

Misplaced entries in the diary of Roger Lowe, 1663 and 1664

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The original manuscript of the diary of Roger Lowe has been re-bound on at least one occasion since it was written, and this has resulted in some of the entries being accidentally misplaced. The most obvious case affects the entries from 12 March 1664 to 28 May 1665, which now appear out of their correct sequence – as noted in the ‘Illustrated Companion’, Part 7, with a photograph showing the entries for 6-12 March ‘1663/4’ facing those for June 1665. Close scrutiny of other parts of the diary suggests that the pages just mentioned are not the only ones to have been misplaced. The entries for January-February ‘1663’ [i.e. 1662/3] and January-February ‘1664’ [i.e. 1663/4] contain several apparent anomalies, which suggest that they might have been transposed. Restoring these pages to their original positions could potentially eliminate these problems and could also clarify some of the narrative threads of the diary.

Chronological anomalies in the diary.

As currently arranged, the diary entries assigned to the first months of 1663 and 1664 raise a number of puzzling issues.

- The entries of 3-5 January ‘1663’ [1662/3] refer to the marriage of Thomas Tickle and Isabel Hasleden, which is stated to have taken place on 3 January and was reported to ‘old Seph[t]on’ at Rainford the following day. However, the marriage licence of Thomas Tickle of Sutton and Isabel Hasleden of Rainford, spinster, is dated 11 November 1663, and includes the proviso that Tickle’s marriage was ‘not to be solemnised without consent of Henry Sefton, his Uncle, with whom he lives’ (W. F. Irvine [ed.], *Marriage Licences granted within the Archdeaconry of Chester*, V. 1661-67: *RSLC* 65 [1912], 88). The wedding therefore (which was to be at Prescott or St Helens) must have taken place after 11 November 1663 and should be assigned to January 1663/4. As the register of marriages at Prescott for November 1663 to January 1663/4 is illegible (R. Dickinson & F. Dickinson, *The Register of Prescott Parish Church*, part II: 1632-1666: *LPRS* 114 [1975], 70), and no register survives for St Helens at this period, the official record of the event is probably lost. Perhaps the delay between the issue of the licence and the actual marriage is to be explained by Henry Sefton’s evident displeasure at the union of Thomas and Isabel, as indicated in the diary entry of 4 January.
- On 5 January ‘1663’ [1662/3] the diary records Roger Lowe’s returning from Rainford ‘in darke night a very sad night and as I came in Ashton near widow Marshes old James Hanys [*sic*] lived (?) over against and was newly drowned.’ [The word ‘newly’ is clear in the manuscript, and is not ‘nearly’, as interpreted in the 1938 Sachse edition, p. 14]. One of Roger Lowe’s obituary notes, appended to the diary, describes what appears to be the same incident: ‘Old James Haryes went out of the house being a darke night & plunged into the pitt & was there drown’d. He lived att James Berchalls near Teand (?) Barne.’ The date is recorded as ‘3 [or 5?] Januery

1663', but this entry occurs in a chronological sequence, where it is preceded by entries for June, August and September 1663, and is followed by others dated June, July and August 1664. The incident should therefore be dated in January 1663/4. 'James Harries' is listed in the 1663 hearth tax of Ashton, between James Birchall and Ellin Marsh, but he is absent in the 1664 list (TNA, E. 179/250/8 & 11), which would agree with a death in January 1663/4.

- The runaway marriage of John Chaddock, Roger Lowe's fellow apprentice, is assigned to 5 February '1664' [1663/4] in the diary (and is mentioned again on 17 February), but the same event, listed among the obituary notices, is there dated 5 February 1662 [i.e. 1662/3]. Since Lowe records the birth of a child to Chaddock's wife on 6 December 1663, the earlier date for the wedding is supported. This is also consistent with the statement in the Dugdale pedigree of the Chaddocks, stating that Thomas, son of John and Mary Chaddock, was aged nine months in September 1664 (F. R. Raines [ed.], *The Visitation of the County Palatine of Lancaster, made in the year 1664-5, by Sir William Dugdale, Knight* [Manchester 1872], 72).
- 'Mr Woods'. James Wood, the former minister of Ashton chapel, was held in high esteem by the townspeople, and in particular by Roger Lowe, who mentions him frequently in his diary (usually as 'Mr Woods'). Wood was one of many clergymen who were deprived of their offices in 1662 for refusing to accept the Act of Uniformity. In April 1663 he left Ashton and moved to Thelwall in Cheshire, where he lived until his death in February 1666/7. In the weeks before Wood's departure from Ashton, Roger Lowe recorded visits he made to the minister, on 1, 15 and 22 March 1662/3, and they met again on the following 6, 9 and 15 April. On the first occasion Roger was accompanied by Thomas Smith, and on Sunday 15 March, he and 'a few' other people (unnamed) called on Wood after evening prayer. Roger recorded Mr Wood's farewell visits to people in Ashton on 23 April 1663 and noted that on the 26th Wood passed his last Sunday night there before his departure. He returned periodically, to call on the inhabitants and to preach surreptitiously in private houses, but these were only fleeting visits. As he no longer had a residence in Ashton, he spent the nights at the homes of his former neighbours (examples, recorded in Lowe's diary: 22 June, 2 August, 15 September 1663, 16 August 1664, 10 January, 15 May, 12 September, 30 December 1665). Yet, in the diary entries for 1, 2, 13 and 22 February '1664' [1663/4], Roger Lowe again records visits to Mr Wood, together with Thomas Smith and others. Some of these visits lasted until late at night, and it is evident that Wood was then living locally, seemingly in a house of his own; there is no indication that he was lodging with anyone in or around Ashton, as he did on his brief visits after moving to Cheshire. These four entries in February, therefore, describe the kind of visits that Roger Lowe and his friends had made to Wood in the months *before* he left Ashton. They seem to be out of context in 1663/4, and would fit more comfortably in the early weeks of 1662/3, before the diary entries of 1, 15 and 22 March which describe similar meetings.

- On Roger Lowe's visit of 13 February '1664', Mr Wood mentioned the imprisonment of the Presbyterian minister Edmund Calamy and of his parishioners' donation of £500 for his benefit. The imprisonment happened in December 1662 (Sachse edition, 1938, pp. 126-7, n. 57) and thus would have been recent news in February 1662/3, but not in February 1663/4.

All of the issues just mentioned arise from entries which are written on two particular leaves of the diary. The first page in the volume, as currently bound, is headed 'Jenuery 1662/3' ('modernised' as '1663' in the 1938 Sachse edition, p. 13). It contains entries for 1-7, 11, 14, 19 and 26 January, then a heading 'Februery 1663', and entries for 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 February, ending at the bottom of the verso with the words 'this is better, and that God that gives...[illegible]'. The recto of the next page is headed 'March 1663' and begins with an entry for 1 March. Thus, in the current sequence of pages, there are no entries for 9-28 February 1662/3. It was not Roger Lowe's custom to make a record for every day in his diary, but a period of twenty days without an entry is very unusual.

The other page which is here under consideration follows the entries for December 1663. The recto begins with an entry for Saturday 17 January (no year given). No other entries for January are preserved and, according to the Sachse edition (p. 49), two pages which preceded this entry are missing. It is clear that the manuscript had suffered damage at this point, since the text breaks off mid-sentence on 11 December and there are no further entries for that month. There is a problem with the date of the first entry on the page in question, since 17 January 1663/4 was a Sunday, not a Saturday, as stated by Lowe. After this entry comes a heading, 'February 1663'; the final digit of '1663' is followed by a '2' written above another figure, which is partly illegible, but which appears to be a '3'. This would seem to suggest that the intention was to date the entries to 1662/3, but the year-date was modernised as '1664' in the Sachse edition, p. 49, presumably to conform with the position of this page in the manuscript.

The entries for February which follow also raise suspicions, because there are two successive groups of entries for this month. Directly after the entry of 17 January is a group, recounting the events of 1, 2, 5, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22 and 28 February, all written on the recto and verso of the same page. The next page begins in the middle of an entry (date lost) and is followed by others describing 10, 14, 15, 19, 21 and 25 February. If all of these entries refer to the same month, why are they not in their correct numerical order, and why are there are two (very different) entries for 15 February? Furthermore, the names of the days of the week which are given for the two groups of entries are inconsistent with their all belonging to the same month (for example, the two entries dated the 15th are, respectively, 'Lord's day' and 'Munday').

A possible explanation is that these two pages have been transposed. If their current positions are reversed, the page containing the entries for 17 January to 28 February '1664' [1663/4] would actually relate to 1662/3. The heading above the entry for 1 February appears to support this, since it seems to give the year as '1663 2/3'. Moreover, in that year 17 January was a Saturday, as stated by the diarist, and all the days of the week which he records in his entries for 1-28 February also correspond with the calendar for 1662/3, and not with that for

1663/4. This page, then, should directly precede the one which begins with the entry for 1 March '1663' (note that 1 March 1662/3 was a Sunday, as stated by Lowe, so there is no doubt that this entry is correctly dated).

The page recording the entries for 1 January to 8 February '1663' [1662/3] would then belong to 1663/4 and should be located before the page which begins in the middle of an undated entry and continues with the entry for 10 February '1664' [1663/4]. The heading on the verso of the first page, simply reading 'Februery 1663', could equally well represent either '1662/3' or '1663/4', and would therefore be compatible with the theory of transposition of the pages. Arranged in this way, the diarist's soliloquy on 8 February, which breaks off at the bottom of the verso, would be continued in the words at the top of the facing page, as follows: 'God will comfort and suply the wants of his poor servents, and God att present deny [w]orldly things, yet if in the meane while God put com[fort?] into hurt, this is better, and that God that gives....[illegible]. The greater will in time not deny the lesse, and why should I fear? God's providence is the poor man's inheritance, and God hath enough in store for me, for the earth is the Lord's with the fullnes therof. Therfore it's good to waite and trust in the Lord.' (Sachse ed., 1938, pp. 15, 51). The sentiments expressed in the passage beginning 'The greater will in time [etc]' fit much more comfortably with the entry of 8 February than that of 28 February, to which the words have been attributed in previous editions of the diary.

Were the pages transposed?

A rearrangement of the pages in question would eliminate the anomalies, described above, in the events recorded by Lowe. In terms of the materiality of the manuscript, such a transposition of the pages is feasible, since each of the two blocks of entries involved – 1 January to 8 February '1663' and 17 [January] to 28 February '1664' – occupies a separate leaf of the diary. Also – as pointed out to me by Anthony Pilgrim – comparison of the (currently) facing pages which cover 19 January '1663' to 9 April 1663 reveals differences in both the quality (or colouring) of the paper and in the density and spacing of the script, suggesting that the pages were written at different periods. It seems possible that these two leaves had become detached before the volume was bound in its current state and were accidentally misplaced during repairs.

Roger Lowe's references to the calendar also generally support this hypothesis. All the days of the week which he mentions in the entries 17 January to 28 February '1664' (1938 ed., 49-51) are consistent with the calendar for 1662/3, but not with that for 1663/4 (the diary of Samuel Pepys, covering the same years, provides a convenient reference, as he always specifically identifies Sunday as 'Lords day'). The weekdays mentioned from 1 January to 8 February '1663' (1938 ed., pp. 13-15) agree with the calendar for 1663/4, not that for 1662/3. Admittedly, two of Lowe's entries in this January do include dating errors, but these can be explained. He identifies both 3 and 4 January as 'Lord's day', so one of these must be a mistake. In 1663/4, 3 January was a Sunday, whereas in 1662/3, 4 January was Sunday. The next three days in the diary – 5, 6 and 7 January – are named as Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, which would be correct for 1663/4, but not for 1662/3. The next entry in the diary,

11 January, is named as 'Lord's day'; this is inconsistent with the preceding entries, since, if 7 January was a Thursday, then 10 January ought to have been a Sunday – as it was in 1664. Roger Lowe may simply have written '11' in place of '10' here. The last two entries for January '1663' (19th and 26th) are both named as Tuesday – which again agrees with the 1663/4 calendar, not that of 1662/3.

However, the main obstacle to this theoretical transposition is the heading written on the recto of the first page, which clearly reads 'Jenuery 1662/3'. Ostensibly, this heading seems to support the 'traditional' chronology of the entries, despite the anomalies in the text and the calendrical issues which have been outlined above. How then can this heading be explained? Since the writer uses the precise dating-form '1662/3', an error due to carelessness or haste seems improbable. Perhaps a more likely explanation is that the heading was inserted or amended at the time the diary was repaired, in order to affirm what was then thought to be the correct date of the entries on that page. As Anthony Pilgrim has noted, slight variations in the colour of the ink in these headings might point to the later insertion or alteration of some of the figures but, since the style of the handwriting is fairly similar to that of the rest of the diary, such interventions are unlikely to date to a much later period. The headings could, indeed, have been written or amended by Roger Lowe himself, but perhaps a more likely candidate is his son John Lowe. John certainly owned the book, inscribing his name in its pages and perhaps adding some text, such as the list of Anglo-Saxon kings.

Revised sequence of diary entries

If the above hypothesis is adopted, the revised sequence of diary entries would be as follows (page numbers refer to the 1938 Sachse edition):

January 1662/3

17 (p. 49)

February 1662/3

1, 2, 5, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22, 28 [as far as the words 'providence towards me'] (pp. 49-51)

March 1662/3

1 (p. 15).

Remainder of 1663 as in current arrangement. By 17 March 1663 [i.e. 1662/3] the diary and obituary list are clearly in agreement, since both mention the death of the child of Matthew Raphe's wife at that time. Since the entries for the second half of December 1663 are missing entirely, they may have occupied one or both of the 'lost' pages mentioned in the 1938 edition, p. 49.

January 1663/4

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, '11' [actually 10?], 14, 19, 26 (pp. 13-14)

February 1663/4

3, 4, 5, 6, 8 (pp. 14-15; 51, from the words 'The greater will in time not deny the lesse...'), 10, 14, 15, 19, 21, 25 (pp. 51-52).

Consequences for the diary narrative.

In addition to resolving the above issues of chronology, the relocation of the two transposed pages brings greater coherence to some of the evolving situations described in the diary.

An example is Roger Lowe's relations with Ann Barrow, one of several young women whom he considered as potential marriage partners in the 1660s. In the current arrangement of the diary entries the narrative begins abruptly, with Roger awaiting Ann's response to his declaration of love (1 January '1663'). He then quickly changes his mind, resolving to have nothing to do with her (19 January), and in May 1663 his interest focuses on Mary Naylor. Soon afterwards, Mary's brother James begins wooing Ann Barrow, and Roger accompanies him on his visits to her. On 21 October, while supposedly devoted to Mary, Roger himself makes overtures to Ann, asking that she consider him as a suitor in case she should break off her relationship with James Naylor. On 22 November, James (perhaps having heard of Roger's approach to Ann?) threatens to reveal Roger's interest in his sister Mary to their father (who might perhaps be expected to disapprove of the match). Roger reacts angrily to what he sees as a betrayal on the part of James Naylor, whom he dismisses as 'a deivelish, malicious, dissembleing, knavish rascall'. In this 'traditional' sequence of diary entries, then, Roger appears to woo Ann Barrow twice – first in January and then again in October-November 1663. This seems rather strange, particularly as no clear outcome to this second approach is recorded in the diary – there is only an enigmatic reference to Roger and Ann 'rectifying all businesses' on 21 February 1663/4.

By rearranging the entries for January- February '1663' and '1664', a clearer picture of Roger's relationship with Ann emerges. His first mention of her, now, is on 16 July 1663, when James Naylor asks for his company while he woos Ann. James and Roger make similar visits to Ann in September, October and November. So far Roger has simply acted as James Naylor's companion, but on 21 October, Roger meets Ann and 'intreated for my selfe to be the next in succession if in case they two should breake of, to which she did not say no, neither yea'. On 22 November 1663, he meets Ann privately and 'spoke much for my selfe by way of motive that shee would except [accept] of me'. On this same day, however, he discovers James Naylor's 'treachery', and there are no further references to friendship with him. It seems likely that Roger made a more definite proposal to Ann, perhaps in mid or late December 1663, a period for which the diary entries are missing. By this time, he may no longer have felt that he owed any obligation to defer to James Naylor, whom he now regarded as a false friend. If the entries of 1 and 19 January are located in 1663/4, they follow logically from those of October-November 1663 and explain both the beginning and end of the affair. By January, Roger evidently regretted his entanglement with Ann and was awaiting her response without enthusiasm, 'feareing the exceptance of love'. On 19 January he states that he had now determined 'to free my selfe and not to have nothinge to doe with

her.’ Perhaps the ‘rectifying of businesses’ on the following 21 February marked the formal end of their relationship. After this, they appear to have treated each other as casual acquaintances (11 March 1663/4, 6 July 1665).

A final observation: By adopting the rearrangement suggested above, the entry beginning, ‘17. Saturday. Being envited and leave granted...’ belongs to January 1662/3 and becomes the earliest surviving entry in the diary. Since there is no heading at the top of the recto, it seems possible that there was originally at least one page covering the first sixteen days of January, and that this is now lost. Examination of the original manuscript might reveal traces of a missing page, enabling this possibility to be either confirmed or dismissed.

It is hoped that the above paragraphs will aid readers in following the narrative of Roger Lowe’s life and that they might prove useful in the preparation of future editions of the diary.

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