The Early Modern Englishwoman:
A Facsimile Library of Essential Works

Series II

Printed Writings, 1641–1700: Part 2

Volume 4

Amey Hayward
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Introductory Note

Until very recently, scholars of the early modern period have assumed that there were no Judith Shakespeares in early modern England. Much of the energy of the current generation of scholars has been devoted to constructing a history of early modern England that takes into account what women actually wrote, what women actually read, and what women actually did. In so doing the masculinist representation of early modern women, both in their own time and ours, is deconstructed. The study of early modern women has thus become one of the most important—indeed perhaps the most important—means for the rewriting of early modern history.

*The Early Modern Englishwoman: A Facsimile Library of Essential Works* is one of the developments of this energetic reappraisal of the period. As the names on our advisory board and our list of editors testify, it has been the beneficiary of scholarship in the field, and we hope it will also be an essential part of that scholarship’s continuing momentum.

*The Early Modern Englishwoman* is designed to make available a comprehensive and focused collection of writings in English from 1500 to 1750, both by women and for and about them. The three series of *Printed Writings* (1500–1640, 1641–1700, and 1701–1750) provide a comprehensive if not entirely complete collection of the separately published writings by women. In reprinting these writings we intend to remedy one of the major obstacles to the advancement of feminist criticism of the early modern period, namely the limited availability of the very texts upon which the field is based. The volumes in the facsimile library reproduce carefully chosen copies of these texts, incorporating significant variants (usually in appendices). Each text is preceded by a short introduction providing an overview of the life and work of a writer along with a survey of important scholarship. These
works, we strongly believe, deserve a large readership—of historians, literary critics, feminist critics, and non-specialist readers.

The Early Modern Englishwoman also includes separate facsimile series of Essential Works for the Study of Early Modern Women and of Manuscript Writings. These facsimile series are complemented by The Early Modern Englishwoman 1500–1750: Contemporary Editions. Also under our general editorship, this series will include both old-spelling and modernized editions of works by and about women and gender in early modern England.

New York City
2003
INTRODUCTORY NOTE

As is unfortunately the circumstance with so many early modern women authors, hardly any information survives concerning Amey Hayward’s life and career. We possess no records of her birth or death, and we frequently struggle with the few cloudy – and, in some cases, potentially misleading – facts or conjectures relating to her life. The title page of The Females Legacy, her only surviving work, states that Hayward resided in a village called ‘Limmington’; however, according to A Biographical Dictionary of English Women Writers (Bell et al.), such a town ‘seems not to exist in Britain’ (p. 101). The scant research conducted on Hayward so far divides itself over whether ‘Limmington’ may be an alternate spelling of Lymington, Hampshire, or of Limington, Somersetshire. The title page also refers to the author as ‘Mrs.’ Amey Hayward, but need not mean that she was married. In any case, the only extant record detailing any marriage involving an Amey Hayward appears in 1730, at Wedmore, some 15 miles north of Limington, Somersetshire, where William Pickford wedded a woman of the same name (Biographical Dictionary, p. 101). This citation likely is irrelevant to our discussion, as it records a wedding which took place over 30 years after publication of The Females Legacy – unless, of course, this person is the Amey Hayward we seek and she remarried on this date; the proximity of the marriage’s locale to Limington is intriguing.

At present, then, we are certain only of the year in which The Females Legacy was published, 1699. However, the text itself creates some more confusion, for the poem which closes The Females Legacy reveals another puzzling circumstance surrounding Amey Hayward’s writing career:

There is a little Book sent forth,
which is not all my own:
Some others added unto it,
which Book I do not own.
Although 'tis publisht in my Name,
and sent unto your View;
But the Addition to the same,
I little of it knew. (p. 96)

No copies or records of this second text exist, nor do any explanations remain as to why Hayward’s name would be chosen to adorn its title page. *The Feminist Companion* attributes the book’s dedication, written by ‘B.H.’, to a relative of Hayward’s. The attribution is probably erroneous: a more likely author is Benjamin Harris (?–c. 1708), the book’s notorious London and Boston publisher and printer of books, primers, pamphlets, broadsides, almanacs, games and playing cards. The link between Harris and Hayward, however, emerges as possibly the most valuable source of information at our disposal to tease out at least part of Hayward’s character and poetic sensibility. This seems especially true in light of their shared commitment to militant Protestantism.

Throughout his publishing career Harris gained notoriety for his virulent religious and political postures, especially his anti-Catholic and anti-Quaker views. His primers, *The Protestant Tutor* (1679) and *The New England Primer* (1690), enjoyed a sustained popularity among seventeenth- and eighteenth-century school masters, primarily because of their intended purpose: *The Protestant Tutor*, for example, sought to ‘instruct Children to Spell and read English, and Grounding them in the True Protestant Religion and Discovering the Errors and deceits of the Papists’ (quoted by Serin, p. 66). Harris’s newspapers expressed similarly partisan tones. His first, begun in 1679 and called *Domestic Intelligence*, played a significant role in stirring up much supportive public fervor over Titus Oates, who claimed to have exposed a ‘Popish Plot’ by Catholics to seize and burn London in preparation for the landing of a French invasionary force. Later, after fleeing to Boston to avoid one of several law suits that threatened him throughout his career, Harris published what many scholars consider America’s first newspaper, *Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick*, a publication that also offended some readers politically. The paper appeared for one issue only, on 25 September 1690, and was halted immediately by the magistrates because of its caustic reportage.
The Females Legacy. Containing, Divine Poems, On Several Choice Subjects (1699)

While rarely political or even topical, Hayward’s Females Legacy generally conforms to – and at times elucidates – much of the same militantly Protestant ideology as the sort Harris spent his life advocating. (On one occasion Hayward does lash out, briefly, against ‘Levellours’, a generally more tolerant and liberal Protestant sect that challenged many of Oliver Cromwell’s initiatives during the 1640s and 1650s: in ‘A Medita[tion on Luke the 19th’ [pp. 40–44], Hayward declares that, like ‘Drunkards’, ‘Revellours’, ‘Sabbath-breakers’ and others, Levellers’ ‘Mirth will end in woe’.) Published at Harris’s shop in Eastcheap and ‘Commended to all Godly Women’ [title page], The Females Legacy contains twenty-six devotional poems, most of which are written either in decasyllabic couplets or in variously rhymed iambic pentameters. The poems are preceded by a title page, a two-page dedicatory poem probably written by the book’s publisher, a table of contents, and a series of three short introductory poems authored by Hayward.

Nearly all the poems feature a male speaker. Hayward identifies several of her short works as ‘meditations’, or poems in which the speaker considers the import and/or practical application of an Old or New Testament narrative. Others she identifies as ‘dialogues’, or verse conversations between speakers who grapple with a sudden realisation of their own sinful natures and a biblical figure or allegorical personification who introduces them to Christ’s redemptive majesty. After listening, the sinners finally attest to the rewards they will receive through Christ’s forgiveness and grace.

Interspersed among these two varieties of verse, a few other poems directly address women or deploy them as protagonists. Poems of this type generally focus both on the woman’s soul and on her responsibilities to God. Whether creating male or female protagonists, the poems constituting The Females Legacy often combine several features of women’s ‘retirement discourse’ – what Marilyn L. Williamson describes as the language of ‘a private sphere in which the poet finds self-sufficient contentment’ (p. 19) – with the equally confident and secure phrasing of ‘the elect’. On several occasions
throughout Hayward’s poems, she refers to herself and any similarly-minded reader as ‘Saints’ or as members of an ‘elect’ congregation. Yet like many of the tattered remnant of true believers inhabiting England during the generation succeeding Charles II’s Restoration in 1660, Hayward may define the ‘elect’ in ways that differ radically from Calvin’s definition, which argued for God’s predestining certain men and women to salvation even before creation (Cross and Livingstone, p. 224).

Hayward’s ‘A Meditation on the 9th. 10th. and 11th. Chapters of Exodus’ (pp. 45–52), which appears midway through The Females Legacy, may help to isolate and identify her particular type of Protestant faith. In the poem, God’s chosen ones, the Hebrews, find themselves enslaved and persecuted in the ‘Wilderness’ of Egypt. Despite years of being with ‘[b]urdens bowed down’, and despite receiving ‘no relief’ from Pharaoh, God’s people never stop working diligently, all ‘[i]n hopes that they should then prevail / their Masters to content’. After realising that Pharaoh intends to provide them with no imminent relief, they turn to God, making ‘their moan, / and unto him [their] cry’. Mercifully and immediately, God responds to their prayers by imposing plagues and curses on Egypt, and He calls Moses to gather the Hebrews together to cross the parted Red Sea towards the Promised Land. However, on their way through the desert the chosen ones engage in grievances, disregard of law, and, finally, outright rebellion. Disappointed and angered, God leaves them to suffer alone and unheard for forty years. In other words, Hayward manipulates scripture to illustrate how God offers grace and mercy freely to anyone who asks and who exhibits an honest effort to earn them, but she ultimately suggests that it remains for people to determine what their relationship to God will be. Once humbly petitioned, God lovingly administers unto His elect their most heartfelt desires. And when the people ‘rebel’ (a word employed repeatedly and scornfully throughout the poems) through murmurs, complaints and provocations, God likewise turns away from them and leaves them to suffer.

Through this and several other biblical retellings, Hayward reveals a standard of election that seems more Arminian than Calvinist. The sixteenth-century Dutch theologian Jakob Arminius revised Calvin’s
beliefs on predestination by insisting that election occurred only after God witnessed in the subject a proclamation of sincere belief and a perseverance by grace in both faith and works. Thus, although much of man’s ‘Free-will was lost in Adam’s Fall; / And now to good, Man’s Will is very small’, as Hayward attests in ‘The Author’s Belief concerning the dealings of God towards the Sons and Daughters of Men …’ (pp. 86–87), nevertheless we may become saints by proclaiming aloud that we ‘would Live more Righteously / here in this present World’ (p. 72) and through enduring genuine ‘Thirst and Hunger … after God’s Righteousness’ (p. 70). And once we achieve God’s election, according to the repentant ‘Sinner’ who participates in the conversation making up ‘A Dialogue between Moses, an Awakened Sinner, and Jesus Christ’ (pp. 3–20), we come to realise that ‘Here is a Love, a matchless Love indeed; / Ye Saints on Earth, be all astonished; / For there is now no other Love but this / Can bring your Souls to endless Happiness’ (p. 20).

Images of struggling – both physically and spiritually – to achieve God’s favour dominate The Females Legacy. These images create in readers a sense of immediacy, of the urgency and passionate desirability of an unrehearsed and voracious longing for Christ to accept them into His fold. In ‘A Dialogue between Christ and a Young-man’ (pp. 26–32), for example, Christ compels the man whose ‘pleasure[s] have no true content’ (p. 26) to proceed ‘into my Vineyard … and Labour there till I do for the[e] send’ (p. 28). When the young man realises the extent and nature of the labours which he must perform, he begs for relief from them, complaining to Christ of his inherently weak nature. After listening patiently to the man’s excuses, Christ accepts the labour himself and promises, ‘My Vineyard I will hedge in round about, / To keep the wild Boar of the Forrest out’ (p. 31). In short, once Christ witnesses the man’s conversion and acknowledges his meager yet sincere effort, the salvation He has offered as the man’s reward becomes a guarantee – a ‘surety’ which pays his ‘debt’ (pp. 8–10) – and the young man then, like the Sinner discussed above, achieves elect status.

Hayward’s visions of salvation frequently involve a total separation of believers from those ‘Jolly Boys’ (p. 28) who ‘take delight in sports and plays’ (p. 26) or who otherwise rebel against Christ.
Underscoring this severance of believers from the rest of humanity, the poems constituting *The Females Legacy* paraphrase several biblical accounts wherein the main thrust involves the physical distancing of one group from another. Culled from both Testaments, these stories include Moses’ leading of the Hebrews out of Egypt, the five Virgins whom the bridegroom Christ happily receives because they have trimmed their lamps properly and thus have prepared themselves for Him, the parable of the talents, and the parable of the vineyard, among others. Furthermore, in many of these accounts, the narrator stresses the ideological and spiritual distance between those chosen and those left behind by naming those not in Christ’s camp ‘enemies’ or ‘strangers’ who face dire consequences if not redeemed: in ‘A Meditation on the Day of Judgment’ (pp. 68–69), these ‘Reprobates’ find themselves ‘[s]entenced to hell, / With damned Spirits ever for to dwell, / Where they shall evermore both weep and wail’ (p. 69). Satan, the evil force behind all mischief and rebellion, continually merits description as an ‘Enemy’, ‘Dragon’ and ‘Beast’.

As I stated earlier, many of Hayward’s metaphors of confident spiritual and physical isolation resonate throughout not only Christian discourse but also the burgeoning feminine literary output of the time. Although accounting for ‘less than one per cent of the total number of texts published’, poetry and prose by women increased exponentially in the decades after the Restoration (Hobby, p. 6). Women writers immediately confronted and then turned to their advantage the implicit tension between their culture’s demand for them to maintain a chaste and appropriately silent demeanor and the faith-based and/or personally driven compulsion to speak the truth of their minds/souls publicly. Many early modern women writers, in the words of Elaine V. Beilin, eased the tension by ‘creating a little island for [themselves] in the literary stream by writing pious works’ (p. xxi). And while by no means insincerely hiding behind masks of piety or demeaning its power, women nevertheless through the act of writing chiselled out an ever-increasing discursive space and simultaneously discovered an alternate sphere which allowed ‘in practice, greater freedom’ to define themselves both as individuals and as members of a community of women (Hobby, p. 62).
Methods by which women overcame the many stigmas associated with public offerings of their prose or poetry involved couching their works as modest yet assured affirmations of their spiritual purity (Hobby, p. 9). Hayward’s ‘A Word of Advice to the Female Sex’ (sig. [A3v]), for example, emphasises several areas of concern regarding a woman’s integrity, including her soul’s ‘value’, time’s fleeting nature and the concomitant significance of living piously until death, and the ‘charming net’ that ‘this juggling World’ often sets for the unsuspecting. Throughout the poem, in fact, Hayward urges women to ‘look about’ and remain ever ‘watchful’ for any perceived threats to their eternal welfare. This sentiment likewise informs ‘A Word by way of Caution to the Female Sex’ (p. 91), where Hayward implores women, ‘do not your selves deceive, / Satan to gratify, / Least that you do your Souls bereave / of blest Felicity’.

As stated in ‘The Author’s Request’ (pp. 39–40) which concludes ‘A Meditation composed into Verse, on the 25th. Chapter of Matthew’ (pp. 33–38), Hayward offers herself as an example for her female readers by begging of God the ‘Oyl of thy Free Grace / my Vessel for to fill’, and that He ‘cleanse my Lamp about / from all the Stinking Snuffs’ (p. 39). In other words, Hayward asks of her Creator a fulfillment, a completion, a perfection that she cannot attain alone. While this perfection obviously concerns her spirit, Hayward nevertheless reveals through her repeated petitions for perfection one other device through which women secured for themselves a public discursive space: self-deprecation. Hayward’s first poem in the collection, ‘The Author on her weak Poems’ (sig. [A3v]), begins by saying,

Go, little Book, and take thy Rounds,  
And if thou meet’st with Angry Frowns,  
Then Blame thy Author, and her Quill,  
For having of so little Skill.

But do not Blame her over much,  
Because that she is one of such  
Which counted is the weaker Sex,  
And wanteth Skill thee to correct.


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Furthermore, there recur throughout the poems images of a vessel needing to be filled. While all these images obviously stem from biblical stories – stories that do not ‘belong to’ women, as Clare Brant and Diane Purkiss remind us (p. 3) – they nevertheless signal a distinctly feminine self-perception. As a woman, Hayward continually negotiates this perception for male readers as well, arguing that although women are the weaker ‘vessel’ they nevertheless possess voices as well as souls and owe it to themselves to employ these voices in service to God. One male at least accepted her argument wholeheartedly. In his dedication to The Females Legacy, called ‘A Panegyrick in Praise of the Author’ (sigs. [A2r-A2v]), Benjamin Harris extols Hayward as a ‘Poetick Soul’ and vows to ‘Protect her Poetry’ from ‘an Age that’s grown / So Paganiz’d’ that it has become ‘Aloof [from] such Moralists, with all their Train, / Who’ll all be Damn’d, unless they’re Born again’. Harris’ comments situate Hayward’s poems exactly where she intended them to be: firmly in the camp of the saved, all of whom must become brides to Christ.

Only one copy of Arney Hayward’s The Females Legacy survives. It is housed at The British Library. Fortunately, this lone copy of Hayward’s ‘little Book’ is well preserved, with only a few minor ink spots and bleed-throughs as well as some imperfect inking. Water stains appear on the book’s lower outside corners beginning on p. 84 and continue until the final page, but they do not hinder reading. Other distinguishing marks in this text include, on both pp. 52 and 59, in handwritten scroll near the bottom, ‘Mary Peacky [or Peachy] her book’. Again, on p. 59, ‘Mary Peacky’ occupies the bottom margin. And on the book’s final page, surrounding ‘FINIS’, another of the book’s owners has scrawled, ‘Robert Willson his Book. June ye 27: 1724 Witness my hand R: J: Anno Domine [sic]’.

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DANA ASPINALL
Words that are difficult to read in the original:
3.20 less
87.1 The Father gives unto this Son the Soul;
87.2 There’s nothing can his boundless Love controul.
87.3 impart with it again
87.4 freely to be slain
87.26 fragrant
87.27 content.
91.29 Well-wisher,
91.30 Hayward
92.25 6 Alas,
92.26 Nor do
92.27 Ye Careless
92.28 In cleansing of your
93.11 are
93.30 (Marry,
93.31 they must
93.31 walk contrary;
94.1 94 The Females Legacy
94.2 must guide the House, and Children bear
94.3 case is good, we nothing fear
94.4 Word.
94.5 and there you may see,
94.6 each degree:
94.7 Idle be,
94.8 that liberty.
94.23 Mary Peachy her book
95.1 A Divine Poem.
95.2 the heart with
95.3 will not contented be:
THE FEMALES
Legacy.

Containing,

Divine POEMS,

On Several Choice

SUBJECTS.

Commended to all Godly Women.

PSALM XLV. I.
My Heart is Inditing a Good Matter.

Written by
Mrs. AMETHATWA
Of Limington.

LONDON
Printed by Benj. Harris, for the
A PANEGYRIC
In PRAISE of the AUTHOR

[ I. ]

Well done, Poetick Soul,
Let Envy rage,
And (big with Critick's Poison) fret it's fill,
To see thy Lines, drawn with a loftier Quill,
Than ever came
From feign'd Parnassus's Hill,
Which does Prefage,
Thy Heavn-inrolled Name,
Shall be Transmitted down to everlasting Fame.

[ II. ]

Indeed, 'tby Time's well spent,
In teaching all
'T improve their Talents in an Age,
So Paganiz'd, as Man's ashamed.
His Lord and King,
When as he plainly sees,
The World's vast Ball,
And all that is therein,
Except's Ingrateful Self acknowledges the thing.

[ III. ]

A Christ, [with some] is now
Of no Effcit!
About such Moralists, with all their Train,
Who'll all be Damn'd, unless they're Born again!
Can Men, by Works,
Think ever to Obtain
(As least, expect)
Salvation for their Spirits,
When they invalid both their Saviour's Blood and
('Merits?"

[ IV. ]

If Carpers do Descry
This Work, because
One of the fairer Sex is that that Pen'd it,
Let 'em Confess their Alchetons to mend it;
For, sure their's isn't,
Compels me to Defend it:
But if some Flaws,
Those Critics chance to spy
I am the Person who'll Protect her Poetry.

B. H.
The Contents of the following Poems.

ON Adam in Paradise; and Fallen. page 1
A Poem between Moses, Sinner, & Christ. p. 3
A Meditation on the Song of Solomon p. 7 1
A Dialogue between Christ and a Young man. p. 26
A meditation on the 25th of Matthew. p. 33.
The Author's Request.
On the 9th, 10th, and 11th of Exodus.
On Solomon's Temple.
On Christ's Ancient Vine-yard.
A Dialogue between Christ and a Soul.
The Author's Request to God, &c.
On the Day of Judgment.
A meditation on the 8th of Luke.
A Dialogue between the Holy Spirit & Soul.
Between Death, and a carnal heart shown.
Between Death, and a Soul which fears it not.
A Dialogue between Christ and a Believer.
The Author's Belief, &c.
A Spiritual meditation upon a Bee
An Hymn on mortality.
A Caution to the Female Sex.
A Dialogue between the Word of God, and Corrupt Women, Isaiah, 39, 2.
A meditation on the Downfall of the World.
and the Vanity of man's craving heart. p. 54.
The Author on her weak POEMS.

Go, little Book, and take thy Rounds,
And if thou meet'st with Angry Frowns,
Then Blame thy Author, and her Quill,
For having of so little Skill.

But do not Blame her over much,
Because that she is one of such
Which counted is the weaker Sex,
And wanteth Skill thee to correct.
Kind Reader, though these Lines are few,
I pray do not them scorn to view.

A Word of Advice to the Female Sex.

Come, Female-Sex, and Labour now apace,
And do not spend away your Day of Grace:
Our Souls let's value at a higher Rate,
And look about us, e'er it be too late.
For, Time being past, cannot re-called be,
As by Experience daily we may see;
For, as the Tree doth fall, so it shall Iye,
And that we may be forced for to fly
From Sea to Sea, after it's sweet Supply.

And
References

Contents


DANA ASPINALL xvn The Females Legacy (Wing H1227) is reproduced by permission of The British Library. The text bears the shelfmark 1163a29, and its text block measures approximately 125 x 70 mm. It originally was bound in sixes. Words that are difficult to read in the original: 3.20 less 87.1 The Father gives unto this Son the Soul; 87.2 There's nothing can his boundless Love controul. 87.3 Impart with it again 87.4 freely to be slain 87.26 fragrant 87.27 content. 91.29 Well-wisher, 91.30 Hayward 92.25 6Alas, 92.26 Nor do 92.27 Ye Careless 92.28 In cleansing of your 93.11 are 93.30 (Marry, 93.31 they must 93.31 walk contrary; 94.1 94 The Females Legacy 94.2 must guide the House, and Children bear 94.3 case is good, we nothing fear 94.4 Word. 94.5 and there you may see, 94.6 each degree: 94.7 Idle be, 94.8 that liberty. 94.23 Mary Peachy her book 95.1 A Divine Poem. 95.2 the heart with 95.3 will not contented be: T H E : ; i " . 4 . . . , , . . . . . . E S J . . , t g a t ! ' . C o n t a i n i n g , D i v i n e P O E M S , O n S e v e n C h o i c e S U B J E C T S , C o m m e n d t J t o a l l G o d l y W o m e n 1 1 . P S A L M X L V . I . M y H e a r t I s I n d u T t t e r " G o m t M t t t e r . . L O P r i n t e d b . ~ , , , , s t e e l € 4 \ \ \ T a y l o r & F r a n c i s ~ t a y l o r a n d f r a n c i s G r o u p h t t p : / / t a y l o r a n d f r a n c i s . c o m A P A N E . G Y R t c J . C . ~ , ~ I n P R A I S B o f t h e A U T H O R [ I . J