



Peter Beal, ed. *Discovering, Identifying and Editing Early Modern Manuscripts 1100-1700*

Peter Beal, ed. *Discovering, Identifying and Editing Early Modern Manuscripts. English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700*, vol. 18. London: The British Library, 2013. vi, 269p., ill. ISBN 9780712358934. £50.00 (hardback).

The great Restoration scholar Harold Love (1937-2007) looks out quizzically at us from the frontispiece of this issue of Peter Beal's invaluable *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700* (*EMS*). In front of him is a large folio volume (print? manuscript?) whose pages are only apparently blank – the unintended effect, presumably of the camera's exposure settings. An image of absent presence is apt, for this number of *EMS* in Love's memory is, we learn in passing towards the end, the journal's "final volume" (253). It seems extraordinary that such an important publication – as central to the flourishing of manuscript studies in the past few decades as Love's own *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (1993) – should slip so unobtrusively away. As readers of *EMS* will expect, each of the twelve essays in this valedictory volume is characterised by precise and searching scholarship: *is* have been dotted and *ts* crossed, jottings on flyleaves transcribed, provenances tracked.

Four articles cast fresh light on Rochester, whose *Works* Love edited for Oxford in 1999. In a fascinating blend of speculation and scholarship, Paul Davis uncovers the political affiliations and transmissional and postal histories of hitherto unknown Rochester separates in the University of Nottingham Library. Paul Hammond considers previously uncollated witnesses from an early eighteenth-century miscellany in the Brotherton Collection at Leeds, including an intriguing piece on "Man" which shuffles together extracts from "Satyre against Reason and Mankind" with verse by Oldsworth, Philips and Blackmore. Nicholas Fisher introduces us to a recently discovered manuscript copy of Rochester letters made for Edward Harley, second earl of Oxford, which includes a previously unknown letter from the poet's wife. New allusions to Rochester, one involving violent death, are unearthed by Hilton Kelliher.

A nod is made to Love's *Attributing Authorship* (2002) by the inclusion of John Burrows's and Peter Anstey's forensic investigation of the authorship of two medical manuscripts, texts in John Locke's hand that are sometimes attributed to Thomas Sydenham. This is a challenging but rewarding read – rewarding not simply for the authors' nuanced conclusion about the texts' authorship but also for their lucid account of their methodology and its safeguards.



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Equally brilliant is the highly concentrated essay by Heather F. Windram, Christopher J. Howe and Ruth Connolly on variant analysis, another of Love's topics. In a case study on Herrick's sack poems, Windram *et al.* establish the value of phylogenetic computer programs as a complement to traditional stemmatics. A second article on attribution, by Alan H. Nelson, plausibly argues that the notorious Elizabethan pamphlet *Leicester's Commonwealth* was written by Robert Persons and its "Addition," by Charles Arundell.

Grace Ioppolo reports the discovery of an early seventeenth-century manuscript play, *The Destruction of Hierusalem* (just possibly by Thomas Heywood), among the Clitherow family papers at the London Metropolitan Archive. The discovery of another play, in a University of Chicago Library manuscript, is described by Robert D. Hume: *Feniza*, a ludicrously complicated late seventeenth-century comedy adapted (perhaps by George Digby, second earl of Bristol) from Lope de Vega, and the source for Shadwell's *The Amorous Bigotte* (1690). The volume is topped and tailed by manuscript lists. Concluding with the regular saleroom report by A.S.G. Edwards, the issue begins with two indispensable catalogues: a supplement to Peter Beal's 1998 list of "Feathery Scribe" manuscripts and Colin Tite's richly-contextualised list of the manuscripts that migrated in the early eighteenth century from the Cotton manuscript collection to Humfrey Wanley's Harley library.

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