Plumb. Sylvester’s text offers a fairly conventional epitaphic statement of the superiority of the “Toomb of Woords” to the

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476 See Susan Snyder, “Sylvester, Josuah [Joshuah] (1562/3-1618), poet and translator” and Bernard Capp, “Taylor, John [called the Water Poet] (1578-1653),” *ODNB*. Capp offers only brief mention of Taylor’s memorial for Prince Henry in *The World of John Taylor the Water-Poet 1578–1653* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 15 and 45-46; this work was nonetheless one of the earliest of Taylor’s to appear in print and must have played an important role in solidifying his public persona as a writer, while also helping to establish what Capp describes as his reputation for distinctive and ingenious uses of title-page images.
monuments of the Greeks and Egyptians. The compositor has carefully arranged its title-cum-dedication into the spire of a “pyramid” and set the five quatrains around the central device, the two quatrains of tetrameter length being set in italics, the first of these broken up and set sideways around the central image. As an ensemble, the page presents an instance of the contemporary category of the “inscription,” that is, materialized, public lettering that encompasses and often conflates the functions of epitaph and dedication.477

If the later solid mourning pages seem intended to simulate the effect of black mourning tapestries, as discussed above, this originary instance of printed black mortuary style takes the tomb monument as its representational model. The block of black color at the center of the shape poem represents a black stone panel or what contemporaries would have referred to as a “table.”478 Though English tombs typically rely more heavily on paint and somewhat less on the luxury marbles adopted for Italian Renaissance tombs,479 black stones, sometimes marble, and typically if incorrectly called “touch” or “jet,” appear commonly from the mid-sixteenth century onwards on English monuments, where they are usually if not exclusively used as a surface for inscription.480 (As Michelangelo’s insistence that his tomb monument’s black panels not be used to display

477 Compare e.g. the shape-poem dedication-cum-epitaph prefacing William Austin’s posthumous Deuotionis Augustinianiæ Flamma. or Certayne Deuotion, Godly. & Learned Meditations (London: John Legat and Ralph Mab, 1635), [xv], which is headed by the commonest of all tombstone formulae, “Deo Optimo Maximo.” The anchora spei prose shape poem is perhaps inspired by the dedication of Spenser’s 1596 Faerie Queene; the dedication not to an aristocratic patron but to God recalls Herbert’s recently published The Temple (1633). It is possible the text may be by William’s wife and literary executor Anne.
478 Llewellyn, Funeral Monuments, 222.
epitaphs would suggest, it was probably the common contemporary assumption that such panels or “tables” were by default a site for writing.\textsuperscript{481}

The new cultural prestige given to inscriptive panels is reflected in earlier manuscript works providing a precedent for the Henry memorials’ black-ground writing. One ca. 1500 Florentine commemorative sylloge written for the teenage Orsino Lanfredini features a first page written in gold ink on black-tinted parchment in a pseudo-lapidary style, evidently in an attempt to turn the written page into a tomb panel.\textsuperscript{482} A Flemish book of hours commissioned for the future bishop of Bruges by his mother in 1573 presents its text throughout the entire volume in gold and silver ink on framed black “tables.”\textsuperscript{483} Though the latter manuscript derives from a tradition of earlier Flemish “black” books of hours, it transforms that model for black-ground writing specifically in order to give each page the appearance of a surface mounted with an inscriptive panel.

The striking white-line title-pages included in the “first” (fig. 4.12) and “third” editions of Sylvester’s \textit{Lachrimae lachimarum} as well as in the \textit{Three Elegies} of Cyril Tourneur, Thomas Heywood, and John Webster (fig. 4.1) may be intended to produce a similar effect of black stone inscriptive panels. Though appearing with the imprint of different publishers, it is possible that the same calligrapher and/or carver was responsible for all three; together, they represent arguably the most impressive and finely

\textsuperscript{481} Petrucci, \textit{Writing the Dead}, 78.
\textsuperscript{483} Bibliothèque de Valenciennes MS 836. Digitized copy available online at http://patrimoine-numerique.ville-valenciennes.fr/ark:/29755/B_596066101_MS_0836/ (accessed February 4, 2015).
produced cuts from this set of prints.\textsuperscript{484} Even among the other innovative woodcut effects of the memorials for Henry, these cuts would have stood out: the title page of Sylvester’s “third” edition was printed on a stock of paper larger than the rest of the book, representing not only its separate production but possibly also its use for public display on posts and walls in the manner sometimes used to advertise early modern books.\textsuperscript{485} Certainly, the ostentatious display of these pages’ negative space invokes their physical presence on material supports, in a manner closely related to what Armando Petrucci has called “public lettering.”\textsuperscript{486}

If the material form of these white-line title pages may be intended to evoke the impression of tomb panels, it also serves more generally as a reflection on the condition of writing. In this regard, the Henry memorials pick up on the earlier use of white-line carving in sixteenth-century writing books used to disseminate models for handwriting and the new Roman script.\textsuperscript{487} In these earlier models, the use of white line simply reflects the greater ease with which precise letter modeling may be carved directly into the block, though this economy harmonizes with what seems to have been a sense that black-ground

\textsuperscript{484} Though one additional example of a white-line title page appears in a 1619 tribute for Queen Anne, this form does not appear to have been followed directly by later print. See Patrick Hannay, \textit{Two Elegies, On the Late Death of Our Soueraigne Queene Anne with Epitaphes} (London: Nicholas Okes, 1619).
\textsuperscript{487} For a number of examples, see Stanley Morrison, \textit{Early Italian Writing Books: Renaissance to Baroque}, ed. Nicolas Barker (Boston: David R. Godine, Publisher for the members of «Hoc Volo,» 1990); also Ludovico Vicentino, \textit{La operina} (Leiden, 1545); Giovanni Battista Palatino, \textit{Libro nuovo d’imparare a scrivere} (Rome, 1548); Juan Yciar, \textit{Arte Subtilissima} (Saragossa, 1550); Georg Bocksay, \textit{Mira calligraphiae monumenta} (1562); Martin Billingsley, \textit{The Pen’s Excellencie or the Secretaries Delighte} (London, 1618).
writing is in some way inscriptive or antique. In the title pages of the Henry memorials, this capacity for precise lettering is adapted specifically to the function of mourning. Rather than presenting clear models for handwritten script, their white lettering seems disconcertingly to mingle effects of print, handwriting, and carving: the combined Italic and Roman fonts laid out in a visually centered sequence of short units of meaning most immediately resembles contemporary typeset title pages, but their lettering preserves distinct, untypographic effects of writing produced by hand—perhaps most noticeably in the word “Elegies” (fig. 4.1) with its wisp of a tail crossing the descender of the g and the similarly fine ligature joining the es. The trace of the movement of the hand in cutting the woodblock is perhaps also retained in the unprinted white letters’ sense of empty or recessed space; these empty visual markers seem to present a form of writing as loss, as a removal or cutting away such that the visual mark records absence rather than presence.

Black woodblocks appear occasionally in later mortuary print as representations of tomb panels.488 Late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century broadside elegies often include an arched top border or woodcut evidently intended to turn the entire sheet into a representation of the new material form of the churchyard tombstone.489 One of the most self-consciously developed examples of such tombstone broadsheets comes from the American colonies (fig. 4.16). This 1710 elegy for the six-year-old Rebekah Sewall appears with a factotum frame that marks off the tombstone’s lunette. The oblong factotum itself is copied (slightly crudely) from another woodcut frame used to print late

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488 See fig. 4.2; the elegy for the Earl of Essex by Josiah Ricraft, op. cit.; William Drummond, Tears on the Death of Meliades (Edinburgh: Printed by Andro Hart, 1613); Robert Markham, The Description, of that ever to be famed knight, Sir Iohn Byrgh (London: [Augustine Matthews], 1628).
489 See Draper, A Century, op. cit.
17th and early 18th-century London funeral invitations. Inside the frame, a *titulus* or inscription stands both as a title for the poem that follows below and a separable, self-contained epitaph following the forms of a conventional tombstone text. Much as in the Henry memorials a century before, mortuary decoration marks and materializes its enclosed writing within a category of inscription.

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Black in the memorials for Henry takes on specific representational functions, standing for the luxury value of inks, paints, and dyes, for the black of mourning cloth, or for the black stone of contemporary tomb monuments. In this way it reflects the participation of memorial texts in the material culture of the funeral, as goods presented, exchanged, and displayed alongside jewelry, clothing, and household and church furnishings. Yet black also takes on a non-representational function, as a more abstract symbol of loss as negation or aporia. The persistence of mortuary black in later memorial print reflects this powerful potential of black color to stand as a marker of representation and as a marker of refusal—even a sign of the difference (internal or external) encountered in the experience of loss.

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490 See Litten, *op. cit.*, 77 (fig. 37); and also Folger Shakespeare Library Y.d.1786. The Folger library’s “Memento Mori” print, STC 17816.5, also seems to copy from this funeral ticket frame.
Chapter 5

Memorial Culture and the English Family Album

As soon as someone dies, frenzied construction of the future (shifting furniture etc.): futuromania.491

This chapter investigates the work of mourning as it takes place in the household. My focus is the group of texts I am calling “family memorial albums,” gatherings of verses, sermons, letters, and biographies produced within the family as a way of performing the work of mourning and memorialization. Specifically, I will focus on three examples of this form produced within three different families around the tumultuous middle decades of the seventeenth century. Each of these family albums originates in response to the loss of a particular loved one, and each one grows in some way beyond that original purpose to encompass additional materials—commemorations of additional family members, general devotional materials, and notes on family history. The making of these works offers us intimate insight into domestic practices of mourning and commemoration, as well as access to what might be called the particular literary economy of domestic space.

Much like Barthes’ Mourning Diary, with which they share an essential form, these manuscripts trace the “discontinuous” suffering of bereavement as it unfolds over months or years. At the same time, they record the mourning process’s shifting constructions of the future, changes that often take the form of grappling with, display, and dispersal of material things, or more precisely of a reconfiguration of human

relationships as they are constituted through material things—as in Barthes’ “shifting furniture” recorded in one of his first notes on the loss of his mother. The manuscript books this chapter focuses on record these shifting relationships; they are also themselves among the objects reconfigured.

There are two key points about these albums I want to use this chapter to emphasize: their status as material object or “books,” and their unusual work to draw women into the literary performance of mourning. The first point is simple, but has been overlooked: while earlier scholars have drawn on several of the manuscripts I will cite in order to find new literary texts or to clarify family genealogies, these manuscripts have not been considered as composite forms or discrete objects. In other words, for understanding the social functions of these albums within a broader material culture of loss and commemoration it is crucial that they are not loose or unorganized gatherings of papers but rather offer attempts to organize materials in the relatively fixed form of bound books. I follow Jeffrey Todd Knight in taking the book binding as a crucial unit of organized meaning in what he styles early modern England’s “compiling culture.” Bound memorial albums represent a specific material form or category for critical analysis, one that might be invisible to studies of poetic forms such as “epitaph” or “elegy.”

As “books,” these albums are also material objects that may take on specific functions in the material economy of mourning and commemoration. Products of the experience of loss, these books take a place among the material leftovers of death, as a participant among the array of things that must be rearranged, dispersed, or preserved as

“monuments.” Each of the manuscripts I will discuss devotes explicit attention to their own status as gifts, legacies, or even “relics” intended to be preserved. In order to understand the texts contained within these albums properly, we have to pay attention to the projected future histories their books imagine for themselves, as well as the legacies of preservation and inheritance that they have subsequently enjoyed.

The second key point about these albums is that they offer us crucial insight into the gendering of mourning in the early modern world. Each of the albums I will discuss is authored by a male patriarch—two concern the death of an only son, while one deals with the loss of a beloved wife—yet each addresses itself to surviving daughters. The literary economy producing these albums is thus defined by the prominent presence of women as the recipients and possessors of texts. Indeed, these books’ male authorship may in some ways be less important to the shaping of their contents than the fact that they are intended to be received, read, and preserved by female readers.\textsuperscript{493} Moreover, as I will show, the participation of women in the literary economy making these texts extends beyond their readership and ownership of texts, encompassing more direct forms of mediation and control including the copying, editing, assembling, and perhaps also authorship of contents.

These manuscript books may thus allow us to further critical conversation around the difficult question of women’s access to mourning literatures. There are compelling reasons for emphasizing memorial writing as an area of literary activity that is relatively more open to women’s participation; as scholars of women’s writing have long

\textsuperscript{493} Some of the seminal work on considering women as literary agents beyond their roles as authors is gathered in Margaret Hannay, ed., \textit{Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works} (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985).

This picture of women’s access to memorial writing, however, is complicated by ways in which mourning is implicated in or even provides a key site for sexual differentiation. If it is true that mourning literatures may represent an area where women’s participation in authorship is relatively more tolerated, it is still the case—however obvious, it bears repeating—that the vast majority of printed and manuscript commemorations are written by men about men. As Peter Sacks, Jonathan Goldberg, and Celeste Schenck have each discussed, a marked current of elegiac tradition and early
modern elegiac writing seeks to turn literary history itself into a succession of moments of sexless transmission from male poet to male poet.\textsuperscript{498} Juliana Schiesari, drawing on Freud’s distinction between “mourning” and “melancholy,” has shown that Renaissance theorizations repeatedly refuse women access to the affective state of melancholy, which is explicitly thought of as productive of writing in response to loss.\textsuperscript{499} Steven Mullaney has gone even further in suggesting that public displays of mourning, at least in the late Elizabethan period, seem to bear a necessary associative link with expressions of misogyny.\textsuperscript{500}

Negotiating between these potentially opposed positions, I follow the work of Patricia Phillippy and Lynne Enterline, each of whom takes expressions of mourning as a key ritual action (Phillippy) or performative space (Enterline) where gendering takes place in the early modern period, but also, for that very same reason, as cultural spaces where categories of sexual difference are actively destabilized or contested.\textsuperscript{501} I also follow Lena Cowen Orlin’s work in taking the household itself as another crucial space for early modern gendering.\textsuperscript{502} These family albums are doubly positioned, as material goods exchanged within a domestic economy and as expressions of grief that carefully

negotiate who is able to articulate mourning in writing and who is tasked with carrying or bearing memory into the future.

As already stated, each of the three family albums I will be discussing is intended to be passed down from a father-author to a daughter-owner. In this regard, the two key aspects of these manuscripts I am emphasizing—their status as material objects, and their implication in the gendering of mourning in the domestic space—intersect with one another. These books are moveable properties intended for female ownership, marked as entering circuits of transmission outside of the patriline. As Elizabeth Mazzola has argued, women’s writings in the early modern period belong to a broader category of women’s wealth. Like the necessarily limited range of material goods women are able to own and bequeath—jewelry, embroideries, textiles, dishware—books and manuscript writings offer a key set of properties through which women are able to articulate and manage their social networks of friendship and kinship. Significantly, these manuscript books implicate women in cross-gender kinship networks while also marking a site of unusual property translation outside of the lines of patrilineal succession.

These books thus also crucially reflect on a distinctive feature of English inheritance law: unlike in other European countries in the early modern period, in England, in the case of a lack of male heirs, women may inherit their husbands’ or fathers’ property. Each of the manuscripts of the following discussion openly confronts

503 Elizabeth Mazzola, Women’s Wealth and Women’s Writing in Early Modern England (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009).
this exceptional possibility, drawing their own status as material things into relation with the other forms of lands and goods able to be transmitted to daughters in the case of an interrupted male line. These manuscript books thus directly participate in, even as they also reflect on or manage, this transition from lines of male succession to the non-patrilineal transmission of property and land.

These manuscripts thus mark the cultural importance of patrilineal succession even as they are tasked with articulating alternative formulations of kinship and property relations. Each of these albums overtly reflects on the interruption of patrilineal descent. The Freind and Rodeney volumes each originate in response to the loss of an only son (though each grows beyond that originary subject in its contents); the Overton album, though oriented on the loss of a wife, also directly reflects on a symbolic rupture in the male line due to the surviving son’s rejection of his family’s religious Independence and political Republicanism. The motivations for the production of these volumes are thus fundamentally patriarchal, indeed invested in the key ways in which patrilineal genealogy, alongside patriarchal family organization, serves as a controlling mechanism of gender subordination in early modern England.\textsuperscript{505} They are artifacts of the relatively greater cultural value given to sons and specifically to male heirs. Yet at the same time, in the ways in which each of these manuscripts turns to the address of surviving daughters, they crucially ask how it is that the experience of loss might open up non-patrilineal lines of affiliation and descent. Rather than starting from the position that these writings mark impositions of paternal authority and patriarchal ideology, I suggest we ask how these

\textsuperscript{505} Erin Murphy, \textit{Familial Forms: Politics and Genealogy in Seventeenth-Century English Literature} (Newark: Delaware University Press, 2010).
texts’ value as material legacies may register the radically shattered and reconfigured relationships of kinship and affiliation in the aftermath of loss. To adapt the often-cited provocation of Wendy Wall, by way of Erin Murphy, these texts can be taken as marking not so much a suspension of the metaphor of patriarchalism as a loss of the principle of patrilineal succession in its function to produce domestic, gendered, and political identifications. What may emerge in the aftermath of this loss is the concern they explore.

Appearing at moments when the normal circuits of transmission of property are interrupted, the importance of these manuscripts as material goods—already great in the case of a response to death, where the literary text often takes on the function of a material and symbolic substitute—is heightened even further. Each of these books takes on roles as both repository of affect and materialization of memory intended to be preserved and passed down. Each also reveals slightly different mobilizations of their status as material things, however. In doing so, they reveal productive tensions concerning the status of the book as material object and as representational form. In the Freind family album, bookish materiality serves an archival function, gathering together representations of disparate documents, memories, and material remainders as though in holographic form. In the Rodeney family album, in contrast, the material status of the manuscript primarily serves to mobilize it as a participant in the material culture of

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506 “One of my goals in writing this book, then, is to suspend the central metaphor of patriarchalism in order to reveal other conceptions of domesticity and national identifications available in the period” (Wall, Staging Domesticity: Household Work and English Identity in Early Modern Drama (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 8). Cf. Murphy, writing partly in response: “the family-state analogy, which mobilizes family as a metaphor, intersects with the issue of hereditary rule, which uses family as a form of lineal narrative” (Family Forms, 18; see also 18-21 et passim). I would only add that “hereditary rule,” as Murphy herself shows, is itself also a culturally central metaphor.
memory and mourning complementary to, rather than simulative or substitutive of, other such material forms as tomb monuments. In the Overton album, in contrast, it is precisely the manuscript album’s removal from such sites of ceremonial performance that enables its powerful spiritualization or textualization of ritual technologies of mourning and memory in the form of verse.

In what follows, I will attempt to give some shape to the families who produced these manuscript volumes. Necessarily, I will reproduce gender inequalities engrained in the structure of the archive by giving much fuller voice to the male producers of these texts than to the women who owned, read, and managed them. Further research may be able to produce additional information about these female figures—perhaps through letters or other writings I have yet failed to locate. Even as I draw attention to this imbalance of historical representation, however, I want to emphasize that these memorial albums are a space where women’s presence becomes visible, or even becomes visible as invisible. Unlike many other early modern textual ecologies, from which women can disappear sometimes almost entirely, in the case of these manuscript albums, women’s presence and participation are essential and in the foreground, even if their authorship is elided or subordinate to other forms of textual control. This set of materials thus returns this dissertation at its end to a question it had addressed from its outset: who has

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access to forms of memorialization and commemoration? If the survival of memorial writings often reproduces the uneven distribution of economic and social capital in early modern England, there are also powerful reasons for taking loss as a site that may interrupt ideologies governing political and gendered forms of subordination.

**Contexts**

The family memorial album as I am describing it warrants investigation as a distinct material form. It also, however, represents a subset of a larger category of what might be called memorial compilations, gatherings of verses and other materials in bound format in manuscript or in print. Such compilations have an intimate relation with and often seem to derive from the occasional use of manuscript verses in the funeral setting: Boccaccio, for instance, had a manuscript gathering copies of the loose paper verses that had been attached to Dante’s tomb. These collections also have a particularly close relationship with historical and genealogical scholarship: Quattrocento Italian humanist scholars and aristocratic families often compiled commemorative manuscript sylloges or gatherings of epigrammatic verses modeled on the historical or antiquarian collection of inscriptions. Developing throughout Europe in the sixteenth century, the form of such collections was inflected by the growing influence of the Greek Anthology, itself

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consisting in large part of a late antique collection of epitaphic inscriptions from Asia
Minor. Of course, many examples are founded less on the specific imitation of
Classical epigrammatic form than they are on the general idea of the collection or
gathering. Such multi-author epitaphic or epigrammatic collections swiftly enter the print
medium in response to the deaths of humanist scholars or powerful aristocrats. In
sixteenth-century Europe and especially in France they even acquire a specific title-page
genre term, the “tumulus” or “tombeau,” a label that seems specifically to allude to these
books’ status as material substitutes for the tomb monument or even as grave goods.

In England, the memorial book form is established in the middle years of the
sixteenth century through Surrey’s Epitaph with devotional verses and John Leland’s
Naeniae for Thomas Wyatt (both 1542), Leland’s Naenia for Henry Dudley (1545), the
gathering of verses collected by John Cheke for Martin Bucer (1551), or that collected by
Thomas Wilson for the Suffolk brothers (also 1551)—the latter work apparently
providing the nucleus out of which Wilson’s subsequent influential treatise on English
rhetoric was developed. Many subsequent examples follow, some marking important
moments of innovation in English print history. The first work by a female English

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510 Marc D. Lauxtermann, “Janus Lascaris and the Greek Anthology,” and David Rijser,
“The Practical Function of High Renaissance Epigram: The Case of Raphael’s Grave,” in
The Neo-Latin Épigram: A Learned and Witty Genre, ed. Susanna de Beer, Karl Enenkel,
and David Rijser (Leuven University Press, 2009), 41-65 and 103-36.

511 Amaury Flégès, “‘Je ravie le mort’: tombeaux littéraires en France à la Renaissance,”
between Neo-Latin and Vernacular Poetry in Renaissance France (Leiden and Boston:
Brill, 2013), Ch. 5; Armando Petrucci, Writing the Dead: Death and Writing Strategies in

512 On the Bucer and Brandon volumes, see John F. McDiarmaid, “Classical Epitaphs for
Heroes of Faith: Mid-Tudor Neo-Latin Memorial Volumes and Their Protestant
McDiarmaid notes the shared materials relating Wilson’s earlier memorial volume to the
later Arte of Rhetorique, but does not stress the point; see 31, notes 35 and 38.
author to be issued in print—albeit in France—is such a commemorative anthology, Anne, Margaret, and Jane Seymour’s *Hecatodistichon* (1550) on the death of Marguerite de Navarre. The Seymours’ work was widely commented on by contemporary humanist scholars and was responded to in the form of an expanded *Tumulus* incorporating additional verses by French male authors published the following year. Later in the sixteenth century, the first funeral sermon with attached poetic commemoration published in England is another such commemorative gathering, one incorporating a collection of Latin, Hebrew, and Welsh verses composed by Welsh poets on the death of Walter Devereux, 1st Earl of Essex (1577). The Devereux family expended significant energy distributing copies of this text and there is evidence that readers responded: at least two heavily annotated copies survive, one belonging to Gabriel Harvey and bearing the young Robert Devereux’s gift inscription; an additional surviving copy is hand corrected and hand colored. The widespread influence of this book appears also to be revealed in Holinshed’s 1577 *Chronicles*, which excerpts from the funeral sermon to provide a conclusion to its history of Ireland.

516 British Library General Reference Collection 1415.g.10.
These memorial compilations continue to be produced for occasional purposes through the seventeenth century and beyond. From the death of Philip Sidney, it becomes standard practice for the university presses to issue collections of commemorative verses on the deaths of major public figures, sometimes on those of more minor local figures as well (thus Milton’s “Lycidas”). Manuscript collections of memorial verses also continue to be produced, often through patron-client relationships. John Gauden, for example, later the compiler of the *Eikon Basilike*, practiced the creation of a composite memorial volume in gathering verses by a number of important courtier poets on the 1638 death of Lady Anne Rich for presentation to her host (and possibly lover?) Dudley, Lord North.\(^{518}\)

Though often gathering together multiple compositions by distinct authors, as in the early epigrammatic collections, later manuscript memorial volumes are also in some instances composed by a single author or client, as in the case of each of the two distinct manuscripts presented to Anne Sadleir on the 1634 death of her father Edward Coke.\(^{519}\)

Several such presentation manuscript memorial volumes, both single- and multi-author, survive among the selection of Ellesmere papers still retained by the present-day family, including two copies of an album compiled by Nathanael Harris for Sir Thomas Egerton (*d.* 1598), son of the Lord Chancellor Thomas Egerton, 1st Viscount Brackley; a presentation collection of verses by members of Brasenose College, Oxford for the same; a small pamphlet by Hugh Holland on the 1617 death of the Lord Chancellor; and another bound volume by Robert Codrington, also the author of one of the above-mentioned memorials for Edward Coke, on the 1636 death of Frances, Countess of

\(^{518}\) Bodleian MS misc.e.262.

\(^{519}\) British Library MS Add. 37484; Harvard Law Library MS 4125.
Bridgewater.\(^{520}\) Among the manuscripts from the same collection now at the Huntington Library is a copy of a memorial volume by Arthur Gorges addressing the royal family on the 1612 death of Prince Henry.\(^{521}\) In many cases, the motives for the compilation of such volumes involve the open attempts at self-inflation and meretricious seeking common among early modern gift books.\(^{522}\) Imprisoned for debt, for example, the salt merchant and self-styled “Nursechild of Maro” Nicholas Murford sent a memorial album on the 1652 death of Henry Ireton to Oliver Cromwell as a part of his bid for relief.\(^{523}\)

The three family albums this chapter studies all date to the tumultuous years of the middle seventeenth century; at least two of the three directly reflect the pressures that political history placed on their families. Earlier and later family albums also survive, however, as well as other closely related gatherings of commemorative materials intended for circulation and preservation within the family. Surviving late-sixteenth-century collections include the commemorative family record and system of moral education compiled by the yeoman Robert Furse for his “sequele” to preserve and continue,\(^{524}\) as well as the family commemorations, business accounts, and moral-

\(^{520}\) Photocopies are available at the Huntington Library, as Ellesmere MSS 1002, 1007, 1008, 1018, and 6850 35/B/7. Robert Codrington’s two memorial manuscripts share similar material features, including mourning pages written in silver on black; “achrostic” epitaphs with black borders; and mourning bindings featuring mortuary devices stamped in gold on black.

\(^{521}\) MS Ellesmere 1130 34/B/27.


\(^{523}\) British Library MS Add. 28602. Murford claims to have intended to present memorial verses at the funeral even before his imprisonment. He includes a dream-vision poem imagining and describing the funeral from his prison cell.

economic verses of John Kay, surviving partly in the eighteenth-century copies of a later
descendant. Further examples survive in greater numbers from the later seventeenth
and early eighteenth centuries, and are sometimes maintained over multiple generations,
as in the case as the “Great Hodge Podge” compiled by the Catholic Blundell family over
the course of the seventeenth century. As these examples or the latter title might
suggest, such collections are often formally indeterminate or even deliberately hybrid or
adaptive. William Tipping’s personal album, for example, compiled at the end of his life,
doubles as a commemoration of his much younger wife and a record of his personal
religious devotions; Robert Freame’s biography of his wife Anne, compiled for his
children’s use, conflates the popular printed genre of Quaker “death-bed sayings” with
less typically Quaker commemorative manuscript form.

In some instances, book memorials intersect with other material forms used to
preserve memory within the family. One surviving silver-filigree-bound set of erasable
writing tables belonging to the Gardiner family of Fareham, Hampshire is filled up with
almost a hundred years of male and female family members’ inscriptions of their dates of
loss. This latter example points to the close relation between the family album and
another key medium of family memory, the family registers commonly entered into bible
title pages or flyleaves. The social diffusion of the family register form throughout the
sixteenth century reflects the marked effects of the spread of literacy and printed matter,

(Malden: Blackwell, 2004), 407-29, 412; idem, The Social Circulation of the Past:
English Historical Culture 1500-1730 (Oxford University Press, 2003), 89.
525 Folger X.d.445-449 and W.b. 482-484.
526 Woolf, Social Circulation, 90; 89-91 and 96-98.
527 Bodleian MS Rawl.poet.101.
528 University of Pennsylvania MS Codex 1742. For another Quaker example, however,
see Woolf, Social Circulation, 91.
529 Folger V.a.531.
while also participating in and to some degree anticipating the general sixteenth-century explosion of genealogical knowledge and genealogical writing.\textsuperscript{530}

The memorial album can be defined by a relatively stable set of social functions, as a gathering of disparate materials in a relatively “fixed” book form intended to preserve the memory of the deceased. The specific material status of such volumes is subject to wide variation, however. In printed format, these volumes range from duodecimo to folio size, from thin pamphlets to thick books. In manuscript there is likewise variation from privately copied notebooks to professionally produced scribal copies, sometimes incorporating elaborate calligraphy or painted decoration. Though I define the general print and manuscript category as “bound,” moreover, the nature of that binding is itself subject to variation, ranging from paper wrappers (sometimes black) to limp vellum (also sometimes stained black) to plain calf or (occasionally) blind-stamped designs with skulls and skeletons. While the family albums I will discuss show a marked tendency towards the finer end of the spectrum of manuscript production, in the case of the Rodeney family materials this potential for materialization in radically different form is realized through the survival of multiple distinct copies of the same texts produced by professional scribes or copied in multiple different family hands.

The literary form of the contents of these manuscripts is also marked by significant variation. Though there is some continuity in the presence of memorial verses, included poetic contributions range between longer and shorter elegiac, epigrammatic, epitaphic, and devotional modes, and may constitute the bulk of the memorial volume or may take a subordinate position as an appendage to other materials. Sermons,

\textsuperscript{530} Woolf, \textit{Social Circulation}, 86-91 and Ch. 4.
biographies, letters, and devotional meditations all appear alongside and in various configurations with such poetic contents. Each of the family albums that I discuss in this chapter incorporates some number of eulogies or other short memorial verses, but each also draws on other literary categories and print forms as models for shaping their content: for the Rodeneys, the religious devotion and the genealogical history; for the Overtons, the printed lyric anthology; for the Freinds, the epistolary narrative.

Freind

Bodleian MS Top.Oxon.f.31 comprises a set of memorials gathered by Nathaniel Freind on the deaths of several family members. The octavo volume is bound in black leather with remains of blackened metal clasps. A virtuosically executed calligraphic title page (fig. 5.1) describes the volume as “Memorialls & Remaines: Containing ye Life, & Death, of my deare Sonne Iohn Freind”; it lists John’s date and place of death—Oxford, 20 March 1672/73—and is signed “By mee Nathaniell Friend.” Carefully executed and embellished, this title page was probably produced early on in the creation of the manuscript, and does not quite accurately describe the volume’s contents: in addition to the two sections of “Memorials” and “Remains” for John (on numbered pages 1-303 and 305-368), the volume includes memorials on Nathaniel’s mother Elizabeth (in modern penciled foliation: xxvii-xxviii), his daughter Sarah (xxix-xl), and his brother John (xliii-xlvii). Internal references to the dates of writing indicate Nathaniel composed the bulk of the “Memorials and Remains” in the six months following his son’s death, up to November 1673 (43, 348), subsequently adding additional notes the end of the volume.
concerning visits to his son’s tomb in April 1674, the death of a scholar who wished to be 
buried next to his son in 1675, and the erection of an additional tomb marker, a 
floorstone, in 1676. The memorials for his mother, daughter, and brother also refer to 
their dates of composition in 1673 (xxxix) and 1675 (xliii); two addenda, each dated 
1678, describe the tombstones erected on the burial sites of his daughter and brother; the 
latter is copied uncharacteristically messily into the manuscript, apparently in situ into the 
already bound volume (xlvii). A cross-reference changed from “before” to “after” (xxxix) 
indicates that the additional family memorials originally followed the memorials for his 
son, possibly as a set of unbound quires, before being moved to the front of the volume 
where they are now bound. Blank quires at the front of the volume suggest that Nathaniel 
intended to leave open the possibility of additions after binding; the tightly cramped 
additions at the end of the volume indicate he used up the space left there for that 
purpose. Widely spaced red-ruled margins are also intermittently filled in with clarifying 
notes and updated information added at later dates.

Nathaniel Freind’s life and social connections are poorly traced in surviving 
documents, possibly due to his and his family’s dissenting religious practices. I have been 
unable to locate any birth, death, or marriage records concerning Nathaniel, his unnamed 
wife, or his addressees, his daughters Mary and Elizabeth; the survival of his manuscript 
apparently in private hands in the Bristol region until some time before its 1912 
acquisition is the only indication that some family line may have continued after his 
death. 531 According to the manuscript, Nathaniel appears to have been born and raised in

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531 On the verso of the front free endpaper: “Bought from J.E. Cornish, bookseller, 16 St. Ann Square, Manchester, Oct. 23. 1912, for 10s. It had been in the possession of Mr. Cornish’s father-in-law, Mr. Kenslake, bookseller of Park Street, Bristol.”
or around Westerleigh parish, Gloucestershire, a short distance outside of Bristol. He served with his brother John in the Parliamentary army in the civil wars. Nathaniel and John both were taken prisoner after the battle of Cirencester and were held in Oxford until their release through the efforts of their “kinsman” John Day of University College and “Mr. Bland” (Thomas), butler of Hart Hall (43). In the Restoration Nathaniel ran a private school of “grammar and mathematics” in Henfield, Westerleigh parish.\textsuperscript{532} He may have maintained nonconformist sympathies, keeping up a friendship with an ejected local minister (293). Nathaniel evidently also developed active intellectual connections across political and confessional boundaries, however: he corresponded with Anthony Wood,\textsuperscript{533} sending him a manuscript he had compiled of antiquities relating to Bristol\textsuperscript{534} as well as notes contributing to Wood’s history of Oxford (37, 39). He also contributed the commendatory verses included in the second 1672 edition of the royal hydrographer John Seller’s \textit{Practical Navigation}, offering his praise on behalf of all “mean artists, men obscure.”\textsuperscript{535} Lacking a university education himself, his personal connections with university men obtained admission for his son John to St. Edmund Hall, Oxford. As a part of the process of matriculating, John subscribed to the articles of faith and religion, omitting the oath acknowledging the king’s “supreme majesty” only on account of his being under the age of 16 required to swear (14-15).\textsuperscript{536} In the manuscript itself there are

\textsuperscript{533} Wood MS F.41.
\textsuperscript{534} Wood MS D.4 copies extracts from Nathaniel’s Bristol collections.
\textsuperscript{535} \textit{Practical Navigation: Or An Introduction to the Whole Art} (London: printed by John Darby), A3r-v.
few traces of oppositional politics or religion, only evidence of a strong piety and belief in the value of education.

Nathaniel’s narrative of his son’s upbringing and his copying out of letters by his young children together present a wealth of fascinating detail for the social historian, as well as often intriguing biographical information concerning his family. The one topic universally addressed in every letter, apparently in some cases also the reason for keeping up correspondence, is personal health. Additionally, John’s exchange of letters with his father is taken up with and to a great extent motivated by discussions of the purchase, provision, and sending back and forth of books. If the manuscript presents little in the way of traditional biographical facts concerning Nathaniel’s younger daughters Mary and Betty, their letters to their brother reveal their education in formal writing, their concern for sometimes elaborately courteous if also appropriately pious expressions of praise and affection, and their investment in the medium of letter writing itself as a means of maintaining their relationship with their older brother across distance as well as of preserving his presence within a broader network of local childhood friends (57, 65-66, 81, 103-4, 195-96). John’s Latin epistles to his father, which include more in the way of detail describing his daily activities and social connections, might seem comparatively sophisticated, and the modern reader might be tempted to forget that the author is barely pubescent: one of John’s early letters to his father includes a detailed description of a wet dream and a plea for help understanding if the changes happening to his body are normal (59-60; see also 64).

The central and apparently originary section of the manuscript, Nathaniel Freind’s “Memorials” for his son John, integrates copies of letters and documents with Nathaniel’s
first-person explanations, commentary, and reflections. As Nathaniel explains, while clearing out his son’s room, he discovered a trunk filled with copies of the letters sent to and from John and his family during his time at Oxford. The compilation of the family album thus appears to have been instigated by the attempt to deal with and manage this material remainder.

Nathaniel’s first-person narrative provides a coherent and continuous frame for the different materials his family manuscript gathers, but for analytic purposes the central “Memorials” can be roughly divided into sections corresponding to the different kinds of materials being composed or copied:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–3</td>
<td>Preface or introduction: an account of the religious and personal motivations for compiling the memorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–22</td>
<td>An account of John’s upbringing and education. Towards its end, this section transitions into a narrative of John’s admission to St. Edmund’s Hall, Oxford, and includes transcriptions of letters and documents relating to his admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22–208</td>
<td>Chronological sequence of letters exchanged between Nathaniel and John from the time of John’s entrance at Oxford in May 1672 until his death in March 1673. Nathaniel’s narrative insertions between each letter offer explanations and emotional reactions and provide the whole with a coherent progressive structure. Nathaniel transcribes John’s Latin letters to him but also includes English translations of the same. In addition to Nathaniel and John’s letters, the sequence also includes some letters exchanged between Nathaniel and his sisters, mother, and uncle. On pp. 200–204 Nathaniel’s devout meditation on loss and affliction serves as an introduction to John’s last letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>208–227</td>
<td>Narrative of John’s death and funeral. A sequential narrative of events following the receipt of John’s last letter, including Nathaniel’s travel to Oxford, his discovery of his son’s death, and his son’s funeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>227–240</td>
<td>Funeral oration. Transcription of the oration given at John’s funeral by John Barrow and a translation of the same into English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240–243</td>
<td>The placement of a monument. A detailed description of the commission and erection of a monument in the college church (today’s St. Peter-in-the-East), including a full-page drawing of the final monument and a transcription and translation of its text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The return home. A narrative of departure from Oxford and bearing news home.

Letters of consolation. Transcriptions of consolatory letters received. At the end, on pp. 257–77, Nathaniel transcribes an additional consolatory letter he received from his brother on the earlier death of his daughter Sarah.

Funeral elegies and epitaphs. Transcriptions of verses made upon the death of John by Oxford scholars, including some of those that were attached to his hearse.

Additional consolatory letters and verses. Entered apparently in order as they were received; verses on 297–299 are dated as received October 24, 1673.

Elegies by Nathaniel Freind for his son. The bottom half of p. 303 and p. 304, a verso, are left blank.

Following the end of the “Memorials” section, and under the new heading “Remaines of my deare sonne John Freind” following the preceding blank verso, a more miscellaneous gatherings of documents and reminiscences is entered apparently without clear premeditated order. A note at the beginning describes the following “Remaines” as transcriptions of miscellaneous papers found among John’s Oxford possessions, though the sequence that follows eventually exceeds that limited definition. Nathaniel’s first-person narrative voice continues to introduce, explain, and provide transitions between items, while also offering Nathaniel’s own emotional reactions and reflections. Items in this section include transcriptions of verses and writings from John’s Oxford papers, among them a number of elegies for his sister and grandmother; transcriptions of letters sent by John during his schooling in Bristol, prior to his acceptance at Oxford; accounts from John’s time at Oxford, divided between “necessary” and “unnecessary” expenses, and including expenses for his funeral; a description and drawing of a floorstone placed in addition to the earlier wall monument for John at the site of his burial in Oxford; and a section of pasted-in signatures cut out from John’s Oxford books.
As this sketch of its contents indicates, Nathaniel evidently conceived of his manuscript in terms of a kind of archive, that is, a means of gathering and storing records in the form of narrated historical sequences of events as well as copies of documents. At the same time, a clear narrative arc emerges from the “Memorials” section’s documentary materials, in which Nathaniel’s role as curator of his son’s remains is conflated with his role as author or narrator. The interjections, explanations, and commentaries framing the main sequence of letter transcriptions from John’s Oxford months (at almost 200 consecutive pages, the centerpiece of the volume) seem to reflect or anticipate the emergent form of the epistolary narrative, a form developing in prominence around the time of the manuscript’s compilation. In copying each item of Latin correspondence alongside its translation into English—for the benefit of his daughters, as Nathaniel explains, “for I haue noe Relation now that is able to understand it unless in English” (14-15)—the manuscript lays bare the gap between its documentary materials and intended recipients, or the necessary loss that remains in spite of attempts to provide compensation through the written form. The “narrative” this manuscript presents is one of its own creation, an attempt to gather, store, and provide access to its collected materials that reflects continuously on its own means of providing compensation for loss.

Nathaniel’s predominant approach to compilation seems to take his manuscript volume’s copies of materials as something like holographic reproductions—transparent representations of things that lie outside and beyond the book. His carefully executed drawings of John’s Oxford wall monument and floor slab exemplify this approach: on a

foldout attached to the rear pastedown, both monuments are carefully copied with notes on physical location, scales for measure, and attention to visual decoration and letter form (fig. 5.2). In tension with this mode of representation, however, the manuscript also reveals efforts to establish more immediate or intimate connections with its documentary materials and the process of mourning. Notably, a section at the end of the “Remaines” pastes down a lengthy sequence of John’s signatures cut out from all his Oxford books (fig. 5.3). Even more significant is a passage marking the transition to John’s final letter preceding his death:

Here I must pause a while & shed a few Teares at the Transcribing of this letter. this was the last that ever he writt to mee, this was the last time that ever he writt that Beloved superscription most deare father & yt beloved subscription yo[ur] dutyfull son John Freind. (208-9)

At the top of the recto, the words “a few Teares” have been visibly blotted or blurred on the page (fig. 5.4). In some sense certainly artificial, yet in another undoubtedly authentic, this material remainder of fleeting emotion uncomfortably troubles the status of the memorial book as compensation or consolation, destabilizing the supposedly progressive motions of the mourning process.

Overton

Princeton MS C0199 (no. 812) comprises a gathering of prose, letters, and verse copied by the Civil-War era Republican, Independent, and military officer Robert Overton (1608/9-1678/9), as a memorial for his wife Ann, née Gardiner (1615/16-1665). The manuscript is written in Robert’s own hand with evident care for visual appearance
and is presented as a composite whole with an index of titles and themes at its end. It is entered in a pre-bound, pre-ruled quarto notebook over pages numbered from 1 to 367 (with a skip from 60 to 70), plus three pages of index and a prefatory inscribed flyleaf. The contents, including the index, have been recorded in a small, neat hand *seriatim*: there are no blank pages and there is no extra space between items. The first section of the manuscript, a set of religious meditations, appears to have been written before the plan to create a memorial for Ann, though the final meditation is, appropriately, of death. The address “To the Reder” introducing the subsequent verse sections of the manuscript and a dedicatory inscription and verse also addressing the reader added probably at the same time to the flyleaf, however, seem to direct the reader to consider the whole manuscript as a monument in her memory. It is unclear when Robert compiled this manuscript or how long he spent doing so. As David Norbrook has noted, an edited line of verse early on in the poetic section of the manuscript appears to describe a date of 1671, allowing for the possibility that Robert may only have begun the manuscript a number of years after his wife’s 1665 decease. Materials at the end of the manuscript give the impression of having been copied in Robert’s anticipation of his own death, though they may of course have been written out some time before his 1679 decease. The sheer quantity of reading and writing that went into the manuscript’s creation might conceivably have taken a number of years. Nonetheless, the copying is carefully uniform throughout the volume and betrays no evidence of the changes in hand that might be expected in a manuscript copied over the span of as much as a decade.

Robert’s military and political career in the cause of religious Independence and political Republicanism traces a striking ascent from unlisted volunteer to commander of the garrison of Hull, governorships of Hull, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen, and, through the patronage of Fairfax and subsequently Cromwell, the rank of major-general in command of the Parliamentary armies in the West of Scotland. In spite of his eventual rank, Robert continued to be popularly known as “Colonel Overton,” or, in a moniker apparently given by his officers but which he himself seems to have endorsed, “Colonel Overturn.” What may have been a more significant role in Interregnum politics was cut short in 1654 by imprisonment stemming from his openly stated opposition to Cromwell’s perceived monarchical inclinations. First under Cromwell and subsequently until 1671 under Charles II, Robert was held on the Isle of Jersey without trial and in violation of his right of habeas corpus. During a brief period of release following Cromwell’s death in 1659 he was appointed one of seven governors of the army and was active in leading opposition to the restoration of the monarchy.  

Robert’s striking political career is rivaled by his surprising close connections with some of the most important literary figures of his time. While living in the parish of St. Giles Cripplegate, Robert may have hired his former Cambridge colleague John Milton to tutor his children; it was almost certainly Robert who later introduced Milton to his close neighbor from the East Riding of Yorkshire, Andrew Marvell.  

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also introduced Marvell to Fairfax and certainly introduced Marvell to his former military chaplain and close associate John Oxenbridge, about whom Marvell wrote “Bermudas.”

Milton in the Second Defense invokes Robert in terms of some affinity, apparently in an effort to further his political advancement to the Interregnum Council of State: “you Overton, who have been connected with me for these many years in a more than brotherly union by similitude of studies, and by the sweetness of your manners.”

The terms of Milton’s praise—love of learning and refinement of manners—are echoed in the appraisal of one of Robert’s Edinburgh prisoners, who describes him as “a scholer, bot a bit pedanticke” who treated his prisoners with notable “courtesie.”

Robert’s wife Ann appears to have led her own active London life in radical political and religious circles. According to the lengthy letter written to Robert about Ann’s final days by their daughter, which Robert copies in toto into his manuscript, Ann received a visit and interactive deathbed “sermon” from “Mr. Batcheller” (81-82), likely the radical minister, Leveler, and Protectorate press censer John Batchiler or Bachiler, who appears to have been acquainted with Robert’s chaplain John Oxenbridge, and who appears to have been influenced by the radical views on press censorship expressed in Milton’s Areopagitica. A subsequent deathbed message from “Sarah Weight” seems to

543 Cited in Taft, ODNB.
refer to the popular prophetess of the same name (89). In the lead-up to her death, Ann requested to be buried in the radically unostentatious Calvinist manner of the popular Baptist preacher and anti-royalist leader Henry Jessey, a figure perhaps personally connected with Robert as well as with Sarah Wight (90).^545

Strikingly, given these intimate family connections with radical politics and poetics, Robert’s vast compilation of verse in commemoration of Ann is founded on the adaptation of source materials from a range of seventeenth-century authors for the most part prominently encoded as Royalist: John Donne, George Herbert, George Wither, Francis Quarles, Abraham Cowley, Thomas Flatley, and Katherine Philips. Robert’s prefatory address “To the Reder” openly articulates his method of appropriation:

By this meanes may I not p[er]form a necessary dewty, in applyinge, w[ha]ts my owne, or others to ye blessed memory of my Dearests deceased Dust?…In her happy rememberance, I haue (I hope) not impropp[er]ly– applied, these Poems. Had her beauty & virtue, been ordinary, my priuate sorrowes might haue seamed sufficient, but beinge her inward and outward brightnesse reflected on all, may not all haue Interest in her memory? and to none more then her, these Poems (for whome soeuer they had been pend) coulde more propp[er]ly be applied. (151)

This method of “application” seems to explode earlier commonplacing traditions based around what Mary Thomas Crane calls the “gathering” and “framing” of materials.\textsuperscript{546} It also offers a vivid emblem of Knight’s “compiling culture,” one in which Robert takes on spent time at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and both enjoyed overlapping Eton College fellowships during the Interregnum.

\textsuperscript{545} Jessey and Robert Overton were among the cosigners of a broadside “testimony” attempting settlement in the aftermath of Cromwell’s death: \textit{An Essay towards settlement upon a sure foundation} (1659), Wing 1846:45.

a role as the editor or curator of a set of texts. Robert cannot in any strict sense be called the author of the materials he gathers, but he fundamentally shapes their meanings through a collapse of distinctions between what we might conceive of as separate practices of reading and writing.

As Robert concludes, his gathered “application” of verses amounts to a “religious relique” of Ann’s memory on Earth, through which he may “rest, & remaine, as a votary to her virtues” (152). His manuscript collection thus appears to be motivated not only by his physical remove from the site of his wife’s death and burial during his time in prison, but also by a specific attempt to spiritualize, transform, textualize, and compensate for the ceremonial commemorative practices that Ann had explicitly repudiated for her own burial. In contrast with the Freind family album, the Overton manuscript is thus cut off to some extent from the simulative representation of primary materials such as funeral sermons or tomb monuments. Rather, it reflects to a greater extent on its own status as text, as itself its own distinct form of performance of mourning and commemoration through the medium of poetry.

In his foundational work on the Overton manuscript, David Norbrook identifies Robert’s method of compilation as an attempt to “reform” or “overturn…traditional conventions of love poetry and elegiac poetry….to overgo the courtly forms of Petrarchan verse by reapplying its figures to a republican saint.” I wish to reverse this claim: I suggest that it is Puritan poetry and poetics that Robert’s manuscript seeks to reform by elevating its subject matter to the realm of refined courtly verse. In this regard the Overton album echoes and reinforces Robert’s evident concern with manners and his

apparent conviction that social distinction and religious election should be correspondent.

In 1654, at a time when other self-described “Levelers” were pulling down rather than erecting church monuments, Robert commissioned a wall monument for his Royalist parents in their parish church in Easington, Yorkshire. Utterly conventional in its physical form, its English and Latin text, signed “Robertus filius moerens,” is infused with radical spirit. “Blood not minds but minds adorn their blood,” the poetic text declares, staking out one side on a longstanding debate over the nature of true nobility. In its continuing final line, the epitaph turns to an almost Althusserian rendering of his parents’ hailing by God as a supersession of temporal markers of election: “here’s” (i.e., hic iacent) “more than Madam or My Lord.” Stripped of the traditional material supports of the monument, and forced to turn correspondingly inward on its own resources for poetic composition, the Overton manuscript album nonetheless represents a similar attempt to project a threshold where divine election might reflect or even perfect the codes importing social worth.

Norbrook’s tremendous labor in identifying the sources employed throughout Robert’s 200 pages of verse provides the groundwork for all further study of the manuscript. Using electronic resources not available at the time of Norbrook’s writing, I can add a small addendum to his work in the form of a list of attributions for the sources he was unable to identify, which include works by Michael Drayton, Christopher Harvey, and Hugh Peters. Only one poem in the manuscript remains unattributed, one that is

548 Woolf, Social Circulation, 80-82.
549 [Flyleaf]: untitled quatrain beginning “Thinck often on her, O my Soule”: ll. 1-2 adapted from Thomas Flatman, “To the Memory of the incomparable Orinda. A Pindarick Ode,” ll. 97-8, in Katherine Philips, Poems (1667), sig. fl. 154: “Loues Arethmatick”: a loose adaptation of Michael Drayton, “Taking my pen, with words to
copied twice in two different versions; this remaining poem is probably Overton’s own.\(^{550}\)

While contributing to the project of understanding the sources that make of the Overton manuscript, however, I wish to redirect attention from Robert as a “reader” to consideration of his role as a “compiler” or “editor” of texts and a composite volume. While the Overton album bears some incidental resemblance to the kinds of manuscript miscellanies Robert might have encountered during his youth at Cambridge and the Inns of Court,\(^{551}\) it is a fundamentally distinct entity based not on the intimate circulation and recirculation of unpublished poetic texts but rather on the selection and curatorship of a range of already printed poetry. Specifically, in organizing its contents in loose thematic

or generic groupings each given their own running header, the manuscript appears to model itself on the relatively new form of the printed poetic anthology.\textsuperscript{552} Such popular miscellanies include \textit{Wits Recreations} (1640 and many subsequent editions) or \textit{The Academy of Compliments} (1640 and many subsequent editions), gatherings of often obscene or irreverent verse also, like Robert’s source authors, heavily affiliated with political Royalism.\textsuperscript{553} The addresses to a generalized “reader” included at the beginning of the poetic section and in the probably contemporaneous flyleaf prefatory inscription may even suggest that Robert in an early stage of the compilation of this manuscript intended it for print publication.

Though the distinct running headers mark off a large number of subdivisions of the manuscript, the composite whole can loosely and schematically be described as grouping together a set of prose moral meditations or essays, apparently of Robert’s own composition, and apparently written before the manuscript was repurposed for Ann’s commemoration (1-77); a set of letters on the topic of his wife Ann’s death (77-151); a set of lyrics memorializing and idealizing Ann (171-273); and a set of lyrics on more general religious topics (273-367). None of the poems included in the manuscript is given an authorial ascription. Aside from the one that appears to be of Robert’s own composition, and three copied from a letter or letters by his in-law John Gardiner, however, all appear to be adapted from attributable print sources. Robert’s basic method of composition was to read through a book in order, excerpting and retitling whole poems

\textsuperscript{553} Smyth, Ch. 4; Arthur Marotti, \textit{Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric} (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), 258.
or passages, frequently adapting flexible verse forms including sonnets and Pindaric Odes to rhymed couplets, and repeatedly intersplicing couplets of his own composition. With the exception of the first and last sections of verse, which each rely on multiple sources, every other distinctly titled section is copied from a single book. At the end of the final section of the manuscript, copied from an edition of George Herbert’s *The Temple* bound with Christopher Harvey’s revised edition of *The Synagogue*, Robert abandons his typical practice of editing, adapting, and retitling his source materials, opting instead to copy out a lengthy sequence of Herbert’s lyrics roughly as they appear in the printed edition. This lengthy sequence constitutes by far the single largest surviving manuscript collection of Herbert’s verse.\(^{554}\)

Much like the Freind family album, the Overton manuscript appears to adapt its form and purpose in the course of its composition. About halfway through the poetic section of the manuscript, Robert begins to include verses on the deaths of additional family figures. Moreover, the final section of the manuscript, as discussed above, shifts from the topic of commemoration to more generalized religious devotions through the copying out of a vast number of lyrics from Herbert’s *The Temple*. Strikingly, Robert appears to recognize what critics have described as the apocalyptic, self-epitaphic ending structure of Herbert’s collection in choosing to end his book with a sequence of lyrics from the ending of Herbert’s volume. The impression offered is of an open weaving of self into sense, a personal preparation for death.

The final section of the Overton manuscript is also marked by an important shift of address. On pp. 313-15 Robert copies out three poems taken from Hugh Peter or

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Peters’ *A Dying Fathers Last Legacy to an Only Child, Or, Mr. Hugh Peter’s Advice to His Daughter* (1660). The second of these, titled “Wishes,” openly addresses an interpellated daughter, bequeathing her a set of pious virtues. The inclusion of Peter’s work is significant: no other openly Puritan or Republican author is included in the Overton manuscript, and Peter himself was one of the most radical agitators for shifts in gender roles of the English Revolution, calling for women’s participation in the paid labor force and for a revision of inheritance law to allow sons and daughters to inherit equally.555 (Overton’s close associate John Oxenbridge argued similarly radically for female inheritance.)

Moreover, no poem in the manuscript up until the lines copied from Peter addresses any other than a generalized, public “reader”; these lines’ inclusion there point to a shift in Robert’s conception of his manuscript from a public declaration of his wife’s saintliness to a more intimate record to be preserved among the family. Following his release from prison in 1671, Robert lived in Seaton, Rutland with his daughter Ann—author of the extended letter describing his wife’s dying comportment—and her husband Andrew Broughton, son of the clerk who read out Charles I’s death sentence. In a will proved 29 January, 1678, otherwise mainly concerned with the settling of debts, Robert bequeaths his “books and manuscripts” to his daughter Ann and “son and daughter Johnson,” Nathaniel and Joanne.556 Such attention to written matter in a will is unusual. Evidently at some point towards the end of his manuscript’s composition, and possibly towards the end of his own life, Robert came to consider his memorial volume not as an

556 PROB 11/359/132.
address to a print public but as a material object to be handed down to the daughters who succeeded him.

One additional reference on the last page of Robert’s verse collection may also be intended to address his daughters. The final sequence of poems before the “Finis” copies out, in order, Herbert’s “Love [III]”; an excerpt of the nearly censored passage beginning “Religion stands on tiptoe in our Land / Ready to passe to ye American strand” from Herbert’s “The Church-Militant,” retitled “Herberts Presage”; and Herbert’s “L ’Envoy” (fig. 5.5). Shortly following Robert’s death, “son and daughter Johnson” left England for the new world, first for the Leeward Islands and subsequently as Governor and Lady of Carolina; Anne Broughton’s son also followed to Carolina, where the two families intermarried and exerted a dynastic influence over local politics for several generations.  

Robert’s evident endorsement of Herbert’s vision of the westward translatio of religion may stand as his acknowledgment, or even encouragement, for his children’s anticipated or imagined migratory future.

The Overton manuscript itself seems not to have traveled westward with Robert’s descendants, but rather remained in or around Seaton until its 1879 acquisition from a bookseller in nearby Bristol. It was not impossible, however, that such a manuscript should cross the Atlantic, as the next section will show.

Rodeney

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558 On the back paste-down: “14 Febr 1879 Purchased this Book of Prescut, Bookseller, Upper Arcade, Bristol Gave him 2/1 paid Edwd G: Doggett”
Unlike the previous examples of family albums, which each exist in a single copy copied out by a single scribe, multiple distinct versions of a Rodeney family album survive. Each comprises some different configuration of three general groupings of materials: a set of religious devotions composed by Sir Edward (1590-1657) for his family’s use during the period of the suspension of Common Prayer of the Interregnum; a genealogy and family history tracing the Rodeney name back 500 years to the time of Henry II, compiled by Edward from historical documents; and a funeral sermon and anniversary elegy on the death of George, Edward’s sole male heir, composed by the family chaplain Francis Atkins. The six surviving copies of these materials of which I am aware comprise:

**NA-1**, PRO 30/20/18, a professionally produced scribal copy of the family history, the funeral sermon, and the religious devotions, in folio, including a table of contents listing all of the same

**NA-2**, contained in the same box, a partly or wholly scribally produced copy of the family history and funeral sermon on gilt and colored parchment, in folio

**NA-3**, PRO 30/20/25/7, an 18th-century copy of the family history, unbound, with later genealogical continuations

**BL**, British Library MS Add. 34239, a copy of the family history, the funeral sermon, and the religious devotions in multiple hands, in folio, including additional materials, in a modern binding evidently missing some leaves, with a defaced inscription “Jane Rodeney her booke 1656”

**F**, Folger Shakespeare Library V.a.520, a copy of the religious devotions in multiple hands, in quarto, bearing a 1663 gift inscription from Jane Stawell, née Rodeney, to her niece Anne Bound

**S**, Somerset Heritage Center MS DD/SAS C/1821(4), a copy of a part of the religious devotions followed by additional meditations in a male hand, in quarto, in a prebound volume stamped with the initials “PR” and inscribed “Penelope Rodeney”
Though there is compelling reason for treating the religious devotions as a distinct set of texts evidently produced at an earlier time and in a different (quarto) format for a distinct family use, the inclusion of the devotions in NA-1 and BL suggest that they also came to be viewed as belonging to the general category of texts subsumable within these memorial collections.

Edward Rodney, member of parliament for Wells and Somerset, judge, and justice of the peace, landed in Rodney Stoke, formerly Stoke Gifford, Somerset, was a prominent royalist active in Caroline and Civil Wars politics. His wife Frances came from the prominent Southwell family and served as Queen Anne’s Lady of Privy Chamber; Edward himself traced from royal lineage on his mother’s side through the Seymour family. Their 1614 marriage was celebrated at Somerset House. Edward and Frances’s last surviving son, George, died November 30, 1651, at Rodney Stoke, of causes never named in any of the family album materials. On Edward’s 1657 death the entirety of his estate passed to Frances; on her 1659 death, the estate was carefully split up among the surviving daughters Anna, Jane, Penelope, Katherine, and Elizabeth.

Edward’s devotional compositions, including a “Preparation before the Taking of the Sacrament” intended for his children’s use as well as a large number of specific prayers and meditations, appear to have been compiled specifically as a response to the suspension of Common Prayer in the Interregnum period. His family history is likewise stated to have been undertaken “in your brother George his lifetime,” and may have been developed through serious antiquarian research: the history defers repeatedly.

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559 PRO 11/266/391.
560 PRO 11/297/167.
to “the genealogy,” but also makes repeated corrections to it apparently based on some other source of historical documentation the nature of which is unclear. The death of George and Francis Atkins’ presentation of an anniversary elegy seems to have prompted the attempt to gather sets of these materials in the folio memorial albums that survive. The title pages of NA-1 (fig. 5.6) and NA-2 (fig. 5.7), each containing a prominent dedication “To My Deare Daughters Elizabeth Penelope Anna Jane Katherine Rodeneys,” suggests originary intent to supply each daughter with a professionally produced copy of the compiled memorial album (the emphasis given to Penelope’s name in NA-1 likely indicates that copy was intended for her possession). The brilliantly decorated parchment pages of NA-1 (fig. 5.8) indicates that these manuscripts may have been intended as lavish productions. The survival of the BL copy of the same materials in multiple hands points to alternative means of production, however, based not on professional scribal work but rather on the collaborative amateur work of the household.

Edward’s manuscript writings struggle to reconcile God’s providence with what was evidently taken as the catastrophe of his family’s male line’s end. In Edward’s repeated phrase, “500 yeares is the common period of kindgdomes and great families.” At the same time that he acknowledges a necessary cyclical or revolutionary structure of history, he is unable to resist mapping personal family history onto recent national events: the end of his family line coincides with the catastrophic end of the kingdom. Faced with the dissolution of the Rodeney estate, Edward’s writings confront earthly with heavenly models of inheritance: “for what punishment is it to change a brittle and fading inheritance for one yt is immortall & everlastinge?” Nonetheless, he faces considerable difficulties extracting persons from material things and places. Referring to the crushing
debts incurred through the course of the Civil Wars and threatening his estates, Edward suggests:

if GOD had blessed my Sonne, with long life I make no question, but hee would haue recovered and kept it vp longer. But I conclude with IOB. The LORD giveth and the LORD taketh; blessed be the name of the LORD.

In this moment adapting the burial service, it is unclear whether what is given and taken is Edward’s familial material wealth or his son; the implication is that they are equivalent. At the end of his family history he is able only to speak of rupture: “But I have done with this broken discourse and indeed with the world, waiting till my change come.”

Edward and Frances’ portraits survive on their joint tomb in the parish church of St. Leonard’s, which stands immediately facing the gatehouse leading towards their no-longer-extant manor house. A nineteenth-century watercolor painting of the tomb shows a vividly painted structure with the intriguing detail that both Edward and Frances are dressed in black. \(^{562}\) Though the accuracy of this coloring is uncertain—the watercolor shows Edward with brown hair, while the tomb today has traces of gold paint covering his Cavalier hairstyle—the style of Frances’ cap, a so-called “widow’s peak,” conclusively marks her at least as dressed in mourning. \(^{563}\)

Edward and Frances’s joint monument was erected next to an imposing tomb for their son George inside a family chapel added in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century extending the church on either side of the chancel and including tombs and

\(^{562}\) Somerset Heritage Center A/DAS 1/334/6.
effigies of Edward’s ancestors Sir Thomas (d. 1471) and Sir John (d. 1527). A few other post-Reformation aristocratic families constructed new family chapels, preserving or reviving a burial practice largely suspended in the Reformation, albeit without the practices of endowed prayer that had once accompanied it; a greater number appear late in the seventeenth century shortly before being superseded by the much more popular freestanding mausoleum. Many other contemporary families preserved or revived practices of burying family members in groups. The Rodeney family are unusual among the seventeenth-century families reviving collective burial practices, however, in being able to bury their family members in a surviving pre-Reformation chapel alongside pre-Reformation tombs of their family members. They do so, pointedly, at the moment that their family line ceases: following Edward and Frances’s tomb, the last burial in the family chapel recorded by any monument is that of their daughter Katherine, who is marked on Edward’s floorstone as having been buried in his grave.

The Rodeney manuscript collections function at once as a material extension of their family chapel and, at the same time, a compensation for the monument’s physical immobility at a moment anticipating the disruption and dispersal of family members and family possessions following the death of a last male heir. George’s striking wall monument (fig. 5.9) not only marks the renovation of the family chapel for family use, it also provides a direct motive for the creation and compilation of the family memorials.

564 Post-Reformation English family chapels are few: the 1556 Bedford Chapel, Chenies, Buckinghamshire; the 1615 De Gray Chapel, Flitton, Bedfordshire; the 1649 Osborn Chapel, in Campton, Bedfordshire; the 1656 Ailesbury “Mausoleum,” originally connected to the church, in Maulden, Bedfordshire; the 1664 Ashburnham Chapel, in Ashburnham, Sussex; and the 1681 Astley Chapel, in Melton Constable, Norfolk.
The anniversary elegy on the death of George written by the family chaplain Francis Atkins, included either at the beginning (BL) or end (NA-1, NA-2) of the folio collections, appears to have provided the impetus for Edward’s subsequent gathering of materials and the creation of the family volumes for his daughters. The final set-off section of this poem directly reflects on what appears to be a plan or draft for the not-yet erected tomb for George:

Farwell (great Soule) and Leaue vs here to mourn
Thy sleeping ashes in their silent vrne:
Where they expect that pow’rfull trumpets sound,
Shall raise each atome to bee glorie crown’d.
Whilst (through thy Parents bounty) I invoake
Thy now forsaken household Gods at Stoake,
That wee thy fresh-sprung vertues still may see,
Ingraud, and ris’n, in each good memorie.

The final line—imagining George’s vertues “ingraved and risen in each good memory”—wittily plays with the double sense of “graving” explored in Chapter 1, while also offering up a sophisticated reflection on the anamnestic function of anniversary remembrance. It is also, however, almost certainly a witty ekphrastic comment on the posture of George’s effigy on his tomb, which can now be seen sculpted (sculptus, “engraved”) rising out of his grave at the moment of resurrection, as the angel blows the trumpet above.

Though undoubtedly like other contemporary tombs showing the deceased in winding sheets influenced by the striking monument of John Donne in St. Paul’s, George’s tomb interestingly conflates this modern model with the widespread iconography of late medieval memorial brasses and Day of Doom wall paintings showing the dead wrapped up while kneeling in prayer, or (in paintings) often still halfway
submerged in the tomb. Much like the *NA*-1 parchment copy of the family memorials, which conflates distinctively medieval, Renaissance, and seventeenth-century materials, decorative styles, and scripts, or like the family chapel itself, which erects modern wall monuments alongside medieval effigial tombs, George’s monument seems to rely on a lively hybrid collapse of historical significations in an image of family perdurance.

Two distinct provenance histories reveal how the Rodeney family memorial collections could be repurposed to very different ends. One of these illustrates the means by which Edward’s manuscript materials were used distant relatives much later in the eighteenth century to shore up a sense of family antiquity. Three of the Rodney album copies survive in the National Archives, Kew, as a part of the family papers collection of George Brydges Rodney, 1st Baron Rodney (1718-1792), the controversial and meretricious British naval commander in charge of numerous naval actions in the Caribbean as well as against the American War of Independence. Another copy of Edward’s family history survived in the possession of Caesar Rodney (1728-1784), the signer of the American Declaration of Independence featured on the Delaware state quarter, from whom it passed to his nephew and heir Caesar Augustus Rodney (1772-1824), who as a diplomatic commissioner for President Monroe is often credited with formulating the theory of American hegemony subsequently known as the Monroe Doctrine. In a letter dated from Philadelphia, January 1st, 1791, the young Caesar Augustus writes to his unknown distant British relative Baron Rodney to describe his upbringing, his studies at the University of Pennsylvania, and the legal difficulties preventing him from inheriting his uncle’s estate; he pleads for money and promises to

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show his relative his copy of Edward Rodney’s family history if he should support his study of law in England. The desired patronage never materialized, and Caesar Augustus’ copy of this text does not survive in the American archives of his papers.

Another radically different appropriation of Edward Rodney’s family writings emerges from a different provenance history tied more closely to his daughter’s inheritance. Through comparison with Jane Rodney’s gift inscription in F, it seems to be possible to identify one of the main hands involved in the production of the multi-hand BL copy as Jane’s. Supporting the identification, a defaced ownership inscription in larger script on 85v is still legible as “Jane Rodeney her booke 1656.” This amateur hand is one of the main hands responsible for copying out the manuscript’s contents, even though it is unable to read or reproduce the Latin phrases peppering its copy. Jane thus appears to have copied out vast quantities of her father’s writings, working apparently in collaboration and with the help of the second most common hand of the manuscript, possibly that of the family chaplain Francis Atkins who contributed the verses on George’s anniversary apparently inspiring the memorial collections and who also authors the memorial verses on Edward’s 1657 death included only in this BL copy. Alongside Jane’s relatively unaccomplished hand—one befitting her elevated social station—this more educated male scribe checks her readings and offers corrections and translations of Latin phrases. While daughters seem sometimes to have worked as amanuenses in the household, the relatively unaccomplished quality of Jane’s hand suggests this was not a

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567 PRO 30/20/18.
routine practice for her, but rather an instance of scribal labor motivated by other factors.\(^{569}\)

Unlike the other copies of Edward’s works, the \(BL\) copy owned and substantially copied out by Jane incorporates a large number of texts not present in other examples: the verses on Edward’s death, mentioned above; verses by multiple different authors on the 1637 death of Jane’s sister Frances; political dialogues composed by Edward; a sermon dated as late as 1680. Intriguingly, in a short section now missing an unknown number of pages, Jane copies out what seem to be original verses by her father, including a striking response to Donne’s “The Indifferent” (fig. 5.10):

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Serena thinkes because Time changeth her
My thoughts of her change too; and doth infere
From bodily defects the minds decay
From natures ebbe in her. my loues allay
O heretick in loue; as iff that fire
Kindled in humane breasts by ye worlds syre
For lasting ends to propagate our kind
And loose desires in vertues bands to bind
Should feed on such weak stuffe…(68v)
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This highly unusual celebration of middle-aged married love—perhaps unique for its period—calculates the moral and spiritual gains of aging together, concluding simply “Each change in loue is not inconstancy.” It is quite possible that these apparently original verses are Edward’s composition for his wife Frances, copied out by Jane not only as a means of archiving her family’s literary remainders but also as a means of indexing more fully what may have been the strong relationships within her family. Elsewhere in the manuscript Jane copies out another set of verses by her father not

\(^{569}\) Love, 99.
present in any of the other family copies, an elegy on the 1637 death of her sister Frances (85r-v).

As a composite whole, the BL copy apparently represents Jane Rodeney’s appropriation of her father’s design for a family memorial album, one that extends his investments into a much broader gathering of family literary remains that is at once a spiritual exercise and an effort in the cultivation of personal memory.

* * *

Through these different means, the families surveyed in this chapter turn the material form of the book into an adaptable resource for responding to loss. These families’ parallel or comparable efforts to create memorials across the spectrum of political, religious, and class affiliations of the period reveal to a broadly distributed culture of remembrance and memorialization traversing public and private modes. If the materials gathered by these memorial albums point to their participation within a larger material culture of memory, these texts also reveal the particular power of the material book to preserve and convey the affect of embodied remembrance.
Fig. 0.1. Peter Apian, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis*. Folger Shakespeare Library.
Fig. 11. Epitaph on the death of Henry VII, Bodleian Library.
Fig. 2.1. Wooden epitaph table, St. Albans Cathedral.
Fig. 2.2. Wooden epitaph table, Southwark Cathedral.
Fig. 2.3. Wooden church wall furnishings, parish church of St. Thomas and St. Edmund, Salisbury. Center: arms of Elizabeth I (restored). Top right: funeral hatchments, 19th c. Bottom right: monument carved for himself by local woodworker Humphrey Beckham (d. 1671), partly restored.
Fig. 2.4. Maynard family monuments, St. Albans Cathedral.
Fig. 2.5. Epitaph of Marcus Pacuvius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (Ingolstadt, 1534), copied from Giacomo Mazzocchi, *Epigrammata antiquae urbis* (Rome, 1521). Folger Shakespeare Library.
Fig. 2.6. Epitaph for James Hyde. Bodleian Library.
Fig. 2.7. Epitaph on the death of Robert Bowes. Edinburgh University Library.
An Epitaph of Master Fraunces Benison

Fig. 2.8. Epitaph on Francis Benison. Huntington Library.
**Fig. 2.9. “Table” broadside print. London Society of Antiquaries.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE MAP OF MORTALITIE.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The father, God, made man, created life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As by first Adam all do die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So in me all are made alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death’s your servant in victory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And I external life do give.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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| Sishe Adams fall did fill the world with stone, |
| Whereby man doth few days of sorrow bin, |
| His life, no life, rather calamity. |
| And world’s bell pleasures, but meere vanities. |
| Sishe beautie, strength and wit, flowers fading bee, |
| Man made of dust, to dust must turne againe. |
| Sishe all must die, by god’s moit full decree, |
| And death no content is, but rest from pains. |
| Why should frail fleshe fear death, that ends all woes, |
| That falses all fones, and takes man from his foes? |
| His shape though eaphy tis, he bringeth peace, |
| Stimes trysts, ends cares, glues life, and wills for eaph. |
| Men dying, sleepe sleeping, from trauell rest, |
| To live in joy for euer with the blest. |
| Rather embrace, then fear so good a friend: |
| Ye with not for bithis in one deu end. |
| Burg farer than, to fear him be it, |
| That troubles end, and brings eternal blisse. |
| To faithfull fough, death’s full of comforts woots, |
| That longeth with his Chrift in Cloudes to meane. |
| In earths sleep, that is to wise doe comes, |
| Then to prepare for peace, full paflage hence. |
| For, wise man all his life shold meditate |
| On death that come he doth not knowe, or late, |
| He is prepared to entertaine him for, |
| As Captives do, redeeming friends from woe. |
| Like well thou matchest and not lies long. |
| So lies, that death may leave thee fit, for beastes. |
| And thee not death, poneglie though he be, |
| Thou art in trall, he comes to alter thee. |

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*Inspired at London by R. S. for William Leger, and are to be sold at his shop at Holborne, against S. Andrew’s Church.*
Daphnæïda.

An Elegie upon the death of the noble and vertuous Douglas Howard, Daughter and Heire of Henry Lord Howard, Viscount Byndon, and wife of Arthur Gorges Esquier.

Dedicated to the Right honorable the Lady Helena, Marquess of Northampton.

By Ed. Sp.

At London, Printed for William Ponsonby, dwelling in Paules Churchyard at the signe of the Bishops head 1591.

Fig. 3.1. Daphnæïda (1591), Huntington Library.
Fig. 3.2. Complaints (1591), Folger Shakespeare Library.
Fig. 3.3. Abraham Fraunce’s translation of Thomas Watson’s *Amyntas*, expanded 1591 edition. Folger Shakespeare Library.
Fig. 3.4. Woodcut prefacing the first “Querela” of Watson’s *Amyntas* (1585). British Library.
Fig. 4.1. Cyril Tourneur, John Webster, and Thomas Heywood, *Three Elegies on the most lamented Death of Prince Henrie* (London: for William Welbie, 1613). Folger Shakespeare Library.
Fig. 4.2. Cyril Tourneur, John Webster, and Thomas Heywood, *Three Elegies on the most lamented Death of Prince Henrie* (London: for William Welbie, 1613). Folger Shakespeare Library.
Fig. 4.3. John Taylor, Great Britaine, all in Blacke. For the incomparable losse of Henry, our late worthy Prince (London: E.A. for I[ohn] Wright, 1612). Harvard Houghton Library.
Fig. 4.4. John Taylor, Great Britaine, all in Blacke. For the incomparable losse of Henry, our late worthy Prince (London: E.A. for John Wright, 1612). Harvard Houghton Library.
Fig. 4.5. Post-Henry mortuary style: broadside on the death of King James, 1625, reusing a woodcut frame also extant in a 1624 print, one perhaps originally used for an earlier lost broadside. London Society of Antiquaries.
Fig. 4.6. Post-Henry mortuary style: funeral ticket, 1641. Bodleian Library.
Fig. 4.7. Post-Henry mortuary style: broadside elegy printed on vellum, 1711 (1708). Bodleian Library.
Fig. 4.9. Colorful death: inserted manuscript illustration, pen and brush, ca. 1634. The grey-tinted “ground,” apparently added after the gold and red paint but before the black ink, may be a mixture of liquid size and pigment, possibly calcined bone. Harvard Law Library.
Fig. 4.10. Manuscript memorial for Edward Coke, title page with borders in watercolor(?) and varnish(?), 1634. Harvard Law Library.
Fig. 4.11. Autograph sonnet and epitaph by George Weckherlin on the death of his daughter Elizabeth, 1624(?). British Library.
Fig. 4.13. Mourning page with heraldic device, George Chapman. Folger Shakespeare Library.
Fig. 4.14. Mourning page with heraldic device, Joshua Sylvester. Folger Shakespeare Library.
Fig. 14.15. Mourning device included in the 1608 edition of Joshua Sylvester’s works. Folger Shakespeare Library.
A Neighbour's TEARS
Sprinkled on the Dust of the Amiable Virgin,
Mrs. Rebekah Sewall,
Who was born December 30, 1704, and dyed suddenly, August 3, 1710, Ætatis 6.

Heav'n's only, in dark hours, can Succour send;
And shew a Fountain, where the cisterns end.
I saw this little One but t'other day
With a small flock of Doves, just in my way:
What New-made Creature's this so bright? thought I
Ah! Pity 'tis such Pretensions should die.
Madam, behold the Lamb of GOD; for there's
Your Pretty Lamb, while you dissolve in Tears;
She lies infolded in her Shepherd's Arms,
Whose Bosom's always full of gracious Charms.
Great JESUS claim'd his own; never begrutch
Your Jewels rare into the Hands of Suck.
He, with His Righteousness, has better dres'd
Your Babe, than e're you did, when at your Breast.
'Tis not your ease alone; for thousands have
Follow'd their SWEET Comforts to the Grave.
Seeking the Plut of Immortality,
I saw no Place Secure; but all must dy.
Death, that stern Officer, takes no denial;
I'm grieved he found your door, to make a trial.
Thus, be it on the Land, or Swelling Seas,
His Sovereignty doth what His Wisdom please.
Must then the Rulers of this World's affairs,
By Providence be brought thus into Tears?
It is a Lesson hard, I must confess,
For our Proud Wills with Heav'n's to acquiesce.
But when Death goes before; Unseen, behind
There's such a One, as may compose the Mind.
Pray, Madam, wipe the tears off your fair eyes;
With your translated Damsel Sympathize;
Could She, from her New School, obtain the leave,
She'd tell you Things would make you cease to grieve.

B. T.
MEMORIALS,
& REMAINES:
Containing y Life,
& Death of my deare Sonne

JOHN FREIND;
who deceased at Oxford.
Mar. 20th. 1672.

Hunc Deus tantum terris
ostendit, nec ulterior
esse sinit.

By mee Nathaniell Freind.

Fig. 5.1. Freind album, title page. Bodleian Library.
Fig. 5.2. Freind album, foldout with tomb monument reproductions. Bodleian Library.
Fig. 5.3. Freind album, pasted-in signatures. Bodleian Library.
Fig. 5.4. Freind album, “tear-stained” writing (top of recto page). Bodleian Library.
Fig. 5.5. Overton album, final leaf of poetry, with “Herberts Presage.” Princeton Firestone Library.
Fig. 5.6. Rodeney Album, decorated parchment title page. UK National Archives.
Fig. 5.7. Rodeney Album, title page, scribal copy. UK National Archives.
Fig. 5.8. Rodeney Album, gilt and decorated parchment. UK National Archives.
Fig. 5.9. Tomb of George Rodney, St. Leonard’s, Rodney Stoke.
Serina thinks because I'm changed she
My thoughts of her change too and dare infer
From bodily defects the minds decay
From Natures side in hers my love decayed
O that in soums as if of fire
Wied in human breasts by worlds spies
For lasting ends to propagate our kind
And last desires in virtous hands to bind
Should feed on such weak stuffs as fair and good
Quickly deform'd with sicker signs or damn
Perhaps they were the flaws in the fairest
And a concuring cause but in their wise
Up start more powerfull objects as of wise
Riper'd to wisdom at the helme to sit
Of prouder cares and by a wise dispose
To build the house rude cattles refine
And make great towers turning ther boome and clay
To marble palaces their sheepeards gray
To Tyrian purple and the pots of lead
To Messy plate with carvings oher spread
Religion and virtuem add to these
The soules chiefse beauty wisebome exercise
Rapt in the mind with love and choise delight
Enabling it to judge twixt wrong and right
To live in either fortune then to dye
And live again in immortality
Cage therafore to complaine on this rely
Each change in love is not inconstancy.

Fig. 5.10. Rodeney Album, verses in hand of Jane Rodeney. British Library.
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