3
Layout

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The poems commanded themselves to shape up.

JOHN HOLLANDER, *Types of Shape*, p. xvi.

Layout is intimately bound to *punctuation* and *rhyme* through *lineation* (division into lines), a form of spatial punctuation determining both a principal issue of layout and the *display* of rhyme. Though treated here in separate chapters, all must be integrated once individually understood—yet though it is plainly crucial most people never consider layout as in its own right a feature of written texts. If, for example, you see three printed pages, from a novel, a telephone directory, and a volume of poetry, you need not be close enough to read words to identify each ; page-size and the pattern of black words and white space would tell you at a glance. And if you were fooled—if the novel were columnar, the telephone directory in continuous prose—both would be deeply irritating to read.

R eaders (as you see) absorb and react to unexpected layouts, but expected ones are commoner : the headlines + column-format of newspapers ; *alinéa* (new item, new line) for lists and addresses ; itemisation of ingredients in a recipe, followed by instructions ; separate lines for the 'Dear . . .' and 'Yours . . .' that top and tail letters, and so on. Precisely because such formats are familiar, registered by your eyes before you begin to read words, they tend to be noticed automatically, not thought about consciously—and usually fair enough, their whole purpose being to make different kinds of texts equally easy to read by helping readers analyse their sequence of characters correctly, as spaces distinguish each word from the next. Onlywheninterwordspacesorhyphensaremissing, ort he $l_a$yo^{u}t incorrect, do you realise how vital they are. In poetry, however, automatic noticing won't do, for common things may be used in uncommon ways.

   Layout is more than where words go and spaces are left. There are also whether words are capitalised in Lower-Case, in SMALL CAPS, or

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ALL CAPS ; in roman, *italic*, **bold**, 𝔟𝔩𝔞𝔠𝔨 𝔩𝔢𝔱𝔱𝔢𝔯,[1] or another distinguishing *face* or *fount* ; whether type-fount and -size are constant ; whether colour, underlining, or *diacritical marks* are used[2] ; whether left and right margins are *justified* (straight-line) or *ragged* ; how title and *epigraph*,[3] if any, are *set*, etc. Decisions about these things in relation to the *metal page* were almost always made by printers, not authors ; since Modernism, however, poets in particular have sought command, telling publishers what they want, and in *post-metal* publishing, normative online submission of texts or *camera-ready copy* has accelerated the process. The collective term for 'basic layout + all these features' is *mise-en-page* (French, 'putting-on-the-page'[4]) : a *text* in the abstract has no *mise-en-page*, but a <u>book</u> must have one, and most people still encounter most texts in books ; nor is computing a release, for to read is to encounter, if not *mise-en-<u>page</u>*, then *mise-en-<u>écran</u>* ('putting-on-screen'), texts on screen no less than paper having to be laid out one way rather than another. Multiple versions can, however, be simultaneously available online, and the ability to download or scan images, with the capacity of inkjet- and laser-printers to handle them, means critics no longer have any technical excuse for failing to confront the significances of *mise-en-page*, in poetry as elsewhere.

A first distinction is whether lines follow directly from one another, as always in blank verse and usually in couplets, or are grouped into stanzas ; a second is whether a line is flush with the left margin (*ekthesis*) or *indented* (*eisthesis*). In poems set as continuous lines, indenting only for verse-paragraphs, the most interesting question is whether (first words of) lines have *initial* capitals. The practice is conventional, but unless a particular word is usually capitalised the only reason to supply

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[1] Now popular for band-names or places called *Ye Olde . . .*, black letter was standard in all printed books until *c.*1580, and is occasionally used in later poetry as a distinguishing fount : in the first edition of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, for example, the title was in black letter, in keeping with the terminal -e of "Childe".

[2] Diacritical marks modify letters. Though limited in English the following may be encountered : acute (née) and grave (changèd) accents, modifying vowels or marking stresses ; the circumflex (entrepôt), indicating omitted s ; the diaeresis (naïf), preventing a diphthong, or umlaut (Führer), altering Germanic vowels ; the cedilla (soupçon), softening c ; the *tittle* (frō), indicating omitted n or m, or *macron* (statūs), lengthening vowels ; the *tilde* (Señor), indicating palatalised n ; and the breve (drŏll = 'drol', not 'drowle'), shortening vowels. Other European languages use the caron (č), over- (ė) and under-dot (ą), over-ring (å), and ogonek (ę) ; classical Greek additionally uses the lenis (') and asper (').

[3] An *epigraph* (from Greek ʼεπι [epi], 'upon' + *γράφειν* [graphein], 'write') is a short motto, often a quotation, placed between title and text.

[4] Cf. *mise-en-scène*, material production of a playscript—casting, costumes, props, etc.

one is to reinforce lineation : helpful when first encountering poetry, usually redundant thereafter. Printers used to mark the <u>end</u> of every line as well, usually with a comma, whether or not one was needed : editors always remove these as obscuring sense, but often keep initial caps ; poets increasingly use caps only for words usually commanding one, or that they wish to emphasise. In stanzaic poems it is equally optional-conventional to indicate rhyme-schemes eisthetically : up to quatrains it's easy to see rhyme, and so common to set ekthetically ; with more complex stanzas indentation really helps, as in Keats's 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' (N938 ; text from 1820) :

> Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
>   Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
> Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
>   A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme :
> What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
>   Of deities or mortals, or of both,
>   In Tempe or the dales of Arcady ?
>   What men or gods are these ? What maidens loth ?
> What mad pursuit ? What struggle to escape ?
>   What pipes and timbrels ? What wild ecstasy ?

The *abab-cde-dce* rhyme-scheme is exactly reflected in the eisthesis, *a*- and *c*-lines unindented, *b*- and *d*-lines indented by one unit, and *e*-lines by two. You might expect every new rhyme to be more deeply indented, but even short poems would soon shuffle to the other margin, so indentation is usually reset as soon as any substructure is complete, here between the cross-rhymed quatrain (ll. 1–4) and interlocked tercets (ll. 5–10).

Sonnets, particularly Shakespearian, are a special case. Perhaps because unlinked cross-rhymed quatrains are easy to see and hear, it is usual to print Shakespearian douzaines ekthetically and couplets indented (as in 1609 and N257–69), but the *b*-lines of Petrarchan octaves (*abbaabba*) often are indented, and variations (such as the Sicilian *abababab*) visible at a glance. More radically, blank-lines between component quatrains and tercets (as in 'September Song') *display* substructures but may mask form (cf. 'exploded' diagrams), and general care is needed, for poets can deliberately use eisthesis <u>against</u> rhyme. Alert readers will have noticed that the layout of Keat's 'Ode on Melancholy' in the 1820 edition of *Lamia, Isabella* . . . (p. 68) does not reflect the shifting tercet-form, though many editors silently emend it to display the third-stanza variation. More systematically, Wilbur's

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arch-rhymed quatrains in 'A Baroque Wall-Fountain in the Villa Sciarra' (N1635) are set thus :

> Under the bronze crown
> Too big for the head of the stone cherub whose feet
> A serpent has begun to eat,
> Sweet water brims a cockle and braids down

The tensions of layout and rhyme make each stanza more ornate than if layout supported rhyme, evoking baroque decoration : presumably Wilbur's point, stanzaic complexity echoing the fountain's. Eisthesis may also (as here) distinguish line-length rather than rhyme, or when heterometrics and rhyme patterns coincide (as in common metre) both.

Medial capitalisation is more complex. It is *deictic* punctuation (p. 106), as are italicisation, small caps, expanded spacing, and other means of local emphasis ; any of these may be combined (as in the biblical 'L O R D'), and practices differ culturally, historically, and generically. In German the Convention is still to capitalise all Nouns ; in Britain the liberal use of caps dried up with the Enlightenment, and has never been restored despite Serious Romantic Efforts, though italic emphasis survives ; and dramatic verse is a special case, not least because in Shakespeare's First Folio and some other Jacobethan play-texts medial capitals suggest (and perhaps record) emphasis in delivery. Shakespearian editors, declaring Folio practice non-authorial and grammatically inconsistent, almost always reduce it to the conventional modern paucity of proper names and words after full-stops— but speak the Folio text of Mark Antony's "Friends, Romans, Country-men" (☞) and the coherent value for actors of its discriminating and viciously ironic capitalisation is plain.

Moreover, in E V E R Y CASE (and *face*, as word-processors make newly apparent in their facility to add caps or toggle faces on and off) deictic punctuation is an overlay, a textual hypersystem, and with intrinsic doubleness (word, F A C E) necessarily in play no emphasis can blindly be guaranteed free of interesting criticism (live up to the italics you *nominally* deserve) or instructive irony (oh I'll respect you, my *Lord*, to the italic letter). Even wholly conventional emphasis of titles and names can in its ubiquity become a window on a more authoritarian, scrupulous, and consistent world than our own (as drama-students familiar with status-games will appreciate). Ralph Crane, a scribe who prepared several Folio texts, offers one interesting lesson : his *hand* is identified partly by his observance of a particular Jacobethan convention editors

always remove, the parenthesisation of *vocatives*, spoken 'calls' of address like "(Sir)", "(Good Gentleman)", and "(*Paulina*)"—all from *The Winter's Tale*,[5] which excited Crane to 369 parentheses, far more than in any other F-text. Pedantic as he may seem, Crane rightly points readers first to the peremptory commands of (and frightened deference to) Leontes in tyrant-mode, then to the personal apologies he must tender ; the many vocatives are a distinctive feature that should be noted by readers, as (necessarily) by actors, about both of whom Crane thought more helpfully than editors allow. Marvell, equally, rarely retains the interlocking caps and italics of *Miscellaneous Poems* (1681), but why it should be thought helpful to remove either is beyond me ; consider two stanzas from 'The Definition of Love' (N480) explaining why his love is impossible :

<div align="center">

VI.

Unleſs the giddy Heaven fall,
And Earth some new Convulſion tear ;
And, us to joyn, the World should all
Be cramp'd into a *Planiſphere*.

VII.

As Lines ſo Loves *oblique* may well
Themſelves in every Angle greet :
But ours ſo truly *Paralel*,
Though infinite can never meet.

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One need not with this text be a mathematician to <u>see</u> that the italicised words are critical to the thought. Consulting the *OED* (or annotated editions), one discovers from Blundevil's *Exercises* (1594) that the "Aſtrolabe [. . .] is called of ſome a Planiſpheare, becauſe it is both flat and round, repreſenting the Globe or Spheare, having both his Poles clapt flat together" : the claim is that these lovers can meet only if the north pole kisses the south, as it may (short of apocalypse) only on paper. Stuck with a stubborn globe, Marvell suggests a comparison between meridians of longitude, which "*oblique* may well [/] Themſelves in every Angle greet" at each pole (✳), and the *Parallels* of latitude, "infinite" in their circularities that "can never meet" (☉). There is an arcane philosophical payoff under Plato's 'Third Man Rule',[6] in that intrinsically latitudinous lovers can never (if Platonically

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[5] F1, 'Comedies', 299 ; the italics of "(*Paulina*)" mark a proper name.
[6] Summarily, that universals may not be self-instantiating.

true to themselves) claim the latitude needed for them to meet, but the "*Planiſphere* [. . .] *Paralel*" is italicised for all to see. The roman caps matter less, but their patterning of Heaven-Earth-World and Lines-Loves-Angle is helpful, as all (and 'Convulſion') are for readers-aloud as cues to consider emphasis (or sustenance of tone etc.). Verse first published after 1800 (unless light, regional, or self-consciously *déclassé*) is <u>relatively</u> unlikely ever to have had much deictic punctuation of this kind, but if Shakespeare and Marvell can suffer so badly from editorial slash-and-burn approaches to *mise-en-page*, there are compelling reasons to read early texts (especially with the Web to facilitate access).

Stanza-numbering is a particular issue. In the *Miscellaneous Poems* it is applied to every non-dialogic stanzaic poem, whether in quatrains, sestets, or octets, more as an element of fine display on large pages than a reference system ; it is often retained for 'Upon Appleton House' because of that poem's length, but elsewhere discarded with other deictic punctuation. The matter seems simple, but has lately been very interestingly complicated by Jorie Graham in a group of six 'Self-Portraits' in *The End of Beauty*, in which irregular groups of lines (many single verses, some as long as sonnets) appear beneath Arabic numerals.[7] Helen Vendler has suggested Graham is not numbering lines (which Vendler thinks may be interrupted by a centred numeral on a line of its own), or even irregular stanzas, but has instead created a "long numbered pause" as part of a "sequestering of the pause".[8] The implications for punctuation and especially lineation are considerable (pp. 102, 174), and to read earlier work with the notion of numbered pauses rather than numbered stanzas in mind refreshes a convention that too often goes unheeded.

Another surprisingly consequential issue is whether lines are single-, double-, or more widely spaced, and how many lines are left blank between stanzas. The amount of a page left white is called the *leading*, because in metal type spaces between lines and stanzas are created by bars of lead.[9] Particularly between the early-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries (say, first editions, Gay to Browning) there was an age of great printing in England : some masterpieces—the joke-pages in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, the engraved poems of Blake—are acknow-

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[7] 'Self-Portrait as the Gesture between Them', '. . . as Both Parties', '. . . as Apollo and Daphne', '. . . as Hurry and Delay', '. . . as Demeter and Persephone', and 'Pollock and Canvas', in *The End of Beauty* (New York: Ecco Press, 1987).

[8] Vendler, *Breaking of Style*, 82, 84.

[9] Larger spaces are usually created with wooden blocks, for which the collective term is 'type-furniture'. Computers have made the technique of leading obsolete, but the word is still used.

ledged, though accurate reproductions of their *mises-en-page* are rare. In an age of great printing ordinary books may also be printed very intelligently, and a characteristic feature of most *Augustan* to *Victorian* first-edition poetry is heavy leading, lines double (or wider) spaced, pages elegantly clear to read ; in cheaply bound modern paperbacks with as much text as possible on each page to keep production-costs down, such *mises-en-page* are distant memories. Better inelegant books than no text, and the cheaper the better—but this cheapness costs. Byron's *Don Juan*, for example, was first printed with two stanzas per page ; Penguin print four, the *Norton* (though it includes only a fraction of the poem) four to five, regularly splitting stanzas between pages (N837–62). In looking up a line or two it makes no odds ; if you read nearly 2,000 stanzas cumulative difference is considerable. Reading *Don Juan* in the six-volume first edition (smelling calfskin, feeling each thick page, every stanza spaciously pl/easing the eyes) discovers a more leisurely, considered poem than reading the commercially cramped Penguin text, where constricted economy makes it seem rattlingly comic, less capable of moving seriously[10] : it's cheaper, so more people can afford it, but readers pay a price. Nor is *Don Juan*, however substantial, an extreme case : modern protocols of editing have until very recently ruthlessly depriviled *mise-en-page*, even when authorial, and rarely acknowledge its loss ; the more fool they, the 'mere layout' they think to discard being only a beginning of what poets do with *mise-en-page* and materialities of text.

In free verse without patterns of rhyme or line-length to display, layout is promoted to carry meaning and nuance it may subjectively express but cannot always communicate. Glancing through the post-1900 pages of the *Norton* one finds many such experiments, including those of Olson, Levertov, and Ammons (N1511, 1677, 1695). Such idiosyncracy puts many (less experienced) readers off, though comic instances may become beloved : cummings's 'r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r', where 'grasshopper' hops about as "PPEGORHRASS" and "gRrEaPsPhOs" until achieving its proper order, or Enright's 'The Typewriter Revolution', imitating a typewritten (not printed) document. Generalisation is unhelpful, a poet's particular strategy demanding particular attention ; all, however, owe Eliot's *The Waste Land* (and Pound's *Cantos*) for

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[10] In the same way reading the Bible in an old lectern-bible in church and a modern pocket-paperback are not the same experience : for one you need a table or lectern, will handle pages differently, see headings printed in red, etc. ; to damage such a book would take effort, but small paperbacks may be casually used and maltreated.

legitimising non-standard layout as a central strategy of Modernism, and sections of parts II ("My nerves are bad tonight", N1347) and III ("The river sweats [/] Oil and tar", N1351), where Eliot aggressively displays one-sided conversation and dirges, are as good a guide to what follows as anything. The evolving layout can be seen in the facsimile *drafts* and *typescripts* (TSS) of *The Waste Land*, Eliot's continuing uses of it in 'Coriolan', 'Choruses from "The Rock" ', and 'The Hollow Men' (N1356).[11]

Although the case has never been substantively made for poetry, as it almost has for prose,[12] the impact and idiosyncrasies of typewriters are worth pondering generally. They were certainly agents of Modernism : for Eliot, as for many, production of a typed text was an important stage, and his expression of layout had to use the keys available on a manual typewriter with ratcheted (hence quantised) spacing. cummings is clearly a typewriter-poet, and W. C. Williams's progressively indenting tercet (p. 42), another influential Modernist layout, is also indebted, I suspect, to preset mechanical tabs or a round number of spaces, easy to iterate. The constraints of typewritten and printed pages are different, but close enough that typewriterly features pass readily into print, acquiring authority, influence, and disguise as they go—the running joke of Don Marquis's 'archy' poems, typed by a "vers libre bard" reincarnated as a cockroach and so unable to work the shift-key. In amateur verse (and widely in prose) the TS is tied also to carbon-paper and various kinds of stencil-duplication, and there are similar links in the 1960s–1980s between golfball-, daisywheel, or dot-matrix printing and the photocopier ; at a professional level, for poets like Iain Sinclair (in *Lud Heat*, 1975, and *Suicide Bridge*, 1979) and Peter Reading (in *Ukelele Music*, 1985, the ironic *Stet*, 1986, and *Perduta Gente*, 1989) the available/affordable distinguishing faces (caps, bold, italic) became a constant 'typoetic' grammar. Word-processing has broadened the picture enormously, but is no simple liberation : in standard w.p. packages spacing remains quantised, fine printing of poetry (as for *broadsheet* poster-editions) is still often metal-set (or silkscreened), and poets who enthusiastically deploy

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[11] cummings, *Complete Poems 1913–1962* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972) ; Enright, *Collected Poems, 1948–98* (Oxford: OUP, 1998) ; Eliot, *The Waste Land: A Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts, Including the Annotations of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber, 1971) and *Complete Poems and Plays* (London: Faber, 1969) ; see also Leunard, *But I Digress*, plate 8, pp. 200–1.

[12] See Leon Edel, 'A Fierce Legibility', in *The Life of Henry James* (2 vols, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), and Wilfred A. Beeching, *Century of the Typewriter* (1974; Bournemouth: British Typewriter Museum Publishing, 1990).

multi-variant *mise-en-page* may find publishers less keen. Michael Horovitz's 'A Postcard from Ireland (sound-poem score for contraction or extension with improvised or illegible noises)' (1966) was unpublished for twenty-three years and uncollected for twenty-eight, while Brathwaite more or less had to publish *Barabajan Poems 1492–1992* himself.[13] One consequence of the Web, however, is to make available founts once restricted to fine metal pages, and type-designers like Herman Zapf and Sumner Stone have already produced screen-founts to ponder.[14]

Looking back, the typewriterly (post-)Modernist line descending particularly from Eliot is revealed as only a spur from a broader and much older tradition. Even layouts that seem to us self-evident are culturally acquired and transmitted, and to confront MSS and older editions is an education in the variety of what poets, scribes, and printers can do. At the same time certain possibilities are clear : columnar formats, for example, when not simply an economic response to short lines (as with Bishop's 'Jerónimo's House'), have always been able to ask questions about order of reading, as they do in Pollard's 'Harriman Revisited'. An anonymous poem of *c.*1600 begins :

I hold as faythe	What Englands Church allowes
What Romes church saith	My conscience disavowes

Here the use (if not purpose) of equivocal readings in line ($\rightrightarrows$) and in column ($\downarrow\downarrow$) is politically plain, but the possibility is always there with columns, and in medieval MSS there are many such oddities ; 'Hir face, Hir tong, Hir wit', published anonymously in *The Phoenix Nest* (1593) and attributed to Ralegh, has three columns and makes clever sense in all of them. Such poems are not so different in their spacious pleasures from, say, Figueroa's 'Spring has Come', in which six dimetric octets with rotating burdens are printed in two rows of two above and below two in centred single column (2/1/1/2)—a cheerful

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[13] Marquis, published in newspapers 1916–*c.*1939, and collected as *archy and mehitabel* (1927), *archy's life of mehitabel* (1934), *The Complete archy and mehitabel* (London: Faber, 1998), *archyology* and *archyology II* (Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 1996, 2000) ; Sinclair, now published jointly (London: Vintage, 1995) ; Reading, all in *Collected Poems 2: Poems 1985–1996* (Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 1996) ; 'Stet' (Latin, 'let it stand') is an instruction by a corrector to ignore his or her correction ; Horovitz, *Wordsounds and Sightlines: New and Selected Poems* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1994) ; Brathwaite, Kingston and New York : Savacou North, 1994.

[14] Sebastian Carter, *Twentieth Century Type Designers* (1987; new edn, New York: Norton, 1995).

embodiment of cyclicality and interchange that looks like a fat capital 'I'.[15]

Looks like, yes, but is <u>meant</u> to resemble ? In Figueroa's case I doubt it, but in *shape-poetry*, pictorial and verbal representation fuse. The Greeks called shape-poems *technopaignia*, 'games of artifice', the Romans *carmina figurata*, 'figure-poems', crude modernity *concrete poems* ; whichever you prefer they demand attention. Please find the *Norton* and consider for a moment <u>both</u> its texts of the most famous English example, Herbert's 'Eaſter Wings' (N368–9); then turn to the illustrations over*leaf*, which show the poem as it appears in the Jones *manuscript* (MS),[16] and in the first edition of *The Temple. Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations* (Cambridge: Buck and Daniel, 1633), 34–5.

The corrections to the Jones MS are probably authorial, but the primary hand isn't, so the 'choice' of horizontal layout need not be Herbert's ; moreover, in the licensing-copy for *The Temple* (Bodleian Library MS Tanner 307) both (parts of the) poem/s are also laid out horizontally. But the striking vertical layout in 1633 remains, not something any printer (let alone the official printers to Cambridge University) would do casually, and in metal time-consuming to achieve ; so much so that in the first six Cambridge editions of *The Temple* (1633a, 1633b, 1634, 1635, 1638, 1641), each (as usual) otherwise wholly reset in type, the texts of 'Eaſter Wings' are <u>identical</u>, printed from blocks of type created in 1633, permanently fixed together, and stored in Buck's and Daniel's print-shop for at least eight years—to my knowledge the only such retention of set type over an extended period that can be demonstrated.[17] Vertical *setting* was retained (with increasing variation) into the nineteenth century, but as 'professional' editing took hold was abandoned for horizontal setting with all 20 lines of the 1633 *opening* (two *facing* pages, *recto* and *verso*) under one title ; as late as its 3rd edition (1983), the *Norton* printed 'Eaſter Wings' thus, but from the 4th (1996) printed horizontal and vertical versions—a better solution, but still an editorial shrug of the shoulders.

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[15] Bishop, *Complete Poems* ; Pollard, *Shame trees don't grow here . . . but poincianas bloom* (Leeds: Peepal Tree, 1992) ; Anon., Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC, MS V.a.198, fol. 14r (for a full text see Lennard, *But I Digress*, 266–7, or ✍) ; Ralegh, *Poems* (London: RKP, 1951 [Muses' Library]) ; Figueroa, *The Chase: a collection of poems 1941–1989* (Leeds: Peepal Tree, 1992).

[16] MS Jones B 62, Dr Williams's Library, Gordon Square, London ; with whose permission it is reproduced.

[17] My source for all 'Eaſter Wings' material is Random Cloud, 'FIAT *f*LUX', in R. M. Leod, ed., *Crisis in Editing: Texts of the English Renaissance* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1994), 61–172, which includes a stunning rogues' gallery of 18 editions spanning 1838–1978.
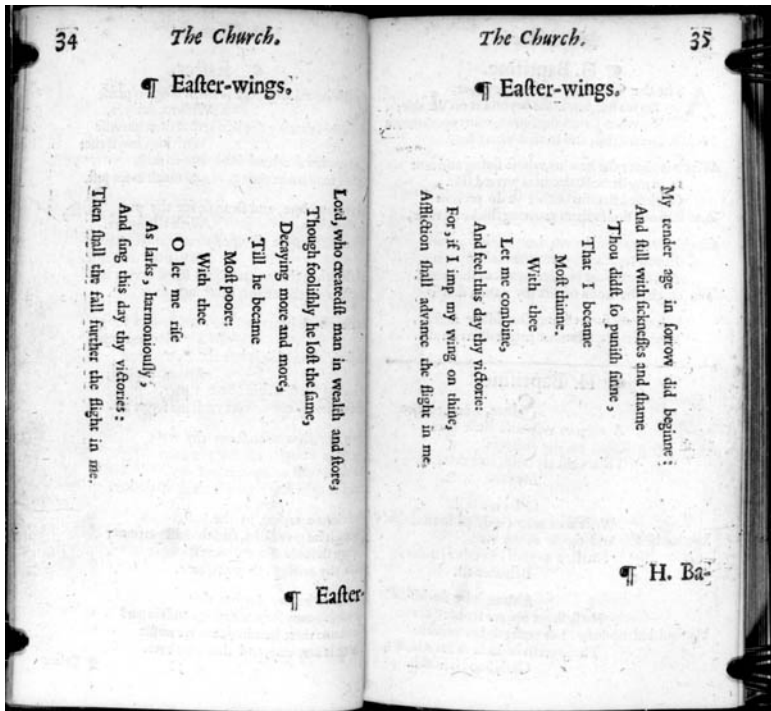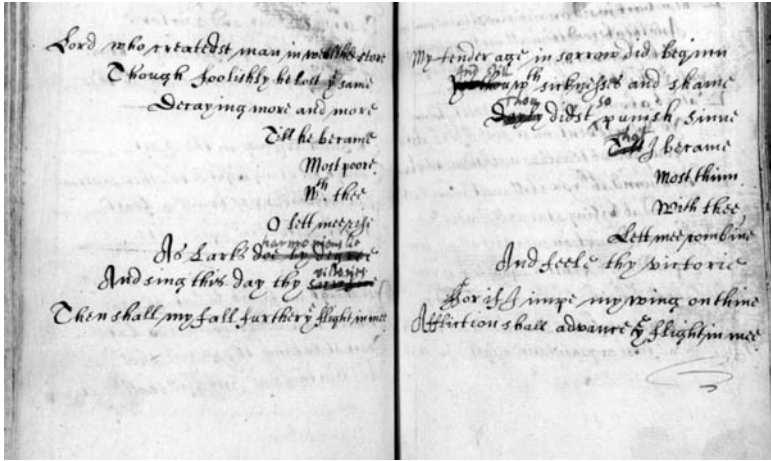
Manuscript of George Herbert's 'Easter Wings' (MS. Jones B 62).
Reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of Dr Williams's Library.

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The exact *authority* (author-ity) of 1633 is uncertain : the deathbed *autograph* MS on which it is supposedly based is lost, and the relative authority of the Tanner and Jones MSS insusceptible of proof. At the same time, there was no need to set vertically (measure the lines and page-width), and that the 1633 setting happened without the direction or agreement of Nicholas Ferrar (who supposedly received the death-bed MS and certainly arranged the publication of 1633) is incredible. It might be a private notion of Ferrar's, but it was he to whom Herbert sent his unpublished poems, and editors are in general happy enough with 1633 as *copy-text*. However understandably, they balk only with 'Easter Wings', where layout matters most, and it won't do.

Both MSS and 1633 insist there are two poems called 'Eaſter Wings' ; 1633 marks both titles with the *paraph* or *pilcrow* (¶) whereby it dis-tinguishes elements among its contents, and the *catchword* on p. 34 (isolated lower-right but in my photograph partly lost in the *gutter*), helpfully informing readers(-aloud) of what begins the next page, is "Eaſter". Implicitly, the reading-procedure in 1633 is to see both shapes before you read any words, and between the pages/wings the spine of the book ; then, beginning p. 34, to read the (first) title, rotate the book 90° left, read the vertical lines on that page, rotate 90° right, read the catchword on p. 34 and then the (second) title on p. 35, rotate 90° left, read the second set of vertical lines, rotate 90° right, and via the catch-word on p. 35 proceed to the next poem, 'H[oly]. Ba-[ptiſme]', on p. 36. Were 'Eaſter Wings' a single 20-line poem it would in 1633 presumably begin at the 'top' (i.e. right margin) of p. 35 and proceed to the 'bottom' (left margin) of p. 34, with the invocatory "Lord . . ." in its eleventh (not first) line—a delightfully il/logical procedure which 1633 invites, as having once rotated the (small) book 90° left it is very hard (try it!) to imagine anyone not clocking the possibility.

Intentionally or otherwise, 1633 as prime authority, however post-humous, creates uncertainty about how many poems there are, prob-lematises reading ll. 1–20 or 1–10 + 1–10, and provokes a host of shapely questions. The *Norton*, alas, mostly confuses, despite trying to better itself by adding a cropped, gutterless photoquotation of pp. 34–5 of 1633 to its 'normal' text, which is derived from Hutchinson's 1941 Clarendon edition and reproduces the different, more symmetrical x-shape/s Hutchinson gave the poem/s.[18] Herbert borrowed his wing-shape from 'Pterygion' (attributed to Simmias of Rhodes, fl. *c.* 275 BCE), printed vertically in at least one edition of *The Greek Anthology* to which

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[18] *The Works of George Herbert* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941).

he had access[19] ; inadvertently, Hutchinson's (and the *Norton*'s) horizontal setting imposes a different shape also used by Simmias, a double-axe-head Herbert also saw and did <u>not</u> borrow. Worse still, the *Norton*'s footnote—"we reproduce the poem almost as it was first published. The stanzas were printed on two pages and arranged to suggest two birds flying upward, wings outspread"—is so misleading and presumptuous one is grateful it doesn't venture to identify an avian species.

What Herbert (or possibly Farrar) was doing was to take his own metaphors visually and literally. A deeply religious man, the dedicatee of Bacon's *Translations of Certain Psalmes* in 1625 and ordained in 1630, Herbert's poems are prayers, offered in *The Temple* ; his book is its own material metaphor for a building dedicated to worship, specifically the beautiful church at Little Gidding (⌂). Entering The *Temple* the reader passes through 'The Church-porch' (comprising 'Perirrhanterium', for sprinkling holy-water before entering, and 'Superliminare', the lintel over the church-door), into 'The Church' (a *running-head* is visible on both pages of the Jones MS and of 1633). In 'The Church' readers see first (looking straight up the aisle, a poem shaped as) 'The Altar' (N367), and about 160 more poetic devotions, including groups dedicated to material structures ('Church-monuments', 'Church-lock and key', 'The Church-floore', 'The Windows' [N373]), the liturgical round ('Good Friday', 'Eaſter', 'Whitſunday', 'Trinity Sunday', 'Chriſtmas', 'Lent'), and particular concepts ('Nature', 'Sinne', 'Affliction', 'Repentance', 'Faith', 'Prayer' [N369–72]). And a little way in is (a/poem/s shaped as) 'Eaſter-wings' (for my money attached, if anywhere, to an intercessant angel sharing *The Temple*'s spine) to carry heavenwards prayers of and for that resurrection of the "Most thinne", "Most poore" body that devout Christians expect. Far from a dangerous oddity to be removed, the extraordinary 1633 layout of what I shall (with Gollum) now call 'Eaſter Wingſes' is an integral part of Herbert's sacred work.

The pictures made by shape-poems are schematic, lacking visual perspective, and subordinate to their constituent words $\left(\frac{\text{WORDS}}{\text{picture}}\right)$; in the early-seventeenth century, when Herbert was writing, a parallel form, the *emblem*, balanced drawing and writing more evenly $\left(\frac{\text{PICTURE}}{\text{WORDS}}\right)$.[20] Emblems explicitly matched an illustration, usually a woodcut, with a poem on the same subject, often moral or political ; collections in

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[19] *Heroici Poetae Graeci* (Geneva: Fugger, 1556), then in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, where Herbert was a fellow.

[20] The whole Renaissance was characterised by intense interest in the visual, including major areas of culture (handwriting, printing, political imagery) and minor but intriguing oddities (pictures in false or mirror perspective, decorated page-borders).

emblem books were popular but fell out of use after the Civil War.[21] At the other extreme, where a motto is subordinate to a picture, often symbolic, ($\frac{\text{PICTURE}}{\text{words}}$), are coats-of-arms, sentimentally moral Victorian pictures with pointed titles ('Too Late!'), and forms like posters, printed advertisements, and charity T-shirts. When Picasso and Braque began to paint or collage words into paintings many thought it a radical feature of Cubist technique, but both were working in an old tradition.

There has recently been intensive development of the graphic novel : another story, but an exception must be made. Some poems attract illustrators ; there are in particular editions of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, from David Scott's (1837) to those by Doré (1876), Peake (1949, 1978), and Garrick Palmer (1994), with interesting lessons to offer : where Doré chose to create 42 plates, Peake settled for 8, while the Folio Society edition of Palmer fascinatingly uses light-blue paper, starkening Palmer's woodcuts and inducing a perceptible chill. Hunt Emerson (1989) outdid them all, distributing Coleridge's text into captions and speech-bubbles in a full-length graphic poem-as-novel. His decisions about freehand layout are often *de facto* very impressive critical analysis, as are Martin Rowson's in his graphic *The Waste Land* (1989), and to a lesser extent Art Spiegelman's in his illustrated edition (1994) of March's *The Wild Party* (1926), and Michael C. Caine's in his broadsheet of Harrison's 'The Fire Gap'. The brilliance of these editions is the work of the artists, but they open a new chapter in the history of poetic *mise-en-page*.[22]

In one respect they are <u>un</u>happily typical, taken by those who haven't read them as comic/s and <u>therefore</u> lightweight. Emerson is funny, and in mocking any claims the *Rime* has to tragedy genuinely comedic, but levity and gravity may coexist ; the real point, underpinned by editorial treatment of Herbert, is that in Anglophone letters the graphic is typically associated with juvenile simplicity, and shape-poetry (or anything resembling it) thought an unimportant-because-amusing game—a situation not helped by the best-known examples after Herbert, Carroll's 'Fury Said to a Mouse' and mirror-stanza, written for children. But 'Easter Wingses' are as serious as Herbert's hopes for his immortal soul, and committed shape-poets, like Riddell,

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21 The best known was *Emblems* (1635), by Francis Quarles (1592–1644).
22 Scott, Edinburgh: Hill, 1837 ; Doré, London: Doré Gallery, 1876 ; Peake, London: Chatto and Windus, 1949, 1978 ; Palmer, London: Folio Society, 1994. Peake 1949 omitted a plate (Life-in-Death) restored in 1978. See Woof and Hebron, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner: The Poem and its Illustrators* (Dove Cottage: Wordsworth Trust, 1997). Emerson, London: Knockabout Comics, 1989 ; Rowson, New York: Harper and Row, 1990 ; Spiegelman, New York: Pantheon, 1994 ; Caine, Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 1985.

Swenson, the great John Hollander (N1775), and Manuel Portela (also the Portuguese translator of Blake and Sterne) are more like Herbert than Carroll. Even occasional shape-poems, like Senior's dedicatory gourd-shaped 'Gourd', readily rattle with significance ('calabash', the usual Jamaican term for bottle-gourd trees, is the press that first published Senior and an arts festival). Even those who simply use *mise-en-page* intensely tend to be serious, as Eliot was.[23] cummings, rightly celebrated as a lyric poet, was also tragic and satiric, and deployed typography in all three modes, as his *Complete Poems* shows. Snodgrass, in *The Fuehrer Bunker*, used layout to distinguish monologists : Himmler, obsessed with occult codes, writes grid-poems of 25, 50, or 75 lines, each 30 characters long, arranged in pentains, the initial letters of lines running *abecedarially* (A–Z) once, twice, or thrice per poem ; Speer, trained in architecture, writes stanzas with each line longer or shorter than the last, forming with every 11 lines right-angled triangles that combine in trapezoid shapes and individually embody diminutions into silence and cascadings into speech profoundly typical of Speer (the only senior Nazi to plead guilty at Nuremberg who yet always denied any prior knowledge of his part in the *Sho'ah*—and a man Snodgrass had met).[24] And there is always the simple, demanding occasion, as for Christopher Logue when Homer's Patroclus was mightily berserking outside Troy but :

> Coming behind you through the dust you felt
> —What was it?—felt creation part, and then
>
> > [----------------page-turn 29/30]

APOLLO!

> > Who had been patient with you
> >
> > > [----------------page-turn 31/32]

> Struck.

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[23] Riddell, *Eclipse: Concrete Poems* (London: Calder and Boyars, 1972) ; Swenson, *Iconographs* (New York: Scribners, 1970) and *The Complete Poems to Solve* (New York: Macmillan, 1993) ; Hollander, *Types of Shape* ; Portela self-published *Cras! Bang! Boom! Clang!* (1991), *Pixel, Pixel* (1992), and *Rimas Fodidas e Outros Textos Escolares* (1994) ; his *Cantigas de Inocencia and da Experiencia* (Lisbon: Antigona, 1994), *Uma Ilha na Lua* (Antigona, 1996), and *A Vida e Opinioes de Tristram Shandy* (Antigona, 1997–8) are 'graphic translations' ; Senior, *Gardening in the Tropics* (Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 1995), p.vii.

[24] See Gitta Sereny, *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* (London: Macmillan, 1995), or Edgar's dramatisation, *Albert Speer* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2000).

Layout

> His Hand came from the east,
> And in his wrist lay all eternity;
> And every atom of his mythic weight
> Was poised between his fist and bent left leg.
> Your eyes lurched out. Achilles' helmet rang[25]

—as well they might when the Mouse God comes calling in such wise. To embody a fatally overwhelming divine presence in letters so big that six + *screamer* (!) fill an entire opening is a simple trick, as booming the name is if reading this episode aloud—but both <u>work</u> just fine. Shape-poetry is a sort of game, and fun—but not necessarily funny, and you can never be sure a layout is inertly standard, even if it looks it, until you check for yourself.[26]

Finally, two distinct suggestions. The most enjoyable and best way to learn the ins and outs of line-layout is in practice. Word-processors allow experiment with different founts and leading ; better still, do some hand-press printing, learning to *compose* (set letters and interword spaces) and *impose* (put pages of type on the press) with cold-metal type. Various institutions offer courses in(cluding) hand-presswork, and the opportunity is worth seizing. When <u>you</u> are responsible for <u>every</u> letter <u>and space</u>, and overall balance, the importance of layout becomes clearer than reading can ever make it. Theory also helps : the editorial follies I upbraid arise from a particular theory of text distinguishing substantives ('intentional' words) from accidentals (unavoidable but irrelevant *mise-en-page*), promulgated by Sir Walter Greg in dealing with Shakespearian quartos but as Platonically unworkable as essentialist genre-theory (p. 65). A much more sensible theorisation by Jerome McGann distinguishes *lexical codes* ('text') from *bibliographical codes* (*mise-en-page* + all material issues of paper, binding, etc.), and his *Critique of Modern Textual Bibliography* (1983) is seriously worth understanding.

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25 *War Music* (1981 ; London: Faber, 1988), 29–32 ; page-numbers 30 + 31 are omitted.

26 Shaped layouts also occur in prose, extraordinarily so in Alasdair Gray's *1982 Janine* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), 177–90. The text develops over several pages multiple columns which widen, narrow, and collide, representing the fracturing mind of a man attempting suicide by overdose ; blank pages represent sleep. Gray designs himself, and *Poor Things* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993) is (among much else) a compendium of layouts.