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**ESTHER INGLIS: A FRANCO-SCOTTISH JACOBAN
WRITER AND HER *OCTONARIES UPON THE VANITIE
AND INCONSTANCIE OF THE WORLD*¹**

Jamie Reid Baxter

This article seeks to present Esther Inglis (c.1570-1624) as a Jacobean Franco-Scot and an author in the conventional, traditional sense. It is followed by the first-ever printed text of the *Octonaries upon the Vanitie and Inconstancie of the World*, fifty eight-line poems, translated in Edinburgh c.1600 from the French of Antoine de la Roche Chandieu (1534-1591). This Scottish translation is known only from three tiny illuminated manuscript books made by Esther Inglis.² This essay will argue that the translator-poet responsible for these impressively lyrical statements of Calvinist *contemptus mundi* was Inglis herself, and ask why, given the quality of the poetry of the *Octonaries*, this remarkable woman composed so little verse.

That Inglis was remarkable was acknowledged in her lifetime: the title of a prefatory sonnet by a mysterious G.D., which adorns the *Octonaries* manuscripts of 1607 and 1609, addresses her as “The only Paragon and matcheles Mistresse of the golden Pen.” That sonnet ends by acclaiming Inglis as no less than “Glore of thy sex and miracle to men” for the sheer quality of the work produced by the “draughts inimitable” of her “unmatched pen.”³ The 1607 *Octonaries* manuscript contains another

¹ I should like to thank Alison Adams, Anneke Bakker, Sajed Chowdury, Audrey Duru, François Rouget, Robert Giel, Alasdair Grant, Ciaran Jones, Bryan Maggs, Michael Riordan, Anne Scherman, Anders Toftgard and Timothy Wilks for generous help and providing information, images and copies of articles; the anonymous readers of an earlier version of this article; Georgianna Ziegler for unstintingly giving more help on all fronts than any author has any right to dream of; and the editor of *SSL* for his patience and encouragement.

² For a modern edition, see Antoine de Chandieu, *Octonaires sur la vanité et inconstance du monde*, ed. Françoise Bonali-Fiquet (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1979), hereinafter Bonali-Fiquet.

³ To marvel at the two manuscripts now in the Folger Library, which have been fully digitized, see <https://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/s/uk2p20> (Folger MS V.a.91), and <https://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/s/20wd7p> (Folger MS V.a.92). My

sonnet by G.D., this time in praise of religious faith, based on the name ESTHER INGLIS, anagrammatised as RESISTING HEL. Section IV below considers these sonnets and the other paratextual verse of one kind or another that features in no fewer than twenty-one of Inglis's sixty-odd known manuscripts. Some of the poems concerned are addressed to the various volumes' dedicatees, while others are written in praise of Inglis and her miraculous skills. Just as Inglis would recycle images, sentences and whole passages in her own prose dedications, so too she recycled several of the liminary verses composed by her French father, her Scottish husband, three leading Scottish clerical writers—and herself. For Esther Inglis was not merely the object of poetic attention: as we shall see, she was herself a writer in both French and in Scots/English.

Scotland currently houses fourteen of the sixty-odd extant works produced by Esther Inglis's "golden pen," brush and brain between 1586 and 1624. Yet to date this "mirakill to men" has had very little presence in the annals of Scottish culture, and none at all in the annals of Scottish literature.⁴ In fact, Scotland's sole published contributions to Inglis studies between David Laing's remarkable "Notes relating to Mrs Esther (Langlois or) Inglis," of 1865 and twenty pages on Inglis published in 2018 by Michael Bath seem to be the important but very different essays by Alison Saunders of Aberdeen University in 1992, and Marie-Claude Tucker in 2005.⁵ Regrettably, Saunders's groundbreaking essay seems to have gone unread by many of those who have written about Inglis's *Cinquante*

warm thanks to Patrick Johnson for photographing the third MS, NYPL Spencer Coll. MS. 14, for me: for a few of its still brilliantly-coloured leaves, see: <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47da-eae9-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>.

⁴ For holdings, see "Locations" on Georgianna Ziegler's "Esther Inglis Creative Woman" site: <https://estheringlis.com/ms-locations/>.

⁵ David Laing, "Notes relating to Mrs Esther (Langlois or) Inglis," *Proceedings of Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 6 (1865-66): 284-318; Michael Bath, *Emblems in Scotland: Motifs and Meanings* (Leiden and Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2018), 23-43; Alison Saunders, "Montenay comes to Edinburgh," in Alison Adams and A.J. Harper, eds, *The Emblem in Renaissance and Baroque Europe: Tradition and Variety: Selected Papers of the Glasgow International Emblem Conference 13-17 August 1990* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 132-53; Marie-Claude Tucker, "From Georgette de Montenay's *Emblemes ou devises chrestiennes* (1571, 1619) to Esther Inglis's *Emblemes chrestiens* (1624)," in Alasdair A. MacDonald and Kees Dekker, eds, *Rhetoric, Royalty and Reality: Essays on the Literary Culture of Medieval and Early Modern Scotland* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 165-95. While space precludes discussion here, subsequent writers have sometimes reiterated errors in the Tucker essay (as they have done errors in Laing, "Notes"). Tucker has also written at greater length in French about the *Emblemes*: see fn. 23 below.

emblemes chrestiens.⁶ Scotland can lay no claim to “Calligraphic Manuscripts of Esther Inglis (1571-1624): A Catalogue,” by Aydua Scott-Elliott and Elspeth Yeo (1990). Though Elspeth Yeo was attached to the National Library of Scotland, the epoch-making result of this transatlantic collaboration, from which entries are cited below in the text as “S-E & Y,” appeared in the *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*.⁷

Outwith Scotland, however, the combination of Inglis’s female sex, the identities of some of her dedicatees, and the quality of her handiwork as a calligrapher, limner and needlewoman has given rise to an ever-growing body of international scholarly writing.⁸ Serious scholarly effort has been

⁶ An exception is Georgianna Ziegler’s “Devising a Queen: Elizabeth Stuart’s Representation in the Emblematic Tradition,” *Emblematica*, 14 (2005): 155-79, citing Saunders on 168, fns.17 and 20.

⁷ Aydua Scott-Elliott and Elspeth Yeo, “Calligraphic Manuscripts of Esther Inglis (1571-1624): A Catalogue,” *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 84.1 (March 1990): 10-89. This catalogue’s chronological numbering of the then identifiable manuscripts from 1 to 55 has become the equivalent of the Bachwerkverzeichnis. Nicolas Barker used it for his “List of Manuscripts,” 86-118, inserting post-1990 discoveries in their correct chronological place as e.g. “48A”: see Nicolas Barker, ed., *Esther Inglis’s Les Proverbes de Salomon: a Facsimile* (Roxburgh Club, 2012). The S-E & Y numbers are also used in the most up-to-date and complete list of Inglis’s work, Georgianna Ziegler’s “Esther Inglis Creative Woman.” The *Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts 1450–1700* [CELM] has its own numbering system, but also provides S-E & Y numbers at the end of each alphabetical entry: <https://celm-ms.org.uk/authors/inglisesther.html>.

⁸ See, for example: Anneke Bakker, “Esther Inglis & Maurice of Nassau,” *Quaerendo*, 48.1 (2018): 39–76; Nicolas Barker, as in n. 7; Tricia Bracher “Esther Inglis and the English Succession Crisis of 1599,” in James Daybell, ed., *Women and Politics in Early Modern England, 1450-1700* (Aldershot, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), 132-146; Susan Frye, *Pens and Needles: Women's Textualities in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), ch. 2; Theresa D. Kemp, “Women’s Patronage-Seeking as Familial Enterprise: Aemilia Lanyer, Esther Inglis, and Mary Wroth,” *Literature Compass*, 4 (2007): 384-406: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-4113.2007.00415.x>; Sarah Gwyneth Ross, “Esther Inglis: Linguist, Calligrapher, Miniaturist, and Christian Humanist,” in Julie D. Campbell and Anne R. Larsen, eds, *Early Modern Women and Transnational Communities of Letters* (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 159-181; David Rundle, “Postcard from Harvard IX: The Genius of Esther Inglis,” web-site (2018): <https://bonaelitterae.wordpress.com/2018/05/23/postcard-from-harvard-ix/>; Anneke Tjan-Bakker, “Dame Flora’s Blossoms: Esther Inglis’s Flower-Illustrated Manuscripts,” *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700*, 9 (London: British Library, 2000): 49-72; Georgianna Ziegler, “More than Feminine Boldness’: The Gift Books of Esther Inglis,” in Mary E. Burke et al., eds, *Women, Writing, and the Reproduction of Culture in Tudor and Stuart Britain* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 19-37; Ziegler, “‘Hand-Ma[i]de Books’: The

put into expanding the scope of the word “author,” so as to attribute “authorship” to Inglis the calligrapher-copyist, self-portraitist and embroiderer, and some of her rhetorical strategies in her epistles dedicatory have been noted and highlighted in arguing for her authorial status. However, relatively little attention has been given to her own writings, least of all her poems, as *literary* artefacts. Even less attention has been paid to her Scottish context and background.

I. Jacobean Scotland 1567-1625, Jacobean Britain 1603-25

In 2005, Roderick Lyall commented on the

palpable need for scholars in English studies to recognise the ways in which the different cultures of Scotland and England before the death of Elizabeth [Tudor] combined to influence post-Union Jacobean Britain, and to begin to give writers within the Scottish tradition their due.⁹

International scholarship, however, continues to exhibit a marked tendency to take a wilfully unhelpful perspective on Jacobean Scots, both before and after 1603, by subsuming them under headings and book-titles involving the term “(Early Modern) England”—even on occasion simply labelling the Scots in question “Tudor” and “Elizabethan,” in flat contradiction of historical fact and cultural reality.¹⁰ The misrepresentation is systemic. The Name Authority File at the Library of Congress establishes the authoritative form for names used throughout American libraries, and its

Manuscripts of Esther Inglis, Early-Modern Precursors of the Artist’s Book,” *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700*, 9 (2000): 73-87; Ziegler, “Spotlight on a Calligrapher,” *The Collation* (Folger Library, February 2012): <https://collation.folger.edu/2012/02/spotlight-on-a-calligrapher/>; Ziegler, “A recently discovered Esther Inglis Manuscript,” *The Library*, 19.4 (December 2018): 490-499, on which see also Ziegler, “Princely New Year’s Gift? A Newly-Discovered Manuscript,” <https://collation.folger.edu/2017/01/princely-new-years-gift-newly-discovered-manuscript/>.

⁹ Roderick J. Lyall, *Alexander Montgomerie : Poetry, Politics and Cultural Change in Jacobean Scotland* (Tempe, AZ : Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies: 2005), 348-49.

¹⁰ A google-search for “Esther Inglis” or “Elizabeth Melville,” to look no further, will provide many examples. Diarmaid MacCulloch’s preface to Miles Kerr-Peterson, ed., *James VI and I, Collected Essays by Jenny Wormald* (Edinburgh : Birlinn, 2021) should be required reading for anyone writing about the Jacobean epoch. New York’s Metropolitan Museum October 2022–January 2023 exhibition “The Tudors: Art and Majesty in Renaissance England” contained an exhibit labelled “Edinburgh, 1600,” namely an Inglis manuscript (S-E & Y, no. 12) with no connection whatever to the English dynasty.

influence has spread. As a result, the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) and its electronic offspring, Early English Books Online (EEBO), as well as the British Library identify the Scottish poet-king who published *Ane Schort Treatise conteining some Reulis and Cautelis to be observit and eschewit in Scottis poesie* in 1584 as “James I, King of England, 1566-1625,” a sad epitaph on that monarch’s “Britannic” vision, and his dream of a new entity called “Great Britain.”¹¹ Such consistent misrepresentation of the politico-cultural facts erects real barriers to proper understanding, assessment and interpretation of Scottish Jacobean, including Esther Inglis. Her very name embodies the whole problem *in parvo*: many solemn scholarly words have been devoted to pointless speculation about the supposed implications of her lifelong eschewal of the surname of her husband Bartilmo (Bartholomew) Kello (1563-1631). The simple reality is that until well into the eighteenth century, Scotswomen never used their husbands’ names.¹² *Pace* ESTC and many modern writers and online databases, early modern Scotswomen should never have their husbands’ surnames arbitrarily and ahistorically imposed on them.¹³

Scotland’s Jacobean age began with the coronation of the “cradle-king” at Stirling on 29 July 1567.¹⁴ Just how deeply rooted Inglis was in the long Scottish Jacobean epoch is fully revealed by the non-authorial liminary verse considered in section IV below. All of this verse was written by Scots, with the exception of some epigrams by her French father, and the

¹¹ *Ane Schort Treatise* is in *Essayes of a Prentise in the divine art of poesie* (Edinburgh, 1584). For treatises supporting Great Britain written at the time see Bruce Galloway, *The Union of Scotland and England 1603-1608* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1986), and Paul J. McGinnis and Arthur Williamson, *The British Union: A Critical Edition and Translation of David Hume of Godscroft's De Unione Insulae Britannicae* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); and Arthur Williamson, *Scottish National Consciousness in the Age of James VI* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1979).

¹² This point was noted in 1865 by David Laing “Notes,” 284-318, and reiterated in 1990 by S-E & Y, 12, fn.5, in 2012 by Barker, 37, and by Bath, *Emblems*, 27 and 41. Bath’s related discussion (pp.38-41) of the emblematic drawing that Inglis made in 1622 for the Earl of Mar and his wife Marie Stewart (S-E & Y no.52) throws a spotlight on another egregious example of the cavalier dismissiveness with which Scottish realities are generally treated. Despite the unequivocal clarity of Inglis’s written dedication, it was anciently misidentified as “Mary, Queen of Scots” (apparently the only Marie Stewart ever to have existed). Long lost to sight, it continued to be identified with the Catholic queen after its recovery in 1995.

¹³ The major exception is the poet Lilius Skene (1626/7- 1697), née Gillespie, whose deliberate, English-style use of her Aberdonian husband’s name may be linked with the couple’s adoption of Quakerism, imported from England.

¹⁴ The king so describes himself in a late poem: James Craigie, ed., *Poems of James VI of Scotland*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: STS, 1955-58), II: 182, l.135; and see also:

http://www.earlystuartlibels.net/htdocs/spanish_match_section/Nvi1.html.

French-language sonnet signed “Velde,” discussed in section IV below.¹⁵ Likewise, the (imperfectly) anglicised orthography of Inglis’s non-French-language epistles dedicatory should not blind or deafen us to the Scots usages that abound in them: the bilingual Inglis’s second language was Scots, not English.¹⁶ Published scholarship since 1990 has not exactly concerned itself overmuch with the various Scottish contexts of Inglis’s life and work as a lifelong subject of James VI.¹⁷ She has generally been looked at through a London lens, and an anachronistically *English* London at that, not James VI and I’s Britannic capital. Inglis was based in London and rural Essex near Chelmsford between 1604 and early summer 1615, before returning north; and she dedicated many of her productions, throughout her life, to English members of the Britannic ruling elite.¹⁸ But the Jacobean term “Britain” was not an interchangeable synonym for “England” as it is today (except in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).

The historian Keith Brown wrote in 1993 that:

to describe James VI and I’s court or Charles I’s court simply as the English court is quite wrong, and historians who have done so and who discuss it in these terms are making a grave error. This was a British imperial court in which Scottish and Irish elites constituted a sizeable minority, and their impact ought to be recognised at least as much as the second-rate English poets and royal servants who receive so much recognition from historians. But this is a historiographical tradition with a long past... the Scottish presence did decline after the first few years of union. But the Scots did not disappear, and to imagine that their presence at court made no difference to politics, policy or the public culture of early seventeenth-century Britain is a grave error.¹⁹

Esther Inglis, the highly educated daughter of a Huguenot schoolmaster, was not a member of the Scottish “elite,” but the man she described as “the right honorable my very especiall good Mecoenas,” the courtier-poet Sir David Murray (1567-1629), most certainly was a member of the *élite*.²⁰

¹⁵ Nicolas Anglois contributed an elegiac tetrastich paying tribute to his daughter’s calligraphic mastery to three of Esther’s earliest productions, including her *Discours de la foy*, dated 1 January 1591 (S-E & Y no.3), to which he also contributed nine elegiac couplets addressed to Elizabeth Tudor.

¹⁶ See the latter part of Section V below.

¹⁷ In “Inglis and Maurice of Nassau” (2018 : n. 8 above), esp. pp. 55-56, Anneke Bakker provided new biographical and prosopographical detail from Scottish archival sources.

¹⁸ For details, see <https://estheringliscreativewoman.wordpress.com/dedicatees/>.

¹⁹ Keith M. Brown, “The Scottish aristocracy, anglicization and the court, 1603–1638,” *Historical Journal*, 36 (1993): 543–676 (575).

²⁰ *The Psalmes of David* (1612), S-E & Y, no.38.

From 1594, he was a key figure in the life and household of the heir to the throne, Prince Henry Frederick, to whom Inglis dedicated five extant volumes, those of 1612 being dedicated to the “Prince of Great Britain”. Prince Charles was likewise so designated in 1615. David Murray had described himself as a “Scoto-Brittane” on the title page of his 1611 London publication *Sophonisba*, dedicated to Prince Henry. At New Year 1615, Inglis’s *Pseaumes de David. Escrits a Londres* were gifted “A trehaut tresexcellant et trespuissant Prince Iaques Roy de la Grande Bretagne.” That same spring, in the copy she made of John Taylor’s *Thumb Bible* of 1614, she replaced the printed preliminary verses with her own, but she retained Taylor’s postliminary verse prayer that God would “preserve and keep the race of Royall IAMES / That Britaines Throne for euer may be sure / Of one of them / whil’st Sunne & moone endur.” (S-E & Y no.46).²¹ *Verbum Sempiternum*, “Written at London ... April 1615,” was probably the final product of her eleven years furth of Scotland. In 1624, she again refers to Charles as “Prince of Great Britaine” in both a book of psalms and *Cinquante emblemes chrestiens*, in which latter James was “King of Great Brittan, France, and Irland” (S-E & Y nos.53 and 54).

The *Emblemes* also include her final dedication to Sir David Murray, namely that of the fiftieth and final emblem, “Hec est victoria quae vicit/ Ceste foy haute est victorieuse du monde,” celebrating his triumphant adherence to the true Calvinist faith for the duration of the threat of the “Spanish Match” of Prince Charles with the Infanta, which had so alarmed Europe’s protestants (S-E & Y nos. 34, 38 and 40).²² It was in London and rural Essex, however, that Inglis had years earlier created the three extant volumes she dedicated to Murray. Two of them include substantial, highly personal epistles dedicatory, which reveal not only the strength of the spiritual friendship (as presbyterian correlative) that bound writer and dedicatee, but also the quality and intrinsic interest of Inglis’s prose. Yet Inglis was for many years not classed as a writer at all: “Inglis elle-même n’était pas une femme de lettres,” declared Marie-Claude Tucker in 2006.²³ The revised *ODNB* entry likewise describes Inglis only as a “calligrapher,” while the online *Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts 1450-1700* prefaces its alphabetical listing of her known manuscript productions thus:

With Esther Inglis we stretch the boundaries of literature and

²¹ S-E & Y no.46. [https://iif.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:51608558\\$21i](https://iif.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:51608558$21i). Inglis’s verses are now damaged and incomplete.

²² The emblem is no.6 in Montanay; the motto is I John 5:4.

²³ Marie-Claude Tucker, “Un Emprunt à portée théologico-politique,” in Marie Coulton, ed., *Emprunt, plagiat, réécriture aux XVe, XVIe, XVIIe siècles: pour un nouvel éclairage sur la pratique des Lettres à la Renaissance* (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses univ. Blaise Pascal, 2006), 343.

authorship to include in CELM one of the most remarkable calligraphers of her time, one who, however, did probably contribute to some of the verses that appear in her manuscripts, and it has been argued that her products are in a sense professional publications.²⁴

By 2018, Margaret J.M. Ezell was able to welcome the fact that views of Inglis had changed, although

until very recently, she has not been perceived as being part of a woman's literary tradition, in part because of the type of writing she did, and in part because of the ways in which her writings have been contextualised.²⁵

The change of attitude was demonstrated in 2009 by Sarah G. Ross's convincing re-categorising of Inglis as an "artist-intellectual."²⁶

Missing from this reassessment, however, has been Inglis's Scottish Jacobean identity. Jacobean Scotland, before and after 1603, was a country and society very different from its southern neighbour, and Inglis arrived in Scotland as a very small child. She lived in Edinburgh until she was about thirty-three and was perfectly bilingual. Certainly, with James VI's accession to the throne of England in 1603, she and her husband, like so many other Scots inspired by the royal vision of a new "Great Britain," followed their king to London. But the couple returned to Scotland in the summer of 1615, when their son Samuel matriculated at Edinburgh University (though Samuel would spend his long adult life in England as rector of the Suffolk rural parish of Spexhall from 28 December 1621 to his death in 1680).²⁷ As far as we know, Inglis then remained in Edinburgh, with her husband and their daughters Ester, Elizabeth and Marie, until her death on 30 August 1624.²⁸ The Scots sonnets and Latin

²⁴ Elspeth Yeo, "Inglis [married name Kello], Esther," *ODNB* (2004): <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15292> ("Kello" should not, of course, have appeared in the entry header); Peter Beal, "Esther Inglis: Introduction," *CELM: Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts 1450-1700* (University of London, 2005-2013): <https://celm-ms.org.uk/introductions/InglisEsther.html>.

²⁵ Margaret J. M. Ezell, "Invisibility Optics: Aphra Behn, Esther Inglis and the Fortunes of Women's Works," in Patricia Phillippy, ed., *A History of Early Modern Women's Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 39.

²⁶ Sarah G. E. Ross, "Esther Inglis: Linguist" (n. 8 above); and Sarah G. Ross, *The Birth of Feminism: Woman as Intellect in Renaissance Italy and England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 250-61.

²⁷ R. Freeman Bullen, "Sequestrations in Suffolk," *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History*, 19.1 (Ipswich: W.E. Harrison, 1925): 51.

²⁸ Samuel visited Edinburgh at some unknown date in the mid-1630s to try to protect his unfortunate sister Marie from her violent and appallingly abusive husband, the merchant Patrick Ainslie, who called his wife "a priests get," *inter*

verses written for and addressed to her demonstrate how deeply implicated she was in Scottish intellectual circles in the late 1590s, as will be shown in section IV below. And it was in Edinburgh that she began her long engagement with the two French-language texts she most frequently calligraphed—fifteen known copies of Pibrac’s *Quatrains* and ten of Chandieu’s *Octonaires sur la vanité et inconstance du monde*.

II. Inglis the Huguenot Refugee

Esther’s parents, Nicolas Anglois [or Langlois] and Marie Presot, fled religious persecution in late 1569 (or very early 1570), well before the St Bartholomew’s Eve massacres that began in Paris on 24 August 1572.²⁹ The Returns of Aliens in “the Ward of Faringdon in the parish of Blackfriars” in London, drawn up on 10 November 1571 record that:

Nicholas Inglishe, Frenchman, scoolemaster, howsholder, Marye his wife, and David his sonne and Yester hys daughter, came into this realme about two yeares past for religion.³⁰

Since Esther Inglis stated thrice in 1624 (before 5th May) that this was “the fiftie three yeer of hir age,” it is often taken as read that she was born in London in 1571.³¹ Her 1624 phrasing is such that it is difficult to be

alia. Ainslie spat in Marie’s face in Samuel’s presence and threatened to kill him if reproved: *Register of the Scottish Privy Council*, ser. 2, vol. 7, 1638-1643 (Edinburgh: H.M. General Register House, 1906), 40-42 (40).

²⁹ Esther used the form ‘Langlois’ only in three early manuscripts (S-E & Y nos. 1, 3 and 4).

³⁰ R.E.G. Kirk and E.F. Kirk, eds, *Returns of Aliens dwelling in the city and suburbs of London, from the reign of Henry VIII to that of James I*, in *Publications of the Huguenot Society of London*, 10, no.2 (Aberdeen: The University Press, 1902): 15.

³¹ See S-E & Y nos.53 (“in the fiftie three yeere of hir age at Edenbrough the V.March”), 54 (“l’an de mon aage cinquante et trois”) and 55 (“in the fiftie three yeer of hir age at Edenbrugh the V. of May”); no.54 is the *Cinquante emblemes chrestiens* created between 1622 and 1624 for Prince Charles, and completed before the fall of Sir Lionel Cranfield in April-May 1624 (he was imprisoned on 13 May); see Alison Saunders, “Montenay comes to Edinburgh,” 138. The volume might already have been in London when Cranfield was excised, e.g., by Sir David Murray, whom I believe to have had a great deal of input into the *Cinquante emblemes*, going far beyond simply keeping Inglis supplied with up-to-date details of rapidly shifting governmental and courtly hierarchies down in London between 1622 and May 1624. I am very grateful to Timothy Wilks for providing me with documentary proof that Murray’s main place of residence after his fall from office in 1613, and into the 1620s, continued to be London, rather than rural Gorthy in Perthshire.

absolutely certain whether she was only *in* her fifty-third year in May 1624, or would actually be turning fifty-four later that year. Furthermore, “about two years past” from 10 November 1571 is an approximate formulation, and a London birth does not square at all with statements Esther Inglis made early in her adult life. In her fourth-earliest surviving manuscript, *De la grandeur de Dieu* (1592) she unequivocally identifies herself as “fille françoise, de Dieppe;” and nine years later, in the dedication of her 1601 *Livre d’Ecclesiaste* to Catherine de Parthenay, Vicomtesse de Rohan, she describes herself as “françoise, privee de l’air naturel de ma naissance des mon fort jeune aage et menee par deça en Escosse,” phraseology which places her birth in France and entirely elides the spell she had unquestionably spent in London as an infant.³² The most likely explanation is that she was born in Dieppe in 1570 (or even 1571), because for whatever reason, her mother was in Dieppe at the time, and that Marie Presot fled France with the infant immediately thereafter.³³

Dieppe was the port of preference for Scots entering and leaving France, and there was a resident Scottish merchant presence in the town. In the early months of 1559, a temporary but influential resident was John Knox (c.1513-1572), the Scottish reformer, and it is not impossible that the young Nicolas Anglois had known him personally, for Knox officiated as minister of the then pastor-less local Huguenot community. He greatly increased the size of Dieppe’s Huguenot flock, with which he long kept in touch, imbuing it with his own absolute rejection of any idea of pragmatic compromise with Catholicism.³⁴ After the town’s protestant governor M.de la Curaye was replaced on 3 August 1563 by René de Beauxoncles, sieur de Sigognes (d.1582), Dieppe’s by then numerous Huguenots were persecuted with growing severity (albeit mostly bloodlessly). Eventually, Sigognes was in a position to impose forcible Catholic baptism in 1568,

³² “a Frenchwoman, deprived of the natural air of my birth(place) from a very early age and brought over here to Scotland.”

³³ No record of Nicolas or Marie in Dieppe has so far come to light, but “Langlois/Anglois” is an eminently Norman name. The pastor Jean/Jacques Langlois, murdered with so many other protestants at Lyons on the night of Thursday 28 August 1572, was of Norman origin: see Simon Goulart, *Mémoires de l’Etat de France*, 3 vols (Meidelbourg [Geneva]: Heinrich Wolf, 1577), I: 477.

³⁴ Guillaume et Jean Daval, *Histoire de la Réformation à Dieppe, 1557-1657*, 2 vols (Rouen: Imprimerie de Espérance Cagniard, 1878-1879), II: 10-11; Jean-Antoine-Samson Desmarquets, *Mémoires chronologiques pour servir à l’histoire de Dieppe, et à celle de la Navigation française*, 2 vols (Paris: Desauges, 1785), I:148-49, 210.

and many Huguenots left the town; public psalm-singing in Dieppe would be banned in 1571.³⁵

Whether or not he ever met Nicolas Anglois in Dieppe, John Knox was unquestionably very well acquainted with the man who would welcome the Anglois family to Scotland at some point before August 20 1574: David Lindsay (1531-1613), minister of Leith. Lindsay was a fluent French speaker, who had imbibed his protestantism during his pre-Reformation travels in France and Switzerland, where he is thought to have met Knox. Both men were among the original twelve pastors nominated in 1560 by the newly-established Reformed Kirk to minister in the “chief places in Scotland,” Lindsay in Leith and Knox in neighbouring Edinburgh.³⁶

The term “Lislebourg,” used by Inglis in virtually all the French-language manuscripts she wrote in Scotland, generally meant both Edinburgh and the wealthy neighbouring seaport of Leith.³⁷ It would seem that the Anglois family arrived by sea.³⁸ In a calligraphed letter penned by Marie Presot, dated 24 August 1574, Nicolas Anglois apologises to David Lindsay, minister of Leith, for the considerable delay in thanking him properly “for the care you have so kindly taken in our affairs, kindest of men.”³⁹

The letter is a real display piece, featuring several types of hand. Like any Renaissance schoolmaster, Nicolas Anglois was able to turn an elegant neo-Latin epigram when required; as could his Edinburgh graduate son David.⁴⁰ Anglois addresses two epigrams to Lindsay and comments that he

³⁵ See the relevant section of Aristide Guilbert, *Histoire des Villes de France* (Paris : Perotin, 1853-1859) ; Daval, I: 56 *et seq.*, and especially 87-107; Amable Floquet, *Histoire du Parlement de Normandie*, 7 vols (Rouen: Édouard Frère, 1840-1843), III: 26-52; Desmarquets, I: 210, 222-26.

³⁶ David Calderwood, *History of the Kirk of Scotland*, ed. Thomas Thomson, 8 vols (Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1842-49), II: 11, 44-45.

³⁷ T.G.Law, “Lislebourg and Petit Leith,” *Scottish Historical Review*, 1 (October 1903): 19-26.

³⁸ There is much information about the family, though incomplete and sometimes seriously inaccurate, in David C.A. Agnew, *Protestant Exiles from France*, 3rd ed., 2 vols ([Edinburgh]: for private circulation, 1886), I: 102-05, heavily based on David Laing, “Notes”.

³⁹ Newberry Library Wing MS ZW 543 .P922. Original reproduced in Barker, 34-35, partly translated on 33.

⁴⁰ For David Inglis, see the *Album amicorum* of Michael Balfour of Burlie and Balfargvie (National Library of Scotland, MS 16000), f.80. David (d. October 1602) graduated from Edinburgh in July 1588 (David Laing, *A Catalogue of the Graduates in the Faculties of Arts, Divinity, and Law, Of the University of Edinburgh, Since Its Foundation* (Edinburgh, 1858), 9), from the class of Mr Adam Colt, a future close associate of Andrew Melville: Hew Scott, *et al.*, eds, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ*, 8 vols (Edinburgh : Oliver and Boyd, 1915), I:135. David

is writing on the second anniversary of the St Bartholomew's Eve massacre of 24 August 1572. The letter's second, equally-calligraphic, page comprises copies of three poems printed in 1573, commemorating the massacre.⁴¹

Leith is where Inglis would die on 30 August 1624; her testament describes her as spouse of Bartilmo Kello "indwellar in Leyth."⁴² But she had grown up in Edinburgh proper. On 20 August 1574, no less a figure than Scotland's Clerk-Register, James McGill of Rankeillour Nether, appeared before the baillies and council of Edinburgh, and told them that "thair wes cumming [i.e. had come] to this toun of excellent leirnyng fair writteris and expert in the art of arithmetic, quha were willing to teche ane Franche scole," and who wanted only a rent-free "commodius hous." As early as 3 September, the town appointed "*blank* Frencheman, wrytar... to remayne within this toune and teche the youth thairof." The council stated that he would "haif for every bairn in the yeir twenty-fyve shillingis, together with twenty pundis yeirlie," and they would install him and his wife in Alexander Udward's "hous at the New Well" from Martinmas (11 November).⁴³ Presumably David Lindsay of Leith had been in contact with

died unmarried in October 1602, and whatever his unknown profession, the inventory found in his testament dative of 2 March 1603 (NRS CC8/8/37/545), drawn up by Esther, is startlingly sumptuous.

⁴¹ All three poems are anonymous in Presot's manuscript, but were ascribed to S.S.A.M., N.C.M., and TH.B.V. respectively in *Illustrium aliquot Germanorum carminum liber de immanissima summéque miseranda Christianorum laniena ab impiis & crudelissimis Galliae Tyrannis, Lutetiae Parisiorum, Lugduni item, aliisque eiusdem regni locis truculentissimè sceleratissimeque patrata ... Una cum Epicædiis et Epitaphiis quibusdam praestantissimi Heroi D.Gasparis Colligni* (Vilna [Basel], 1573) 22-24. Anglois quotes much of the first part of the title in his letter to Lindsay. N.C.M. is demonstrably Nathan Chytraeus Menzingius, since the epitaph 'Quis situs hic?' is almost identical with two (for quite different individuals) in *Poematum Nathanis Chytraei praeter sacra omnium libri septendecim* ([Rostock]: [Stephan Möllemann], 1579), "Tristia. II," ff. 297r and 299r/v. TH.B.V. is almost certainly not Theodorus Beza Vezelii: the six-line epitaph "*Ille Dei miles iacet Amirallius ...*" first appeared anonymously in a 1572 ?Basel broadsheet. On its next appearance in print, in either 1572 or 1573, the poem was attributed to T.H.B.V., not TH.B.V. After the 1573 *Illustrium aliquot Germanorum* printing, the epitaph had a long but entirely anonymous life ahead of it in German chronicles. It was not, however, included by Simon Goulart in his large selection of St. Barthélemy verse in *Mémoires de l'Estat de France sous Charles IX* (Meidelberg: Henry Wolf, 1578), although he did include Nathan Chytraeus's "Quis situs hic?" and one or two other short poems from *Illustrium aliquot Germanorum*.

⁴² Barker, 37.

⁴³ *Extracts from the Burgh Records of Edinburgh, A.D.1573-1589*, vol. 4 (Edinburgh: for the Scottish Burgh Records Society, 1882), 21 and 23. There are

McGill, the Clerk-Register, whose wife Janet Adamsoun had been one of John Knox's "sweet sisters" well before the Reformation of 1560.

David Lindsay had a most distinguished career ahead of him, "greatly favoured of the king" as he was.⁴⁴ *Inter alia* he would celebrate the king's marriage in Oslo in 1589, co-officiate at Anna's coronation in May 1590, and baptise Prince Charles at Holyroodhouse in late December 1600.⁴⁵ The skilled penmanship of this letter also indicates that Esther would have received her early calligraphic training from her mother: Peter Young's catalogue of the library of his youthful pupil King James notes "Deux petits livres escrits a la main par Marie Prisot," now alas lost, presented sometime in 1576, quite possibly as a New Year's gift, by Prisot herself.⁴⁶

further references to the French school on pages 77 (June 1578), 133 (December 1579), 199 (March 1581) and 554 (June 1580); only the last seems to have been noted by earlier scholars. It names Anglois (and also mentions the regular council payment for the rent of Alexander Udward's house, thus retrospectively confirming the unnamed schoolmaster of the earlier references). Anglois clearly enjoyed some sort of standing with the Crown, given that in March 1579, the royal treasurer paid Anglois and Presot the considerable sum of £70 "for their help and releif of sum debt contractit be them in 1578" (see David Laing, "Notes," 285).

⁴⁴ John Spottiswoode, *History of the Church of Scotland*, ed. Michael Russell and Mark Napier, 3 vols (Spottiswoode Society, 1847-1851), III: 220. Spottiswoode, Lindsay's son-in-law, noted *ibid.* that Lindsay was "nobly born and a brother of the house of Edzell," *i.e.* a close relative of the ninth Earl of Crawford.

⁴⁵ Charles's godmothers were two Franco-Scottish daughters of Esmé Stuart, first Duke of Lennox, the protestant Marie, countess of Mar and the catholic Henrietta, marchioness of Huntly, while the two godfathers were also siblings, none other than the sons of Catherine de Parthenay, the leading Huguenot peer, Henri, Duc de Rohan, and his brother, Monsieur de Soubise; see Henry Cantrell, *The Royal Martyr A True Christian* (London: Mortlock, 1716), 43-44, and the account by Pauline Gregg, *King Charles I* (London: J.M.Dent, 1981), 4-5 and 452; additional sources in Jack Alden Clarke, *Huguenot Warrior: The Life and Times of Henri de Rohan 1579-1638* (Springer Netherlands: 1967), 14-15. To Rohan, Esther Inglis dedicated *Les Quatrains du Sieur de Pybrac, gentilhomme françois, Escrit en diverses sortes de lettres*, dated 30 and 31 December 1600; the volume is reported to be in unknown private hands in the US, rendering the epistle dedicatory inaccessible. When dedicating *Les Proverbes du Roy Salomon* to Rohan three months later, on 1 April 1601, she would write that "Il a pleu à votre Excellence me prometre si aimablement vostre faveur et assistance en quelque chose que i'auroye affaire, aussi bien en ce pais d'Escosse qu'en france" (S-E & Y, 45), wording which indicates that they had actually conversed in Edinburgh. It should always be borne in mind that the Scottish capital was very small, and the Scottish court remarkably informal.

⁴⁶ Alexandra Plane has kindly shared convincing arguments that Barker (p. 37) was misled as to the donor of these books by the printed text of Young's catalogue; see her "The Library of King James VI," in Daryl Green, Alastair Mann, Joseph

In any case, the *petits livres* provide a definite link with the royal establishment. These very early Anglois family connections with the high-ranking figures of Lindsay and McGill and with the royal library raise the intriguing possibility that Esther Inglis may later have had access to and even studied with the virtuoso royal scribe John Geddie, who himself had studied in France at some point before 1586, and had a strong connection with the Huguenot stronghold, La Rochelle.⁴⁷ Inglis certainly seems to have had access to Geddie's royal gift manuscript *Methodi, sive compendii mathematici... libri quatuor* of 1586, since several striking and distinctive decorative features found in it also appear in Esther's early manuscripts, and to date have been found nowhere else.⁴⁸

That David Lindsay preserved the Anglois-Presot letter is evidence that its creators mattered to him. But no matter how useful the Anglois family's

Marshall and Emily Wingfield, eds., *Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland, vol.1: Medieval to 1707* (Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming 2024).

⁴⁷ Geddie was clearly close to François Baudouin (Franciscus Bodoinus), a *rochelais* grandee (*pair*), baillie (*échevin*) and judge (*conseiller au Présidial*), who addressed two Latin poems to the Scotsman, one of them prefacing the *Methodi sive compendii mathematici*. For a usefully complete account of what little is known about Geddie, see Sebastian Verweij, *Literary Culture of Early Modern Scotland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 93-100. However, Verweij did not identify "Bodoinus," so some of his remarks (and translations) need fine-tuning and revision. Baudouin also knew later Scots visitors to La Rochelle; he wrote a liminary verse for the cleric George Thomson's translation of John Napier's *Plaine Discoverie of the Whole Revelation*, and had himself been the dedicatee of both a poem and a prose tract by Mark Alexander Boyd; see Ian Cunningham, "Marcus Alexander Bodius, Scotus," in L.A.J.R. Houwen, A.A. Macdonald, and S.L. Mapstone, eds, *A Palace in the Wild* (Leuven : Peeters, 2000), 161-74 (162-65).

⁴⁸ <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/photographs/item/methodi-sive-compendii-mathematici-by-john-geddy/762161>. For discussion of this sadly little-known calligraphic masterpiece, see Alex D.D.Craik, "A Book for the King: John Geddy's *Methodi sive compendii mathematici* (1586)," in *BSHM Bulletin: Journal of the British Society for the History of Mathematics*, 30.2 (2015): 113-30. The historiated majuscules "M" and "O" found in Esther's 1599 epistles dedicatory to Elizabeth Tudor, Bacon, Essex and Maurice of Nassau, which have been written about by both Georgianna Ziegler in "Hand-Ma[i]de Books," 79, and Anneke Bakker in "Esther Inglis & Maurice of Nassau," 56, are found in Geddie's *Methodi sive compendii....* (which also features a historiated "E," and the letter "I" in three different historiatiions). Not only is the leafy border around Geddie's title page reproduced by Inglis on the title page of the 1599 *Proverbs* (S-E & Y no. 9, dedicated to the Earl of Essex), but sections of that framework, like the scrollwork heading Geddie's dedication to James VI, appear as dividers between sections of text in many of her Scriptural manuscripts, not merely those of 1599. The historiated 'M' would make a rather etiolated reappearance in Inglis's *Cinquante emblemes chrestiens* of 1624 (S-E & Y no.54, dedicated to Prince Charles).

acquaintance with the well-connected Lindsay, they were not parishioners of his down in Leith, but of James Lawson (1538-1584) and his colleagues John Durie and Walter Balcanquhall at the High Kirk (St Giles).⁴⁹ For the “commodius house ... at the New Well” was in the center of Edinburgh, on the corner of Horse Wynd (now Guthrie Street) and the Cowgate, in the “southwest quarter” of the burgh. The school was a success. By December 1581, Nicolas Anglois’ school had made such an impact that the young king granted him an annual pension of £100. James VI had formally moved his residence to Edinburgh with his *Joyeuse Entrée* of 19 October 1579, in the company of his recently-arrived French cousin Esmé Stuart, seigneur d’Aubigny, the first of the king’s favourites, and the only one for whom he created and published a poetic monument, *Ane Metaphoricall Invention of a Tragedie Called Phoenix* (1584). From the outset, the Kirk regarded Esmé with enormous suspicion, convinced that he was an agent of the Catholic Guise interest at the French court.⁵⁰ The theologically trained king undertook Esmé’s conversion, with the aid of none other than David Lindsay of Leith.⁵¹ The most famous result was the rabidly anti-Catholic “Negative Confession” signed in Edinburgh by the king, Lennox and a host of other courtiers on 28 January 1581.⁵²

Edinburgh was very small, and the conferral in December 1581 of a royal pension on Nicolas Anglois, a Huguenot refugee from Catholic persecution, will have been noted by the city’s close-knit burghal society and its kirkmen. Indeed, the pension may have been a public relations gesture intended to counter the rumors of Esmé Stuart’s Catholic mission. The letter conferring the pension makes fascinating reading. Ignoring the family’s years in London, it says that Nicolas, “upoun ane ardent zeale borne be him to the trew religioun of Christ, then persecutit maist crewellie be the inemyes thair of within the cuntrie of his nativitie, retirit him and his familie within this realme.” The pension was awarded, firstly, in

⁴⁹ *Fasti*, I: 51-52, 125. These three men were all militantly anti-episcopal presbyterians and close friends of Andrew Melville and his nephew James; see Section IV below. There was no recorded Huguenot congregation as such in Jacobean Edinburgh, even though in May 1586 arrangements were to be made “anent the ministeris of the Fraynche Kirk that is to cum heir to mak residence, at the Kings Maiesteis desyre ... and sic vtheris of that natioun that will follow thame”: *Extracts from the Burgh Records of Edinburgh*, V: 458-5. These exiles seem simply never to have arrived.

⁵⁰ Calderwood, *History*, III: 460, sums up the suspicions entertained in early November 1579; the Kirk never changed its attitude to Aubigny, and neither did the English government.

⁵¹ Spottiswoode, *History*, II: 267.

⁵² Calderwood, *History*, III: 501-05. The Negative Confession would form the basis of the National Covenant of 1638.

recognition of Anglois' achievements to date ever "sence his first arryvall":

the vertuous educatioun and upbringing of sa many of the yowth as wer committit to his charge, als weill in the feir of God and guid maneris as in leirnyng, speking and writing of the Frenche toung, forming of thair handis to a perfyte schap of lettir and advanceing thame in all kynde of verteous and godlie exercisis efferring to that aige, as the effectis thairof hes kyithit [*appeared*] in a greit nomber to thair greit weill and proffit and to the singular comfort of thair parentis, cuntrie and common weill

and, secondly, as an encouragement to Anglois "to remane within the cuntrie and to continew in this his verteous tred [*trade*] and occupatioun."⁵³ Which Nicolas did, dying in Edinburgh thirty years later, in 1611. Both the witnesses to his testament were Scots, and though this proud Frenchman made sure his testament was bilingual, neither the end of France's interminable wars of religion in 1594, nor the protection afforded to Huguenots by the Edict of Nantes of 1598 had been sufficient to tempt him and Marie Presot to uproot themselves once more.⁵⁴ Their children Esther and Jacques married Scots, and David appears to have been an Edinburgh resident; of Daniel Inglis we know only that he existed and was not in Scotland in March 1603.⁵⁵

III. Esther Inglis's spiritual reading matter

The Anglois household, as the heart of an educational establishment, was naturally a bookish one. While Nicolas and Marie may have felt no need to read books in Scots or English, presumably their bilingual children did. Esther herself is our source for the notably devotional and spiritual nature of her literary tastes, at least as an adult copyist. In her epistles dedicatory, she displays an easy familiarity with Graeco-Roman literature and mythology as well as with Holy Scripture. This is exemplified, for example, in the epistle prefacing the 1607 *Octonaries*, reproduced in

⁵³ *Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland*, vol.8 (1581-1584), 98, no. 591. The bulk of the letter is printed in Anneke Bakker, "Esther Inglis & Maurice of Nassau," 46.

⁵⁴ NRS, CC8/8/48 pp. 198-200. The Scottish scribe's French orthography is wondrous to behold.

⁵⁵ David's testament dative was "faythfullie maid & gevin vp pairtlie be James & Marie Inglissis for thame selffis & in name & behalfe of Daniel Inglis thair lauffull brother quha is presentlie absent furth of ye cuntry and haillelie gevin up be easter Inglis spous of bartilmoe Kello thair sister; quhilks James Daniell Marie & Easter Inglissis ar executoris datives delegat to thair said umquhyle brother" (NRS CC8/8/37/545). I will be publishing an annotated transcript of this document shortly.

Appendix I below. In it, Inglis links the Choice of Alcides (i.e. Hercules) both to the “Castell of Felicitie” of the *Tabula Ceбетis* tradition and to the strait gate of Matthew 7:13, as well as to the Pythagorean letter Y and the pseudo-Virgilian poem thereanent.⁵⁶ We also know that the young Inglis was familiar with emblem-books: she included an emblem from Jean Jacques Boissard’s 1588 *Emblematum liber* in her 1599 *C.L.Pseaumes de David* (S-E & Y no.9); Alison Adams has shown just how Calvinist this ostensibly secular, non-denominational work actually is.⁵⁷ Inglis also knew the 1584 edition of another famous and self-proclaimedly non-secular emblem-book, Georgette de Montenay’s *Emblemes ou devises chrestiennes*.⁵⁸ Like Marin Le Saulx’s *Théanthropogamie* (London, 1577), Montenay’s book would supply a key element of Inglis’s famous self-portraits. The first self-portraits appeared in works dated 1599, and it has been amply demonstrated that they are based on Montenay’s engraved portrait.⁵⁹ What Inglis took from Marin Le Saulx is a sliver of verse:

*De l’Eternel, le bien,
De moi le mal, ou rien.*

These words appear in many of Inglis’s productions. When they do so as part of her self-portraits, they feature as if she had newly written them on the leaf or open page on the desk before the artist, thus forcing the reader to interact physically with the book, turning it upside down so that the text can be read. Inglis took this distich (which can also be construed as the two hemistichs of a hexameter line rhyming at the caesura) from the end of

⁵⁶ Michael Bath, *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture* (London: Longman, 1994), 113-15, provides an excellent brief account of the *Tabula Ceбетis* and its nexus of associations.

⁵⁷ See Alison Adams, *Webs of Allusion: French Protestant Emblem Books of the Sixteenth Century* (Geneva: Droz, 2002), 155-291.

⁵⁸ For Montenay, see Alison Adams, ed. *Georgette de Montenay: Emblemes, ou devises chrestiennes* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2020) and the bibliography given here: <https://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/books.php?id=FMob>. There is no modern printed edition of *Théanthropogamie*, but the text is easily accessible online. See Anne Mantero, “Sonnetts en regard dans la *Théanthropogamie* de Marin Le Saulx,” in B. Degott and P.Garrigues, eds, *Le sonnet au risque du sonnet* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2006), 223-36.

⁵⁹ Michel Bath discusses the image in some detail on pp. 27-34 of *Emblems in Scotland*; Georgianna Ziegler discusses its evolution in “Paper Portraits: The Self-fashioning of Esther Inglis,” *Art Herstory* (June 2020): <https://artherstory.net/the-self-fashioning-of-esther-inglis/>, and explores the relationship of the self-portrait to prints and painted miniatures, as well as its Protestant significance, in “Portraits of a Lady: the Self-Presentation of Esther Inglis, Protestant Limner,” *Renaissance Quarterly*, 76.2 (Summer, 2023), forthcoming.

Marin Le Saulx's long, self-justificatory preface to *Théanthropogamie*.⁶⁰ The exiled poet-pastor may have been personally known to the Anglois family during their short years in London, since he was "durablement installé à Londres après 1572."⁶¹

Théanthropogamie had been published by another French protestant eminently familiar to Scottish literary historians, the printer Thomas Vautrollier. Armed with a letter of introduction to George Buchanan, Vautrollier had moved up to Edinburgh after troubles with the English authorities in 1578 and 1579. He operated initially as a bookseller, which would easily explain the circulation to Scottish readers of copies of *Théanthropogamie*, including in the Anglois household; that the book was known in Scotland in the late sixteenth century has been shown by Roderick Lyall, with reference to the poets Alexander Montgomerie and James Melville.⁶² By 1584 Vautrollier had actually set up a press, with royal support from James VI. It is overwhelmingly probable that the Anglois family would have availed itself of Vautrollier's bookselling presence in Edinburgh, 1580-86.

Commenting on the motto "De l'Eternel le bien" in 2009 (when its source was unknown), Laura Lunger Knoppers asked: "Is Inglis's apparent denial of her art in elaborately illuminated artistic manuscripts a simple contradiction? A sign of an oppressed woman gaining agency only through negating the self?" Knoppers did not think so; Inglis was drawing upon

the fervent Protestant view that the value of all human endeavour (including writing) comes not from the self but in relation to God. Inglis's pen is worthy not despite but because of the modesty, or rather, the piety that she shows.⁶³

⁶⁰ Véronique Ferrer, "De la 'langue sainte' à la langue mondaine. Réécrire le *Cantique* aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles," in Monica Barsi, Alessandra Preda, eds, *Le Cantique des cantiques dans les lettres françaises* (Milan: Edizioni Universitarie di Lettere Economia e Diritto, 2016), 109-22, at 112-14.

⁶¹ See Julien Goeury, *La Muse du consistoire* (Genève: Droz, 2016), 463. Goeury's detailed account of Le Saulx makes no mention of the motto "De l'Eternel," let alone Esther Inglis or the Scottish response to the trinitarian sonnets.

⁶² Roderick J. Lyall, *Alexander Montgomerie: Poetry, Politics and Cultural Change in Jacobean Scotland* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 302-06. On Montgomerie's and Melville's interaction with Le Saulx, see also Anne Kelly, "Towards an Aesthetic of Retreat: Neo-Stoicism, Recusant Culture and Gardens in Seventeenth Century Scotland" (master's thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2012), 25-29.

⁶³ Laura Lunger Knoppers, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 15.

Knoppers is here drawing on the earlier work of Georgianna Ziegler, who noted of the textual element of Inglis's self-portraits that the words reiterated

the Protestant notion that all good gifts come from God and that we are worthy only through God.... As an artist, therefore, Inglis is a lesser god, a handmaid of the Lord, as she styles herself, creating hand-made books that contain the mark of her own identity as well as the word of God through her.⁶⁴

The same attitude is evinced by Inglis's contemporary, the poet-pastor James Melville (1556-1614), to whom we shall return in section IV below. Reflecting on the poems sent him by clerical colleagues, praising his *Spirituell Propine of a pastour to his people* (1598), Melville wrote:

Take not their praises (Reader) meant of me:
Bot of the mater, quhilk my Muse intreats:
O, that their loue, would wish my Buik to bie
Als gud indeed, as in their kynd conceates.
...
Think weill of all, this onely they profes,
To prayse the TRVTH, that thay may it embres.⁶⁵

All the surviving evidence suggests that Esther Inglis limited her copying activities to “spiritual” texts, whether Scriptural, devotional or moral.⁶⁶ She herself would write about this fact (with some humour) in 1612, when presenting a complete *Psalmes of David* to her “mecoenas” Sir David Murray.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Ziegler, “Hand-Ma[i]de Books,” 76.

⁶⁵ James Melville, *A Spiritvall Propine of a Pastour to his People* (Edinburgh: printed by Robert Walde-graue, 1589), sig. [B2^v].

⁶⁶ The exception being David Hume’s *Vincula Unionis* (S-E & Y no.20). Sarah G. Ross considers her fondness for the *Quatrains du sieur de Pybrac* in “Esther Inglis: Linguist,” 176-80, saying at 77 that “they should be understood as a repository of ‘Christian Stoicism.’” See the in-depth discussion and analysis of the *Quatrains* in Melinda Latour, *The Voice of Virtue: Moral Song and the Practice of French Stoicism, 1574-1652* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023). It is worth noting the well-known rôle the *Quatrains* played in the education of Prince Henry Frederick, to whom Josuah Sylvester dedicated his “Tetrastika; or the Quatrains of Guy de Faur, Lord of Pibrac,” in *Bartas his deuine weekes & workes* (London: Humfrey Lownes, 1606), STC 21649a.5, sig. Yy2r. Inglis presented Sir David Murray with a copy of the French text in 1614 (S-E & Y no.40), i.e. after his fall from favour, and she gave Prince Charles a copy in 1615 (S-E & Y no.41).

⁶⁷ S-E & Y no.38. The text she copies is not from the brand-new Authorized or King James Bible, but the Geneva Bible, which would remain the preferred text of presbyterians and puritans; she would use it for Prince Henry Frederick in 1612 and in 1624 for Prince Charles (Folger MS V.a.665 and S-E & Y no. 53).

I presume not Sir to compile any new thing, for wyse Salomon said when he liued, there was no end of the making of bookes, and muche reading is a wearines to the flesh. If he wer now alyue, he should see manye hundrethes now, for one when he was: for this is a bookishe age, wherein a man shall haue mater anewghe to read the titles and inscriptions, tho he leif many yeares and do nothing els: for th'old poëts saying is nowe verified, *Scribimus indocti doctique poëmata passim*: learned and vnlearned euery one setteth pen to paper[.] I haue not Ciceros wayn [*vein*], for he wrete more nor aither him self or any other altogether could reid, and I thinke yt therbe many writters nowe whose Pamphilets deserue not to be redde, but it is no matter, whil ther foolaris <*sic*> and ignorances⁶⁸ can procure to them the names of writers, and agrauat [*weigh down*] Stationars presses and purses, thogh they publish ther owne vncurable reproches: I am content not to ad more fulnes to the sea. Atheniane eares, haue mater ynewgh, altho all furder curiositie of ambitious spirities stand in th'impetuositie of ther restles streames, especiallie in prophaine things, wherof there is to much.⁶⁹

Given the Anglois family's Calvinism, it is a little surprising that the specimen Latin poetic psalm paraphrases copied by Inglis in her first extant manuscript (1586) were by neither the "pope" of Calvinism, Théodore de Bèze (1519-1605) nor his Scottish friend George Buchanan, but by the German Lutheran Eobanus Hessus (1488-1540), of whose *Psalterium Davidis carmine redditum* (1537) there were multiple French editions.⁷⁰ Presumably this was the protestant Latin poetic version with which Nicolas Anglois had grown up. Esther later made two, possibly three, copies of Guillaume Paradin's 1558 Latin tetrastichs summarising Genesis, while the Scriptural *Argumenta* in elegiac couplets (two of Psalms and one each of Genesis, Ecclesiasticus and Matthew), which she dedicated to various individuals between 1606 and 1608, had been first published at Zürich in 1543 by Rudolf Gwalther (1519-1586), Bullinger's successor as *Antistes* there.⁷¹ Entirely up to date, however, was her 1615 copying of the tiny verse summaries that comprise John Taylor's

⁶⁸ In this sentence, "ther" may be a lapsus for Scots "thir," i.e. "these"; I do not know what exactly was intended by "foolaris and ignorances": possibly "scribblers of foul papers" and "ignorants."

⁶⁹ S-E & Y no.38 ; "Atheniane eares » refers to Acts 17:21.

⁷⁰ See Andrew Pettegree and Malcolm Walsby, *French Books III and IV: Books published in France before 1601 in Latin and Languages other than French*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2011-2012), vol. 1 (A-G), entry 57679, *et seq.*

⁷¹ In order, S-E & Y nos. 14 & 24, 25 & 36, 26, 28 and 32. *Antistes* was the Overseer/Head of the Reformed Churches in Zürich and Basel.

aforementioned *Verbum Sempiternum*, since his *Thumb Bible* had first been published only in 1614.⁷²

Esther's early engagement with devotional literature is indicated by the forty hexastichs of the manuscript poem *Discours de la foy*, found in the manuscript she dedicated to Elizabeth Tudor on 1 January 1591; otherwise entirely unknown, this powerful poem may very well be her own work. If so, her reading of devotional literature is underlined by the close relationship between many of the hexastichs of the *Discours* and the fifty hexastichs of Magdelon de Candolle's *Confession de la foy chrestienne* (Lyon: [Jean Saugrain], 1562).⁷³ Another work she almost certainly knew from her childhood was Yves Rouspeau's *Traitté de la préparation à la sainte Cène de nostre seul Sauveur et Rédempteur Jésus Christ*, first published at Rochelle in 1563, which in 1607 her husband would translate as a gift for Sir David Murray.⁷⁴ Inglis's early interest in "literary" spiritual reading matter is indicated by the three other non-Scriptural spiritual texts she copied: first, in 1592 (seemingly only the once and she never gifted it), the poem *De la grandeur de Dieu* by Pierre Duval, bishop of Sées in Normandy, a celebration of God's creation, much reprinted after it first appeared in 1555, since it enjoyed cross-confessional popularity; second, the equally cross-confessionally popular moralising *Quatrains* of the Catholic Guy du Faur, Sieur de Pibrac, of which fifteen copies by Inglis are currently recorded (1599-1617); and third, the *Octonaires* of the Calvinist pastor and theologian Antoine de la Roche-Chandieu (1534-1591).⁷⁵ Inglis copied these poems ten times in French (1607-1616); Princes Henry and Charles were gifted copies in 1607 and 1615 respectively. The three extant copies of her own Anglo-Scots paraphrase, which seems to have been made around 1600, are discussed in section VI below.

⁷² S-E & Y no. 46.

⁷³ The printed edition is attributed simply to "DENAKOL." For a convincing demonstration that this is an anagram of "Candole," see Julien Goeury, *La Muse*, 243-46. See also Jamie Reid Baxter, "Esther Inglis' *Discours de la foy* and her 'pourtraict de la RELIGION CHRESTIENNE', gifted to Elizabeth Tudor, 1591," *Journal of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society*, 17 (2022), 52-94, and for text and translation, see: <https://estheringlis.com/discours-de-la-foy-1591-v2/>.

⁷⁴ S-E & Y no.34. It was "the most popular religious treatise published in La Rochelle" and had played its part in the ongoing assault on the Roman Mass in the city; see Neil Kamil, *Fortress of the Soul: Violence, Metaphysics, and Material Life in the Huguenots' New World, 1517-1751* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 148.

⁷⁵ See Sara Barker, "Face to Face and Side by Side: Printing Cross-Confessional Poetry in Late xvth and Early xviih century France," *Mémoires du livre /Studies in Book Culture*, 4.2 (2013), unpaginated.

The modern editor of Chandieu's *Octonaires* highlights that "en des années profondément troublées par les guerres de religion ... le livre de *Job*, les *Psaumes*, les *Proverbes* et l'*Ecclésiaste*" were "un point de référence constant, une source inépuisable de motifs et d'images" in French literature, adding that "le thème de la vanité du monde rencontra un succès particulier", whether dealt with by Pibrac "à des fins morales" or treated "dans une perspective plus strictement religieuse" by Chandieu and others.⁷⁶ While we have no idea whatever how many volumes made by Inglis have vanished without trace, and should therefore not over-extrapolate from what is currently known of her output, it is striking that we have eight copies of the complete Psalms, three of Ecclesiastes, and three of Proverbs. There are also two copies each of Lamentations and the Song of Songs and four little volumes of selections from Proverbs, in addition to the aforesaid eight volumes of Scriptural *Argumenta*. Despite the multiple copies Inglis made of Pibrac's *Quatrains* and Chandieu's *Octonaires*, it is clear enough that, like any good protestant, she saw the Word of God as her own and her readers' essential, literally life-giving reading material: *De l'Eternel, le bien/ De moy le mal, ou rien*.

IV. Liminary Sonnets for Esther Inglis: context and content

This essay cannot explore all the prosopographical evidence, involving e.g. her maecenas Sir David Murray, his siblings, his cousin the Earl of Mar and Marie Stewart, Countess of Mar, that places Esther Inglis firmly within the orbit of the clerical and lay circles that adhered to a presbyterian ecclesiology, as against the Crown's desire to impose a royally-appointed episcopal hierarchical structure on the Kirk. But there is clear textual evidence of this connection, namely the identities of the men who wrote the substantial clutch of neo-Latin liminary verses which Inglis secured in 1598-99 for the four great manuscripts she presented in 1599 to Elizabeth Tudor, the Earl of Essex, the latter's secretary Anthony Bacon, and Prince Maurice of Nassau. Although Inglis's father Nicolas Anglois, her brother David and her husband Bartilmo Kello were perfectly capable of writing elegant verses in the international language (and there were plenty of other neo-Latin poets in and around Edinburgh), Inglis nonetheless chose three distinguished and closely-linked academics known for their commitment to

⁷⁶ Bonali-Fiquet, 22. "In a time deeply troubled by the Wars of Religion, the Book of Job, the Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes were a point of reference, an inexhaustible source of subjects and images ... the subject of the vanity of the world enjoyed especial success." This same citing of Ecclesiastes, Proverbs and Job, and linking of Pibrac and Chandieu, is found in Terence Cave, *Devotional Poetry in France c.1570-1613* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 146-54.

hardline Genevan presbyterianism: Andrew Melville (1545-1622), John Johnston (c.1565-1611) and Robert Rollock (c.1555-1599). This is striking, because the presbyterian faction in the Kirk had been very much out of favour with the Crown since the end of 1596, following the civic disturbances in Edinburgh that for many years afterward would be known simply as “the 17 December.” Those events are now regularly referred to as an attempted presbyterian *coup d'état* against the Octavians, King James’s supposedly crypto-Catholic eight-man advisory council.⁷⁷

Andrew Melville spent part of his youth studying and teaching in France and Geneva, returning to Scotland to become an energetic principal of Glasgow University in 1574. More than an academic spokesman for the presbyterian cause, he was a very vocal agitator, and he regularly fell foul of the Crown over church policy. In 1580, he moved to Fife to become principal of St Mary’s College within the University of St Andrews. He turned St Mary’s into a presbyterian “seminary,” and he also served as Rector of the university from 1590 until the royal crackdown on presbyterian militants in 1597. Melville wrote a total of twelve epigrams for Inglis.⁷⁸ Those specifically praising the calligrapher and her handiwork became a standard feature of her “portrait pages,” as did those by his friends Johnston and Rollock. However, all of these verses ceased to feature in Inglis’s manuscripts from autumn 1606, after Melville and seven other leading presbyterian clerics had been summoned to London for the so-called “second Hampton Court conference,” which was a disaster for the presbyterian party. Melville would spend 1607-1611 imprisoned in the Tower of London and then be banished abroad until his death.⁷⁹ It cannot be a coincidence that the three dead presbyterian poets and their (now slightly misattributed) verses reappeared attached to her self-portrait in her final trio of productions, two of which were dedicated to Prince Charles, including the *Cinquante emblemes chrestiens*. The latter were begun in 1622, the year inscribed on thirty of the emblematic images and the year

⁷⁷ See Julian Goodare, “The Attempted Scottish *Coup* of December 1596,” in J. Goodare and A.A. MacDonald, eds, *Sixteenth Century Scotland: Essays in Honour of Michael Lynch* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 311-36.

⁷⁸ Most of Andrew Melville’s epigrams for Inglis are in fact addressed to Elizabeth Tudor (S-E & Y no.7); cf. his epigram to the dying queen in *Viri Clarissimi A. Melvini Musae* ([The Netherlands]: s.n., [1620]), 12.

⁷⁹ Melville has been much written about. The best account remains Thomas McCrie’s two volume *Life of Andrew Melville* (Edinburgh, 1818), but see also the essays and bibliographical references in Roger A.Mason and Steven J.Reid, eds. *Andrew Melville (1545-1622): Writings, Reception, and Reputation* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

also of Melville's death in French exile, and they were completed in spring 1624.⁸⁰

John Johnston, theology professor in Melville's St Mary's College, was a widely travelled European scholar and teacher and author of a considerable body of printed Latin verse. Johnston wrote four epigrams for Inglis. The great theologian Robert Rollock (who had studied Hebrew with Melville's nephew James Melville, his sometime colleague at St Andrews) likewise supplied four epigrams. We know that he knew Inglis and her husband Bartilmo Kello personally: he had stood baptismal witness for their first-born son Samuel Kello in 1597.⁸¹ Edinburgh Town Council had secured Rollock's services as the first lecturer (regent) of their new university, the Tounis College, in 1583; in 1586, having acquired subordinate colleagues including Bartilmo Kello's cousin Duncan Nairne, Rollock became the university's first principal.⁸² His printed works enjoyed an international reputation. Rollock's extant prose is substantial in bulk, but his poetic remains are very scanty, consisting entirely of (rather fine) liminary verse.⁸³ Melville and Johnston each produced a considerable body of Latin poetry, in print and manuscript, and two printed liminary sonnets show that Johnston was also a skilled vernacular poet.⁸⁴

Along with other ministers who wrote vernacular verse, Johnston and Andrew Melville were part of a recently identified "community" that practised a kind of poetic spirituality.⁸⁵ A central figure here was Andrew Melville's nephew James, a prolific vernacular poet, minister of Kilrennie in the East Neuk and author of the aforementioned *Spiritual Propine*. The

⁸⁰ In her 1624 epistle dedicatory, Inglis wrote "it was my bounden deutie, to congratulat your Highnesse blessed, saif, and most happie returne, and to offer to your Highnesse thir two yeeres labour." Protestant alarm had been rising for some time before 1622 about the king's desire that Prince Charles's marriage be a "Spanish Match": space precludes further exploration of this issue here.

⁸¹ Edinburgh Register of Baptisms, "the Lordis day 13 March" 1596 (i.e. 1597, N.S.).

⁸² Duncan Nairne had graduated from Andrew Melville's Glasgow in 1580. His father, also Duncan, was described as Bartilmo Kello's "tutour" and "mother-brother" on 23 April 1571 (National Records of Scotland, RD1/10/202v).

⁸³ See George Buchanan, *Rerum Scotticarum Historia* (Edinburgh: Alexander Arbuthnet, 1582) and Thomas Jack, *Onomasticon Poeticum* (Edinburgh: Robert Waldegrave, 1592).

⁸⁴ See Jamie Reid Baxter, "Liminary verse: the paratextual poetry of Renaissance Scotland," *Journal of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society*, 3 (2008): 81-85.

⁸⁵ See Jamie Reid Baxter, "A Spiritual Community on the Margin: James Melville and William Murray singing of Holy Dying in the East Neuk of Fife," *Journal of the Northern Renaissance*, 12 (January 2021):

<https://jnr2.hcommons.org/2020/6072/>.

least unfamiliar poet of this “spiritual community,” however, is Elizabeth Melville, Lady Culross (c.1574-c.1640), whose extant corpus rivals James Melville’s in scale. When assembling a long sequence of her own unprinted spiritual poems c.1608 for Isobell Cor, Lady Airdrie, an East Neuk laird’s wife and another putative female member of this “spiritual community,” Lady Culross prefaced (and dedicated) it with a heavily Scripture-derived anagram sonnet “Sob sille cor,” followed by an acrostic *dixain*.⁸⁶

Very much into this mould falls the Scots-language sonnet upon “ESTHER INGLIS HIR ANAGRAMME, RESISTING HEL” (a scrambling of her name) which features in three of Inglis’s extant volumes, including one of the two extant presentation manuscripts of the *Octonaries upon the vanitie and inconstancie of the world*. Inglis ascribes this sonnet to one G.D., who is discussed in Appendix III below. In two instances—including the other presentation copy of the *Octonaries*—a second sonnet by G.D. follows, “To the onely Paragon and matcheles Mistresse of the golden pen,” which also appears on its own in a fourth MS (namely of the *Octonaries*), while a fifth manuscript features the French original, “A l’unique dame de la souueraine plume.” Full details of these manuscript sources are given in Appendix II.

SONNET
VPON ESTHER INGLIS
ANAGRAMME
RESISTING HEL.

RESISTING HEL, thou shalt the heau’ns obtaine
 Deuils are afray’d of such as them resist
 Draw neere to God, he will draw neere againe
 And compass thee about with armyes blist
 Be always strong, and constantly persist
 The sharp assaults of Satan to sustaine
 First arme thy selfe, then enter to the list
 Thyn ayrie foes in hyer parts remaine :
 Gird therefore vp thy [loynes] with Veritie
 Haue Gods owne word a sharp Swor[de by thy s]yde;
 Let Righteousnesse thy Breastplate [euer be;]
 Thyn heade as Helmett lett Saluation hyde;
 But aboue all mak stedfast Fayth thy Sheeld:
 So shalt thou be assurd to win the feeld.

G.D.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Jamie Reid Baxter, “Elizabeth Melville, Lady Culross: new light from Fife,” *Imes Review*, 69.1 (May 2017): 38-77 (54-55).

⁸⁷ From Folger MS V.a.92 (S-E & Y no.33), with the blotted letters supplied from Folger Ms. V.a.665, kindly made available by Georgianna Ziegler.

Despite the heavily anglicised orthography, it is clear that the mysterious G.D.'s native tongue is Scots, thanks to the scansion-dictated, standard Scottish elision of the intervocalic *v* of "devils" (i.e. "de'ils," pronounced "deels") and the rhyming of *blis*t with *resist*, *persist* and *list*.⁸⁸

G.D. also employs the standard "Scots interlacing" sonnet rhyme-scheme *abab bcbc cdcd ee*, which held wellnigh undisputed sway in Scottish sonneteering from the 1580s to the 1660s, rather than the "Petrarchan" or the "Shakespearean" rhyme-schemes favoured by English sonneteers.⁸⁹ Essentially composed of tightly woven allusions to and quotations from Scripture, G.D.'s sonnet is overwhelmingly reminiscent of the poetry of Elizabeth Melville. Since her *Godlie Dreame* had reached its third known edition by 1606, it is more than likely that G.D. knew both that poem, and possibly some of the unprinted work that circulated in manuscript, notably Melville's anagram sonnet "to M.Andrew Melvill," which supplies exact parallels for the creation of a spiritual sonnet based on an anagrammatised name and crafted out of allusions to and quotations from Scripture.⁹⁰

G.D.'s anagram RESISTING HEL alludes to James 4:7, "resist the devill and he will flee from you." These words are set as an epigraph before the first stanza of Elizabeth Melville's lengthy, unprinted "Admonitioun to rebellious sinneris" (f.177v).⁹¹ In "The Christianis cognisance," she quotes the same words wholesale:

put on thy armour boldlie and assay
to ficht with lustis, and to mak wear with sin
Doubt not bot thow the victorie sall win

⁸⁸ G.D.'s second sonnet likewise rhymes "warks" with "Clarks" and uses Scots "glore." Inglis's own Scots is less easy to demonstrate from her 1615 verses addressed to her son Samuel in an Insular vernacular, prefacing each of the two parts of *Verbum Sempiternum*, but it is clear from (a) her use of the Scots preposition "be," English "by," before her name on title pages, and (b) her prose use of "decoir" rather than "embellish," "ornament" or "decorate" that not only is this the Scots verb, but she employs the traditional Scots *oi* orthographic convention for a long "o" sound; cf. the digraph *ei* (as in *reid*) for a long "e." For images from the *Verbum Sepiternum* MS, see : [https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:51608558\\$21i](https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:51608558$21i).

⁸⁹ Only a small percentage of the huge repertory of Early Modern Scottish sonnets do not employ the interlacing rhyme-scheme, for which the English term "Spenserian" is inappropriate and anachronistic: see Katherine McClune, "The 'Spenserian Sonnet' in Sixteenth-Century Scotland," *Notes and Queries*, 56.4 (December 2009): 533-536.

⁹⁰ *Poems of Elizabeth Melville, Lady Culross*, ed. Jamie Reid Baxter (Edinburgh: Solsequium, 2010), 10.

⁹¹ All quotations are from New College Library, Edinburgh, MS BRU 2.

resist the devill and surelie he sall flie (f.173v).

Melville likewise alludes to James 4:7 in her untitled poem "O pilgrime puir quhat mervell tho thou murne," when she writes "no strenth nor micht/ For to resist my fearde and crewell foe" (f.171v, ll. 164-65), and again, near the outset of her lengthy "Lamentatioun for sin with ane consolatioun to the afflicted saull":

... this last perverss and cruikit age
quhairin my fo dois stronglie roar and rage
I wold resist allace and have no strength (f.175v, ll. 4-6).

In the final lines of her untitled dialogue-poem "O senceles saull quhair art thou now," Melville articulates active resistance, when she says to the devil:

Flie hence or with my scheild and spear
I sall thee dryve away (f.183v, ll.431-432).

G.D. goes on to quote James 4:8, "Drawe neere to God, and He will draw neere to you." Again, Melville alludes to this in numerous poems, not least when she writes "Lest I turn asyde, draw neere me," in line 23 of her sacred parody "Away vaine warld."⁹² G.D.'s reference to "armies blist" recalls both Genesis 32:1-2, where Jacob uses the term "Gods hoste" to describe "the Angels of God," and Ps.91, particularly verses 11-12, "And he shall give his angels charge over thee ... they shall beare thee in their hands." While Melville does not use the word "armies," she does make several references to the heavenly hosts, not least towards the end of *Ane Godlie Dreame*:

The hostes of Heaven ar armit at his command,
To fecht the feild quhen wee appear maist waik. (ll. 447-48)

The Lord of Hostes that rings on royall Throne,
Against your foes, your Baner will display.
The Angels bricht sall stand in gude array,
To hald yow up, ye neid not feir to fall: (ll. 451-54)

The remainder of G.D.'s sonnet, from "Be always strong," is a succinct paraphrase of a famous passage repeatedly drawn on by Elizabeth Melville, Ephesians 6:10-17, which begins "be strong in the Lord." Ephesians 6:11: "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the assaults of the devill," creates a direct link with James 4:7, "resist the devil." Ephesians 6:12 continues, "For we wrestle ... against spiritual wickedness in the high places," which is what underpins G.D.'s line "Thyn ayrie foes in higher parts remaine." G.D.'s next line, "Gird therefore up...", alludes to the first part of Ephesians 6:14, but from here on G.D.

⁹² *Poems of Elizabeth Melville*, 93

readjusts the sequence of St Paul's metaphors. The sword of the Word is moved up from the second part of 6:17, and the breastplate of righteousness is taken from the second half of 6:14, while the helmet of salvation is from the first half of 6:17. This reordering of the sequence found in Ephesians 6 ensures that 6:16 ("Above all, take the shield of faith, wherewith ye may quench all the fierie darts of the wicked") provides the climactic first line of the closing couplet, "But above all mak stedfast Fayth thy Sheeld." The emphasis thus laid on the crucial word "Fayth" is striking. As mentioned earlier, in 1590, Inglis had at the very least copied (and probably composed) the impressive *Sommaire Discours de la foy*, and sung the praises of faith in her accompanying sonnet to Elizabeth Tudor, while at the end of her life, she would conclude her *Cinquante emblemes chestiens* with the emblem "*CESTE FOY HAVTE EST victorieuse du monde*," in a celebration of the faith she shared with that emblem's dedicatee, her "mecoenas" Sir David Murray. In other words, it would seem that even before 1607 when Inglis copied out his sonnet, G.D. had personal experience of the strength of her faith.

G.D.'s rhyming of "sheeld" with "feeld" appears three times in Elizabeth Melville. In her sonnet "O louse me frome this lothsum lump of clay" we read:

my feible flesh for feir doth flie the feild.
 Since I am waik and can no vantage win,
 be thou my strenth my saifgaird and my scheild. (ll. 6-8)

Secondly, towards the end of *Ane Godlie Dreame*, she writes:

The Lord of Hostis, that is your strenth and sheild,
 The Serpents heid hes stoutlie trampit downe:
 Trust in his strenth, pas fordwart in the feild (ll. 437-39)

And in a startling parallel with *RESISTING HEL*, Melville's consolatory acrostic dixain to Isabell Cor ends:

O then be still and clive to chryst thy scheild
 Rejoyce thy fill for faith sall win the feild.

RESISTING HEL is exclusively concerned with its spiritual message; it makes no reference to Inglis's profession or status as an artist. G.D.'s second sonnet, "To the onely Paragon," is a quite different affair.

SONNET,
 TO THE ONLY PARAGON, AND
 matcheles Mistresse of the golden Pen.
 ESTHER INGLIS⁹³

Some when with conqring arme and vaillant interpryse

⁹³ From Folger MS V.a.92 [S-E & Y no.33],

They daunted haue the pryde of high and gallant harts
 With mightie Monuments rays'd vp in many parts
 The all consuming force; of wasting Tyme defyse
 Some other men againe, a surer manner try'se
 To free their dieing fame, from Tymes most deadlie darts:
 These do by diuin writts, by Sciences, and Arts
 Giue wings vnto their names, to flie about the sky'se.
 And many men of olde, by charitable works
 Did climbe the Temple of Fame, among the greatest Clarks
 Desyring nothing but to eternize their name
 But thou (glore of thy sexe, and mirakill to men)
 Dost purches to thy self immortell prayse and fame
 By draughts inimitable, of thy vnmatched Pen.

G.D.

Entirely secular, this is most unusual in being written in iambic hexameters, not pentameters, and in (almost) reproducing the familiar French *marotique* rhyme-scheme, *abba abba ccd eed*. It is a paraphrase of the following, now known only from Inglis's *Pseumes de David* of 15 September 1612, dedicated to Prince Henry:

A L'VNIQVE ET
 Souveraine Dame
 De La Noble plume
 Esther Inglis⁹⁴

Plusieurs apres auoir d'un bras victorieux
 Domté le dur effort des superbes courages,
 Se bastirent iadis magnifiques ourages,
 Pour estre garantis du temps iniurieux:
 Autres craignans leurs faits et actes glorieux
 Assuiettir au feu tempestes et orages,
 Firent diuins escrits qui malgré tels outrages,
 Ont fait voler leurs noms iusqu'au plus haut des cieux.
 Mains encor aujourd'huy, par oeuvre meritoire
 Se font monter aussi au Temple de memoire
 Ne desirans rien plus que d'eux eterniser
 Mais tu t'acquires honneur, loz, et gloire immortelle,
 Par les diuins beaux traits de ta plume fidelle
 Laquelle tu scais mieux que femme manier.

VELDE.

⁹⁴ From Kungliga Bibliotek, Stockholm, Cod. Holm.A.781, [S-E & Y no.39], most generously made available through the kindness of Anne Scherman and her colleagues.

“Velde” is in all likelihood the great calligrapher Jan van den Velde, the elder (1568-1623). Like Esther Inglis’s father, Velde left his place of origin (Antwerp) and ran a French school in the city he moved to (Rotterdam). Paul de Keyser tells us Velde was not merely a schoolmaster: “He was a poet, even if only of occasional verse, rhyming out encomia of his art and *hommages* for colleagues and friends; a linguist, [as] splendidly at home *en françois*, as he was in his *Duytsch* mother tongue.”⁹⁵ We can only assume (a) that the French sonnet had been sent to Inglis long before 1612 and (b) that Velde had seen Inglis’s *Les C.L. Pseumes de David. Escrites en Diverses sortes de lettres* (1599), dedicated to Prince Maurits van Nassau, and perhaps other works now lost.

“To the onely Paragon” has real merit. If “Tyme’s deidlie darts” lacks the rich variety of Velde’s “au feu tempestes orages ... tels outrages,” Velde’s (to modern minds, objectionably patriarchal) conclusion that Esther handles her pen “mieux que femme” is far surpassed by G.D.’s wholehearted acclamation of her as “glore of thy sexe and mirakill to men.” This resounding encomium may perhaps at least suggest that the Scottish poet G.D. was nonetheless male, since a woman might well have written “glore of our sexe.” Whoever G.D. was, it is a matter of real regret that we have no other examples of this author’s verse.⁹⁶

V. Esther Inglis as a bilingual literary writer

The “unmatched pen” and “plume fidelle” praised by G.D. and Velde are not specifically claimed as those of a literary author. However, the stress that G.D.’s anagram sonnet lays on the primacy of faith is suggestive with regard to the forty hexastichs that comprise the *Sommaire discours de la foy* mentioned in Section III above. In their catalogue raisonné of 1990, Aydua Scott-Elliot and Elspeth Yeo noted that Inglis’s manuscripts featured not only epistles dedicatory but also verse of her own making.⁹⁷ Their catalogue reproduces both the tiny “Au lecteur” (though no comment is made as to its authorship) and the equally tiny and perfect “Prière à

⁹⁵ “hij was dichter, wellicht slechts gelegenheidsdichter, berijmer van lofdichten op zijn kunst en van huldgedichten voor confraters en vrienden, een taalgeleerde, uitstekend thuis in het ‘Fransoyisch’ als in zijn moedertaal, het ‘Duytsch’.” Paul de Keyser, “De schrijfmeester Jan vanden Velde (1568-1623) en zijn beteekenis als schrijfkunstenaar,” *De Gulden Passer*, 21.3-4 (1943): 228-29. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are by the author.

⁹⁶ Similarly, only two very fine sonnets apiece survive from Inglis’s own admirer John Johnston and his clerical friend and fellow presbyterian militant William Scot (d.1642). See Reid Baxter, “Paratextual Poetry,” 81-85.

⁹⁷ S-E & Y, 15.

Dieu,” on which they comment: “This verse occurs in several manuscripts. The slight variations in the version in no. 9 may indicate that the verse was composed by the scribe herself.”⁹⁸

Scott-Elliot and Yeo write that Inglis’s authorship of *Discours de la foy* “is suggested by the dedicatory sonnet in which her authorship is implied and which uses a similar plodding and somewhat uncertain metre,” and that “[t]here is no doubt as to her authorship of the dedicatory verses” prefacing her *Estreine pour tresillustre et vertueuse Dame la Contesse de Bedford* (1606).⁹⁹ Like the ten couplets addressed to the Countess, the *Discours de la foy* and its dedicatory sonnet are neither plodding nor metrically uncertain.¹⁰⁰ The *Discours* is an impressive, forward-driving poem, which dramatically applies a militant exposition of the twelve articles of the Apostles’ Creed (and Calvinist teaching on the sacraments) to the plight of Henri de Navarre and France’s Huguenots in the grim year 1590. Inglis’s miniature lyrics, “Au lecteur” and “Prière à Dieu”, are inarguably fine poetry. The last two lines of the latter employ the device of *vers rapportés*: the fifth line’s successive verbs govern the successive nouns of the final line, so that the poem culminates not with the enlightening of the praying calligrapher-writer’s spirit, but with the Godhead’s guidance of her hand:

Seigneur en ton honneur, et par ta grace aussi
 l’ay parfait ce LIVRET, ainsi Seigneur ainsi
 Pour ne faire oncques rien, au monde qui ne duise
 Ton saint Esprit tousiours en ce sentier humain
 Assure, ouure, redresse, illumine, conduise,
 Mon coeur, mon oeil, mon pied, mon esprit, et ma main.
 Ainsi soit-il.¹⁰¹

Writing of the *Discours de la foy*, Scott-Elliot and Yeo observe that the fact “that there is no version of the stanzas in English as adumbrated in the “Advertissement” suggests that her command of the language was unequal

⁹⁸ S-E & Y, 35.

⁹⁹ S-E & Y, 15.

¹⁰⁰ The sonnet is printed in S-E & Y, 29.

¹⁰¹ O Lord in thine honour, and by thy grace also,
 I have completed this little book, like this, O Lord, like this.
 So as never to do any unfitting thing in the world,
 May thy Holy Spirit at all times, as I walk this human path,
 Assure, open, lift up, enlighten, guide,
 My heart, my eye, my foot, my spirit, and my hand.
 So be it

The French text, thus punctuated (a comma after the second *ainsi* would have been more helpful!), is that found in, e.g., *Les Proverbes de Salomon*, S-E & Y, no. 18; Inglis lays it out in half-lines, which naturally obscure the *vers rapportés*.

to the task.”¹⁰² This is a complete misreading of what Inglis writes. These stanzas in English were not a translation of the *Discours*, but clearly accompanied a separate document, namely a now lost emblematic drawing entitled “Pourtraict de la RELIGION CHRESTIENNE.”¹⁰³ Inglis tells the English queen in the course of her long epistle dedicatory:

J’ay appresté ce LIVRET contenant vn sommaire discours de la FOY que J’ay escrit en diuerses sortes de lettres: et vn pourtraict de la RELIGION CHRESTIENNE, que j’ay tiré avec la plume, lequel i’envoye à vostre Ma^{te} pour l’honorer de la petite cognoissance que DIEV m’a donnée en l’art d’escrire et de pourtraire.¹⁰⁴

In her postliminary “Advertissement” she adds:

J’ay bien voulu pour l’exposition d’iceluy pourtraict escrire dessous, certain nombre de vers, les vns en Anglois, les autres en François ayant par la grace de Dieu, intelligence desdites langues.¹⁰⁵

This statement strongly suggests that Inglis wrote verse not only in French but also in Scots/English, like the little verses prefacing the two parts of her copy of Taylor’s *Thumb Bible*, a matter of crucial importance to the authorship of the fifty *Octonaries upon the vanitie and inconstancie of the world*.

Scott-Elliot and Yeo note that the *Octonaries* are translated from the French of Antoine de la Roche Chandieu (discussed in Section VI below), and “may have been the work of the scribe herself, or, more probably, of her husband” (the Scotsman Bartilmo Kello), because “judging from the prose of her dedications, it is doubtful whether Esther Inglis had sufficient

¹⁰² S-E & Y, 28.

¹⁰³ The image utilised was in all likelihood that first printed as “Pourtraict de la vraye religion” in the Crespin and Durant 1561 Genevan editions of *Confession de la foy chrestienne: faicte par Théodore de Bèsze, contenant la confirmation d’icelle, et la réfutation des superstitions contraires. Quatrième édition, reueuë sur la Latine augmentée*. The image had a long life ahead of it throughout the Calvinist world, including as “Emblema XXXIX” in Beza’s *Icones* (1580), a book dedicated to James VI (for which see Adams, *Webs of Allusion*, 119-55), and even as the “Religio” half of the printer’s device of the Edinburgh publisher Henrie Charteris.

¹⁰⁴ “I have prepared this LITTLE BOOK containing a summary discourse of the FAITH, which I have written in various kinds of letters, and a portrait of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, which I have drawn with my pen, and which I send to your Majesty, so as to honour you with what little skill GOD has given me in the art of writing and portraiture.”

¹⁰⁵ “I have chosen, for the expounding of this portrait, to write beneath it certain lines of verse, some in English, some in French, having as I do, by the grace of God, knowledge of the said tongues.”



Esther Inglis, *Octonaries*, Folger MS V.a.92: Octo. XXIII (f. 27r),
 and Oct. XXX (f. 35r), showing mirror writing,
 used by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

command of the English language to have produced these accurate verses.”¹⁰⁶ Scott-Elliott and Yeo also claim that Inglis’s spelling, “throughout her life, was erratic, even in French; and the comparison of texts to discover a possible Scots influence is thereby rendered impossible.”¹⁰⁷ Given the often wild vagaries of Early Modern spelling in all languages, whether in print or manuscript, the choice of the adjective “erratic” here is simply eccentric. As for a command of “the English language,” Inglis grew up in Edinburgh and was bilingual in Scots and French. In her numerous extant non-French writings, we have no examples of her employing full-blown traditional Scots orthography, and she makes little use of distinctively Scots vocabulary items, but we repeatedly encounter examples of Scots spellings and syntax (including the preposition “be” for English “by,” the use of *-is* endings, and third-person singular verbs in the subordinate clauses of first-person sentences).¹⁰⁸

The text below, dated “At London this XX of Februar 1605,” is addressed to the English noblewoman Susanna, Lady Herbert; the Scots usages are underlined:

The Bee draweth noght (MOST NOBLE AND VERTVOVS LADIE) hwny frome the fragrant herbis of the garding for hir self: no more haue I payned my self mony yearis to burie the talent God has geuen me in obliuion. And therefore albeit I be a stranger and no waye knoven to your L. yitt haue I tane the boldnes to present you with thir few flovris that I haue collected of Dame FLORAS blossomes: Trusting your L will accept heirof als kindlie as from my heart I haue done it, and in humilitie offers the same to your L. and the rather becaus it is the work of a woman[,] of one, desyrous to serue and honour your L, in any thinge it shall please your L, to command. Gif heirefter I may vnderstand this litill thing to be agreable to you, treulie I shal accompt my selfe the more fortunat to haue the faourable acceptance of one of the most renommed [sic] young Ladies of this Isle in godlines and verteu. Not myndit to werie your L with forder Epistle, I pray God blis and preserue your L, and your noble husband in long life, good health and prosperitie.¹⁰⁹

As is generally the case with late Middle Scots, especially after 1603, the identity of the language is hidden from the modern eye by simple unfamiliarity with Jacobean written Scots, by the inconsistent application

¹⁰⁶ S-E & Y, 16, 41.

¹⁰⁷ S-E & Y, 16.

¹⁰⁸ At the end of her life, in the epistle dedicatory of her *Cinquante emblems chrestiens* of 1624, she uses Scots *thir* (these), *be* (the preposition “by”), the adjective *douce* and the Scots spellings *Adamanting*, *weemen*, *wes*, *saif*, *spair*, *maid* (made), *knaw*, *spokin*, *servand* and *hir errors*.

¹⁰⁹ Houghton Library MS Typ 428.1; S-E & Y no.2

of southern orthography, and by the avoidance, conscious or otherwise, of specifically Scots vocabulary, i.e. not shared with English.

Yet the language of the fifty *Octonaries* is slightly different again. Not only do the three extant manuscript witnesses very largely eschew Middle Scots spelling conventions; the poems themselves employ rhymes that only work in English (e.g. *groes* with *rose*, *lyes* with *rise*), alongside rhymes that only work in Scots (e.g. *spring* with *resing* [resign]). In Oct. XLVII, we find her combining the Scots use of the 3rd person singular for subordinate verbs with English rhymes (“reign” in Middle Scots was “ring”):

.... As fast as Riuers doo
That, sodainly wax'd proud, sends doun amaine
Their stormie streames vnto Neptunus raigne,

Furthermore, the scansion shows that Inglis almost always treats the key word *world* as disyllabic, because though she spells it with the English written vowel *o*, she is actually thinking in Scots, in which “war’l[d]” either has a svarabhakti vowel, or takes the metathetic form “wardle.”¹¹⁰ This latter Scots usage underpins Inglis’s writing of “wordling” when translating *le mondain*, i.e. “worldling,” creating a pun and a level of meaning unavailable to Chandieu, since a “wordling” is both a little “wordle” and a little *word*. In her version, the worldling in love with this transient world is also a little, meaningless, earthbound word, as opposed to the omnific Word of God.¹¹¹

VI. Chandieu’s *Octonaires* and Inglis’s *Octonaries*

The fifty *Octonaries upon the Vanitie and Inconstancie of the World* are an accurate and generally highly effective verse paraphrase of the *Octonaires sur la vanité et inconstance du monde*, by the Huguenot theologian, pastor and poet Antoine de la Roche Chandieu. Written and part-published in MS and print over several years from c.1570 onwards, Chandieu’s masterpiece first appeared complete in 1583 and enjoyed international popularity into the 1630s. Long forgotten thereafter, the *Octonaires* and their author have

¹¹⁰ “svarabhakti” refers to the (unwritten) insertion of an ə into a cluster of consonants, to make a word more easily pronounceable, e.g. “film” as *filləm*, “girl” as *girrəl*, or Scottish Gaelic “Alba” as *Aləpa*. I am extremely grateful to Prof. Alison Adams, in the course of much discussion of the *Octonaries*, for suggesting that ‘wordling’ was a deliberate choice, not evidence of dyslexia.

¹¹¹ For the *valeur sémantique* of *mondain*, see Bonali-Fiquet, 25-27.

in recent decades been the object of steadily growing interest.¹¹² Chandieu's *Octonaires* inspired other Huguenot poets, notably Simon Goulart (1543-1628) and Joseph du Chesne (c.1544-1609), to produce their own sets of octonaries on the world's vanity.¹¹³ The *Octonaires* also inspired two great composers, and there were several poetic translations made, of which Inglis's is one of the earliest (and most faithful).¹¹⁴

Chandieu's comrade and colleague in Geneva, the pastor Jean Jaquemot (1543-1615), *recteur* of the Académie 1586-91, a friend of Esther Inglis's liminary eulogist John Johnston, made two Latin translations.¹¹⁵ The earlier is often loose and over-expansive, does not follow the order established in 1583 and, *pace* the claims of Chandieu's modern editor, appeared in three instalments, not two.¹¹⁶ In 1590, eighteen

¹¹² Florence Mauger, "Antoine de Chandieu et Etienne Delaune: Les 'Octonaires sur la vanité et inconstance du monde,' un recueil d'emblèmes," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 58.3 (1996): 611-29; François Rouget, "Manuscrits, éditions et transformations: les *Octonaires sur la vanité et inconstance du monde* d'Antoine de Chandieu," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, 152 (2006): 565-82; and for the "c. 1570" dating, François Rouget, "Sur une version inédite partielle des *Octonaires* d'Antoine de la Roche-Chandieu," *French Studies Bulletin*, 29, Issue 106 (Spring 2008): 10-14; Sarah K. Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest: The Vernacular Writings of Antoine de Chandieu (c. 1534-1591)* (Farnham, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 225-38; Marina Hertrampf, "La Réforme et la réforme poétique: les *Octonaires sur la vanité et inconstance du monde*," *Romanische Studien*, no.2 (2015): 159-78; Julien Goeury, *La Muse*, 323-50. Theodore Van Raalte, *Antoine de Chandieu: The Silver Horn of Geneva's Reformed Triumvirate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018) focusses on the churchman and theologian, not the poet, to the extent of consistently misspelling *Octonaires* as *Octonnaïres*.

¹¹³ Bonali-Fiquet, 22. There were even *Quatrains sur la vanité du monde*, by Pierre Mathieu, *idem*, 19, note 19. On these, and for comment on Inglis's French language manuscripts of the *Octonaires*, see Melinda Latour, *The Voice of Virtue*, unfortunately published too late to take due account of her findings here.

¹¹⁴ See Bonali-Fiquet, 13-16 and 18; her edition specifies which poems were set to music by Paschal de l'Estocart (c.1538- after 1597) and Claude Le Jeune (c.1530-1600). For detailed analysis of these settings and of their intellectual and spiritual context, see Melinda Latour, *The Voice of Virtue*. Good recordings of representative selections (which include texts *not* written by Chandieu) now exist. The most electrifying remains the Ensemble Clément Jannequin's 1983 performance of nineteen by L'Estocart, including nine to the words of Chandieu, on CD HMA1951110.

¹¹⁵ When Johnston left Geneva for Scotland on 9 March 1591, Jaquemot bade him farewell in a short poem: *Lyrice* (Geneva: Jacob Stoer, 1591), 96-97. Chandieu was permanently based in Geneva from May 1588, and died there on 27 February 1591, so it is perfectly likely that Johnston had met him, as he did Jaquemot.

¹¹⁶ Bonali-Fiquet, 21.

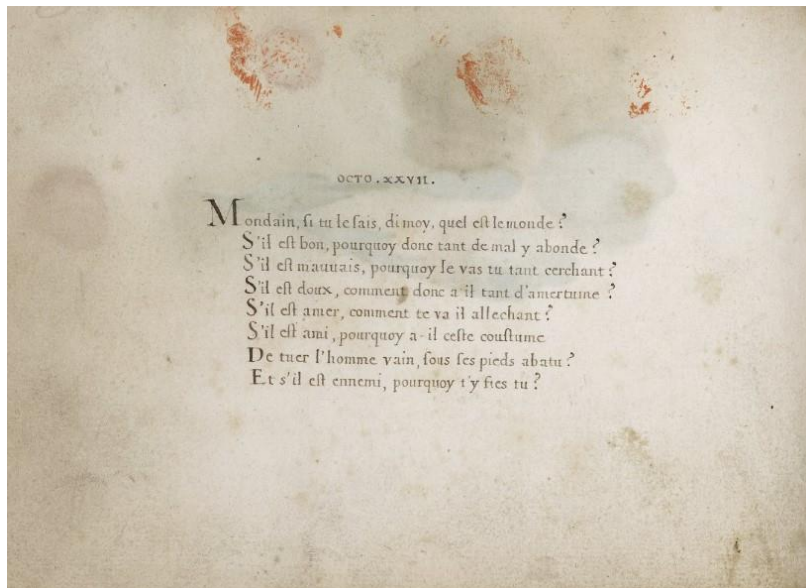
appeared, and then twenty-five the following year, and finally all fifty in 1598, sharing the volume with the *Quatrains de Pibrac*, so beloved of Esther Inglis, in Latin and Greek versions by Florent Chrestien.¹¹⁷ In 1601, Jaquemot published a heavily reworked version, concise, sober and faithful, usefully printed in parallel with the original French.¹¹⁸ In 1609, eighteen of the 1591/1598 versions, strangely enough, were included in *Delitiae C. Poetarum Gallorum*, ([Frankfurt]: Jonas Rosa) ii, 357-63. A very loose paraphrase by Josuah Sylvester (1563-1618), in octavins, was published under the title “Spectacles” (with no mention of Chandieu or the original title), almost at the very end of the posthumous 1621 edition of Sylvester’s collected works. The dreadful, trivialising subtitle, *Perspective SPECTACLES of Especial Use now new polished to discern THE WORLDS Vanitie, Levitie, & Brevitie: These Glasses in indifferent lights / Serve Old, & yong & midle Sights* forewarns us of the frequently banal doggerel to come. So loose is Sylvester’s effort that in 1990, Scott-Elliot and Yeo stated that “No printed translation [of the *Octonaires*] into English exists,” even though they noted that Sylvester’s “Spectacles” showed similarities with some of Inglis’s *Octonaries*, commenting “One can speculate on the source of his inspiration.”¹¹⁹ A sometimes paraphrastic but always poetic translation of twenty-five *octonaires* into German by Martin Opitz (1597-1639) was published as *Von der Welt-Eitelkeit* at Breslau in 1629.¹²⁰ Finally, the many handwritten additions found in the St Andrews University Library copy, dedicated to Archbishop Spottiswoode

¹¹⁷ *Selectorum carminum ex doctiss. poetis collectorum* (Geneva: I. Taurinum, 1590), 141-49; *Lamentationes prophetae Ieremiae, variis lyricorum versuum generibus expressae, cum aliquot sacrae scripturae canticis* (Geneva: Iacobum Stoer, 1591), 100-123; *Viri clarissimi et amplissimi Vidi Fabri Pibracii ... Tetrasticha gallica graecis, pariter et latinis versibus expressa, authore Florente Christiano. Quibus adjecta sunt D. Gregorii Nazianzeni aliquot ejusdem argumenti tetrasticha totidem linguis et versibus expressa* (Geneva: Franciscum Fabrum, 1598), 121-160. Jaquemot also wrote verses in memory of Chandieu, and made parallel text versions of others of his poems (“Ode ... sur les misereres des Eglises Françoises,” “Cantique ... à la memoire de ... sa fille, sur la misere de ceste vie”). Jaquemot published these alongside his own *Ehud, sive tyrannoktonos: tragoedia* (Geneva: Jean de Tournes, 1601), 61-112..

¹¹⁸ Jaquemot, *Variorum poematum liber* ([Geneva]: Jean de Tournes, Lyonnais, 1601), 94-133: https://www.e-rara.ch/gep_r/content/zoom/13522557 (cf. Bonali-Fiquet, 22).

¹¹⁹ S-E & Y, 16, note 18.

¹²⁰ Martin Opitz, *Von der Welt-Eitelkeit* (Breslau: David Müller, 1629), at https://www.google.com/books/edition/Von_der_Welt_Eitelkeit/kqXUAAAACAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1.



Esther Inglis, *Octonaries*, Folger MS V.a.91, f. 27v, Chandieu's French text facing Inglis's, used by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

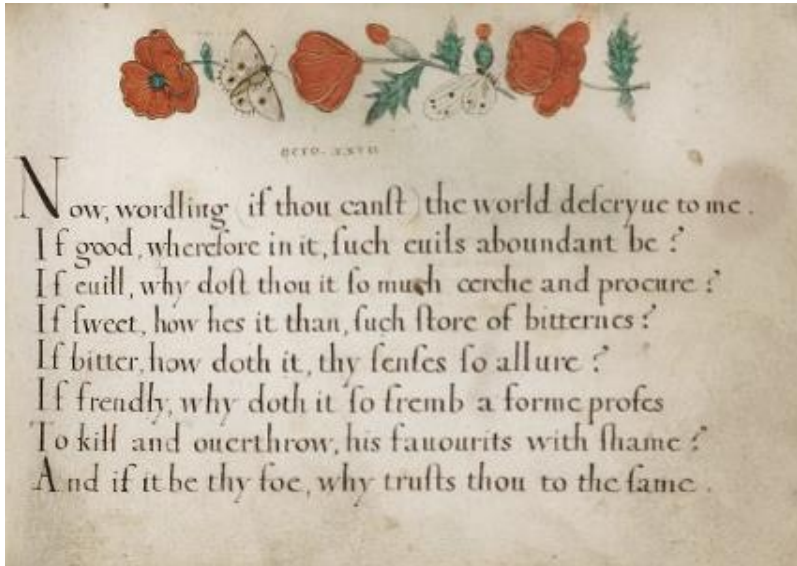
in 1616, include otherwise unknown English versions of *Octonaires* XVI and XXVIII.¹²¹

Chandieu's *Octonaires* are strikingly impressive in every way, and not least for their masterly deployment of a wide range of rhyme schemes and line-lengths within the eight-line remit. In most cases, Inglis reproduces the original metrics, and in twenty-seven cases, she also reproduces the original rhyme-scheme, including the *abbabaab* of no. XLIII. This technical diversity is perfectly complemented by the variety of styles and sizes of the lettering and by the variety of decorative coloured elements that Inglis employs for the *Octonaries* and three of her ten copies of the *Octonaires*. Of the three extant witnesses to Inglis's *Octonaries*, only the undedicated, bilingual Folger MS V.a.91 (S-E & Y no.12) now contains all fifty of Inglis's translated octonaries, each headed by a colored flower.¹²² Anneke Bakker has observed that the manuscript "contains a large number of writing errors in the French text. Most of these were too serious to be corrected."¹²³ This also applies, albeit far less extensively, to the translation

¹²¹ For a Scots version of Oct.XXVIII, see Reid Baxter in *Chapman*, 104 (2005): 17.

¹²² <https://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/s/uk2p20>

¹²³ Bakker, "Dame Flora's Blossoms," 63.



**Esther Inglis, *Octonaries*, Folger MS V.a.91, f. 28r,
 used by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.**

and would make the volume unsuitable for presenting as a gift. Scott-Elliot and Yeo suggest that Inglis may have kept this manuscript back to use as a copytext for the *Octonaries*, since it is dated 1600, while the inserted portrait is dated 1624, the year of her death.¹²⁴ The manuscript presumably remained among Inglis's papers to the end of her life. There is something very touching about the presence of the portrait, with its lapidarily compressed wording of her motto, namely "de dieu le bien de moy le rien."¹²⁵

As the earliest and most complete copy of the *Octonaries* (though not the most accurate text, notably in *Octonaries* X, XXII, XXVI, XL and XLI), Folger MS V.a.91 is used for the text that follows this essay, duly

¹²⁴ S-E & Y, 42.

¹²⁵ Her self-portraits in *Cinquante emblemes chrestiens* (S-E & Y no. 54) and the *Booke of the Psalmes* (S-E & Y no. 55), both dated 1624, use the full quotation from Marin Le Saulx.

collated with Folger V.a.92 and New York Public Library Spencer Coll. MS 14.¹²⁶ Punctuation has been minimally modernized.

The ordering followed by Folger V.a.91 and V.a.92 is not exactly that of the (known) printed texts. Inglis reverses several pairs: VI/V, XVII/XVI, XIX/XVIII, XXIII/XXII, XXXI/XXIX and XXXIII/XXXII. This mildly variant re-ordering is nothing like as radical as what is found between octonaries XIII and XXXIII in the NYPL copy that Inglis presented to her near-neighbour Lord Petre in 1609, which lacks XLIV. The brief epistle dedicatory from NYPL is given in Appendix I below. Anneke Bakker has made the disarmingly appealing suggestion that the disordered sequence of the folios in NYPL could be the result of “something as arbitrary as a gust of wind or the children knocking them off the table” during their preparation, after they had been numbered.¹²⁷ However, while there are loose “thematic groupings” in the 1583 printed sequence, it is not known whether the ordering was entirely Chandieu’s own doing, or whether the printer had a hand in it. It is always possible that Inglis deliberately re-ordered the poems, as Jean Jaquemot did in his printed texts of 1590, 1591 and 1598.¹²⁸

As mentioned in Section III above, the original French *Octonaires* were copied at least ten times by Inglis between 1600 and 1616, though no current location is known for the two copies made in 1616.¹²⁹ Three of the extant French language copies, like those of the *Octonaries*, are filled with coloured images (mainly of flowers), as are a total of seven other Inglis productions.¹³⁰ She created most of these “flower manuscripts” in the years 1606-1607, which period covers the Folger V.a.92 *Octonaries*. As for the dating of the other two *Octonaries* volumes (S-E & Y nos. 12 and 13), Scott-Elliott and Yeo assign them both to 1600, despite the fact that the latter is dated 1609 on the title page; this, they claim, is because the tail of

¹²⁶ As noted in fn. 3 above, the Folger copies have been fully digitized at: <https://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/s/20wd7p>; for NYPL, sadly, only selected leaves are (yet) available online:

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/octonaries-upon-the-vanitie-and-inconstancie-of-the-world/#/?tab=about>.

¹²⁷ Bakker, “Dame Flora’s Blossoms,” 59.

¹²⁸ The St Andrews University French-only copy (1616) does not adhere perfectly to the 1583 running order either, though its discrepancies are its own:

<https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/esther-inglis-les-cinquante-octonaires-sur-la-vanite-et-inconstance-du-monde/762160>.

¹²⁹ The exemplar housed in the Advocates Library, Edinburgh, S-E & Y no. 48, was lost sometime between 1892 and 1912, and Barker no. 48A, which with its companion volume of the *Quatrains*, Barker no. 48B, had been found at Culzean Castle only in 1991, disappeared from ken in 1992.

¹³⁰ Bakker, “Dame Flora’s Blossoms,” 63.

the 9 has been added to the original 0. Even with massive electronic enlargement, it is impossible to be absolutely sure that this is really the case. However, though the self-portrait in Folger V.a.91 is dated 1624, the "1600" on that title page looks authentic; it would have been impossible to backdate it without some visible sign of alteration.

Inglis herself provides some insight into her reason for making these verse paraphrases in her short but densely allusive prose dedication of the Folger MS V.a.92 *Octonaries* to "my loving freinde and landlord," the otherwise virtually unknown William Jefferai at Mortlake (part of Richmond on Thames); the text of this dedication is given in Appendix II. It is dated 23 December 1607, so the manuscript must have been offered as a farewell gift. Inglis's husband Bartilmo Kello had been presented to the cure of Willingale Spain, near Chelmsford, on 21 December 1607. Inglis tells William Jefferai that the book will encourage him to "persist in Virtue to the end," by showing "how light, fragill, vayne, inconstant, mutable, schort, and wicked" is the world, which is to be "compared to a boble of water, to snow[,] to yce in presens of Phaeton" (who almost burnt up the whole Earth, let alone snow and and ice, by losing control of the horses of the sun). The "Christian neo-Stoic" stress laid on Virtue in Inglis's dedication underlines the link with Pibrac's neo-Stoic *Quatrains*. Virtue appears in octonaries XXXVI, XXXVII, XLI and XLVII, and Chandieu's modern editor draws attention to a "printer's note" prefacing the first publication of the complete *Octonaires* in 1583, exhorting readers "à detester le monde, pour s'adonner à piété et vertu."¹³¹

The searingly absolute Calvinist *contemptus mundi* voiced by Chandieu's exquisitely-worked poems, and so well captured in Inglis's verse paraphrases, calls in question the very existence of her beautiful, highly wrought copies of the *Octonaires* and *Octonaries*, which represent the selfsame worldly "vanitie" that the poems denounce. Indeed, the same question arises for the exquisite workmanship and beauty of Chandieu's poetry—and all Calvinist works of art. As Dariusz Krawczyk writes:

The octonaires are an example of devotional poetry with a didactic purpose, namely to equip its readers with material for meditating on their own misery, by making them detest the world by highlighting its inconstancy and vanity, and spurring them to turn to what is eternal and unchanging. It thus aims to foster a spiritual attitude through numerous rhetorical and poetic strategies. The poet's approach is that of the preacher who must rouse the sleeping spirit, enlighten it and exhort it to abandon former errors. he must mobilise the resources to 'move and teach', even more than to

¹³¹ "to detest the world, in order to devote themselves to piety and virtue" (see Bonali-Fiquet, 23, where *piété* is misprinted *pitié*).

‘delight’, and this contributes, inter alia, to the construction of the speaking subject, who adopts the stance of spiritual guide and imposes his authority.¹³²

The same apparent dichotomy has been discussed by Brian MacGilvray, in a large-scale study of Claude Le Jeune’s musical settings of the *Octonaires*.¹³³ MacGilvray tackles the problem head-on by comparing vanitas painting with vanitas music and the *Octonaires* themselves. The illusionism in the paintings, he writes, “served primarily to represent material transience, rather than to contradict it rhetorically or deceive in the attempt.” Similarly, but even more powerfully, vanitas music “enables the literal representation through movement of inconstancy, a concept that visual art can only gesture toward.”¹³⁴ The assumption working behind these art forms is the “ontological precept, that the world’s temporal and material condition separates it from God.”¹³⁵ Those who engaged with these paintings, poems, or music longed for certainty, but would have realized that the works represented—however beautifully—a natural world that was inconstant, always in flux. Thus they would be reminded of the eternity of God. It was this remit that justified the artist in his or her creation.¹³⁶

The deluded worldling is infatuated with the vanity of empty appearances, in love with “a bobble of air” as impermanent as snow and ice

¹³² “Les octonaires sont l’exemple d’une poésie de dévotion dont l’objectif est didactique : fournir au lecteur une matière à méditer sur sa propre misère, lui faire détester le monde en soulignant son inconstance et sa vanité pour l’inciter à se tourner vers ce qui est éternel et immuable. Il vise donc à promouvoir une attitude spirituelle à travers de nombreuses stratégies de la rhétorique et de la poétique. La démarche du poète est celle du prédicateur qui doit éveiller l’esprit endormi, l’éclairer et l’exhorter à abandonner les anciennes erreurs. Il doit mobiliser davantage les ressources du movere et docere que celles du delectare, à quoi contribue entre autres la construction du sujet parlant qui adopte la pose du guide spirituel et impose son autorité.” Dariusz Krawczyk, “Quelle voix choisir ? L’art de l’octonaire et deux poètes protestants: Antoine de la Roche Chandieu et Joseph Du Chesne,” in Marie Blaise, Małgorzata Sokołowicz, Sylvie Triaire, eds, *Crise de la littérature et partage des disciplines* (Warsaw: Warsaw University Press, 2020), 34-35; Krawczyk’s essay and the volume are available to download at: https://www.pl/data/include/cms/Crise_Blaise_Marie_Sokoowicz_Malgorzata_Triaire_Sylvie_red_2020.pdf?v=1607339873117.

¹³³ Brian MacGilvray, “The Subversion of Neoplatonic Theory in Claude Le Jeune’s *Octonaires de la vanité et inconstance du Monde*” (PhD dissertation, Case Western University, 2017).

¹³⁴ MacGilvray, 361-62.

¹³⁵ MacGilvray, 378.

¹³⁶ My warmest thanks to Georgianna Ziegler for formulating this summary of MacGilvray’s argument.

“in the presence of Phaeton.” All created beauty is evanescent, and as Chandieu says in *Octonaire* iii, “L’Eternel a voulu ce bas monde ainsi faire ... Pour monstrer que tu dois ta félicité querre/ Ailleurs”: “So God was pleas’d to mak what this lowe worlde presents/ ... To teache vs that we ought for our cheef good enquiry/ Else-where.” Inglis’s correlegionist Marin le Saulx was aware of this when he wrote of his own poetry: *De l’Eternel le bien, de moy le mal ou rien*.

Esther Inglis’s tiny output of verse indicates that she was a genuinely gifted poet. Following this essay, her gift is presented in the text of her *Octonaries*. This raises the question as to why she seems to have composed so little verse, why she made such minimal use of her lovely *Au lecteur* and *Prière à Dieu*, and why she seems to have favoured Chandieu’s original *Octonaires* so much more than her own *Octonaries*. The answer must lie in the quotation she chose as her motto, and in the words she wrote to Sir David Murray in 1612: “I am content not to ad more fulnes to the sea.” We can only be grateful that as a younger woman, Esther Inglis, Franco-Scottish Calvinist poet, nonetheless had added a little more, in both French and Anglo-Scots, to the ocean of Scottish poetry.

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