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Edward Sherburne (18 September 1616 - 4 November 1702)

Katherine Quinsey
University of Windsor

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British Poet (1616 - 1702)

Author(s): Katherine M. Quinsey (University of Windsor)

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WORKS:

WRITINGS BY THE AUTHOR:

Books

- *Medea: a Tragedie. Written in Latine by Lucius Annævs Seneca. English'd by E. S. Esq; with Annotations* (London: Printed for Humphrey Moseley, 1648).
- *Seneca's Answer to Lvcilivs his Qvære; Why Good Men suffer Misfortunes seeing there is a Divine Providence? Written Originally in Latine Prose, and Now Translated into English Verse, By E.S. Esq.* (London: Printed for Humphrey Moseley, 1648).
- *Poems and Translations amorous, lusory, morall, divine* (London: Printed by William Hunt for Thomas Dring, 1651); republished as *Salmacis, Lyrian & Sylvia, Forsaken Lydia, The Rape of Helen, A Comment thereon, With Severall other Poems and Translations* (London: Printed by William Hunt for Thomas Dring, 1651).
- *The Sphere of Marcus Manilius Made an English Poem: With Annotations and an Astronomical Appendix. By Edward Sherburne, Esquire* (London: Printed for Nathanael Brooke, 1675).
- *Troades, or, The Royal Captives. A Tragedy, written Originally in Latin by Lucius Annæus Seneca, the Philosopher. English'd by Edward Sherburne, Esq; with Annotations* (London: Printed by Anne Godbid & John Playford for Samuel Carr, 1679).
- *The Comparison of Pindar and Horace, Written in French by Monsieur Blondel, Master in Mathematicks to the Dauphin, English'd By Sir Edward Sherburne, Kt.* (London: Printed for Thomas Bennet, 1696).
- *The Tragedies of L. Annæus Seneca the Philosopher; viz. Medea, Phædra and Hippolytus, Troades, or the Royal Captives, and The Rape of Helen, out of the Greek of Coluthus; Translated into English Verse; with Annotations. To which is prefixed the Life and Death of Seneca the Philosopher; with a Vindication of the said Tragedies to Him, as their Proper Author.* (London: Samuel Smith and Benjamin Walford, 1701; reprinted, 1702; facsimile of 1702 printing, New York: AMS, 1976).

Edition

- *The Poems and Translations of Sir Edward Sherburne (1616-1702): Excluding Seneca and Manilius*, edited by Franz Josef Van Beeck (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1961).

Other

- Charles Aley, *Historie of that wise and Fortunate Prince, Henry of that Name the Seventh*, includes a commendatory poem by Sherburne (London: Printed by T. Cotes for W. Cooke, 1638).

- *Ovid's Heroical Epistles, English'd by J. Sherburne*, includes a commendatory poem by Sherburne (London: Printed by E. Griffin for W. Cooke, 1639).
- *Elegies Celebrating the Happy Memory of S^r Horatio Veere, Baron of Tilbury, Collonell Generall of the English in the United Provinces, and M^r of the Ordnance in England*, includes an elegy by Sherburne (London: Printed by T. Badger for Christopher Meredith, 1642).
- Thomas Stanley, *Poems and Translations*, includes commendatory poems by Sherburne (London: Printed for the Author and his Friends, 1647).
- James Shirley, *Via ad Latinam Linguam Complectens, the Way Made Plain to the Latin Tongue. The Rules Composed in English and Latine Verse: For the greater Delight and Benefit of Learners*, includes English and Latin commendatory poems by Sherburne (London: Printed by R. W. for John Stephenson, 1649).
- William Cartwright, *Comedies, Tragi-Comedies, with Other Poems*, includes a commendatory poem by Sherburne (London: Printed for Humphrey Moseley, 1651).
- *Claudius Aelianus His Various History*, translated by Thomas Stanley, Jr., includes a commendatory poem by Sherburne (London: Printed for Thomas Dring, 1665).
- "The Graces, or Hieron," translated by Sherburne from Theocritus' Idyl 16 (London, 1685).

BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY:

Edward Sherburne exemplifies both the seventeenth-century mingling of humanistic and scientific disciplines and the changing practice of the poetics of translation. As a Royalist civil servant, scholar, and poet, he was at the center of the group of Cavalier poets surrounding Thomas Stanley, counting among his acquaintances Thomas Carew, Thomas May, Robert Herrick, Richard Lovelace, John Denham, and James Shirley; he also corresponded with a wide variety of scientists, scholars, and antiquarians, ranging from Isaac Vossius to Anthony Wood. In his own time Sherburne was respected not only for his learning but also for his poetic ability; in his dedication to *Theatrum Poetarum* (1675) Edward Phillips praises Sherburne's translations as discovering "a more pure Poetical Spirit and Fancy, then many others can justly pretend to in their original Works," and his Senecan translations were praised by Gerald Langbaine in *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets* (1691) as "the best Versions we have extant, of any of Seneca's; and show the Translator a Gentleman of Learning, and Judgment." As an exact poetic translator Sherburne has a significant place in the changing discourse of translation at the time, in which translation was increasingly seen as an original poetic effort comparable to imitation. In both his theorizing of translation and his poetic practice, he is a notable proponent of close translation as a creative art in itself, one which can extend the boundaries of poetic definition. Those boundaries are also extended by the wide range of subjects and forms in which Sherburne works, from the refined amatory lyrics of the Cavaliers to the versified astronomy of Manilius.

Family tradition has it that Sherburne's grandfather Henry was related to the Sherburnes of Stonyhurst, and this relationship was recognized sufficiently for the wealthy Stonyhurst Sherburnes to help provide for Edward's needs in the final years of his life. Sherburne's father, Edward, held a variety of important positions in public service, which speaks for his talent, tact, and efficiency; he is remembered in literary history chiefly as the private agent of Sir Dudley Carleton, ambassador to the Hague, in which capacity he was involved (acting in Carleton's interests) in putting an end to Thomas Carew's career hopes under Carleton or anyone else. After some reversals of fortune (as Francis Bacon's secretary from 1617 he was involved in Bacon's downfall and lost everything, and yet four years later he was elected secretary of the East India Company) in 1635 he succeeded to the position of clerk of the office of the ordnance, granted to him in reversion in 1613. This position was inherited by his son. The chief clerk of the ordnance was responsible for the upkeep, storage, and deployment of military and naval supplies. As a perquisite, he and his family were given residence in the Tower of London.

In 1614 Sherburne senior had married Frances Stanley, daughter of John Stanley of Roydon Hall, Essex. According to Sherburne's autobiographical notes sent to Anthony Wood, many of which were published in Wood's *Fasti, or Annals* (1691, 1692), by 1616, the year of Edward's birth, the family was living in London at a "house in Goldsmiths Rents near Redcrosse street" in the parish of Saint Giles Cripplegate, where Sherburne spent his childhood and youth. Edward and his twin brother, John, were born on 18 September 1616, and baptized 27 September in the parish church of Saint Giles Cripplegate. It is noteworthy that of all his brothers and sisters his twin, John, was the one with literary inclinations; one of Edward Sherburne's first published works was a commendatory poem for John Sherburne's translation *Ovid's Heroical Epistles, English'd by J.*

Sherburne in 1639.

Sherburne's classical groundwork was well laid. Both he and John had their early education under the eminent classicist and educationist Thomas Farnaby, who was a near neighbor; according to Sherburne, his father's house was "joyn'd to the backside of Mr. Farnaby's," and he himself "used to play amongst the Scollars in long coats." The school was a large (and profitable) affair drawing many aristocratic and wealthy pupils; it was surrounded by "handsome Houses, and great Accommodations for the young Noblemen," and divided into apartments for the different forms and classes. From the beginning, then, Sherburne had a sense of being in and yet not of a certain privileged world in educational and social institutions of his day; a pattern repeated later when, although he could not take an Oxford degree as a Catholic, he was stationed there and granted a degree in the king's service. One may speculate that this marginal position underlies his aspiring and self-conscious erudition. When Farnaby retired from his London school in 1634, Sherburne studied at home with a private tutor, Charles Aleyn, whose poetic *Historie of that wise and Fortunate Prince, Henry of that Name the Seventh* (1638) features another of Sherburne's earliest published pieces, in the commendatory poem, which engages in finely turned couplets the opposition of poetic and historic language in relation to truth, anticipating William Davenant:

No more, dull Chronicle thy worth shall hold [great Henry]
Or sullen prose thy Noble acts infold.
Behold! the shrine wherein they reverend story
Shall ever be preserved, and thy glory,
Fresh to all Ages[.]

In 1640-1641 Sherburne was sent to Europe ("my Father thought [it] fitt for my better Education"), traveling extensively in France until called back on account of his father's grave illness toward the end of 1641. With his father's death in December, Sherburne succeeded to the office of the ordnance, only to lose his position at the hands of the parliamentary regime. State papers show that the ordnance officers (Sherburne, Francis Coningsby, Richard March) resisted the commands of the House of Lords to deliver supplies, pleading royal command, and were briefly imprisoned, still pleading allegiance to King Charles I (and, as evidence of that allegiance, the fact that their salary as ordnance officers had not been paid for four and a half years), until apparently the doors were forced open and the supplies taken in their despite. Almost immediately after his release Sherburne was sent to Oxford with military supplies, where by his own account the king made him commissary general of artillery; he evidently performed well in that capacity, being one of those created M.A. (20 December 1642) in recognition of his service to the king at the battle of Edgehill.

Not long after his imprisonment Sherburne had suffered the fate of sequestration allotted to those who adhered to the king's cause, losing "my House & all my Personal Estates & Household Goods among wch I lost a very good Study of Bookes as considerable as that I now have," indeed, "one of the most considerable belonging to any gent. in or near London." Considering that the later library referred to contained 831 titles, this was a heavy loss indeed. His four years of military service in Oxford, however, replaced the university career denied to Sherburne and so must to some extent have compensated for the loss of his library--"I did, at our draweing into Winter Quarters, indeavour to improve the little smattering I had in Bookes, gained under my old Master Mr Farnaby by reading of good Authors." Obviously the description of his "smattering" is rhetorical self-depreciation, overemphasizing his marginality: given both Farnaby's training and the extent of his library, Sherburne was clearly widely read and well trained from early youth and must have felt very much at home in the academic environment.

On the rendition of Oxford in 1646, he moved to London, where he lived in the Middle Temple with his relative John Povey in the situation of enforced retirement and relative poverty common to many young Royalists of his generation. (He later describes himself as being "liable ... to frequent midnight searches, & proclamation banishments out of the Lines of communication, as being a Cavalier, which the *godly party* then called *Malignant*.") Here he became intimate friends with the poet Thomas Stanley, perhaps initially with some reference to their distant blood relationship but more enduringly and deeply on the basis of shared interests and intellectual empathy (in Stanley's words, "the double Tye of Sympathy and Blood"). The friendship with Stanley appears to have lasted without diminution until Stanley's death in 1678, in spite of subsequent difference in occupations, and is eloquently set forth in Stanley's poem to Sherburne (effectively a versified critical biography) which appears in various forms over thirty years, to be completed as part of Stanley's "Register of Friends" shortly before his death. The two men cooperated closely in their literary endeavors as well as intellectual pursuits--quite closely indeed on their poems and translations, each publishing a collection in 1651, and in a more general way through Stanley's subsequent studies of ancient

philosophy, which complemented Sherburne's astronomical studies.

In the Middle Temple Sherburne formed new acquaintances and strengthened old ones with "contemporary Wits," including Shirley, May, William Fairfax, William Hammond, John Hall, Lovelace, Herrick, and Denham. Most of these writers exemplified to some extent the pattern of literary activity sprung from enforced retirement from public life, but it is also true that in their literary activity they found a means of resisting an encompassing oppression and of publicly expressing an alternate framework of value. It is in this atmosphere that Sherburne produced his first substantial literary works, translations of two very different pieces from Seneca, the *Dialogus ad Lucilium de Providentia*, and the tragedy of *Medea*. The first of these, with its central theme of integrity, or inner spiritual victory in the face of worldly defeat, is one of the purest expressions of the Stoic element in Cavalier ideals, both in its occasion and in its matter. Published by Humphrey Moseley in 1648, it is titled *Seneca's Answer to Lucilius his Quære; Why Good Men suffer Misfortunes seeing there is a Divine Providence?*, bearing the motto *Calamitatis, virtutis occasio* (Calamity is the opportunity of virtue) and Sherburne's signature as "E. S. Esq." Printed publicly with a title and motto so patently espousing the royal cause (note that "why good men suffer," boldly printed on Sherburne's title page, is not part of Seneca's title but rather occurs as a repeated rhetorical question in the text), it nicely points the conjunction of public and private both in Charles's situation and in the literary form, between the king as a public figure and the king as a private, moral self, and between literature as "diversion" and literature as a moral and political agent. In his dedicatory epistle to Charles, Sherburne represents himself as serving the king in a new capacity: "Sir, whilst the times are such, that they deny me according to my *particular Duty* to serve the just Commands of Your *Majesties Will*, I presume ... to shew Your *Majesty* that yet I have a *Will* to serve You." The witty turn here pits the current political situation against itself, showing the power of will shifting from the royal will (public) to the individual will of the subject (private), a reciprocal relationship which underlies political ideals Sherburne later put down in an unpublished prose treatise. Writing "to the Reader," Sherburne again blurs private diversion with public benefit and in doing so reconstitutes his reading public: if this translation proves "not an unpleasing Diversion" to "divers good Men, honest and loyall Sufferers in these bad Times" then that approval shall "warrant the *Publication* above any Licence of an *Imprimatur*." The immediate political situation and the possibility of censorship transfer the classical *vir bonus* (good man) trope from the realm of idealism into that of practical reality.

The poetic translation closely follows Seneca's sense, in keeping with the principles to which Sherburne adhered throughout his life; in recasting running Latin prose into end-stopped English decasyllabic couplets, it sharpens oppositions and paradoxes. To illustrate, "cui non industrio otium poena est?" (To what industrious man is not idleness a punishment?) becomes

And to a Soule industrious, what lesse
Then a tormenting Paine, is Idlenesse?

The couplet structure balances "Soule industrious" with "tormenting Paine," thus activating the irony implicit in the latter, which is intensified through the long suspense before the final emphatic resolution in "Idlenesse." This work is perhaps the only one of Sherburne's Senecan translations which, while close, can be said to have political overtones in its diction and in its very few additions to the original. In one notable example Seneca's image of God as a father severely educating his children, who learn through imitating him, becomes tinged with the ideas of royal succession: "ille magnificus" (the great Parent) becomes specifically the "Royall Sire" whose "Legitimate Issue" are virtuous men, and the passage evokes the idea of divine right as based in a heavenly likeness, even a heavenly essence (comparable to the blood tie between parents and children). Elsewhere the same slight leaning in the diction appropriates Seneca's descriptions of general evils to the immediate British situation: "quamvis subita sunt" (no matter how sudden ills are) becomes "thought by some to be the Births of suddaine violence," language used by Sherburne elsewhere to describe the national upheaval.

Sherburne's translation of *Medea* (1648) has few if any of these political overtones. As a close translation which uses poetic technique to cut through to central dramatic issues, the play embodies Stanley's commendation--"Thy Version hath not borrow'd, but restor'd." This is particularly apparent in the final act, where Sherburne's talent for balance and paradox sharpens the psychological conflict with a precision not frequent in contemporary Senecan drama:

Seek matter for thy Fury, for all harmes
That brings a hand prepar'd.--Wrath whither, oh!
Transported art thou? 'Gainst what trecherous Foe
Intend'st these weapons?--Something my fierce mind,
But what I know not, hath within design'd,

Nor dares t'her self disclos't.--Fool I have been
Too fondly rash.

Like the Senecan original, Sherburne's *Medea* can be seen as subverting some of the Stoic formulas, seen when Medea justifies her desire for revenge by claiming Stoic integrity: "Fortune m'Estade may ravish from me, my / Minde she ne're can rob me of." Some of the narrative passages show consummate lyrical skill; in the story of Medea's witchcraft, for example, exquisitely tuned language and line structure oppose ideas and images in delicate, even amorous, balance:

These felt the Edge of Knife at Birth of day,
In dead of drousie Night, this slender spray
Was from his stalke cut downe. This ripened Blade
She did with her charme-tainted Naile invade.

During this period Sherburne also was writing various occasional and commendatory verses and possibly beginning the translations for his collection to appear in 1651. Of his occasional verse, however, the loveliest and most unexpected is the epithalamion on Stanley's marriage to Dorothy Enyon on 8 May 1648, printed among a group of epithalamia at the end of a very rare edition of Stanley's *Poems* of 1647. Sherburne writes in an elegant and balanced Pindaric, with graceful use of the variations in line length and repetition and with a rich yet restrained development of metaphor; particularly felicitous is the recurring pattern of the final line of each stanza, which places the "equal flames" of the lovers within the process of their marriage and finally resolves them into "equal ardour" in the transformed point of view of the final stanza. (Particularly striking, for a marriage poem, is the emphasis on mutual love and desire rather than on a fruitful line of succession.)

After the execution of the king in January 1649, Stanley took Sherburne to live with him at Cumberlow Green, which became a center of literary activity. Here the two friends worked in very close cooperation, Stanley on a new and expanded edition of his *Poems*, and Sherburne on his own collection of original and translated verse. The contents of the collections show this closeness, occasionally featuring poems based on the same models and in one instance confusing authorship. Both collections were published in 1651; Stanley's was published privately again, but Sherburne's *Poems and Translations* was publicly printed and sold by William Hunt and Thomas Dring. Sherburne's collection was republished later in the same year under the title *Salmacis, Lyrian & Sylvia, Forsaken Lydia*. Sherburne's dedication effusively declares the volume to be rooted in his friendship with Stanley--"nobilissimo amicissimo candidissimoque" (to the noblest, kindest, truest of friends)--consciously imitating the manner of a Latin monument; thus he grounds and validates both the poems and the friendship in enduring classical ideals.

This is Sherburne's only collection of nondramatic verse which was not reprinted in its entirety until Franz Josef Van Beeck's edition in 1961. In both its form and its content it closely follows the established models with which Sherburne's literary associates were working, primarily contemporary and near-contemporary French and Italian poets, who themselves imitated classical authors. The translations are divided in a manner imitating that of Giambattista Marino and others, based on classical ideas of decorum: "Erotica"; "Ludicra"; "Ethica"; "Sacra." These are given what amount to separate title pages, printed like an inscription in large Roman capitals on the verso of the page preceding the first poem in each section--like the dedication, a conscious visual imitation of Latin models. Sherburne's originals have been exhaustively documented by Mario Praz and Van Beeck; the amatory verse is dominated by Marino and Marc-Antoine de Gérard Saint-Amant (Sherburne has been called the major seventeenth-century English translator of Saint-Amant), and the sacred verse by Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski and Marino, while the ethical and satiric/comic directly translate classical models: Ausonius, Horace, Martial, Theocritus.

Sherburne translates closely in almost every instance, particularly when translating classical models directly; he takes more liberties with contemporary writers. His gift for close translation that re-creates the spirit of the original is most evident in the Theocritan idylls, which evoke the colloquial liveliness of the originals while closely imitating their sense:

Fetch me some water hither, *Eunooa*:
D'ee hear, *Joan Cleanly*! high you, make more haste;
Quick; *The Cat loves a Cushion*: see how fast
Shee comes with it!--pour forth: not so much (Drone!)
Yee idle slut, why hast thou wet my gown?

Here in idyll 15 Sherburne's contemporary references elide Theocritan Greek with something not unfit for the Restoration stage. In his translations of contemporary French and Italian poets, Sherburne tends to condense, to point oppositions, to sharpen turns

of wit or unify them; he prunes excessive metaphoric development and personal references, tending to universalize ideas and heighten thematic implications and questions. Where in the classical translation he more frequently imitates the meter of originals, with Marino and Saint-Amant he radically alters poetic units, transferring short stanzas or the variable lines of *madrigali* into longer verse paragraphs whose primary unit is the balanced decasyllabic couplet, thus allowing for more developed narrative and extended idea or argument. (In general, Sherburne has a flair for dramatic or narrative verse not found in Stanley.) Some of the shorter lyrics also show considerable technical skill, as in the following translation of Marino, in which the line structure re-creates the suspense and the movement of gaze:

Chloris! on thine Eyes I gaz'd;
 When amaz'd
At their brightnes,
On thy Breasts I cast my Look;
 No lesse took
With their whitenes:
Both I justly did admire,
These all Snow, and those all Fire.

Whilst these Wonders I survay'd,
 Thus I said
In suspence;
Nature could have done no lesse
 To expresse
Her Providence,
Than that two such fair Worlds, might
Have two Suns to give them Light.

One of very few poems in the collection to celebrate female physical beauty (as opposed to male), this lyric refines and tightens Marinistic wit while pursuing the implications of its artificiality: the cosmic doubling at the end completely obliterates the human woman (it would be distinctly odd if she had only one eye and one breast), the tenor disappears into the vehicle, and the external object looked on becomes an image in the gazer's mind. Sherburne's rare additions will occasionally question or alter the overall intent of an original, as seen in the following lines added to a translation of Giovanni Battista Guarini's "Celia Weeping": "What reall then in women can be known! / When nor their Joys, nor Sorrows are their Own?" This conventionally misogynistic lament can be read as cutting through to the heart of most amatory convention, exposing the falsity of its construction of feminine subjectivity.

The collection includes some possibly original poems under "Sacra," and under "Ethica" Sherburne includes his own commendatory poems to Stanley and Shirley. This ordering, together with the overpowering classicism of the dedication to Stanley, joins Sherburne's immediate literary circle to the community of the past, giving it a validity transcending their present difficulties. Thus the collection, while it consists of "private exercises" as Sherburne claims, is given a redefined and idealized public meaning. A similar quiet politicizing can be found in Sherburne's version of Sarbiewski's *Amphion, seu Civitas bene ordinata*, titled "Amphion, or a City well ordered." Although it is a translation so close as to imitate the original sapphic meter, it embodies Sherburne's own positive political ideals as outlined in a manuscript prose treatise written between 1650 and 1660, which bases society on mutual help and friendship:

Safer Course those Pilots run
Who observe more Stars than One.
Ships with double Anchors ty'd Securer ride.

Strength united firm doth stand
Knit in an eternall Band:
But proud Subjects private hate
 Ruins a State.

The story of Amphion should be well noted--the poet has a prophetic voice, speaking a word of creative power--and creates the ideal community from nature, not art:

Stones did leap about the Plains,
Rocks did skip to hear his Strains,
And the Groves the Hills did crown
Came dancing down.

When he ceas'd, the Rocks and Wood
Like a Wall about him stood;
Whence fair *Thebes*, with seven Gates close
Of Brass, arose.

Shortly after the appearance of the two collections, Sherburne was called away from retirement with Stanley to enter the service of George Savile, later Marquis of Halifax, as his steward. In 1655, after possibly playing a part in the abortive uprising at Rufford, Sherburne was by the "good favour" of Lady Savile appointed tutor to her nephew Sir John Coventry, traveling through France, Italy, part of Germany, Holland, the Low Countries, and Flanders. As in his earlier European tour, Sherburne used this as an educational opportunity: "I did advance and promote my Bookish Inclination, by Conference with learned Persons, when I came to such Places as could afford Me their desired Converse, rather than by any Academicall Course of Study." He began to pursue the mathematical and astronomical interests that bore fruit in the Marcus Manilius translation; he also started the correspondence with learned men that continued through the following decades and that was to include Elias Ashmole, Obadiah Walker, Edward Bernard (Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford), and Isaac Vossius. (It was during the 1670s that he began a twenty-year correspondence with Anthony Wood, pursuing his own interest in the Sherburne family history and promoting Wood's interest in everybody else's.) During the tour Sherburne also probably began building up the library mentioned earlier, which by the 1670s contained a rich collection of classical and modern literature, dictionaries and grammars of various languages (including Arabic), scientific and mathematical books ranging from Euclid to Johannes Kepler, Robert Boyle, and William Harvey, and books on Catholic canon law and theology. According to Van Beeck, the library also included "a *Historia Byzantii* in twenty-one volumes, Grotius's works, and books, too numerous to mention, on numismatics, archaeology, legal science, heraldry, geography, biology, medicine, music, strategy, and philosophy."

After the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 the restoration of Sherburne's position in the ordnance office did not come so easily; he returned to find someone else appointed to the place and had to petition to be reinstated. He brought with him claims for arrears going back to his father's time, and he received instead a retrenchment of his salary to one-fifth of its original amount. Although the arrears did not go away, the 1660s and 1670s were years of immensely productive activity for Sherburne in both the civil and literary spheres. The memoranda from the years of the Dutch war show Sherburne and the other officers working with great industry, efficiency, and meticulous attention to detail (and to protocol)--keeping lines of communication open and the supplies moving, often against high odds. Furthermore, Sherburne appears to have applied to his work as ordnance officer the same principles of scholarly ordering and research that formed an integral part of his literary achievement: a memoir of his life in *Gentleman's Magazine* (June 1796) accredits him with drawing up the "Rules, Orders, and Instructions" given to the Office of Ordnance in 1683; which, with very few alterations, have been confirmed at the beginning of every reign since, and are those by which the office is now governed."

Sherburne's intellectual activity during this period is given impressive witness by the Manilius volume, on which he was actively working during the 1660s and which was evidently in press with its commentary by 1669. When it did appear in its final form in January 1675, it was as a sumptuous folio edition with engravings by Wenceslaus Hollar (artist and cataloger to Charles I and for a time to Charles II), an apparatus of prose commentary unusually compendious even for the seventeenth century, various illustrated treatises on the nature and origin of astronomy and the different elements of the cosmos, and a descriptive "Catalogue of Astronomers" comprising over a thousand names, each with a vita. Both commentary and appendices reveal an impressive (if somewhat self-generating) knowledge of astronomy, astronomical history, and of comparative mythologies, religions, and philosophies, comparable to Ralph Cudworth's *True Intellectual System of the Universe* (1678). The battery of sources, careful comparison of texts, and weighing of different arguments show that Sherburne had read widely and long and that he was deeply grounded in and able to make his own judgments on historical and scientific matters.

The Sphere of Marcus Manilius was enthusiastically greeted by the Royal Society:

The Learn'd and Intelligent Author of this Work, rightly considering the great importance of the mutual Helps,

which the Knowledge of Antiquity and the Pursuit of New Discoveries of the Present Times may afford to one another, thought fit to imploy part of his ingenious Talent in rendring English this Ancient Poem ... wherein divers Particulars do occur, touching the Nature of the Heavens and the Celestial Bodies, that agree with the Assertions of some of the most Eminent Modern Astronomers[.]

The review goes on to praise not only the compendious learning but also the technical knowledge evident in Sherburne's methods, evidence, and charts. Just as Manilius had set out to invent a new kind of poetry, so Sherburne explores the relation of the poem to its subject and of poetic tradition to empirical science. Indeed, poetry and science are almost identified in the act of knowledge and interpretation, bearing a similar relation to nature (their subject). This appears to be the import of the poem's magnificent frontispiece, whose "Mind" is explained in a verse on the opposite page:

The Spheres (which ever moving are) imply
That *Arts*, and *Learning*, if unactive, die.
Our *Subject's* Worth, is by *Urania* meant,
Our Poet's, *PAN*, and *Mercury* present,
Who sings *rough* Matter in *smooth* Verse, t'invite
The *Ignorant* to Learn, the *Learn'd* Delight.

The frontispiece illustrates the invocation of the poem, made to both the god of nature and the god of interpretation and speech and linking the subject with the poetic form itself. Pan represents both the nature studied and the nature from which poetry springs; Mercury represents both the interpretative eloquence of poetry and the scientific act of knowledge and interpretation. Both poetry and science are linked as "human arts" which are themselves a part of the pattern embodied by the cosmos, the ultimate subject. (The presence of Urania as giving high worth to the subject is noteworthy, considering that *The Sphere of Marcus Manilius* was in press in 1669, two years after the first appearance of *Paradise Lost*.)

The poem translates the first book of the *Astronomica*, which describes various theories for the origin of the cosmos, followed by accounts of the rise of astronomy (in terms of the rise of all human culture and science), the nature of the cosmos (in particular the fixed stars in their constellations), the different ways of bounding and measuring the sphere, and finally the other heavenly bodies, sun and moon and comets. The interaction of poetry and science, and of poetry and classical learning, is embodied in both the subject and the form of the work, not only in the dense commentary which surrounds the lines on the page, but also in the numerous appendices that take up and expand the subjects of the poem in the order in which they appear. The notes are both knowledge and interpretation, just as poetry, like science, is an act of interpretation and discovery--a relationship which Stanley describes with a witty turn in his praise of *The Sphere of Marcus Manilius* in the "Register of Friends":

All who 'till now on the Smooth Surface said
To fathom the vast Depth, despair'd or fail'd.
This Thou hast done; Whose Notes like Seemarks stand
To guide us to the new-discovered Land.
("Notes," of course, can refer either to poetic song or to critical annotations.)

As with all Sherburne's translations of Latin, this one is very close to the original, but it succeeds to some extent in realizing the ideas outlined above, embodying the principles of physics in the sound and structure of couplet verse. The following passage, from the middle of the most mathematical section of the poem, which describes the different ways of measuring and viewing the sphere of the cosmos, is one of the happier examples of versified physics:

Look round about far as thy Sight will go,
What e're Earths Surface with Heavens Verge doth close,
And the divided Hemispheres compose;...
.....
...wheresoe're its wandring Course it steers,
As now to this, then to that Part it bears,
It changes still; a new Arch always making;
For leaving now this Heav'n, then that forsaking,
One half'twill still disclose, or hide, or sign
With varying Limits which the Sight confine.

This is terrestrial, 'cause the Earth it rounds,
And call'd Horizon, 'cause the sight it bounds.

The swelling and movement of these lines re-create the infinite fluidity of perception, while at the same time they vividly convey the scientific and mathematical concept of the imaginary curve.

The publication of *The Sphere of Marcus Manilius* saw Sherburne at the height of public recognition, with a wide scholarly correspondence and various honors from fellow poets: he and Stanley were the dedicatees of Edward Phillips's *Theatrum Poetarum* (1675), in which Phillips describes Sherburne as "an intimate Friend and Acquaintance, as well of the ancient Greek and Latin, as of the choicest of Modern Poets." Sherburne was also given dedicatory mention in Thomas Roycroft's Virgil. It is after the appearance of *The Sphere of Marcus Manilius* that Stanley gives Sherburne the poet's laurel in his poem in the "Register": "O my Defence and sweetest Ornament! / Whose Flame inspires Me, now my own is spent."

Sherburne's verse translation of *Troades, or, The Royal Captives* appeared in 1679. Here Sherburne has gained confidence and skill in the use of the couplet in dialogue, as demonstrated in the psychological immediacy of the scene where Ulysses manipulates Andromache into revealing the hiding place of Astyanax in Hector's tomb. Broken lines recreate the intense conflict and pressure:

Ulysses

The Prophet's Words shall be fulfill'd; the place
I will demolish.

Andromache
Which ye sold.

Ulysses

Deface

The Monument.

Troades is a play that itself deeply questions established order and tradition, exposing conflicting frameworks of value, criticising established heroic models (seen in the heroic deaths of women and children, and the curious abruptness of the ending, in which one poor old woman is left onstage lamenting her continued life as an undesired climax). It should be considered that *Troades* appeared at the height of public panic over the Popish Plot, a rumored Catholic conspiracy to assassinate Charles II (during which Sherburne himself was subjected to some harassment), and the play's questioning of innocent deaths and of public superstition would have been grimly apposite. In his annotations, moreover, Sherburne specifically points out Seneca's possible political motives in contrasting the moderation taught by Agamemnon with the brutality of Pyrrhus.

Being knighted by Charles II on 6 January 1683 may have seemed like the height of public honor, but it was also the beginning of Sherburne's downward trend. Something of this ambivalence appears in his description to Wood:

His Mat^y in consideration of my many and great Sufferings & the long and faithfull Services by Me performed to his Royall Father of blessed Memory, and to himselfe was graciously plesed to conferr the Honour of Knighthood upon Me in his private Bedchamber at Whitehall the 6th of January 1682 [1683] being 12th Day. This You will say cost Him not much, and gained me as little.

Whatever the reason, chronic arrears or the political climate, during the 1680s Sherburne appears to have been attempting to secure his financial position, seen in his (unsuccessful) efforts to secure a college lease from Oxford like those held by his father and grandfather. In 1688 Sherburne was doing his usual job making sure all the supplies were on hand to defend against the Dutch invasion, but by 4 December, one week before James's flight, he knew that his own position was in grave doubt. Referring to the replacement of Catholic officials by Protestant ones, he commented,

We are like to fare yet worse, for Orange they say demands the Towre to be deliverd up to him, trusting in that more than a free Parliamnt wch they say he has no great Affection for, as not knowing how their Votes may answer his Designes.

On 13 December Sherburne was removed from his position and his home in the Tower of London with great suddenness. By the following August he had been replaced by John Swaddell, to whom his office had been granted in reversion, now "forfeited by Sir Edward Sherburne's declaring himself a Roman Catholic and not taking the oath and declaration" (*Calendar of Treasury Books*, 1689-1692). Although there is evidence that in 1673 he took the oaths and the Anglican Sacrament, shortly after the death of his mother and the passing of the Test Act, at all other times Sherburne seems to have adhered to Catholicism.

Sherburne's remaining years tell a rather grim tale. The romantic description in Wood's memoir describes him as spending his days in retirement, study, and prayer and exudes an image of cheerfully resigned piety and the comforts of learning. The reality, to judge from his manuscripts and other documentary records, is advanced age, illness, indigence, and a quantity of incomplete literary projects. He did not fail to publish altogether: a prose translation of Michel Blondel's *Comparison of Pindar and Horace* appeared in 1696, his first prose translation. He was probably working on another prose translation, "Tacitus His Morals, of flattery particularly towards princes, with remarques thereupon," from the French of Abraham Nicholas Amelot de la Houssaye, "English'd by a Person of quality, a lover of plaine dealing" which exists in manuscript in the commonplace book Sherburne kept from 1692 to 1698. In the final year of his life he brought out his collection of the Senecan tragedies, *The Tragedies of L. Annæus Seneca* (1701), which republished *Medea* (with a good many revisions and a virtually new set of annotations) and *Troades*, adding to the latter a reprint of his translation of Coluthus's *Rape of Helen*, which had appeared in the 1651 collection. *Phædra and Hippolytus* was his translation of *Phædra* and was published for the first time in 1702, but Sherburne's translation of Seneca's play had existed in manuscript as early as 1679.

This collection was itself, however, simply the first volume of a projected *opera omnia*, or collected works (first mentioned in 1693), which never appeared. It is clear that Sherburne felt to some degree that his poetic flame was spent, and in some manuscript lines commenting on Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses* he gives the work of creative transmission to antiquarians like Wood:

Time who the Births of All Things brings to Light
Devowres Them likewise with Saturnian Spight.

.....
Of what high Worth may be that worke esteemd
Which Works of lost Creations hath redeemed.

.....
Which I would too; had I a Lute well-strung
To sound the Places Praise from whence I sprung.
But Phaebus warnes Me, tis in vaine to strive
To play the Poet well at Eighty five.

By 1696 Sherburne's money problems were severe, and he spent the rest of his life petitioning the master general of ordnance and King William III (and later Queen Anne), first claiming the right of his patent to his position and the arrears due him, and finally asking for simple charity. These resulted in occasional gifts from royal bounty (in 1699 William refused to grant him a pension, "allowing the Lords to give him something, £50 or some such sum"); in one instance a petition seems to have gone unread for over a year before resulting in another gift of one hundred pounds. The last such gift (one hundred pounds from Queen Anne in July 1702) reached Sherburne not long before he died, "probably at his lodgings in Holborn," on 4 November 1702. He was buried in the Tower chapel. The draft of his Latin inscription emphasizes equally his service to three Stuart kings and his service to the republic of letters, applying the following adverbial characterization to both: "Summa Industria, Constantia Fideque Obsequentissima Inservisset" (He served devotedly, with the greatest industry, the most constant faith, and the most self-giving obedience).

Sherburne's knighthood has a certain moral and aesthetic appropriateness: he was a Cavalier all his life, both in his Royalist principles (in particular his loyalty to Charles I) and in his aesthetic achievement and ideals, which are based on a classical ideal of a moral and spiritual community that transcends time, distance, and difference of language. In the preface to the Senecan collection Sherburne vigorously defends his translation as

the genuine Sense of *Seneca* in these Tragedies intelligibly delivered, by a close Adherence to his Words as far as the Propriety of Language may fairly admit; in Expressions not unpoetical, and Numbers not unmusical. But

representing, as in a Glass, his just Lineaments and Features, his true Air and Mien, in his own Native Colours, unfaded with adulterate Paint, and keeping up (at least aiming to do so) his distinguishing Character.

Here at the end of his life he had developed confidence in the ability of an exact translation to deliver that true poetic "spirit" central to Renaissance ideas of "imitation." At its best, his own poetry exhibits that ability not only to convey the literal meaning of the original (its "Mind," in Sherburne's habitual Latinate use of the term) but also to create a poetic sense and implications of its own--so that two minds meet to make a new one. He is thus a good exemplar of George Chapman's aim in his "Preface to Homer":

As well to reach the spirit that was spent
In his example, as with art to pierce
His Grammar, and etymologie of words.

Sherburne's classicism has its own revolutionary element. In claiming poetic value for those precise sciences of linguistic translation and astronomical observation, he helps alter and stretch the existing boundaries of poetic discipline. In this he shares in the dynamic flexibility of his time and in its own explosive questioning of long-held assumptions and categories in all areas of human experience.

Papers:

Sherburne's principle manuscripts are found mainly in Britain. The British Library Sloane MSS. include among other things one notebook and five commonplace books kept from 1650 to 1701 and the catalogue of Sherburne's library. The Bodleian Library holds his correspondence with Anthony Wood, Elias Ashmole, and Edward Bernard. An interleaved and annotated copy of Joseph Justus Scaliger's 1600 edition of Manilius is in the University Library at Cambridge. Outside Britain a Latin letter to Isaac Vossius is in the University Library in Amsterdam.

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