NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

Lady Ranelagh’s Book of Kitchen-Physick?: Reattributing Authorship for Wellcome Library MS 1340

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Abstract

Wellcome Library MS 1340 is a seventeenth-century manuscript recipe book written in several hands that includes the often-cited recipe “to make S[piri]t of Roses my brother Robert Boyls way.” This recipe, written in the “older hand” in the manuscript, has led scholars and librarians to believe that the book was compiled by Katherine Jones (née Boyle), Lady Ranelagh. In this essay, Michelle DiMeo offers bibliographic research and a comparison of the hands in the recipe book against those found in several letters by Boyle family members. She argues that the “older hand” is actually that of Margaret Boyle, Countess of Orrery, and identifies many of the named recipe authors as Orrery family members. The reattribution is considered in the broader framework of the kinds of evidence recipe books can make available.

Keywords: Lady Ranelagh; Robert Boyle; early modern recipe books; receipt books; early modern women writers; domestic medicine

The study of early modern recipe books is developing into an exciting new field, with researchers in a variety of disciplines increasingly using them as windows into domestic practice, intellectual networks, and textual culture.1 One frequently used recipe book is Wellcome Library MS 1340, a late seventeenth-century manuscript written in several hands. Though catalogued by the Wellcome Library as “The Boyle Family Receipt Book,” it has often been treated by scholars as a collection by Katherine Jones, Lady Ranelagh (1615–1691), based on the tentative claim in the library’s catalogue that the hand is “perhaps that of Katherine, afterwards Lady Ranelagh.” A number of scholars have built on the catalogue’s suggestion and have used the

manuscript to demonstrate this seventeenth-century woman’s practice of domestic medicine.² The most detailed study of the manuscript to date is that by Lynette Hunter, who used it to support her argument that Lady Ranelagh experimented with chemistry in her home and practiced it alongside her famous natural-philosopher brother, Robert Boyle (1627–1691).³ Calling it Lady Ranelagh’s book of “Kitchen-Physick” (an attribution that has since been adopted by other scholars), Hunter says that this is one of two recipe books Ranelagh kept, and she describes it as a “general book of household science and specialized food cookery receipts.”⁴ Her essay concludes with her transcription of the recipe “Spirit of Roses my brother Robert Boyle’s way” as an example of “the kind of skills and technological expertise that were expected in day-to-day household work,” and she uses it as proof of Boyle and Ranelagh’s long-acknowledged, but under-documented, domestic collaboration.⁵ This influential essay was the first attempt to recognize Lady Ranelagh’s interest in natural philosophy and has since become a standard source, especially for those who work on early modern women’s writing or the history of women in science.⁶

No detailed study concerning the authorship of Wellcome MS 1340 has ever been conducted. Such an assessment is necessary for any manuscript with a tentative catalogue entry but particularly essential for texts in this genre. The multiple functions that an individual recipe book may have served, as Margaret Ezell, Sara Pennell, and others have documented, require that such texts be read carefully for clues to compilation practices and various forms of use.⁷ Paleographical and bibliographical study can reveal information about the circumstances surrounding the textual artifact’s original creation and use, and subsequent inheritance and survival. This essay begins by employing a material reading of Wellcome Library MS 1340 to argue that Lady Ranelagh is not the source of the “older hand” in this text, and then offers new contexts and methods for reading the manuscript.

Provenance and Paleography

The Wellcome Library purchased MS 1340, a thick quarto recipe book in multiple hands, in an auction at Hodgson's in London on July 20, 1922. The Hodgson's catalogue merely identifies the manuscript as a seventeenth-century “cooking book” and includes it under “other properties,” so there is no clue as to who consigned it to auction. The Hodgson firm no longer exists, so this scant information represents the extent of what we know about the manuscript’s provenance. The volume is still in its original calf binding and contains 159 folios. It is not an elaborate, expensive binding, and there are no clasps, gilded edges, or embossed letters, which would be typical of presentation copies. The spine has deteriorated, and if there was once a title here, it is no longer extant.

In 1960, the manuscript was catalogued as having been compiled by “The Boyle Family,” apparently based on the attributions within it to members of the Boyle family. The catalogue entry describes it as:

Collection of 712 medical receipts, with some cookery receipts, mainly written by two hands: in English. The most frequent hand, probably a lady’s, is a neat italic; the other hand is that of an older person, who is probably the original compiler. Receipt No. 53 is headed “To make Spirit of Roses my brother Robert Boyls [sic] way”: this is written in the older hand, and is perhaps that of Katherine, afterwards Lady Ranelagh who lived with her brother Robert at her house in Pall Mall from 1668 to the time of her death, exactly a week before that of Robert Boyle himself. The identity of the writer of the greater part of the entries is unknown, but it is possible that she could have been a secretary who copied out the receipts for Katherine Boyle. . . . Many of the receipts have names attached, and in a number of cases these can be identified with members of the Boyle family and their circle.

While this entry only notes that Lady Ranelagh is “perhaps” the original compiler, the suggestion was strong enough to lead many researchers to assume it was hers, as discussed previously.

Because there is no title page or signature claiming ownership or authorship, the hands in which the recipe book was written offer some of the only clues to the original compilers. Thanks to the Wellcome Library’s digitization program, the entire manuscript may be viewed online, and readers may read this essay alongside a freely available

digital facsimile of the original manuscript. The book is written in at least three hands: a sloppy italic hand (Hand One); a tight italic scribal hand with an emphasis on presentation (Hand Two); and a careful but large bubbly italic which appears to have written only two recipes (Hand Three). There is an increased emphasis on presentation toward the end of the manuscript, as represented by a strict adherence to margins, uniform presentation of attributions, titles, and numeration, and the use of a more elaborate scribal hand, specifically evident in the majuscule letters (see, for example, fol. 103r). It may be that Hand Two is the same hand as the elaborate scribal hand found at the end of the manuscript (beginning at 140r) or this may be a fourth hand.

Though an archivist added folio numbers in pencil, the original pagination shows that there were two attempts at organization by the original compilers. In the original number sequence, folio 4r was marked page 1, with numbers following on the recto and verso of each folio until folio 29r, which is numbered 51. This pagination is carefully disguised in elaborate drawings of knots and faces, and one must scrutinize the text to find the hidden numbers. A close analysis of these designs suggests that they were chosen for practical purposes, dictated by the shapes of the original numbers and how these could best be hidden. Folios 134r–135v served as the index for the original volume, though these pages have since been reused, with recipes written by Hand Two squeezed into the blank space. The title “Table” may still be seen on the top of folio 134r, and it is followed by a list of recipe titles and the numbers 1 through 79. These all appear to have been written by Hand One in brown ink, but were later scribbled over so extensively with black ink that they have been rendered almost entirely illegible. The first recipe in the numbered list was “Lady Barkshires water for a sore brest” and the last numbered recipe is number 49, for opium pills, which are numbered as 6 and 83 (respectively) in the comprehensive sequencing that came later. This table offers further evidence that the additions by Hand Two were added later. Hand One left many blank folios (both before and after the table) and even wrote additional numbers in the table when there were no recipes to correspond to them, suggesting that she or he intended to add to this later. Interestingly, while this table of contents lists the titles of the recipes in the order in which they appear in the text, the later index written in Hand Two offers a highly organized alphabetical list, where one may look up dropsy and find ten numbers that correspond to the ten recipes within the manuscript that relate to curing the dropsy. This more highly organized method is one that is employed more frequently than the simple list in seventeenth-century collections. The generational difference in organizational method may be due to changing conventions for the genre over the extended time period during which this manuscript was compiled, or to a

11. The file is at http://archives.wellcome.ac.uk/dserve/recipebooks/MS1340.pdf.
12. Hand One may be found on fol. 3r, “to make Inke very good”; Hand Two may be found on fol. 3v, “Against the Scurvy approved”; Hand Three may be found on fol. 4r, “Lady Barkshires watter for a sore brest” and 4v, “The Lady Carterets unguent for the bloody flux,” which are the only two recipes written in this hand.
13. Numbers 50–78 are listed on folio 135r–v, though there were only 49 recipes when this table was created.
conscious editorial attempt to reorganize a personal collection for easier use by and appeal to a wider audience.\textsuperscript{14}

Hand One wrote the majority of the recipes in folios 5r–59r. Hand Two later added the remainder of the recipes, instituted a sequencing that included all the recipes in the book, and created a new, comprehensive index alphabetized by ailment, part of the body, and sometimes recipe title (fols. 156r–58v). Hand Two also amended recipes written by Hand One (see, for example, fol. 55r), but Hand One never amends Hand Two. The overlapping of hands, often on a single page, makes it tempting to assume that this was a collaborative effort. However, a closer analysis suggests that Hand One began this manuscript, possibly with Hand Three, as the two recipes written in Hand Three (fol. 4r–v) are included in the original pagination scheme implemented by Hand One. Hand Two later took over by restructuring the whole compilation and adding new recipes, both at the end of the volume and in the blank space on pages that had already been used. Significantly, when recipes by Hands One and Two appear on the same page, Hand Two is always at the bottom and appears squashed into available space (for example, fols. 5v, 6r), suggesting that he or she added these at a later date and not in turns with the original compiler. As seen in figure 1, below, some recipes written in Hand One include an author citation in Hand Two, possibly suggesting that the original compiler offered Hand Two additional information while the latter attempted to improve the presentation of the volume for Hand One, or that Hand Two was closely associated with Hand One and already knew the source of these recipes through their shared knowledge. Hand One does not appear again until the recto of the final page in the manuscript (fol. 159r), after the complete index, offering a recipe “For ye Grese in horse Heeles.” Hand Two later rewrote this recipe onto fol. 46r as recipe no. 159, and also wrote “BL: Book No. 159” next to Hand One’s original recipe on the final page as a helpful cross-reference for the reader. It is also noted in the index as “Horses Heels Greasy,” which refers back to the newer numbered version of the remedy written by Hand Two, offering further proof that Hand Two incorporated Hand One’s recipes into a more formalized structure that came later.

Because Hand One is similar to but not obviously identical to that of Lady Ranelagh, I have done extensive research comparing Wellcome MS 1340 to over fifty holograph letters by Lady Ranelagh, written from 1642 to 1690.\textsuperscript{15} Though her writing becomes a bit less carefully formed with age, the main characteristics of her hand, including the slight slant to the right, a consciousness of letter size and spacing, and the manner in which she connects her letters, do not change. When comparing the two hands, several differences appear. Overall, Lady Ranelagh’s handwriting, spelling, and word spacing are always more consistent than those evidenced by Hand One (see fig. 2).


\textsuperscript{15} BL Add. MS 75354, fols. 50–119; West Sussex Record Office, Petworth House, Orrery MS 13219, unpaginated; National Archives of Scotland, GD45/14/237/1–5 and GD/406/1/3797; National Library of Ireland, Lismore Castle Papers MS 43,266/20; and Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, Osborne MS 16789.
FIGURE 1. Wellcome Library, London, MS 1340, fols. 27v–28r: Hands One and Two on a single page with foliation.
FIGURE 2. Lady Katherine Ranelagh's autograph letter, 1659. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, Osborne MS 16789.
While some letters written by Hand One are shaped in a similar way, such as a miniscule p with a tall ascender or a miniscule r that connects to the following letter on the top, there are other letters that are substantially different. For instance, the miniscule t by Hand One is written two different ways, but the most common manner (printed with a foot and not connected to the following letter) is never found in any of Lady Ranelagh’s letters. I am therefore proposing that Hand One in Wellcome MS 1340 is not that of Lady Ranelagh. This invites the question, whose hand is it?

Further comparison of the hand with writings by other members of the extended Boyle family strongly suggests that Hand One belongs to Lady Ranelagh’s sister-in-law Margaret Boyle (née Howard), Countess of Orrery (1623–1689). An analysis of seven letters written by Lady Orrery during the 1670s and one undated letter fragment that may be earlier documents her irregular spelling, eccentric spacing between and connection of words, and the formation of individual letters (see fig. 3). These are all quite distinctive and match that of Hand One in Wellcome MS 1340.

Furthermore, these holograph letters, and letters written to Lady Orrery, demonstrate her commitment toward maintaining the health of her family, most specifically her husband (Lady Ranelagh’s brother), Roger Boyle (1621–1679). Hand Two (the most prevalent hand) and Hand Three are still unconfirmed; both may be those of Lady Orrery’s daughters, or Hand Two could be that of a hired scribe. Although Lady Orrery began compiling this recipe book, it was finished by someone else.

The potential connection between Hand One and Lady Orrery was initially suggested by a closer look at two letters copied into the volume, both of which contained recipes for the gout intended for the Earl and Countess of Orrery. The first letter was signed by E. Dickinson and sent to the Countess of Inchiquin on May 26, 1677 (fols. 137r–v). This was probably Edmund Dickinson (1624–1707), a physician known for his use of chemical methods, writing to Lady Orrery’s daughter Margaret Boyle, who married William O’Brien, second Earl of Inchiquin. He begins by stating, in view of the symptoms that the Countess of Inchiquin described in her last letter, that he “can not but conclude that the Distemper of ye Rt honoble the Countess of Orrery is a Rheumatical Distemper & that kind which is naturally apt to become the Gout hereafter if not timely prevented.” After receiving advice on her mother’s illness from Dickinson, Lady Inchiquin probably sent the letter to her mother, who in turn saved it and eventually had it copied into the family recipe book. The second letter to be copied into this volume contains a recipe for gout. Interestingly, it is dated April 16, 1662, fifteen

16. Margaret Howard (daughter of Theophilus Howard and Elizabeth Home) married Roger Boyle on January 27, 1641. See ODNB, s.v. “Roger Boyle (1621–1679).”
17. I have compared the hand against seven autograph letters by Lady Orrery. These are BL Stowe MS 206, fols. 1, 15, 61, 107–8, 117–18 and BL Stowe MS 207, fols. 297–98, 318–19. There is also one unsigned letter fragment by Lady Orrery, probably to Lady Ranelagh, in West Sussex Record Office, Petworth House Archives, Orrery MS 13219. The fragment by Lady Orrery is in a different hand from the other twenty letters and begins with “find my daughter by doct Barwick and Doct Lower.”
19. See ODNB, s.v. “Edmund Dickinson (1624–1707).”
the last night my lady Margaret gave me honor of receiving a letter from my Exc. Sir, which shee returns you his most humble acknowledgement, and it extremely touched me in her, and I am not in condition of doing it in my own hand, shee being most extremely ill.

Humbly yours,

My 21st.
years earlier than the first letter copied into the book, demonstrating that the date of a recipe as stated in a recipe book might reflect the date of acquisition and not the date when it was entered into the compilation. This second letter is addressed to “the Right Honoble Roger Boyle Earl of Orrery” and signed by a “Christo: Davenport,” whose identity is unknown (fols. 142r–43v).20 Significantly, these two extracts address illnesses suffered by the Earl and Countess of Orrery, and it is likely that the couple saved the letters containing effective cures to be copied into their family recipe book at a later date. Letters provided one method for exchanging recipes, and the fact that both letters named the Orrerys as recipients and patients suggests that the book was compiled by members of this household who had access to letters they received.21

In addition, the individuals named in the author attributions within the manuscript link it more closely with Lady Orrery than with Lady Ranelagh. The individual with the second-highest number of attributed recipes is Lady or Countess Orrery, with eight (fols. 17r, 29r–v, and 40v–41v).22 There are also five ascribed to Lord or Earl Orrery (fols. 5r, 8v, 30v, 137r). There are several references to members of the Boyle family, including three to Lady Warwick (Lady Orrery’s sister-in-law, Mary Rich; fols. 13r, 46r, 75r), six to Lady Ranelagh (fols. 3v, 6v, 35r, 37v) and one to Lady Shaen (Frances Fitzgerald, daughter of George Fitzgerald and Joan Boyle, and therefore Lady Orrery’s niece by marriage; fols. 37v). Lady Ranelagh’s name is among the most frequently cited among members of the Boyle family, demonstrating the diversity of her talents and her involvement in the healthcare of her wider family, two assertions that can be confirmed by her wider correspondence.23

The reference to the author’s brother in the recipe titled “to make S[piri]t of Roses My Brother Robert Boyls Way” (see fig. 4) has been used as the strongest evidence that this book was written by Lady Ranelagh. But the reference could also have been made by Lady Orrery, as Robert Boyle was her brother-in-law. Boyle himself called Lady Orrery “the great support, ornament and comfort” of her family.24 He also collected her medical recipes and referred to her as his “sister” in his work diaries. For example, in his work diary from 1655, Boyle recorded the recipe “To make <or in -crease> Rhenish Wine,” a preparation that included both herbal and chemical ingredients, noting that he had received it from “My sister Broghill,” which was Lady Orrery’s

20. He is probably not the Franciscan friar of the same name, who was known by his religious name Sancta Clara by 1617. See ODNB, s.v. “Christopher Davenport (c.1595–1680).”
21. For example, Royal College of Surgeons MS 0030, Elizabeth Isham MS recipes 1659[?], still has the original letter from which one of the recipes within was copied. Though not a recipe book, Samuel Hartlib’s diaries, the “Ephemerides,” also have several letter extracts containing recipes.
22. The highest number of attributions is to a “Mrs Seager,” who may be a servant in the Orrery household. Or, as most of the recipes attributed to Mrs. Seager are clumped together, they may have been copied from a book once owned by a “Mrs. Seager.” See fols. 134v, 135r–36v.
23. BL. Additional MS 75354, fols. 50–119.
Figure 3. Wellcome Library, London, MS 1340, fol. 19r: “to make S[piri]t of Roses my brother Robert Boyls way” in Hand One.
title at the time. As these examples suggest, people in the early modern period did not typically use the term “in-law” when mentioning such a source in their recipe books.

In addition to the Boyle family attributions, there are some references to the Howard family (Lady Orrery’s family by birth) and even more to the Orrery family (her family by marriage). Two medical recipes are credited to Lady Northumberland, probably Lady Orrery’s sister, Elizabeth Howard (fols. 27r, 34v). Two of Lady Orrery’s daughters are also mentioned: “Lady Powerscourt” (the author of two recipes, fols. 28v–29r, 30r) must be Lady Orrery’s eldest daughter, Elizabeth; and “Lady Kathern Briet” (the author of one cookery recipe, fol. 54v) is her third daughter, Katherine Brett. Lady Essex, the source for one cookery recipe (fols. 66v–67r), is probably Elizabeth Percy, fifth daughter to the Earl and Countess of Northumberland, and therefore niece to Lady Orrery. “Lord Essex” is also credited with having provided one recipe (fol. 64v), and is probably her nephew, Arthur Capel, with whom Lady Orrery was in frequent correspondence throughout the 1670s. There are also references to a “Lady Southwell,” “Lady Barksher,” and “Lady Bedford” (fols. 27r, 45, 147r), all three members of families that had connections to the Howards or Orrerys. While Lady Ranelagh could have gained access to the Howard family’s remedies via Lady Orrery, the multitude of Orrery family attributions and copied letters more clearly fit Lady Orrery.

In summary, though the Wellcome Library catalogue suggests that Lady Ranelagh might be the original compiler of MS 1340, a careful analysis of the text—both the physical object and the textual inscriptions within it—strongly suggests that Lady Orrery was the original compiler and that someone added to it after her death. Recipe books frequently passed down through a family line for several generations, so the later contributor may have been one of her children or grandchildren, who attempted to reorganize the book and decided to keep adding to it. This process may have begun with Lady Orrery’s approval but it clearly continued after her death, as the back page is dated 1711, twelve years after she had died.

28. See ODNB, s.v. “Arthur Capel, 1st Earl of Essex (c.1632–83).”
29. Ibid. For the correspondence between Capel and Lady Orrery, see BL Stowe MS 206 fols. 1, 15, 61, 107, 117 and BL Stowe MS 207, fols. 297, 318.
30. Lady Southwell may be Elizabeth Southwell (née O’Brien), daughter of the first Earl and Countess of Inchiquin, making Lady Southwell granddaughter to Lady Orrery. Lady Berkshire may be Frances Harrison, wife of Thomas Howard (later fourth Earl of Berkshire); Harrison almost married Lord Orrery prior to his marriage with Lady Orrery in 1641. See Lynch, Roger Boyle, 28–29. Lady Bedford
New Context and Methodology

Discovering this misattribution of authorship highlights the difficulty of attributing recipe books more generally to a single or primary author. These manuscripts are rarely single-authored texts, and even those compiled by one person probably included individual recipes from a wide pool of sources, ranging from family members to professional medical practitioners to printed books. Indeed, this detailed study of Wellcome MS 1340 lends further support to Elaine Leong’s recent survey of household knowledge, in which she argues that the majority of early modern manuscript recipe collections are collaborative products involving the wider family network and not predominantly single-authored female texts, as they have previously been read. A recipe book that might provide evidence of Robert Boyle and his sister practicing science and medicine together in their home has (rightly) tantalized those interested in the history of women and science. That said, the Wellcome’s catalogue entry is only meant to be an educated guess, and more careful study of the material object was needed to confirm Ranelagh’s involvement in creating the text. Even if Ranelagh had written the majority of recipes in the book, making the leap from calling it a compilation by the Boyle family to identifying it as a single-authored manuscript by Lady Ranelagh simplifies the multiple layers of knowledge from several decades, evidenced in this manuscript.

This reattribution of authorship poses a significant challenge to Lynette Hunter’s essay on Lady Ranelagh as a domestic experimenter, which is frequently cited either to support biographical accounts of Ranelagh’s intellectual ambitions or to provide evidence of early modern women’s domestic practice of natural philosophy and medicine. While this particular manuscript cannot demonstrate Ranelagh and Boyle’s intellectual partnership, recent research has revealed that Boyle’s published works and the extant correspondence between the siblings offer detailed descriptions of their collaboration on medical, religious, and natural philosophical projects. Further, for those interested in the “Circle of Katherine Jones” to which Hunter’s essay title alludes, Ranelagh’s letters may be more helpful than her recipe books. For example, a recent study by Carol Pal considers many of Ranelagh’s letters alongside scrutiny of the Hartlib Papers to demonstrate the diversity of Ranelagh’s international intellectual network and her sophisticated handling of volatile political and religious matters.

may be Anne Carr, who wed William Russell, Earl of Bedford, in 1637. Anne was the daughter of Frances Carr, the divorced Countess of Essex and daughter of Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk. See George E. Cockayne, Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom, vol. 2 (London, 1912), s.v. “Bedford. VII. 1641. 5. and 1. William (Russell)” (pp. 79–80).


32. Michelle DiMeo, “Such a sister became such a brother”: Lady Ranelagh’s Influence on Robert Boyle,” forthcoming in Intellectual History Review in 2015 and presently available online at http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17496977.2014.89186

That said, one may still glean some information about Lady Ranelagh from this manuscript. Ranelagh is named as the author of four recipes, the source for one recipe authored by Sir Kenelm Digby, and the witness who has “approved good” one remedy authored by Lady Worcester. The four recipes in this manuscript of which she is identified as author are all medical remedies, suggesting that her interest in collecting and distributing recipes was predominantly related to medical ones. There is little overlap of ingredients between the four recipes, which are based on approximately twenty plant-based items, most of which might be easily found or grown in a garden (such as agrimony, sea scurvy grass, and sage). However, the recipes also require such items as the spices cinnamon and nutmeg (fol. 6v), which had to be imported or purchased from an apothecary.\textsuperscript{34} One recipe also includes the exotic plants chinaroot and sarsaparilla, first imported into England in the 1580s.\textsuperscript{35} Significantly, none of these four recipes includes any chemical compounds, metals, or minerals.

While the ingredients appear to be a standard range of herbs, including plants commonly suggested by contemporary printed herbals, the methods used to prepare them are more varied than one commonly finds and include both extremes on the contemporary spectrum of medical procedures. The most common methods and equipment used in the seventeenth century may be found in these recipes, including bruising herbs in a mortar, steeping ingredients in an earthen pot, or infusing them in hot water. However, the recipe “Against the Scurvy” requires that one “Distill these [herbs and spices] in 3 Gallons of Milk in a Rose Still over a Gentle fire” (fol. 3v). Elaine Leong has recently shown that recipes containing the terms “still” and “distill” were still a minority in the seventeenth century, and specific distillation equipment, such as “Rose Still” here, was specified in a tiny minority of recipes: only between 0.1 and 2.2 percent.\textsuperscript{36} However, on quite the other extreme, one of Lady Ranelagh’s recipes, “For the Falling Sickness and Good for Convulsion Fitts,” requires the creation and use of a charm, a common folk remedy. After listing many herbal ingredients that must be powdered and simmered over a fire, she says that it must be administered according to the moon. The recipe concludes: “You must withall grate about an ounce of the peony root and put it into a new Lockram bay and let the party wear it about their Neck 6 months together” (fol. 37v). Lockram, a type of linen fabric, was sometimes used to hold medical charms.\textsuperscript{37} The contrast of these recipes shows the broad range of Lady Ranelagh’s medical practice, in which she incorporated expensive new technologies with established household knowledge of herbs and folk tradition, making no distinction between the methods. This small sample of Ranelagh’s recipes appears representative of the composition of this recipe book as a whole, which contains

\textsuperscript{34} Elaine Leong, “Medical Recipe Collections,” 103.
\textsuperscript{35} On the import of these exotics, see Wear, Knowledge and Practice, 71.
\textsuperscript{36} Elaine Leong, “Medical Recipe Collections,” 107.
\textsuperscript{37} See OED, s.v. “lockram.” For a contemporary print example, see Gervase Markham, The English Housewife (1615; repr. London, 1631), 54.
712 numbered recipes that are primarily medical but are also occasionally related to cookery and household tasks such as making ink. In his analysis of this manuscript, Andrew Wear concluded that “all types of medicine are present here without distinction,” and the same may be said of those recipes authored by Lady Ranelagh.

What is perhaps most interesting about this reattribution of Wellcome MS 1340 is that the manuscript offers fascinating multigenerational coverage of the Orrery family and their network, which also includes many members of the Howard and Boyle families. As is typical of early modern recipe compilations more generally, Orrery family recipes are intermingled with those attributed to people of quite various social status and professional rank. For example, one recipe in Lady Orrery’s hand (Hand One) includes “Mr Moors purge for me,” suggesting that she sought out medical recipes from lay practitioners, and that it appears in this book with several corrections and annotations further suggests that it was among the remedies that were tried and approved (fol. 15r). The frequent additions, corrections, overlapping of hands, and attempts to institute a more organized display of knowledge demonstrate that the Orrery family continued to use this book over several decades, and that knowledge from the previous generation was often valued, preserved, and integrated with new knowledge. The recipes in Lady Orrery’s hand may also serve as the basis of a future study of Lady Orrery’s medical knowledge, circle, and practice, as she remains one early modern female lay practitioner who is barely known to modern scholarship. Finally, Lady Orrery’s inclusion of Robert Boyle’s recipe demonstrates that Lady Ranelagh was certainly not the only sister with whom he shared his medical remedies, and this remedy is worth adding to Boyle’s larger body of medical recipes, both printed and in manuscript, to assist a larger study of this famous natural philosopher’s medical practice.

In conclusion, while Wellcome MS 1340 has been used as evidence of Lady Ranelagh’s collaboration with Robert Boyle on domestic science and medicine, this essay argues that it should instead be read as a compilation of the Orrery family’s household knowledge and practice. While those interested in Lady Ranelagh’s experimentation will find some of her recipes in this manuscript, they will find more helpful material in her extant correspondence and the archives of her family and friends, including the Hartlib Papers. While a close reading of Wellcome MS 1340 is important for future work on this text, the analysis provided here may also serve to argue for the importance of textual scholarship when reading recipe books, and the need for scholars to think carefully about how they attribute authorship for manuscripts in this genre. Though I have argued that the “older hand” is that of Lady Orrery and not Lady Ranelagh, I am not suggesting that we read this as Lady Orrery’s book. Instead, this example reinforces the
need to approach recipe books as multiauthored compilations with complex histories. Wellcome Library MS 1340 is a fascinating example of how a multigenerational family collection might be compiled, edited, and reorganized over decades. While we tend to approach early modern recipe books to answer questions determined by wider trends in our fields, ranging from social networks to life-writing, it might be more valuable and accurate to approach them on their own terms and allow them to tell their own complicated stories of knowledge economies, transfer, and practice.

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