

A COLLECTION OF SUNDRIE APPROVED RECEIPTS

Study and Edition of Glasgow University Library,
Ferguson MS 43

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Ferguson MS 43

Isabel de la Cruz Cabanillas



Universidad
de Alcalá

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ABBREVIATIONS

AN	Anglo-Norman
bap.	baptized
c.	circa
d.	died
e.g.	<i>exempli gratia</i>
<i>et al.</i>	<i>et alia</i>
F	French
F43	Ferguson 43
Fol.	Folio
Gmc.	Germanic
GUL	Glasgow University Library
i.e.	<i>id est</i>
L	Latin
LEME	<i>Lexicons of Early Modern English</i>
n.	noun
OE	Old English
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
OF	Old French
ONF	Old North French
pl.	plural
s.v.	<i>sub verbo</i>
vb.	verb

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The edition

A Collection of sundrie approved Receipts is a semi-diplomatic edition. The first aim has been to preserve the richness of the original manuscript and to allow the text to speak of its time and origins. Thus, the edition maintains the manuscript's peculiarities and the orthographic information given on the printed page, conserving the text's spellings, punctuation, capitalisation and line divisions. Information on marginalia is also provided in comments throughout the study. In sum, editorial intervention has been kept to a minimum. In consequence, some errors have not been emended. Thus, in “put therein an ounce of white Coppras an skumm it well” (folio 7v/1-2), the <d> has not been added to the conjunction *and*; similarly, where the text reads “as much as a Nutmegge fasting, and asmuh [sic] at night” (folio 5r/6), this is reproduced as it appears in the manuscript, although *as much* was probably intended.

With a text that is three centuries old, the first instinct is to adapt the punctuation, expand abbreviations and undertake other actions in the hope of bringing it closer to Present-Day English; however, none of these aspects has been modified. This will enable the reader to taste the real flavour of the language as it was at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, the author is well aware of the fact that twenty-first-century readers of an eighteenth-century text are not seeing the same thing that their predecessors saw. Eighteenth-century readers approached a text with a particular mindset and expectations that are different from those of twenty-first-century readers. Likewise, contextual information concerning the manuscript, the surrounding world and the readers' knowledge are completely different. To assist twenty-first-century readers of the volume, the work has been contextualised in its time and explanations about the language and practical medical knowledge have been inserted to help them follow the text.

My main goal in editing this invaluable recipe book has been to render the inaccessible accessible and provide readers with an intelligible text. In pursuit of

this ambition, many people have contributed along the way, to whom I am deeply grateful, but I remain solely responsible for any mistakes.¹

Finally, although my primary goal has been to make an unknown text accessible to the public, the book is more than a mere edition. The text has been thoroughly analysed in order to produce a study of relevant linguistic features in the recipe genre, as well as to present this specific volume in the historical, social and cultural context in which it was written.

1.2. Women's recipe collections: Ferguson MS 43

In eighteenth-century Britain, both women and men compiled manuscript recipe collections, usually in the form of instructions on how to produce different dishes, cleaning products and other commodities, such as ink and, essentially, medicines to treat various illnesses in the home.

Perhaps no other genre is as permeable to cultural and social change, given that recipes reflect the contemporary society in which they were written. Although both men and women produced recipe compilations, the genre is of particular relevance due to the impact that women had on the medical sphere, because this was largely limited to the domestic setting. By the end of the seventeenth century, male medical practice had become socially legitimised, and men could train as physicians, apothecaries and surgeons, whereas women could only practise as midwives. Consequently, manuscript recipe collections authored by women bear witness to their contribution to this field, to their concerns and to the world surrounding them. Such texts also played an important role in transmitting and disseminating knowledge within the women's families and social circles.

The text presented here is attributed to Lady Stanhope and showcases the capacity of women's recipe collections to provide valuable information regarding eighteenth-century domestic medical practice, and more specifically, women's contribution to this.

The book is structured as follows: after the introduction, the reader will find a section presenting the Glasgow University Library Ferguson Collection, of which manuscript Ferguson 43 forms a part. Next, a description is given of the physical manuscript. Although the name Lady Stanhope is inscribed on folio 2r, nothing else is said in the text about its owner or compiler. Thus, several sources have been consulted to obtain information on the author of the volume. Likewise, the time of writing is rather vague, locating the text in the early eighteenth century. Several linguistic features have been examined to gain insights into the scribe's idiolect

¹ My thanks to the Special Collections staff at Glasgow University Library and especially to Julie Gardham, who kindly offered to check some physical aspects of the manuscript when mobility was highly restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to Niki Russell, who organised digitisation of the text. Glasgow University Library should also be thanked here for allowing the reproduction of the images of the manuscript.

and to assess the degree of standardisation present in the text by determining whether the scribal practices comply with standards in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

This chapter also explores the recipe collection as a genre based on the evidence provided by the manuscript under consideration. Recipes retain their prototypical features over time but also introduce innovations. Thus, recipes in this period replicate the medieval structural pattern where the text begins with a title specifying the purpose, followed by the ingredients, instructions for preparation and application of the remedy and, rarely, a final efficacy phrase (Taavitsainen, 2001). Some of these components are optional, which means not all of them are present in every single recipe. Finally, other linguistic features of the recipe genre, as outlined by Görlach (1992, 2004), have been examined to conclude that the volume contains the usual elements of the genre and follows the genre conventions.

The next chapter opens with a description of the editorial policy, followed by the transcription. The layout has been purposely designed to display the manuscript image on the left and the transcription on the right, so that the reader can easily refer to the original folio. In achieving this fine result, the Special Collections section at Glasgow University Library deserves special thanks for allowing reproduction of the images. While the written content is of significant interest for the genre, the beauty of the images in such careful, neat copy is rarely found in other recipe compilations.

After this chapter, the reader is presented with a glossary. This was compiled using the *AntConc* concordance programme produced by Anthony (2020) to retrieve the alphabetical list. Additionally, manual revision has been necessary at times, as the programme cannot discriminate between spelling alternations or homonyms, among other variations (cf. Crespo and De la Cruz 2016 for constraints on the use of corpus linguistics in historical studies).

On browsing through the alphabetical list, it became apparent that many words remain in common use today. Consequently, only words specific to the genre, several of which are now rare, have been included. Thus, the glossary mainly contains the nouns mentioned as ingredients, the crockery and utensils used to prepare the remedies, the names of medical simples and compounds as well as units of volume and weight, along with the diseases or medical conditions treated in the text. The definitions were reached after consulting the *Oxford English Dictionary* online (henceforth OED) and other lexicographic references, such as *Lexicons of Early Modern English* (henceforth LEME). Specific botanical works, such as Gerard (1597), Salmon (1710) and Hunt (1989) have also been searched to provide the most accurate description. Lastly, the book closes with the references mentioned in the volume.

2. STUDY OF FERGUSON MS 43

2.1. The Ferguson Collection

The manuscript under consideration forms part of the collection amassed by John Ferguson (1838-1916), who was born near Alloa and attended the old high school in Glasgow. Subsequently, he became a student at Glasgow University in 1855. During his days as an undergraduate, he was very fond of visiting the Hunterian Museum, which housed the collection of William Hunter (1718-1783), a surgeon and former student at Glasgow University. When recalling his visits to the Hunterian Museum, Ferguson remarked that “the under-keeper, in my early days, was a typical Irishman, full of humour and good humour, who subsequently gave me the run of the place and to whom I am indebted for some guidance in the courses which I ultimately pursued” (1930: 41). He spent nine years as a student at Glasgow University, most of which were in the Faculty of Arts, “graduating BA in 1861 and MA with honours in 1862” (Weston, 2004).

While Ferguson was still a student, he was employed by Professor William Thomson (1824-1907, since 1892 Lord Kelvin), who was engaged in his research on electric telegraph cables. Along with the experimental work, Ferguson was required to prepare a summary of some of Thomson’s lectures for the use of students, which was finally published as *Elements of Dynamics* (1863). According to Weston (2004), in the same year Ferguson

Matriculated in the faculty of medicine in order to pursue studies in chemistry. After a time working as a student in the chemistry laboratory, he became assistant to the professor, Thomas Anderson, and in 1868 was appointed university assistant with responsibility for tutorial classes and the supervision of students in the laboratory.

Ferguson continued collaborating with Anderson until the latter’s death in 1874, when Ferguson was appointed to the regius professorship. As Weston (2006: 165) relates, “as a person he was well liked and possessed a keen if somewhat caustic sense of humour, a fact which may account for his nickname ‘Soda’.”

Weston (2006: 162) adds that his name was also familiar to students and scholars of alchemy thanks to his survey of alchemical writers and their works in the *Biblioteca Chemica* (Ferguson, 1906), which, according to Weston (2006: 162), was:

A catalogue of the alchemical collection of James Young (1811-1883), ‘Paraffin Young’, a self-made Scottish entrepreneur who amassed a considerable fortune from his discovery of paraffin. Young collected alchemical books because he believed that a survey of alchemy was indispensable for an understanding of the history of chemistry, rather than through a deep interest in alchemy for its own sake. He was able to gather a collection of some 1,300 books and seven manuscripts, which was given in the late nineteenth century to the Andersonian Institute in Glasgow where, by attending classes in his early years, Young had been able to gain his knowledge of chemistry. The collection is now housed in the Department of Special Collections in the Andersonian Library of the University of Strathclyde.

In common with his predecessors, William Hunter and James Young, John Ferguson gathered an impressive number of books and manuscripts, amassing an extensive personal library that contained approximately 18,000 volumes. After his death, a significant part of his collection—including Ferguson MS 43—was purchased by Glasgow University in 1921. The Ferguson Collection comprises circa 500 manuscripts and circa 7,500 printed books produced between 1363 and 1864 and written in various languages, chiefly Latin, German and English. The manuscripts in the collection are mainly about chemistry, alchemy and medicine. Library catalogues and other specific catalogues on medical and scientific manuscripts do not always provide detailed information on every single manuscript. Thus, Keiser (1998) and Voigts and Kurtz (2000) mainly concentrate on medieval content. Even major bibliographic works, such as that by Ker (1977), may only include details of the most well-known manuscripts. In fact, the only catalogue that contains information on Ferguson MS 43 is the *Glasgow University Library Catalogue*, available online. This lack of references implies that the collection still holds a number of hitherto unexplored English medical recipe compilations. Ferguson MS 43 is one of these never-before edited texts.

Although John Ferguson’s main area of interest was alchemy, the medical field is also extensively represented, either in complete recipe compilations or in other kinds of material. This circumstance has already been noted by Taavitsainen, Schneider and Jones (2019: 63): “recipes are also found integrated in longer treatises”. Thus, recipes appear embedded in medical compendia but also in collections including cooking recipes, as noted by Görlach (1992 and 2004), and in alchemical books. Consequently, within the Ferguson Collection one can find: a) medical recipes, as in Ferguson MS 147, the only medieval recipe compilation in the collection; b) medical recipes and cooking recipes, as in Ferguson MS 15 and Ferguson MS 43, and c) medical, cooking and other kinds of recipes, as in Ferguson MS 61, which also gives recipes for cattle and instructions on how to polish men’s shoes and boots

properly, among others. Moreover, alchemy treatises occasionally include a medical or culinary recipe. Thus, Ferguson MS 58, Ferguson MS 91, Ferguson MS 229 and Ferguson MS 309 all contain a small number of medical and culinary recipes.

2.2. Ferguson MS 43

2.2.1. *Physical description*

The manuscript under study is referenced as GB 247 Ferguson MS 43 and is held in Glasgow University Library. It is a bound volume of thirty folios, fifteen of which are blank. The manuscript measures 19.5 by 15 cm and is written on paper with no watermarks. The paper has been lined in red to delimit the physical boundaries of the text, and all the margins have been clearly marked. Given that the lines are handwritten, the text box space within the lines differs slightly from page to page, but, on average, the writing space measures approximately 13 by 7.5 cm. The text is written in a single column. The number of lines varies, but the average is twenty lines per folio, except for folio 1r, which functions as a cover.

Regarding the script, manuals on Renaissance palaeography rarely go beyond the year 1650 (e.g. Dawson and Kennedy-Skipton, 1966 and Preston and Yeandle, 1999), rendering it difficult to identify a piece of writing that can be compared to the hand used in Ferguson MS 43. However, a holograph dated to 1659 and included in Petti (1977: 125-126) is written in a facile round hand that shows a remarkable resemblance to the script in Ferguson MS 43.

The text studied here is written in a mixed cursive hand, combining italic and secretary letter forms. By and large, italic hands enjoyed wide acceptance in England because of their simplicity, legibility and beauty, and became both generalised and preferred by women (Preston and Yeandle, 1999: viiii). The text shows this italic script with several particular features. Thus, mixed cursive seems to be the most fitting denomination, as most of the traits belong to an English round hand—one of the italic hands introduced into England in the early sixteenth century—but it also displays some additional traces of secretarial traits. Several of the characteristic features retained from secretarial hand in the text are the letter <d> represented with a left-curved stem, as in Figure 1, and the double-compartment <e>, which alternates with the cursive <e>. Both forms of <e> can be seen in the word *Leaves*, in Figure 2.

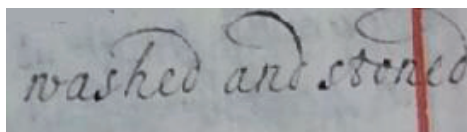
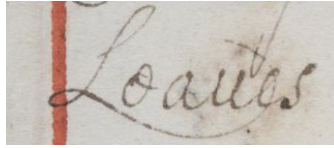
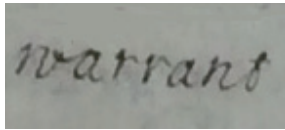


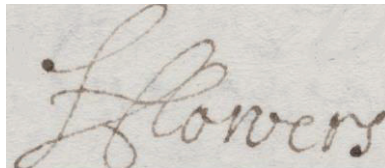
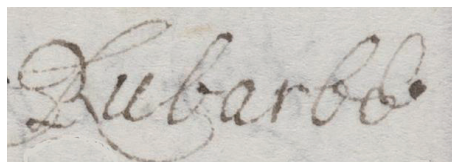
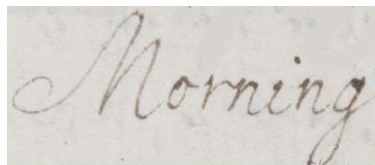
FIGURE 1. *washed and stoned*
(Folio 2r)

FIGURE 2. *Leaves* (Folio 1v)

As regards other letters, the script is similar to one printed in Hector (1958: 91) and dated to 1682, although this particular piece retains the secretarial <r>, whereas Ferguson MS 43 displays the italic shape of <r>, as shown in Figure 3:

FIGURE 3. *warrant* (Folio 9v)

Other characteristic features of Ferguson MS 43 are the letter <f>, distinguished from long <s> by its medial horizontal stroke (Figure 4), and the letters and <g> with a double lobe (Figures 5 and 6).

FIGURE 4. *fflowers* (Folio 10v)FIGURE 5. *Rubarbe* (Folio 3r)FIGURE 6. *Morning* (Folio 12r)