

Pounced Corrections in Oxford Copies of Cavendish's *Philosophical and Physical Opinions*; or, Margaret Cavendish's Glitter Pen

[W]hen I cast mine eyes and see
That brave Vibration each way free;
O how that glittering taketh me!
—Robert Herrick, 'Upon Julia's Clothes'¹

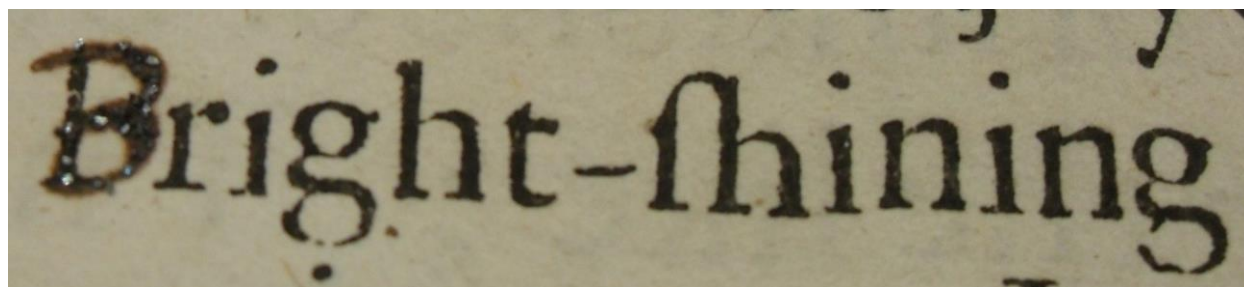


Figure 1: Pounce or pin-dust stuck to the 'B' of 'Bright-shining', from the Balliol College Library's copy of: Margaret Cavendish, *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* (London, 1663). Shelfmark: 535 d 4. Reproduced by the kind permission of the Master and Fellows of Balliol College.

The prose in Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle's *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* (1663) literally glitters. Or at least, it does in most of the copies of the book to be found in Oxford college libraries. Bits of blotting sand or ground magnesium mica, sticking to inked corrections in the book, sparkle and create flashes of light when seen from different angles. This essay is about those sparkly bits—variously called stanchgrain, pounce, pin-dust, sand, blotting sand, callis sand, or Calais sand—and what their appearance in copies across Oxford libraries tells us about Cavendish's revisions to the third edition of her natural philosophical treatise.

As people who study early modern manuscripts have discussed, 'pounce' actually means, potentially, two to three very different things in medieval and early modern manuscript studies.² First, pounce and stanchgrain were both names for a powder rubbed onto a parchment or paper page before writing to keep ink from spreading on the page. Pounce in this sense was made of powdered pumice, cuttlefish bones, rosin, or gum sandarach.³ While this was less of a necessity for paper than for parchment, it was still recommended especially for paper that had little size (a gelatinous coating used to make paper less absorbent).⁴ Early modern writing manuals such as those

¹ Robert Herrick, *Hesperides, or, The works both humane & divine of Robert Herrick, esq.* (London, 1648), p. 308.

² For overviews on the changing history of pounce, on which this paragraph draws, see Michael Finlay, *Western Writing Implements in the Age of the Quill Pen* (Wetheral, Carlisle, Cumbria: Plains Books, 1990), ch. 6, 'The Pounce-pot or Sander', pp. 32–34; James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture of Letter-Writing, 1512–1635* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 36–37, 41; and Joyce Irene Whalley, *Writing Implements and Accessories: From the Roman Stylus to the Typewriter* (Exeter: David and Charles, 1975), pp. 90–93. Thanks to Megan Heffernan for helpful tips and examples that made it into the final draft of this piece, and to Dianne Mitchell for checking a rare book for pounce on my behalf.

³ Finlay, *Writing Implements*, p. 34, states that pumice and cuttle-fish bones were used for parchment, and rosin and sandarach for paper. Peter Beal seems to suggest that all four of these ingredients were used for parchment and paper alike in *A Dictionary of English Manuscript Terminology, 1450–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), *s.v.* 'POUNCE', p. 307.

⁴ Finlay, *Writing Implements*, pp. 32–33. Plat includes detailed instructions on the application of pounce to paper in his *Jewel House of Art and Nature* of 1594, though he calls it 'the fine powder or dust of Rosen and Sandarach' (qtd. Finlay, *Writing Implements*, p. 33).

by John de Beauchesne include instructions for making pounce or stanchgrain, though as A.S. Osley has demonstrated, 'Later writing-masters (especially Cresci and Scalzini) were violently divided about its use'.⁵ Giovambattista Palatino—in his sixteenth-century writing manual—advises, 'Pounce is employed when you want to write well and distinctly, but it must be used sparingly, as too much of it will stop the ink from flowing'.⁶ A pounced page would allow a scribe to make sharp lines, but also prevented speedy writing.

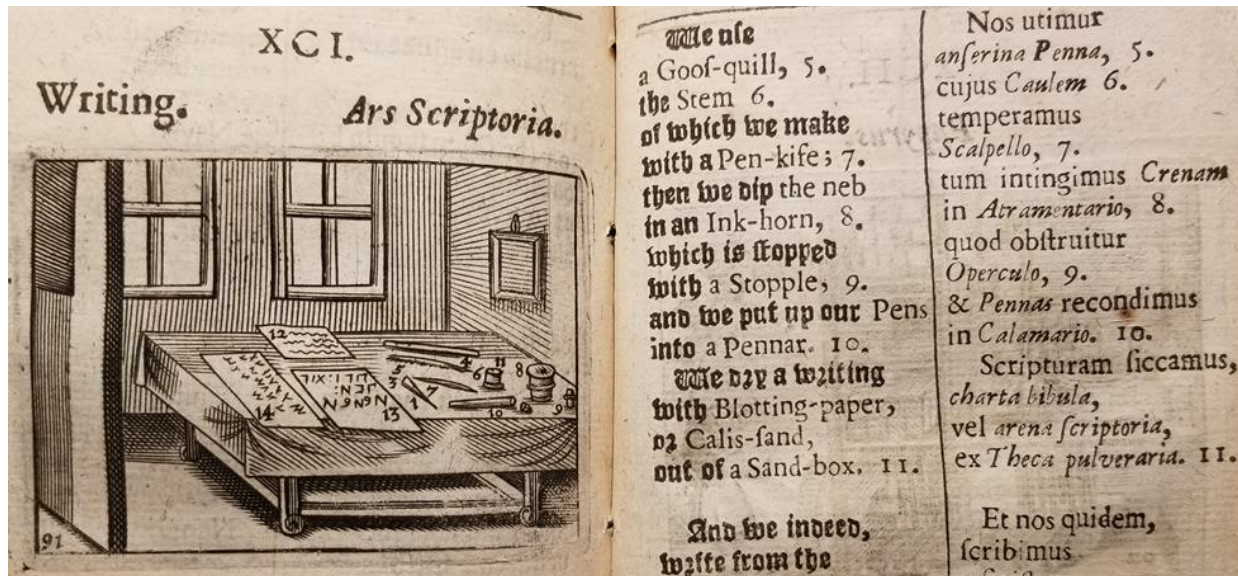


Figure 2: Tools of writing, including callis sand in a sand box (11), from: Johann Amos Comenius, *Orbis Sensualis* (London, 1685), pp. 186–87. Call #: C5525. Photograph by Liza Blake, from the collections of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

However, pounce was used not just for the preparation of paper, but also for the blotting of ink after it had been written on the page. Pounce in this sense, also called blotting sand or callis sand, would typically be held in 'pounce pots', a standard tool for most writing desks, as in Johann Comenius's list of useful tools for writing (see Figure 2): 'We dry a writing with *Blotting-paper*, or *Calis-sand*, out of a *Sand-box*'.⁷ This pounce, used for blotting, was a different powder again: 'The type developed later for purely blotting purposes tended to be chalk or else powdered biotite, a magnesium mica. Traces of this metallic, sparkling substance can still occasionally be seen adhering

⁵ John de Beauchesne and John Baildon, *A booke containing diuers sortes of hands: as well the English as French secretarie with the Italian, Roman, chancelry & court hands. Also the true & iust proportion of the capitall Romane set forth by Iohn de Beau Chesne and M. Iohn Baildon* (London: by Richard Field, 1570), sig. A2r; *Scribes and Sources: Handbook of the Chancery Hand in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. and trans. A. S. Osley (Boston: David R. Godine, 1980), p. 48. See also Finlay, *Writing Implements*, p. 33.

⁶ Giovambattista Palatino, *The Instruments of Writing*, trans. Henry K. Pierce (Newport, RI: Berry Hill Press, 1953), n.p. In England, Edward Cocker extols the virtues of pounce in *The Pen's Triumph: being a copy-book, containing variety of examples of all hands practised in this nation according to the present mode; adorned with incomparable knots and flourishes . . . also a choice receipt for inke* (London, 1658), p. 7: 'your paper will be so fitted for your use, that if your Pen and Ink be good, your Letters will be as clear and smooth as you can wish'. For the debate on pounce, see *Scribes and Sources*, ch. 18, 'Epilogue: the Cresci-Scalzini Debate', pp. 243–79.

⁷ Johann Amos Comenius, *Orbis sensualium pictus, hoc est, Omnium fundamentalium in mundo rerum, & in vita actionum, pictura & nomenclatura* (London, 1685), p. 187. For more images of pounce pots, see Finlay, *Writing Implements*, pp. 133–35; William E. Covill Jr., *Ink Bottles and Inkwells* (Taunton, MA: William S. Sullwold Publishing, 1971), pp. 404–10 (figs. 1693–1730); and Joyce Irene Whalley, *English Handwriting 1540–1853* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1969), plates 83, 86.

to the dried ink in old manuscripts'.⁸ Finlay argues that pounce pots or sanders initially held pounce of the first kind (for prepping paper), until 'the advent of glazed papers' at the end of the eighteenth century when 'the pounce-pot was given a new lease of life' and began to be filled with chalk and biotite for drying ink.⁹ However, it is more likely that both kinds of pounce were used simultaneously. Comenius's sand-box is clearly used for blotting, and Beauchesne, who includes a recipe for 'staunch graine' in his writing manual, also advises his writers to have blotting sand handy: 'Inke always good store on right hand to stand / Browne paper for great haste, or else boxe with sand'.¹⁰ Figures 3 and 4 show an ink stand with matching ink and pounce jars, including the perforated top that would have been used to shake out pounce, as well as the indentation in the top that would have been used to collect any extra pounce after a page had been blotted.



Figures 3 and 4: Ink stand including pounce pot and ink jar (Figure 3), with detail of perforated top of pounce pot (Figure 4). Call #: Wood no. 18 (realia) (B3a). Photographs by Liza Blake, from the collections of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

While the 'glitter pen' of my essay's subtitle is tongue in cheek, I do wish to suggest here that the sparkly bits left behind by pounce used for blotting is not always accidental; in many cases early modern writers seemed to be well aware that they were leaving behind 'an occasional sparkle' from their blotting.¹¹ The word 'pounce' had a wide range of meanings in the period, one of which included decoration, so that someone can write of, for example, 'Rhetoricall ornaments, which beautifie and pounce the style of an Orator'.¹² To pounce was to blot, but also, potentially, to decorate.

⁸ Beal, *Dictionary*, s.v. 'POUNCE', p. 308.

⁹ Finlay, *Writing Implements*, p. 34.

¹⁰ Beauchesne, *A book*, sig. A2v. A third sense of 'pounce' in manuscript and textual studies is as a verb rather than as a noun: to pounce a book was to prick holes around a pattern or shape and then force a dark powder through, to allow for copying or tracing. As Cocker explains, 'In France such as would write even, have Paper with lines pricked with small holes, through which they pounce Chark-cole-dust on the paper they write on, and after dash it off with a Feather or a Handcherchief' (*The pen's triumph*, p. 7). On this third sense of pounce, see also Raymond Clemens and Timothy Graham, *Introduction to Manuscript Studies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), p. 30.

¹¹ Whalley, *Writing Implements*, p. 92.

¹² Cicero, *A panoplie of epistles, or, a looking glasse for the vnlearned Conteyning a perfecte plattform of inditing letters of all sorts, to persons of al estates and degrees, as well our superiours, as also our equalls and inferiours*, trans. Abraham Fleming (London, 1576), sig. L4r. See also the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (hereafter OED), s.v. 'pounce, v.1', 2.b.

Even the many synonyms for the substance 'pounce' in the period highlight the beautiful nature of the blotting sand or powder. As Figure 2 shows, the Latin term for this blotting substance was *arena scriptoria*, literally 'writer's sand'. The English translation 'callis sand' that Comenius gives as his translation seems to come from 'Calais sand', the fine white sand of the cliffs of Calais, used in the period to refer to sand that was particularly fine.¹³ In Matthew Hale's moral contemplations, Calais sand or callis sand is so fine that it is impossible to hold—'commonly the faster thou thinkest to hold it the sooner it is lost, like him that gripes *Calice* Sand in his fist'—while for Walter Charleton, callis sand is used as a stepping stone on the road to imagining miniscule atoms: 'as may be most familiarly understood, if we compare an heap of Corne, with one of the finest *Callis* sand; that with an heap of the most volatile or impalpable Powder, that the Chymist or Apothecary can make; and so gradually less and less in the dimensions of Granules, till we arrive at the smallest imaginable'.¹⁴ To imagine atoms, the finest, most minuscule particles there are, one may first think about the difference in scale between a grain of callis sand and a kernel of corn.

If 'callis sand' highlights the fineness of pounce, then its other major synonym, 'pin-dust', highlights its sparkle. Richard Huloet gives '*Pinne duste*' as the English translation of the Latin *Pulvis scriptoris* (literally 'writer's dust') in his Latin-English dictionary, and a receipt from 1523 lists 'pynnedust' as a household purchase alongside paper, sealing wax, and ink.¹⁵ As Beal notes, 'pin-dust' was technically 'the fine dust or metal filings produced in the manufacture of pins, [but] was also a term sometimes applied in the early modern period to the fine chalky powder known as 'pounce' used to blot ink'.¹⁶ This name was given to pounce, most likely, to reflect the way the magnesium mica sparkled up from the page. Pin-dust seems to be notoriously sparkly, so much so that John Smith, in a travelogue, describes sparkly ground in the new world as 'a claie sand so mingled with yeallow spangles as if it had beene halfe pin-dust', and Henry More will describe twinkling stars in a philosophical poem as being 'thick as pin-dust scattered in the skie'.¹⁷

Pin-dust was also understood as a way of making writing in particular sparkle, both metaphorically and literally. Hence we can see Charles Herle dismissing the metaphorical sparkle of writing in an enemy's treatise: 'the Magistery of the Title, Author, Style of this Treatise, [is] but the pindust of it, that gilds but intercepts the Letter'; he urges his readers to focus not on this stylistic

¹³ For the etymology of 'callis' and for more sources referring to callis sand, see OED, *s.v.* 'callis sand, n.' The Folger Shakespeare Library has a manuscript receipt from a spice dealer, dated Nov. 16, 1643, which includes 'Callis sand' as well as other spices (call #: X.d.563). For other appearances of this term, see also Daybell, *Material Letter*, who quotes a payment of one penny 'for Callis sand' and paper in 1627 in Devon. Daybell lists this purchase while discussing pounce as a paper preparation, though my sense from sources such as Comenius is that callis sand was thought of primarily as a blotting agent rather than as a paper preparative.

¹⁴ Matthew Hale, *Contemplations moral and divine by a person of great learning and judgment* (London, 1676), p. 354; Walter Charleton, *Physiologia Epicuro-Gassendo-Charltoniana, or, A fabrick of science natural, upon the hypothesis of atoms founded by Epicurus; repaired by Petrus Gassendus; augmented by Walter Charleton* (London, 1654), p. 319.

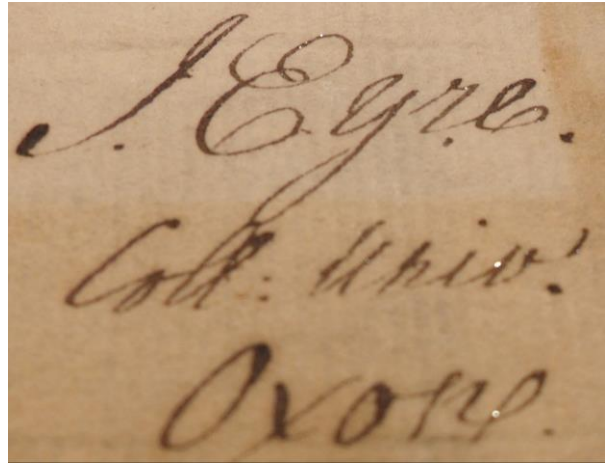
¹⁵ Richard Huloet, *Huloets dictionarie newely corrected, amended, set in order and enlarged, with many names of men, townes, beastes, foules, fishes, trees, shrubbes, herbes, fruities, places, instrumentes &c. And in eche place fit phrases, gathered out of the best Latin authors. Also the Frenche therevnto annexed, by which you may finde the Latin or Frenche, of anye English woorde you will. By Iohn Higgins late student in Oxeforde* (London, 1572), sig. 2H6v. A transcription of the receipt can be found in *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Rutland, K.G. Preserved at Behoir Castle*, vol. 4 (London: Mackie & Co., 1905), p. 263; this receipt is also noted in Daybell, *Material Letter*, p. 41. The OED entry for 'pin-dust' lists other sixteenth-century receipts as well.

¹⁶ Beal, *Dictionary*, *s.v.* 'PIN-DUST', p. 298.

¹⁷ John Smith, *The generall historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles with the names of the adventurers, planters, and governours from their first beginning. Anno 1584 to this present 1624* (London, 1624), p. 58; Henry More, *Democritus Platonissans, or, An essay upon the infinity of worlds out of Platonick principles* (Cambridge, 1646), p. 16.

gilding, but on 'the substance of it'.¹⁸ While Herle figures gilding, glittering pin-dust as a distraction from the 'substance' of writing, John Williams uses pin-dust to describe the necessity of reflecting King James's glittering reign: 'Private Histories . . . are but Incke, and Paper, and may bee holpe in part with the golden pin-dust'.¹⁹ As literal writing or inscriptions can be beautified with pin-dust, so writing about a king should metaphorically sparkle with his greatness.

There is a broader interest in the period in beautiful writing, not just in terms of forming letters well, but also in making beautiful words on the page. Hence several recipes for ink from the period advise using pomegranate rind 'to make it [ink] beautiful & lustrous',²⁰ and other books include recipes for gold and silver metallic inks.²¹ Pin-dust was sometimes used alongside gold and silver, as in the following instructions for applying lacquers 'sent from the East-Indies' to the Royal Society: 'If you would print in Gold or Silver, &c. you must with a fine Pencil dip'd in the said Varnish, draw what Flowers, Birds, &c. you please, and let it lye till it begins to be dry; then lay on your Leaf-Gold, or Silver, or Pin-Dust, &c.'²² While pin-dust, pounce, and callis sand were largely used for practical blotting purposes, it does seem that in some cases the sparkly side-effects were deliberately cultivated.



Figures 5 and 6: Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Aradia* (London, 1598): title page (Figure 5) and recto of flyleaf (Figure 6). Call #: STC 22541 copy 2. Photographs by Liza Blake, from the collections of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

¹⁸ Charles Herle, *A fuller answer to a treatise written by Doctor Ferne, entituled The resolving of conscience upon this question, whether upon this supposition or case, (the King will not defend but is bent to subvert religion, lawes and liberties) subjects may with good conscience make resistance.* (London, 1642), sig. A3r.

¹⁹ John Williams, *Great Britains Salomon. A sermon preached at the magnificent funerall, of the most high and mighty king, Iames, the late King of Great Britaine, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c.* (London, 1625), p. 60; italics regularized.

²⁰ Palatino, *Instruments*, n.p. Cocker, *Pen's Triumph*, gives the same instruction: 'And to make your Ink shine and lustrous, add certain pieces of the Barque of Pomegranat, or a small quantity of double-refin'd Sugar, boyling it a little over a gentle fire' (p. 23).

²¹ See, e.g., G.D.'s *Directions for Writing. Set forth for the Benefit of Poore Schollers. Now reprinted from the sole surviving copy published in London A.D. 1656* (Cambridge, UK: W. Lewis, 1933), p. 18. See also the several colored ink recipes in Steven W. May and Arthur F. Marotti, *Ink, Stink Bait, Revenge, and Queen Elizabeth: A Yorkshire Yeoman's Household Book* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014), pp. 211–20.

²² Royal Society, *Philosophical Transactions* 20 (1698), p. 275. In the nineteenth century, blotting sand was sometimes explicitly used for glittering decoration, as with the golden 'CALIFORNIA GOLD WRITING SAND', a blotting sand manufactured in Massachusetts but 'no doubt made to stimulate sales during the California gold rush'; see Covill, *Ink Bottles*, p. 403; images at figs. 1731–32 (p. 410).

I do not plan to argue that Cavendish deliberately made her natural philosophical texts sparkle, though I do wish to explore the payoff of paying attention to pounce in early texts. In addition to providing a beautiful sparkle, pounce can sometimes also be useful to the bibliographer attempting to learn more about the history of a text. For instance, the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC owns a 1598 printing of Sidney's *Arcadia* whose title page is covered with pounced ink.²³ Figure 5 shows one of the large swatches of ink (of seven on the title page) that completely obliterates the text underneath. The large amount of ink used for this obliteration was dusted with an especially fine and sparkly pin-dust or pounce, thereby creating a beautiful effect, as if inverting Henry More's analogy that 'Small subtil starres appear until our sights / As thick as pin-dust scattered in the skie'.²⁴ The recto of the flyleaf immediately preceding has a signature from one 'J. Eyre' of University College Oxford, which also has some small pieces of pounce stuck to it (Figure 6); the appearance of pounce on both the signature and the obliterations on the title page suggest that J. Eyre was the one to scratch out bits of writing on the title page, presumably the signatures or owners' marks of previous owners.

The pounce or pin-dust that is found in copies of Margaret Cavendish's 1663 *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* (*PPO*) across Oxford is far more coarse than that found in the Folger's *Arcadia*. Figures 7 and 8, of manuscript corrections to *PPO* found in copies of New College and The Queen's College, respectively, show the thick, reflective grains that have been stuck to the ink. While New College and Queen's College have particularly encrusted manuscript corrections, pounce can be found sticking to corrections in at least nine of the copies held in various Oxford libraries, and nearly every copy of the 1663 *PPO* to be found in college libraries has uniform corrections.²⁵ We know that these copies exist across Oxford college libraries because they were donated by Cavendish; as William Poole notes, there is ample evidence that she had copies of her works (including her poems, plays, and natural philosophical treatises) deposited in the college libraries of Oxford, as well as in the Bodleian.²⁶ I have also found that she did the same in Cambridge, and that she had her books batch-bound before sending them to Oxford and Cambridge University college libraries, with matching bindings across colleges in each of the two universities (but, interestingly, varying bindings between the two universities: the uniform Oxford binding patterns are different from the uniform Cambridge binding patterns).²⁷ Cavendish, a prolific writer, understood that her writings—ambitious and sometimes controversial treatises, letters, plays, and orations, all written by a woman—were not always finding their ideal audiences in the middle of the seventeenth century; by depositing her works in college libraries, she ensured their survival until a more hospitable present.

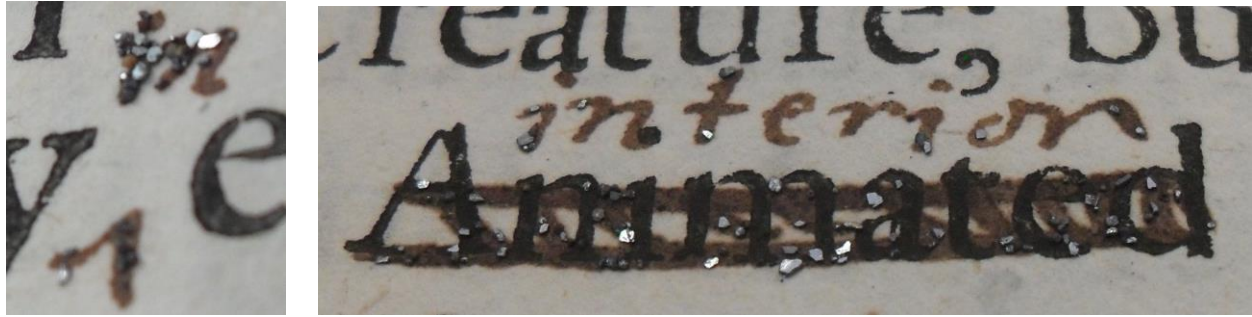
²³ Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* (London, 1598). The pounced copy is call number STC 22541 copy 2.

²⁴ More, *Democritus Platonissans*, p. 16.

²⁵ There are pounced corrections in the following Oxford college libraries: All Souls, Balliol, Corpus Christi, Herford, Jesus, Lincoln, Merton, New College, and Queen's. The following libraries have matching corrections, though no pounce: Brasenose, Christ Church, Magdalene, Pembroke, and St. John's. There are corrections in the Wadham college library copy of *PPO*, though they do not exactly match those in other colleges: they are made in a different hand, and the corrections vary from the patterns established in other Oxford copies.

²⁶ William Poole, '[Margaret Cavendish's Books in New College, and around Oxford](#)', *New College Notes* 6 (2015), no. 5, pp. 1–8. The Bodleian Benefactors' Register, volume 1, records a donation of eight works in 1667, including the 1663 *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* (Library Records b. 903, p. 404). This donation may have actually been made in 1668, as it includes the Latin translation of her biography of her husband, which was not published until 1668.

²⁷ This larger article on binding patterns is in development.



Figures 7 and 8: Manuscript corrections thickly encrusted with pounce, found in: Cavendish's *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* (London, 1663) in Oxford. Figure 7 © Courtesy of the Warden and Fellows of New College, Oxford; Figure 8 used by permission of the Provost and Fellows of The Queen's College Oxford.

Further, Cavendish ensured not merely the survival of her printed texts, but their survival in corrected form. The existence of pounce in so many matching copies across Oxford tells us that the pounced corrections were almost certainly done at the same time, by the same corrector, perhaps a secretary in the Cavendish household whose task it was to correct the books before she had them distributed to colleges across Oxford.²⁸ This practice of correcting books before distributing them as presentation copies was, as James Fitzmaurice has shown, typical for Cavendish, with several of her texts showing evidence of what he refers to as 'uniform hand correction, probably at the behest of the author'.²⁹ These uniform manuscript corrections, he notes, are to be found in seven of her publications, including the *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* of 1663.

The only copy of the 1663 *PPO* in college libraries without corrections is a duplicate *PPO* held at Queen's; the corrected copy at Queen's was the one donated by Cavendish, as is evident from that copy's donor inscription, in the hand of Thomas Barlow: 'Liber Bibliothecae Coll: Reg: Oxon ex dono Illustrissimae Heroinae Margaretae Nouo-Castrinsis Marchionessae. Anno. CIO. IOC. LXIII [1663]'.³⁰ That the second copy of the 1663 *PPO* at Queen's was perhaps acquired later than the other Cavendish texts is indicated by the history of call numbers recorded on pastedowns and flyleaves. Former call numbers in the Queen's College Library Cavendish books, crossed out on front pastedowns, include: 104/h/1 [*Philosophical Letters* (1664)], 104/h/2 [*Sociable Letters* (1664)], 104/h/3 [*Observations upon Experimental Philosophy and Blazing World* (1666)], etc.³¹ The *PPO* with the donor inscription has the former call number 104/h/5; the *PPO* without the donor inscription and without the uniform corrections has former call numbers 393.G.10, 32.ff.2, and 385.H.5.³² Clearly the corrected *PPO* was part of the original set donated by Cavendish, shelved together in the library.

The existence of pounce in so many copies, then, indicates corrections overseen or authorized by Cavendish, and perhaps also indicates that the corrector was in something of a hurry when making the corrections (as the pounce or pin-dust would be more likely to stick to ink if it was sprinkled immediately after writing, when the ink was still wet and absorbent). The rush may be

²⁸ I guess that the corrections originate from a secretary rather than from Cavendish herself because the hand of the corrector is nothing like her own, examples of which survive in the British Library, shelfmark Add MS 70499.

²⁹ James Fitzmaurice, 'Margaret Cavendish on Her Own Writing: Evidence from Revision and Handmade Correction', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 85 (1991), pp. 297–308; quotation from p. 305. This article is richly informative on larger patterns of manuscript correction across her works.

³⁰ The Queen's College Library, shelfmark PP.r.152, title page.

³¹ Their current call numbers are as follows: *Philosophical Letters*, PP.r.157; *Sociable Letters*, PP.r.155; *Observations*, PP.r.158.

³² The current call number of the uncorrected copy of *PPO* is PP.r.151.

understandable, as the corrector had several corrections to make in each volume. The Errata for *PPO*, found at the back of the volume, is long, with a total of seventy-eight changes recommended to make the text entirely correct. These corrections range from minor grammatical adjustments and tweaking of punctuation ('for *and* read *an*'; 'for *this, is* read *this is,*'), to modest substitutions ('for *Womb* read *Parts proper for it*'), to more significant and substantive alterations ('for *won* read *lost*'; 'for *Creature* read *Creator*'; 'for *ruggedness* read *smoothness*'). The corrections in Oxford copies roughly follow the Errata corrections, but in addition, the pouncing corrector consistently did *not* make two corrections suggested in the Errata, and, in each volume, made six additional corrections (on which, more below).

While the corrections I shall detail below are to be found in nearly all Oxford copies of the 1663 *PPO*, it is not clear that she had the corrections made in copies of the book that did not go to Oxford. In Fitzmaurice's article on hand correction in Cavendish books, he concludes that the lack of uniform corrections in *all* presentation copies of the 1663 *PPO* indicates that the volume may not 'have been as important to Cavendish as *Sociable Letters*, *The Life*, and *Plays* (1668)' (where corrections are far more frequently found, even in non-presentation copies).³³ It is interesting, however, that it is common to find corrections in copies of the 1663 *PPO* that did not originate from Cavendish or the corrector who uses pounce.

Extant copies of this work outside Oxford also have hand corrections, though they are inconsistent with those corrections made to Oxford texts: at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC, the Huntington Library in Pasadena, California, and the Harvard University Houghton Library in Cambridge, MA, presumably later readers have gone through and corrected those changes listed in the Errata. There are some variants: the corrector of the Huntington copy did not delete the word 'to' from page 37, and the corrector of the Folger copy did not bother changing the word 'rending' to its synonym 'renting' on page 40, or change the phrase 'make stop' to 'stop' on page 302.³⁴

Some later correctors also made additional modifications to fix the sense if the Errata corrections seem insufficient, or introduce new errors. The corrector of the Harvard copy deleted the 'ed' from 'Disordered' on p. 262, as the Errata suggests, and then additionally crossed out 'Reason' immediately after to make the sentence more coherent.³⁵ The Folger corrector also made additional modifications, adding a 'not' on page 306 to correct the sense, and changing 'Cough' to 'Coughs' on page 361. Though these latter changes do not match with or originate from the authorized Cavendish corrections of the Errata, they do show a trend of later readers wanting to work from a fully corrected version of the text, taking the time not only to correct the changes listed in the Errata but, in some cases, to make their own modifications. Even if Cavendish did not have corrections made in non-Oxford copies, later readers took her text seriously enough to make sure their text was accurate.

³³ Fitzmaurice, 'Margaret Cavendish', p. 306.

³⁴ The call numbers of the Huntington Library and Folger Shakespeare Library's copies are 120156 and 131-516f, respectively.

³⁵ The call number of the Harvard Houghton Library copy is Phil 294.4.

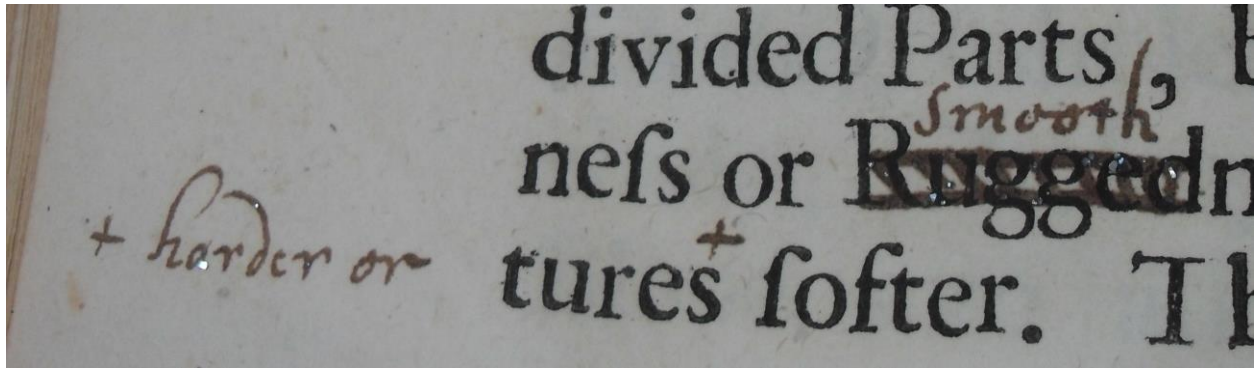


Figure 9: Corrections to Margaret Cavendish, *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* (London, 1663), p. 144. Shelfmark: BT3.25.12. © Courtesy of the Warden and Fellows of New College, Oxford.

(To better see the sparkle of the pounce, [click on Figure 9](#) to access a moving image.)

The patterns of correction in pounced copies of *PPO* in New College and other colleges around Oxford mainly incorporate changes from the Errata, but they also vary from the Errata. These variations are so consistent that they should allow a bibliographer or librarian with a corrected copy of *PPO* to tell if that copy's changes originated from Cavendish, or from a conscientious reader. Some of the variations are minor: for instance, no copy in Oxford has the correction listed for page 331, to change the chapter title 'Madness is not always about the Head' to 'Madness is not always in the Head'. Likewise minor, but consistent, is the variation on page 144. The Errata instructs the corrector, 'for *ruggedness* read *smoothness*' and 'read *softer or harder*'; the corrector, in every copy, instead inserts 'harder or' before 'softer', making the phrase read 'harder or softer' instead of 'softer or harder'. The image of the correction as found in New College's copy (Figure 9) usefully indicates some typical features of the pouncing corrector's hand, including their habit of deletion (two thick horizontal lines connected by diagonal lines between), their use of '+' to mark an insertion, and the swooping ascenders on their uncial 'd's—as well as the pounce stuck to the ink.

There are two other consistent changes where the corrector has addressed an error from the Errata, but not in the way the Errata demands. On page 306, Cavendish writes, in the original printing, 'Animals cannot Live without Air, although some think Fish do not, but I believe they do, for if Fish had no Air, they would Die'; the Errata instructs readers to delete 'not'. In Oxford copies, the corrector deletes 'not', but also adds a 'not' after the second 'do', so that the corrected phrase reads 'some think Fish do, but I believe they do not'.³⁶ On page 200, the word 'the' should be deleted twice (and is deleted twice in copies corrected by later readers), but is only deleted once in Oxford copies. This likely comes from a typo in the Errata: 'page 200. line 31 leave out *the*, *ibid.* line 28 leave out *the*'. The page only has 28 lines, and the first Errata entry should therefore read not 'line 31' but 'line 21'. While readers correcting their own copies work this out and make both deletions, the pouncing corrector does not delete the first 'the', which is before the word 'Degrees'.³⁷

Some of the corrector's changes are of more consequence. On sig. c4v, in a prefatory note to the reader, the original printing had the following sentence: 'Other Learned and Wise men have an Opinion, that Fire is only Motion without Substance, to which Opinion, when My Lord heard it, he answered, that if so, then an House when it is Burnt, cannot be said to be Burnt and Consumed by the Fire, but by a Substanceless motion'. The Errata asks the reader to delete the phrase 'without

³⁶ This addition is also found in the Folger Library's copy as well, as mentioned above, because otherwise the sentence would be nonsensical—this is, therefore, an instance of two separate correctors coinciding on a correction.

³⁷ In the Harvard Houghton Library copy (Phil 294.4), the corrector deletes the 'the' before 'Ebbing'.

Substance' after 'Motion', and to replace the word 'Substanceless' with 'violent'. In Oxford copies, the corrector makes these changes, and additionally inserts 'a violent' before 'Motion'. This change perhaps shows Cavendish, through her corrector, dialing back the polemics of the preface. Elsewhere in her natural philosophical works she attacks those who erroneously believe in immaterial substance, arguing that substance by definition must be material or physical, and repudiating dualism, the idea that the soul or mind might be immaterial. Here, however, she sidesteps this controversial argument, changing the discussion from the substance of matter, to the relationship between motion and matter.

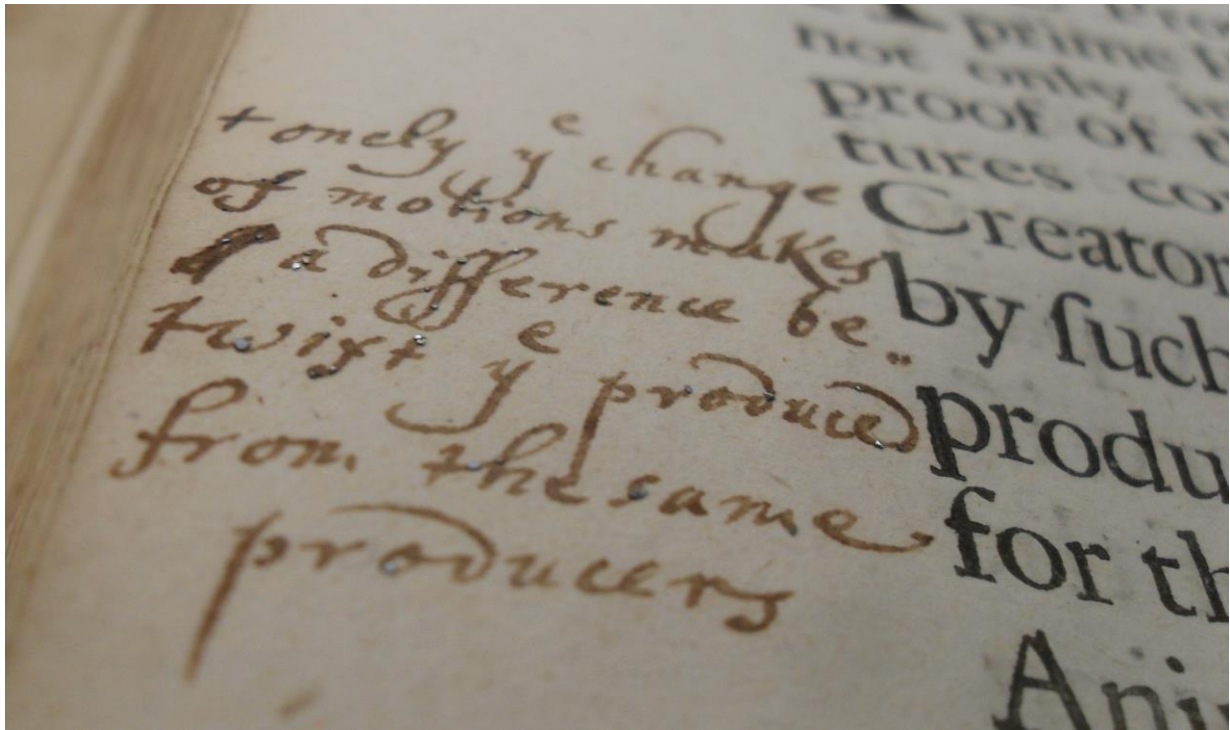


Figure 10: Addition to Margaret Cavendish, *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* (London, 1663), p. 22. Shelfmark: PP.r.152. Used by permission of the Provost and Fellows of The Queen's College Oxford.

The biggest difference between Oxford pounced copies and copies corrected by random readers is on page 22. The pouncing corrector deletes the word 'part' in the phrase 'in each part more or less', and also adds a long insertion; neither change is listed in the Errata. These changes are to chapter 21, 'That the Produced partakes of the Producer'; the chapter investigates the relationship between producers (for example, parents) and productions (for example, children), though she is interested in non-human, and even non-animate productions as well. The insertion is clearly required to make sense of the sentence it modifies; I give the (corrected) sentence in full, with the insertion italicized (the insertion is transcribed from the Queen's College copy, Figure 10, with abbreviations expanded):

ALL Produced Creatures partake of their prime Producers, of each ~~part~~ more or less, not only in Effect, but of Substance; and the proof of this is, that such a Creature or Creatures could not be Created but by the same Creators, *only the change of motion makes a difference betwixt the produced from the same producers*[,] otherwise the same Motions made by such Kind, Sort, or Degree of matter would produce the same Creature ...

The length of the insertion suggests that it re-supplies a line dropped from the manuscript in typesetting, and indeed it provides a crucial hinge between the sense of the first part of the sentence—about the necessary resemblance between creatures and their creators—and the second, which is about the fact that multiple children of the same parents will not be identical, because of a ‘change of motion’ in the process of (re)production. Given that the chapter is about reproduction(s) that never entirely match one another, it is a happy coincidence that in the New College Library’s copy, the manuscript insertion is nearly identical, except that the first word is not ‘onely’ but ‘but’.

In another chapter of her 1663 *Philosophical and Physical Opinions*, Cavendish reflects on two different kinds of luster: those objects that produce their own light out of themselves, and those that reflect the light of others. Expanding on this second kind, she writes, “These Shining Bodies, as Water, or Metall, or the like, are not perceived in the Dark, but when the Light is cast thereon, we do not onely perceive the Light, but their own natural Shining Quality by that Light”.³⁸ The pin-dust to be found in copies of this volume across Oxford colleges is this second kind of shining body, and with this quotation Cavendish emphasizes not the borrowed luster of these reflective surfaces, but the way they collaborate with the light given to them to reveal themselves more fully. The light that makes them shine reveals in them ‘their own natural Shining Quality’. The survival of so many copies of her 1663 *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* across Oxford colleges shows us that she intended to preserve her works, so that, as she hopefully speculated in 1666, ‘She may meet with an age where she will be more regarded, then she is in this’.³⁹ The pin-dust that sparkles up from the pages reminds us that she wanted that regard to focus on the meticulously corrected version of the text—and, like the shining bodies she discusses elsewhere in the treatise, those corrections, as well as the treatise as a whole, require light to shine. If more readers in Oxford crack open these fascinating volumes—which treat of such topics as living matter, the knowledge of animals and plants, and the infinite nature of the universe—perhaps we will at last be able to perceive ‘their own natural Shining Quality’.

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³⁸ Cavendish, *PPO*, pp. 121–22.

³⁹ Cavendish, *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* (London, 1666), sig. e1v; italics regularized.