Chapter 13

THE CAVENDISHES AND THEIR POETRY

Hero Chalmers

THE RICH SEAM of Cavendish family poetry exists in the form of manuscript writings by William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle, and his daughters Jane and Elizabeth, as well as in printed volumes by his second wife, Margaret (Jane and Elizabeth's stepmother). Jane and Elizabeth's verse originally appears in what Alexandra Bennett refers to as "two handsomely bound, presentation-style manuscript volumes" in the hand of their father's secretary, John Rolleston. Internal references suggest that the contents of both were mostly composed in the mid-1640s.[1] The earlier of the two manuscripts, held in the Beinecke Library, presents the poems along with *A Pastorall*; the later one, held in the Bodleian Library, adds eight more poems and a further drama, *The concealed Fansyes*.[2] British Library, MS Additional 32497 consists chiefly of poems written by William to Margaret during their courtship (which began after they met in April 1645) and shortly after their marriage some time before December 20, 1645.[3] The courtship poems—mostly transcribed by a secretary but with evidence of William's intervention—are printed by Douglas Grant in his edited collection, *The Phanseys of William Cavendish* (1956).[4] Meanwhile, several manuscripts in the Portland Collection at the University of Nottingham contain "scribal copies and authorial drafts" of verse by William ranging

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1 Jane Cavendish, *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, ed. Alexandra G. Bennett (London: Routledge, 2018), 14. See also Jill Seal Millman and Gillian Wright, ed., *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Poetry* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 87. Whereas Bennett and others argue for Jane's sole authorship of the poems in these manuscripts, the present chapter is guided by Sara Mueller's full and persuasive case against restricting attribution to Jane alone; see Chapter 12 of this book. While Mueller's careful analysis and comparison of the manuscripts leads her to conclude that no decisive judgment can be made as to whether both Jane and Elizabeth wrote the poems, I have chosen to refer to them as being by both poets in order to reflect what Mueller calls "the manuscripts' heterogeneous presentation of authorship."

2 *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 15. The two manuscripts are Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Osborn Collection MS b.233 and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS Poet. 16 respectively.

3 Douglas Grant, ed. *The Phanseys of William Cavendish Marquis of Newcastle Addressed to Margaret Lucas and Her Letters in Reply* (London: Nonesuch, 1956), xxx; Katie Whitaker, *Mad Madge: Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, Royalist, Writer and Romantic* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2003), 64, 75, 376n31. Grant considers that the latest poem in this manuscript probably dates from 1647; see Grant, *The Phanseys of William Cavendish*, xxxi.

4 For the handwriting in this manuscript, see Grant, *The Phanseys of William Cavendish*, xxx.

from the Caroline period to shortly before his death in 1676.[5] Lynn Hulse prints various of these poems with a connection to William's dramatic writing.[6] Finally, Margaret's verse appears chiefly in her first printed work, *Poems, and Fancies* (1653), although *Philosophical Fancies* (1653), which she had intended to publish as a companion volume, contains a few poems.[7] Liza Blake's digital critical edition of *Poems, and Fancies* offers a full collation across the 1653 edition and the two subsequent editions of 1664 and 1668 with full textual notes.[8] Meanwhile, Brandie Siegfried's modern-spelling, scholarly edition of *Poems, and Fancies* takes as its copy-text Cavendish's revised edition of 1668.[9]

Precise evidence of Cavendish family members having read each other's verse is sometimes elusive. Sarah Ross shows how certain aspects of Jane and Elizabeth's manuscripts—for example, their poems to members of the royal family or their devotional verse—closely track motifs in their father's writing.[10] Conversely, Kate Chedgzoy speculates that "literary influence within the Cavendish family's culture of textual production could flow in multiple directions," citing in particular the apparent impact of Jane and Elizabeth's *Pastorall* on their father's writings.[11] Margaret certainly received William's courtship poems and acknowledged them in her letters, and Marion Wynne-Davies traces the evolving sexual dynamics of their familial discourse.[12] Katie Whitaker considers that Jane is likely to have met Margaret when the latter returned to London

5 Lynn Hulse, ed. *Dramatic Works by William Cavendish* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), xviii. See University of Nottingham, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Portland MSS Pw V 24, 25, 26. For the dating of poems in each of these manuscripts, see Hulse, *Dramatic Works by William Cavendish*, xviii, xix.

6 See Hulse, *Dramatic Works by William Cavendish*, nos. 1–5, 6, 7–8, 9–11.

7 For her intention to print the two works together, see Margaret Cavendish, *Philosophical Fancies* (London, 1653), 10. Elizabeth Scott-Baumann, *Forms of Engagement: Women, Poetry and Culture 1640–1680* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 56–57, discusses some of the poems from *Philosophical Fancies* in her analysis of Margaret's poetic fusions of blazons and recipes. (For a further consideration of the use of blazons in *Poems, and Fancies*, see Jennifer Low, "Surface and Interiority: Self-Creation in Margaret Cavendish's 'The Claspe,'" *Philological Quarterly* 77 (1998): 149–69.) For a detailed analysis of the stylistic changes made by Margaret in the second edition of *Poems, and Fancies* (London, 1664), see Scott-Baumann, 62–66.

8 Liza Blake, ed., *Margaret Cavendish's Poems and Fancies: A Digital Critical Edition*, http://library2.utm.utoronto.ca/poemsandfancies.

9 Margaret Cavendish, *Poems and Fancies with The Animal Parliament*, ed. Brandie R. Siegfried (Toronto: Iter, 2018), 51. For a discussion of Cavendish's revisions in the second and third editions (1664, 1668), see 15–17.

10 Sarah Ross, *Women, Poetry, and Politics in Seventeenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 100–34.

11 Kate Chedgzoy, "Cavalier and She-Majesty: The Cultural Politics of Gender in Jane Cavendish's Poetry," *The Seventeenth Century* 32 (2017): 393–412 at 404.

12 Grant prints Margaret's letters replying to William's poems in *The Phanseys of William Cavendish*, 97–119. Marion Wynne-Davies, *Women Writers and Familial Discourse in the English Renaissance* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), chap. 7. See also James Fitzmaurice, "The Intellectual and

from Antwerp during the period 1651–1653, but we have no conclusive evidence that Jane and Elizabeth's poems and plays were read by their father and stepmother.[13] Nevertheless, in reading verses by Jane, Elizabeth, William, and Margaret alongside each other, this chapter traces fresh resemblances that argue for a shared web of influences, including the possibility that Margaret was responding directly to Jane and Elizabeth's manuscript verse and certainly reading her husband's poems in ways which have hitherto gone unnoticed.

As Ross has persuasively shown, the politics of Cavendish family manuscript poetry is bound up with "a culture of elite *poetic* sociality … It manifestly *does coterie work* … Writing to and through her father, [Jane] … adopts and adapts the apparently modest genres of occasional and coterie poetic culture, and the sociality integral to those lyric modes, in order to articulate her allegiance to the royalist cause."[14] Like Burke and Coolahan, Ross regards Margaret's participation in the "print professionalization of the writer" as utterly distinct from the conventions of manuscript poetry adopted by Jane, Elizabeth, and William.[15] There are certainly a number of features peculiar to Margaret's printed verse which have merited critical attention in their own right: Margaret's striking self-presentation as a debut author in *Poems, and Fancies*, her network of literary influences, the volume's adumbration of her theories of natural philosophy, and its experimentation with oppositional politics.[16] Yet for all the features which set *Poems, and Fancies* apart from the manuscript verse of Jane, Elizabeth, and William which precedes

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Literary Courtship of Margaret Cavendish," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 14 (2004): 7.1–16, http://purl.oclc.org/emls/si-14/fitzinte.html; Whitaker, *Mad Madge*, 78–79.

13 Whitaker, *Mad Madge*, 139. Ross, *Women, Poetry, and Politics*, 132, states that "it is not known whether … [Jane's] poems reached her father in exile" but explores traces of their possible wider circulation, 134.

14 Ross, *Women, Poetry, and Politics*, 102–4. See also Ross, "Coteries, Circles, Networks: The Cavendish Circle and Civil War Women's Writing," in *A History of Early Modern Women's Writing*, ed. Patricia Phillippy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 332–47.

15 Victoria E. Burke and Marie-Louise Coolahan, "The Literary Contexts of William Cavendish," in *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Nottinghamshire*, ed. Martyn Bennett (Lewiston: Mellen, 2005), 115–41, 130; Ross, *Women, Poetry, and Politics*, 106.

16 For Margaret's self-presentation as author, see Hero Chalmers, *Royalist Women Writers, 1650–1689* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), chap. 1; Randall Ingram, "Margaret Cavendish, Humphrey Moseley, and 'the Book,' " *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 30 (2000): 101–24; Tina Skouen, "Margaret Cavendish and the Stigma of Haste," *Studies in Philology* 111 (2014): 547–70; Elaine Walker, "Longing for Ambrosia: Margaret Cavendish and the Torment of a Restless Mind in 'Poems, and Fancies' (1653)," *Women's Writing* 4 (1997): 341–51; Susan Wiseman, "Women's Poetry," in *The Cambridge Companion to Writing of the English Revolution*, ed. N. H. Keeble (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 127–47, 131. For literary influences, see Cavendish, *Poems and Fancies with The Animal Parliament*, 17–22; Hero Chalmers, " 'Flattering Division': Margaret Cavendish's Poetics of Variety," in *Authorial Conquests: Essays on Genre in the Writings of Margaret Cavendish*, ed. Line Cottegnies and Nancy Weitz (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2003), 123–44, 133–34, 137–38; Lara Dodds, *The Literary Invention of Margaret*

it, this chapter contends that Margaret's poems, like theirs, contribute to the task of textually reconstituting Royalist networks disbanded by the Civil War and Interregnum. Beyond this, I argue that her volume shares with Jane, Elizabeth, and William's verse a deliberate presentation of the tension between efforts to maintain a sense of a cohesive Royalist community or culture and the inevitable consciousness of its disintegration. In focusing on the manner in which all three poets embed notions of rupture and trauma associated with Royalist experience during the 1640s and 1650s, I build on recent critical attention paid to the ways in which Jane, Elizabeth, and William's poems all constitute affective responses to their historical moment.[17] By reading Margaret's poems alongside those of Jane, Elizabeth, and William, I discern a common poetics of loss articulated through tropes which recur across both their manuscript and printed verse.

Cavendish (Pittsburgh: Dusquesne University Press, 2013), chaps. 2 and 3; Scott-Baumann, *Forms of Engagement*, 53–57; Tanya Caroline Wood, "Borrowing Ralegh's Mantle," *Notes and Queries* 47 (2000): 183–85. For *Poems, and Fancies* as a work of natural philosophy, see Anna Battigelli, *Margaret Cavendish and the Exiles of the Mind* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1998), chap. 3; Roberto Bertuol, "The Square Circle of Margaret Cavendish: The Seventeenth-Century Conceptualization of Mind by Means of Mathematics," *Language and Literature* 10 (2001): 21–39; Deborah Boyle, *The Well-Ordered Universe: The Philosophy of Margaret Cavendish* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), chap. 2; Cavendish, *Poems and Fancies with The Animal Parliament*, 22–45; Stephen Clucas, "The Atomism of the Cavendish Circle: A Reappraisal," *The Seventeenth Century* 9 (1994): 247–73; Stephen Hequembourg, "The Poetics of Materialism in Cavendish and Milton," *Studies in English Literature* 54 (2014): 173–92 at 175–76; Bronwen Price, "Feminine Modes of Knowing and Scientific Enquiry," in *Women and Literature in Early Modern Britain*, ed. Helen Wilcox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 117–39; Emma Rees, *Margaret Cavendish: Gender, Genre and Exile* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), chap. 2; Lisa T. Sarasohn, *The Natural Philosophy of Margaret Cavendish: Reason and Fancy during the Scientific Revolution* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), chap. 2; Lisa T. Sarasohn, "A Science Turned Upside Down: Feminism and the Natural Philosophy of Margaret Cavendish," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 47 (1984): 289–307 at 290–1, 296–97; Jay Stevenson, "The Mechanist-Vitalist Soul of Margaret Cavendish," *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 36 (1996): 527–43 at 530–35; Lisa Walters, " 'Not Subject to Our Sense': Margaret Cavendish's Fusion of Renaissance Science, Magic and Fairy Lore," *Women's Writing* 17 (2010): 413–31 at 419–26. For ways in which her poems diverge from a straightforwardly Royalist politics, see Sarasohn, *The Natural Philosophy of Margaret Cavendish*, 107; Mihoko Suzuki, "Animals and the Political in Lucy Hutchinson and Margaret Cavendish," *The Seventeenth Century* 30 (2015): 229–47 at 229–32; Lisa Walters, *Margaret Cavendish: Gender, Science and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 26–31.

17 See Kate Chedgzoy, *Women's Writing in the British Atlantic World: Memory, Place and History, 1550–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 135–40, and "Cavalier and She-Majesty"; *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 26–28; Elspeth Graham, " 'An After-Game of Reputation': Systems of Representation, William Cavendish and the Battle of Marston Moor," in *Authority, Authorship and Aristocratic Identity in Seventeenth-Century England: William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle and His Political, Social and Cultural Connections*, ed. Peter Edwards and Elspeth Graham (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 83–110, 97–98.

Following on from Margaret Ezell's seminal recognition of Jane and Elizabeth's verse as coterie writing that reaffirms bonds between Royalists, much important work has been done to uncover its rootedness in what Betty Travitsky calls a "Cavendish family dynamics."[18] Yet, while the majority of critics have emphasized the daughters' relationship with their father, Margaret's *Poems, and Fancies* also symbolically gathers together sundered members of the Cavendish family and household in an echo of Jane, Elizabeth, and William's manuscripts.[19] Beginning, in a number of copies, with William's commendatory verses, "To the Lady Newcastle, On Her Booke of Poems," the opening paratexts then juxtapose her husband (resident in Antwerp at the time) with his brother, who is with Margaret in London.[20] Her comparison of Sir Charles Cavendish's "kindnesse" with the "Affection" shown by "S$^{t.}$ Paul" to "*his* Brethren *in* Christ" recalls the opening line of Jane and Elizabeth's poem "On my Noble Uncle S^{r} Charles Cavendysh Knight": "Uncle Your life's the true Example of a Saint."[21] "The Epistle Dedicatory: To Sir Charles Cauendish, My Noble Brother-in-law" is followed by an "An Epistle to Mistris Toppe," Margaret's maid, in which she justifies herself to her "*Freinds*," thus gesturing towards the wider Cavendish household and circle of acquaintance.[22] The epistolary and conversational modes associated by Larson with Jane, Elizabeth, and William's coterie manuscripts are evoked not only by virtue of the fact that the volume is bookended by poems from and to William but by the fact that Elizabeth Toppe is given space to reply to Margaret's "epistle" with

18 Margaret M. J. Ezell, " 'To Be Your Daughter in Your Pen': The Social Functions of Literature in the Writings of Lady Elizabeth Brackley and Lady Jane Cavendish," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 51 (1988): 281–96; Betty S. Travitsky, *Subordination and Authorship: The Case of Elizabeth Cavendish Egerton and Her "Loose Papers"* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999), 74. See also Elizabeth Clarke, "The Garrisoned Muse: Women's Use of the Religious Lyric in the Civil War Period," in *The English Civil Wars in the Literary Imagination*, ed. Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 130–43, 134–37; *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 15–19; Katherine Larson, *Early Modern Women in Conversation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), chap. 5; Patricia Phillippy, " 'Monumental Circles' and Material Culture in Early Modern England," *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 4 (2009): 139–47 at 143; Ross, *Women, Poetry, and Politics*, 112–13.

19 For a similar strategy in Margaret's *Natures Pictures* (London, 1656), see Ann Hughes and Julie Sanders, "Disruptions and Evocations of Family amongst Royalist Exiles," in *Literatures of Exile in the English Revolution and Its Aftermath, 1640–1690*, ed. Philip Major (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 45–63, 50, 52.

20 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies* (London, 1653), facsimile reprint (Menston: Scolar, 1972), sigs. A1r, A2r; Whitaker, *Mad Madge*, 136, 137. For details of textual variants, see Liza Blake's "Textual and Editorial Introduction" to her digital critical edition of *Poems and Fancies*.

21 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, sig. A2v; *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 53.

22 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, sigs. A2r, A4r, A4v. Catharine Gray, *Women Writers and Public Debate in Seventeenth-Century Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 26, reads these elements of Margaret's prefatory material as mitigating the "scandalous self-display" of printed publication by situating it "within the class and gender hierarchies of the aristocratic household."

her own reply, signed "Your Honours most humble and obedient Servant, *E. Toppe*."[23] Meanwhile, *Poems, and Fancies*—which also includes "An *Elegy* on my *Brother*, kill'd in these unhappy Warres"—concludes with stanzas which once again invoke the influence of her brother-in-law and husband. Here she describes "Sir *Charles* into my chamber coming in" to engage in a literal conversation about her fairy poems, and she acknowledges the formative influence of the "*witty Poet*" to whom she is "married."[24]

Yet if Margaret's poems, like Jane, Elizabeth, and William's, bring the Royalist family together, the writings of all three are equally predicated on the absence of key family members. Chedgzoy draws attention to the way in which Jane and Elizabeth's manuscript poems and plays foreground "male absence consequent on political exile," opening with six poems which "memorialize absent father, brothers and uncle."[25] Similarly, William's manuscript, entitled "Phanseys … Sett by him in verse at Paris," depicts Margaret's "absence" as the catalyst for the "sadder thoughts" which nourish his poems.[26] Margaret's prefatory epistle "To the Reader" situates her poems, like Jane and Elizabeth's, as the product of her separation from William: "For *my* Rest *being broke with* discontented Thoughts, *because I was from my Lord*, *and* Husband, *knowing him to be in great* Wants, *and my selfe in the same* Condition; *to divert them … I have sat, and wrote this* Worke."[27]

Alienation, then, as much as cohesion, animates these collections of verse, all of which openly explore the necessity to find a space for "sadder thoughts." Jane and Elizabeth's outwardly focused poems (for example, their panegyrics to family members, friends, and the royal family, or their celebration of their father's victory against the Parliamentary forces at Adwalton Moor) are interspersed from the outset with verse which dwells on the personal "Hell" of "greife" which they experience owing to their father's absence.[28] Bennett reads Jane's poems as offering evidence that she was a sufferer from the "bouts of melancholia" for which William and Margaret both sought medical advice.[29] Indeed, the recurrence of the term "fancies" in the writings of Jane, Elizabeth, William, and Margaret may be seen to foreground not merely the poetic creativity which flows from

23 Larson, *Early Modern Women in Conversation*, 116; Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, sig. A5v.

24 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 196, 213, 214. This reference to Sir Charles does not appear in subsequent editions.

25 Chedgzoy, *Women's Writing in the British Atlantic World*, 137. See also The *Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 16; Ross, *Women, Poetry, and Politics*, 102.

26 MS Additional 32497, fols. 2r, 78r. See also fols. 75r, 77v, 79r, 80v, 87r–v. When William composed the poems in Paris, Margaret was currently with the queen in Saint-Germain-en-Laye; see Whitaker, *Mad Madge*, 74–75.

27 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, sigs. A7r–v.

28 Jane Cavendish, "Passions L[tt]re to my Lord my Father," in *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 52.

29 *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 26–27.

imagination but a shared propensity to fall prey to the darker thoughts which attend on a heightened imaginative capacity during a period of historical conflict.[30]

Nevertheless, however suggestive the thread of a (partly genetic) tendency to melancholia running through Cavendish family verse, it remains important to understand the latter's representations of psychological disturbance as consciously managed poetic constructs rather than purely spontaneous effusions. Chedgzoy notes the "performance of misery" in Jane's depiction of herself donning "Hermetts weeds" in "On a false reporte of yo^{r} Lo:^{ps} landinge," and she identifies other recurrent tropes through which the poet consciously stages her politically charged sorrow at being separated from her father.[31] These include "metaphors of live burial" and projections of herself as a ghostly apparition or as her own alter ego in a looking glass.[32] Yet Chedgzoy concludes that, for Jane Cavendish, as for fellow Royalist Lady Hester Pulter, "the consolatory uses of memory in the context of the psychic distress consequent upon war are vital."[33]

I wish to suggest that Jane and Elizabeth's poems also deliberately dramatize the mental effort involved in attempting to present a composed demeanour to the world when contending with inner emotional turmoil. In addition to relieving their own feelings, such a gesture offers their intended Royalist coterie readership a potentially consoling or affirming expression of their own dilemmas and implicitly celebrates collective Royalist stoicism. It is "Passions Contemplation [1]" which most vividly evokes the strain of having to restrict the expression of strong feelings:

> Ther's nothinge more afflicts my greiued soule
> But that I cannot grieue without controlle
> And ^{soe} least others should interprett more
> Thoughts Centries keepes out teares in each Eyes doore
> ϴ I; how sorrow swells mee when it must ^{not} raue
> To washe it selfe with teares, then begg a graue
> Soe in contemplate thoughts I wishe to bee
> Teares Statue for sadder soules to drop to mee
> I am indeede a congeild peece of greife
> And without sight of you have noe releife.[34]

It appears that Jane and Elizabeth's poem may have caught the imagination of Margaret, who seems to echo its use of Niobe-like imagery to depict the impact of

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30 Burke and Coolahan, "The Literary Contexts of William Cavendish," 130, notes "the repeated use of the word 'fancies' " by all three poets. For examples of their use of the term, see Jane's dedicatory poem to her father from the Beinecke manuscript in *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 51, and the play-title, *The concealed Fansyes*; William Cavendish, "Loves Phansy," in MS Additional 32497, fol. 76r. Later on in this poem, the term is used to denote the darker side of the imaginative capacity, "Those sadder thoughts & Phansys fill my Brayne", fol. 77v. See also William's "The Battle," fol. 80r, and Margaret Cavendish, "An Epistle to a Troubled Fancy," in *Philosophical Fancies*, 5.

31 Chedgzoy, "Cavalier and She-Majesty," 407; *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 57.

32 Chedgzoy, *Women's Writing in the British Atlantic World*, 137–38.

33 Chedgzoy, *Women's Writing in the British Atlantic World*, 166.

34 *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 53.

suppressed grief. In "*On a* Melting Beauty," Margaret's speaker imagines going into a church to find "a *mourning Beauty*" kneeling by a "*Tombe*." The woman is "fix'd" in an attitude of grief, although racked with sorrow: "Her *Breast* did pant, as if *Life* meant / To seek her *Heart,* which way it went … / *Teares* pull her *eye-lids* down, as they gush'd out."[35] Like the speaker of Jane and Elizabeth's next poem in the manuscript, Margaret's "*Beauty*" bemoans her "*torments*" and finally begs, "strike me dead by this deare *Monument*," only for the speaker to discover that the mourning woman has been turned to ice in an echo of Jane and Elizabeth's "Teares Statue … / … a congeild peece of greife."[36] Margaret's speaker relates how:

> Hearing *her* mourne, I went to give *reliefe;*
> But, Oh alas, her *eares* were stopt with *griefe.*
> When I came neere, her *bloud* congeal'd to *Ice,*
> And all her *Body* changed in a trice;
> That *Ice* strait melted into *tears,* down run
> Through *porous earth:* so got into that *urne.*[37]

Margaret here revisits the imagery deployed by earlier Cavendish family verse and takes its metaphors to a new level of poetic conceitedness, as if literalizing Phillippy's conception of Jane and Elizabeth's verse as providing an equivalent to familial funerary monuments.[38]

In order to understand the specific ways in which *Poems, and Fancies* similarly develops the seemingly rawer emotions of William's "Phansyes" manuscript, it is necessary first to appreciate the ways in which the traumatic experiences of the Civil War period impact his verse as they do Jane and Elizabeth's. A pivotal poem in this discussion is William's "The Battle," which he couches as a nightmare vision catalyzed by the melancholia indicative of the darker side of Cavendishian fancy:

> When parted, Eare since, my sad hard did ake
> Such Melancholly dreames, and so a wake
> My perturbd Phansyd sleepe, whose motion thought
> Of bloody battles ~~how~~ more bloodily wee fought
> In seurall Posturs, one an other Graspinge
> Minglinge defeates, most now for life are gasping.[39]

While Graham reads this poem as an interruption of William's use of "love conventions" in the "Phanseys" manuscript to effect a "self re-creation" and rebuild his damaged reputation after Marston Moor, other poems in this collection (and dating from the same

35 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 193.

36 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 193; Jane Cavendish, "Passions Contemplation [2]," in *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 54.

37 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 194.

38 Phillippy, " 'Monumental Circles,' " 143.

39 MS Additional 32497, fols. 80r–v.

period) also reveal disruptions of the veneer of courtly confidence.[40] Most strikingly commensurate with the grim tone of "The Battle" are the two poems which precede it. In the first, "Loves Phansy," the speaker relates how "My Phansey sett mee on a high topt hill / The Eyre Cereane, and Cleere the winde was still." In the midst of an idyllic pastoral vision of "fertill meddows," "bleating sheepe," and "shepherdesses lovers," he sees "a youth, so sweet, and fayre / His rich apparel shewd a Princes Heaire." Yet the beautiful, regal youth is soon killed by a bear, and the mourning which follows evokes the sorrow of those for whom the Civil War has challenged the sovereignty of Charles as monarch, drawing perhaps on the affective resonances associated with the untimely death of William's youthful companion, Prince Henry, and the national mourning which followed it:

> So burid Father, Mother, Sonne, ith wombe
> Of sadder Earth, and built a statly tombe
> But all in vayne their teares themselves did dround
> That kingdome too, none since saw any Ground
> …
> And so in wofull blacks, that place doth morne
> No hopes of day, because heele neer returne.[41]

While the next poem, "The Deflowred Virgin," is less directly legible as political allegory, it follows suit in disrupting harmonious pastoralism with lurid violence in a manner which hints, by association, at the rupturing of a pre–Civil War Stuart hegemony often associated with pastoral as a literary and dramatic mode.[42] Here, "a tender Virgin … / Like to a gentle, modest sheppardesse" is raped and mutilated by "a harsh and Cruell man" who then throws her body off a precipice: "Splitt all in peeces when shee came to ground / And in the bottoms River, there shee dround."[43]

The broken pastorals of "The Deflowred Virgin" and "Loves Phansy" have antecedents in Jane and Elizabeth's *Pastorall*. While Wynne-Davies and Chedgzoy trace mutual channels of pastoral influence running between the work of the Cavendish sisters and their father, the antimasque of witches in Cavendish and Brackley's *Pastorall* offers

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40 Graham, "'An After-Game of Reputation,'" 90, 96, 97. Graham's argument, 92–93, draws on Timothy Raylor's reading of William's poem, "Love's Muster," as related to the decoration of Bolsover Castle, see Raylor, "'Pleasure Reconcil'd to Virtue': William Cavendish, Ben Jonson, and the Decorative Scheme of Bolsover Castle," *Renaissance Quarterly* 52 (1999): 402–39 at 432–34. Graham, 93, acknowledges that "several of Cavendish's courtship poems explicitly draw attention to his 'Misfortunes,'" citing "A Songe", 93n33. Others include "Loves love not mee," "Loves partinge," and "The spotlesse Love," in MS Additional 32497, fols. 69v–70r, 73r–v, 75r.

41 MS Additional 32497, fols. 76r, 77r–v. For William's association with Prince Henry, see Whitaker, *Mad Madge*, 65, and the chapters in this volume by Lisa Hopkins and Elaine Walker.

42 See, for example, Leah Marcus, *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell, and the Defense of Holiday Pastimes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 19, 70; Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England 1640–1660* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 250–51, 320.

43 MS Additional 32497, fols. 78r–v.

a precedent for William's use of anti-pastoral as a means of accentuating historically plangent scenes of grief and violent disruption.[44] "Hath not our mischeife made warr, and that a miserable one, to make Brother hate brother," asks one of the hags before proceeding to join in planning a burnt "sacrafice" of "Childrens heads … Mens leggs … Weomens Armes … And little Barnes."[45] This is the vision of strife and dislocation which frames the advent of the main pastoral and alerts us to the wider political significance of its more mournful notes, as when one of the "three sad Sheppardesses," played by the three Cavendish sisters, sings of her father, "His absence makes a Chaos sure of mee."[46] The anti-pastoral strain shared by Jane, Elizabeth, and William's writing resurfaces in Margaret's "*A Description of* Shepherds, *and* Shepherdesses," described by Scott-Baumann as presenting "a dystopian vision of pastoral."[47] The poem's sceptical sense that "rustick Clownes" do not "spend their times … / … as *Poets* faine" is reinforced in the next poem, "*A* Shepherds *imployment is too mean an* Allegory *for* Noble Ladies."[48]

"The rhetoric of dismemberment" which characterizes Jane and Elizabeth's anti-pastoral "Antemasque" is, Chedgzoy argues, "a potent stand-by of wartime propaganda," but it also specifically anticipates the nightmarish images of William's "The Battle," which are taken up, in turn, by Margaret in "*A* Description *of the* Battle *in Fight*." This is the poem of all those in *Poems, and Fancies* which most directly draws on William's "Phanseys" manuscript.[49] She borrows her husband's often anaphoric and asyndetic techniques of relentlessly listing what she (directly echoing him) also calls the "severall postures" of dead men after battle, the human turmoil and physical damage left behind in the wake of military engagement:

> *Some* with *sharp Swords*, to tell, O most accurst,
> Were above halfe into the bodies thrust:
> From whence fresh streams of *bloud* run all along
> Unto the *Hilts,* and there lay clodded on.
> *Some,* their *Leggs* hang dangling by the *Nervouse* strings,
> And *shoulders* cut, hung loose, like flying wings.
> …
> Their *knees* pull'd up, to keep their *bowels* in;
> But all too little through their *blood* did swim.[50]

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44 Chedgzoy, "Cavalier and She-Majesty", 404; Marion Wynne-Davies, " 'How Great Is Thy Change': Familial Discourse in the Cavendish Family," in *A Princely Brave Woman: Essays on Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle*, ed. Stephen Clucas (Farnham: Ashgate, 2003), 40–50, 43–44.

45 Jane Cavendish and Elizabeth Brackley, *A Pastorall*, in *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 79, 80.

46 Jane Cavendish and Elizabeth Brackley, *A Pastorall*, in *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 89.

47 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 142; Scott-Baumann, *Forms of Engagement*, 5.

48 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 143.

49 *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 79; Chedgzoy, *Women's Writing in the British Atlantic World*, 141; Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 173.

50 MS Additional 32497, fols. 80r–v. Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 176, 173, 174. For William's use of the phrase "severall posturs", see MS Additional 32497, fol. 80r.

If we compare the above extracts from Margaret's poem with lines from William's equivalent piece, it is possible to detect not only rhetorical and broadly conceptual analogies but detailed points of comparison including images of rivers of blood, severed legs, and disembowelment. William writes:

> One wants a legge, an other wants an Arme
> One Cries retreat, another Cries Alarme
> A Gored body heere lies could and dead
> Ones bowels out, another wants his head
> …
> None knowing what for to call bad, or good
> Rivers, for water, now all running blood
> His doubtfull victory neyther to yield
> Neyther durst say, yett Eyther won the field.[51]

However, Margaret takes William's brief and more rawly immediate poem and extends it into a much longer piece which seems, at times, to distance or sublimate post-traumatic emotions through the use of the fancifully conceited tropes which are such a familiar feature of *Poems, and Fancies*:

> *Some* softly murmuring like a bubling stream
> Yet sweetly smile in *death*, as in a *dream*.
> Whose *soules* with soft-breath'd sighs to heaven flye,
> To live with gods above the starry skie.
> …
> With heaps of bodies, *hills* up high are growne,
> Where *haire* as *grasse*, and *teeth*, as *seed* are sown.[52]

The sense that Margaret is further processing the psychological damage sustained by herself and (most directly) William as a result of military conflict also emerges in the way a number of her poems attempt to reassert his lost military authority by demonstrating practical strategic expertise.[53] Wynne-Davies notes "Margaret's knowledge of the necessary fortifications to withstand a siege" in her allegorical poem, "The Fort or Castle of Hope."[54] Indeed, the poem's technical description of how to repel enemy ordinance by building a defensive wall "from whence the Cannons play" curiously echoes the language of the anonymous commendatory verses found in the Beinecke copy of the Cavendish sisters' manuscript, which praises the authors because "in garrison your

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51 The phrase "*Rivers* of *bloud*" recurs in Margaret's "*A* Battle *between King Oberon, and the* Pygmees," in her *Poems, and Fancies*, 184, in which she also imagines "*severall noyses* that rebounded far," recalling William's "Noyse, drowndinge noyse," fol. 80v.

52 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 176. Price, "Feminine Modes of Knowing and Scientific Enquiry", 130, reads Margaret's poem (which she does not link to William's "The Battle") as "an analysis of the masculine."

53 William's investment in stressing his expertise in military strategy while in exile is evident in the existence of his unpublished treatise on swordsmanship; see Philip Major, "A Previously Unknown Poem by William Cavendish, First Duke of Newcastle," *Notes and Queries* 54 (2007): 409–11 at 410.

54 Wynne-Davies, *Women Writers and Familial Discourse*, 168.

muse durst stay / When that shee heard the drumms and cannon play."[55] Although Margaret's "Epistle to Souldiers" protests that she has "*no knowledge*" in "the *valiant* Art, *and* Discipline *of Warre*," the poems on military themes which follow this epistle repeatedly attest to her specific practical acumen.[56] "*Doubts Assault*, and *Hopes Defence*" contains another detailed description of the minutiae of siege warfare, a topic of immediate, personal concern for Margaret owing to William's involvement in the defence of the besieged city of York in 1644 as well as her own links to the Parliamentarian siege of her home town, Colchester, in 1648 and the resulting death of her brother.[57] Meanwhile, "A *Battle* between *Courage*, and *Prudence*" dwells on the correct way to clothe, arm, and pay both infantrymen and cavalry.[58] The group of military poems also manifests a persistent interest in the value of well-trained horses in battle, reflecting William's most cherished personal commitment to promote the equestrian arts, including their military utility.[59] In "*A* Battle *between* King Oberon, *and the Pygmees*," in particular, Margaret's account of the miniature grasshopper steeds ("*Horses* for *War*") leads her to offer a sustained defence—complete with technical terminology—of the strategic advantages to be gained from deploying "*Horses* of *manage*" in battle.[60] It is striking to find what appears to be the earliest extant written record of some of William's central ideas concerning the art of *manège* in the form of his wife's printed poems.[61]

Margaret's engagement with what Graham (borrowing Clarendon's phrase) calls the "after-game" of William's reputation manifests itself not only in her preoccupation with his military and equestrian concerns but in the way that *Poems, and Fancies* follows Jane, Elizabeth, and William's verse by attaching itself to the Cavendish family estates, their

55 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 169; "Upon the right honourable the Lady Jane Cavendish her booke of uerses," in *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 29.

56 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 167. Vimala Pasupathi, "Old Playwrights, Old Soldiers, New Martial Subjects: The Cavendishes and the Drama of Soldiery," in *Cavendish and Shakespeare, Interconnections*, ed. Katherine Romack and James Fitzmaurice (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), 121–24, 133–34 takes Margaret's declaration of a lack of military expertise here more at face value.

57 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 170–71; Margaret Cavendish, *The Life of the Thrice Noble, High and Puissant Prince, William Cavendishe* (London, 1667), 44–47; Whitaker, *Mad Madge*, 107–8.

58 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 171.

59 See William Cavendish, *La méthode et invention nouvelle de dresser les chevaux* (Antwerp: 1658), sig. e1r; William Cavendish, *A New Method, and Extraordinary Invention, To Dress Horses, and Work Them According to Nature* (London: Milbourn, 1667), 6, 77.

60 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 180, 182–83. See also 172, 177. For a further discussion of the debt owed by *Poems, and Fancies* to William Cavendish's equestrian manuals, see Elaine Walker's chapter in this volume.

61 William's printed equestrian treatises, *La méthode* and *A New Method* (see note 59 to this chapter) appeared in 1658 and 1667 respectively. The earliest surviving manuscript pertaining to these works postdates the publication of *La méthode* five years after *Poems, and Fancies*; see University of Nottingham, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Portland MS Pw V 21, fol. 157v.

Civil War jeopardy, and their subsequent reclamation.[62] Studies of the Cavendish sisters' manuscript have recognized the way its poems and plays stress the garrisoned status of its site of composition at Welbeck Abbey, where they found themselves "under virtual house arrest" by Parliamentary soldiers.[63] The loss of his estates impinges keenly on William's own verse written in exile after 1645:

> Why shouldst thou love me alas I am old
> Ruind of all and now am bought and solde
> …
> Thus am a Just delinquent and so stande
> My greatest fault was having too much Land.[64]

His nostalgia, in exile, for the imagined stability of pre-war country house life is hinted at by the way in which he embeds a direct echo of Jonson's "To Penshurst" in a pastoral he wrote to be performed while in Antwerp. Its prologue acknowledges that the lavish hospitality figured by Jonson as the preserve of his earlier aristocratic patron's table cannot now be matched by William: "Since on uss, are the times, most fatall Curses / Nott feaste your taste, Itt is beyond our Purses."[65] However, in a subsequent pastoral dialogue, Flora promises Coridon a feast of natural abundance which contains a near-verbatim allusion to Jonson's poem. "The Blushinge Aprecott, & walleye Peache, / In a freshe maunder, Ile offer to thy Reache," announces Flora, recalling Jonson's "The blushing apricot and woolly peach / Hang on thy walls, that every child may reach."[66] (The first line of this couplet was evidently one which William favoured, since it reappears in his poem "On Mr Evling his Marriage.")[67] If Jane, Elizabeth, and William's poems register threats to, and the loss of, Cavendish houses and estates, Margaret's *Poems, and Fancies* arises directly out of the attempt to reclaim Cavendish property, since she wrote the volume while in England to assist her brother-in-law, Sir Charles Cavendish, in petitioning Parliament to rescind sequestration. In the event, Charles finally managed to recover a portion of the Cavendish estates, including Welbeck Abbey and Bolsover Castle, in the summer of 1652.[68] Margaret's "*A* Dialogue *between a* Bountifull Knight, *and a* Castle *ruin'd in* War"

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62 Graham, " 'An After-Game of Reputation,' " 83.

63 *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 8. See also Chedgzoy, *Women's Writing in the British Atlantic World*, 138; Clarke, "The Garrisoned Muse," 133–34; Ross, *Women, Poetry, and Politics*, 109; Marion Wynne-Davies, " 'My Fine Delitive Tomb': Liberating Sisterly Voices During the Civil War," in *Female Communities 1600–1800: Literary Visions and Cultural Realities*, ed. Rebecca d'Monté and Nicole Pohl (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 111–28, 112.

64 MS Additional 32497, fol. 69v.

65 Pw V 24, fol. 15v; Jonson, "To Penshurst," lines 59–70, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson, 7 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 5:213.

66 Pw V 24, fol. 16r; Jonson, "To Penshurst", lines 43–44, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, 5:212.

67 MS Additional 32497, fol. 145v.

68 Whitaker, *Mad Madge*, 137–38, 143, 151–52.

has been widely recognized as directly referencing Charles's efforts to save and restore Bolsover.[69] Moreover, Margaret's epistle "To the Reader" represents the writing of her book as a substitute for the household duties she would normally be carrying out were it not for the Cavendish's dispossession from their estates:

> *And my* Lords Estate *being taken away*, [I] *had nothing for* Huswifery*, or thrifty* Industry *to imploy my selfe in … For* Housewifery *is a discreet* Management*, and ordering all in* Private*, and* Household Affaires*, seeing nothing* spoil'd*, or* Profusely spent*, that every thing has its proper* Place*, and every* Servant *his proper* Work*, and every* Work *to be done in its proper* Time*; to be* Neat*, and* Cleanly*, to have their* House *quiet from all* disturbing Noise … *But I have nothing to … order, so as I become* Idle*; I cannot say, in mine owne* House*, because I have none, but what my* Mind *is lodg'd in*.[70]

A sense of Cavendish family poetry as registering—but providing a site of resistance to—the disruption of their relationship with property, households, and pre-war lifestyles is apparent in shared references to inventories and food. Inventories of possessions naturally took on greater significance for families whose property was threatened during the Civil War period, but Jane's consciousness of the importance of making inventories in order to keep track of family property is apparent in her account-book from an early age.[71] The Portland papers also contain an "Inventory of Lord Newcastle's plate hidden beneath the brewhouse at Welbeck," with a statement from Royalist soldiers to guarantee that it had been "removed from it hiding place" and would be returned to William's daughters when it was "safe to do so."[72] Margaret would later show an acute consciousness of the cost to her husband of losses sustained to his property during the war, presenting them in the form of accounts or inventories in her *Life of William Cavendish* (1667).[73]

The preoccupation with inventories inflects poems by Jane, Elizabeth, and Margaret. In "Thankes L^{tt}re," one of the sisters expresses her gratitude to William for a list of presents he has sent her: "The curious Fan … / Thy fyner Combes … / Thy neater Brasletts … / Thy Maskes & Chinclothes."[74] Reading as if they are an inventory of prestigious personal

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69 See Dodds, *The Literary Invention of Margaret Cavendish*, 115–16; Pamela Hammons, "The Gendered Imagination of Property in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century English Women's Verse," *CLIO: A Journal of Literature, History, and The Philosophy of History* 34 (2005): 395–418; Wynne-Davies, " 'How Great Is Thy Change,' " 42–47; Wynne-Davies, " 'My Fine Delitive Tomb,' " 116–18; and Wynne-Davies, *Women Writers and Familial Discourse*, 162, 167–68.

70 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, sig. A7r. Megan Fung, "Art, Authority and Domesticity in Margaret Cavendish's 'Poems, and Fancies,' " *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 10 (2015): 27–47 at 28, argues that "markers of domesticity" in this passage, as elsewhere in the volume, "constitute a critical metaphor for Cavendish's poetic process."

71 *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 165–66. See also 173; Wynne-Davies, " 'How Great Is Thy Change,' " 41–42.

72 University of Nottingham, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Portland MS, Pw 1.367.

73 Cavendish, *The Life of … William Cavendishe*, 96–107.

74 *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 61.

possessions, these items assert Newcastle's "power and status, despite his exile" and offer his "material encouragement" to his daughters to "maintain socially acceptable standards of self-presentation."[75] They also allow the sisters to assert ownership at a point in time when Cavendish family control over the larger properties represented by their houses and landed estates was becoming increasingly tenuous. Similarly, a number of Margaret's poems personifying a feminine Nature evoke inventories of clothing and jewellery, as in "Natures Cabinet":

> In *Natures Cabinet*, the *Braine*, you'l find
> Many a fine *Knack*, which doth delight the *Mind*.
> Severall *Colour'd Ribbons* of *Fancies* new,
> To tye in *Hats*, or *Haire* of *Lovers* true.
> …
> *Fans* of *Opinio*n, which wave with the *Wind*,
> …
> *Gloves* of *Remembrance*, which draw off, and on,
> …
> *Pendants* of *Understanding* heavie were,
> But *Nature* hangs them not in every *Eare*.[76]

Yet Margaret's heavily allegorical poems, unlike Jane and Elizabeth's verse epistle to their father, read almost as phantom inventories, dislocated from a tangible connection to Cavendish family control over property.

The sense that Margaret, Jane, and Elizabeth's poetry responds to the historical threats posed to the Cavendish estates in the way it figures more transient elements of the material life of the aristocratic household is also apparent in the way that they, like William, repeatedly return to the imagery of food. Jane and Elizabeth's poems register distortions of the expected role of food in facilitating Royalist sociability. Chedgzoy argues that Jane and Elizabeth's manuscripts give their "distress" at their father's continued absence "material form as food and drink which is neither nutritious or palatable" by proclaiming, "My meate I'le tell you if you would it heare / 'Tis severall Hashes made upp in a feare / Instead of Beare, now tell you what I drinke / Sighes still'd till mallencholly make mee winke."[77] In another poem, Jane and Elizabeth's speaker vows to protest against William's absence by becoming a "Puritane": "And I will fast untill I bee not able / To call for Pigg or Turkey to my Table."[78] Where William's prologue to a pastoral at Antwerp had lamented the failure to offer guests the kind of feast they might have expected from him before his exile, another of his poems in the Portland manuscripts veers between fantasizing culinary abundance and offering a darkly comic

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75 Pamela Hammons, *Gender, Sexuality and Material Objects in English Renaissance Verse*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010) 74; Chedgzoy, "Cavalier and She-Majesty," 395.

76 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 126. See also "*Natures* Dresse," 127; "*Natures* Wardrope," 134–35.

77 Chedgzoy, "Cavalier and She-Majesty," 406; Jane Cavendish, "On a false reporte of yo^{r} Lo:^{ps} landinge," in *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 57.

78 Jane Cavendish, "Hopes Still," in *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 78.

sense that the violent military conflicts of the Civil War have infected even the hospitality of his table.[79] Imagining a generous meal of "Boylde Beefe," "Chyne," and "Venison Pastye … Pipinge Hott," accompanied by perfectly chilled "Wine," the poem continues:

> The soldiers do note
> The pigg In's Buff Cote
> How Valeantly hee bears upp his snoute
> With Curants Hayle Shott
> Sutch wounds hee hath Gott
> That did dashe all his Brayns quite oute.
> The fortefide pie
> With out works did Lie
> Off Custards there was sutch a peale
> The […][80] bones Hott
> Did plye them with Shott
> Prince off orange Gaynst sweet bread of veale.[81]

Where William's poem represents food through military metaphors, Margaret's "*Description* of a *Battle* in Fight" grotesquely figures the physical consequences of military combat in culinary metaphors:

> Here heads are cleft in two parts, *braines* lye masht,
> And all their *faces* into slices hasht.
> …
> And *Guts* like *Sausages* their bodies twine,
> Or like the *spreading plant*, or *wreathing vine*.[82]

The grotesque imaging of human bodies as food continues in "*Natures* Cook," which offers a gruesome twist on Jane and Elizabeth's poems about household servants by figuring "*Death*" as the eponymous chef.[83] Where Jane and Elizabeth's speaker facetiously imagines herself to have become "a compound Christmas dish," claiming "hope doth gellye me," Margaret's figure of Death works on human "*Meates* … / Some for *Gelly* consuming by degrees."[84]

Margaret, Jane, Elizabeth, and William's rhetorics of food, like the other aspects of their verse which this chapter has examined, show evidence of common ground extending beyond the shared territory of coterie manuscript poetry which has rightly been seen to link father and daughters. Margaret's printed volume builds more on its

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79 Pw V 24, fol. 15v.

80 The manuscript is illegible at this point.

81 Pw V 25, fols. 68r, 68v.

82 Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 173–74.

83 For Jane and Elizabeth's poems on servants, see "The Carecter" and "On a Chambermayde," in *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 66, 69.

84 "The discoursiue Ghost", in *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish*, 68; Cavendish, *Poems, and Fancies*, 127. For a further discussion of the culinary imagery in "The discoursiue Ghost," see Chedgzoy, "Cavalier and She-Majesty," 397.

familial antecedents than we might at first recognize, responding to their poetics of loss by developing shared tropes and, in some cases, reworking direct allusions. By way of a coda, however, it is instructive to return to the dominant strand in *Poems, and Fancies* that sets it apart from Jane, Elizabeth, and William's verse: namely, its preoccupation with atomistic natural philosophy. For by means of this philosophy of matter, Margaret's poetry offers a sense that underlying the death, dismemberment, and dilapidation of Royalist estates brought about by the Civil War is a world of intelligent, self-moving atoms eternally offering the possibility of reconstruction and renewal:

> Small *Atomes* of themselves a *World* may make,
> As being subtle, and of every shape:
> And as they dance about, fit places finde,
> Such *Formes* as best agree, make every kinde.
> For when we build a house of Bricke, and Stone,
> We lay them even, every one by one:
> And when we finde a gap that's big, or small,
> We seeke out Stones, to fit that place withall.
> For when not fit, too big, or little be,
> They fall away, and cannot stay we see.
> So *Atomes,* as they dance, finde places fit,
> They there remaine, lye close, and fast will sticke.
> Those that unfit, the rest that rove about,
> Do never leave, untill they thrust them out.
> Thus by their severall *Motions,* and their *Formes,*
> As severall work-men serve each others turnes.
> And thus, by chance, may a *New World* create:
> Or else predestinated to worke my *Fate.*[85]

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85 Margaret Cavendish, "A World made by *Atomes*," in *Poems, and Fancies*, 5–6.

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Hero Chalmers is Fellow and Director of Studies in English at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. She is the author of *Royalist Women Writers, 1650–1689* (Oxford University Press, 2004) and coeditor of *Three Seventeenth-Century Plays on Women and Performance* (Manchester University Press, 2006). She has also published a number of articles on seventeenth-century writing by women, on Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Henry VIII*, and on the equestrian treatises of William Cavendish. She is currently working on forthcoming articles concerning Margaret Cavendish's *Orations of Divers Sorts* and Lucy Hutchinson's elegies, with a focus on the often surprising relationships between poetics and political allegiance.