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on the upper or lower outer corners of the leaves of many eighteenth-century books, raking light reveals systematic dog-earining. Opposite, on pp. 238 and 240 of the University of Toronto's Fisher Library copy 1 of Richard Bentley's quarto edition of *Paradise Lost*, 1732, you can barely discern these creases now the ears stand upright. Dog-ears can be detected here in 51 of 222 leaves. The 73 such occurrences in the Folger Library copy are more obviously methodical, occurring in two consecutive quires, but not the third: in C & D, but not E (here the rhythm begins); then in F & G, but not H; and so on, *almost* regularly, through the penultimate 3H (where the Index quires are merely half-sheets).

Above left, I depict unopened the upper folds (or bolts) in C & D, two full-sheet Folger quires. Their four consecutive dog-ears bend at a single angle. As the angle of the corresponding fold in the next pair, F & G, is different, each pair must have been folded as a unit - the last two bolted leaves in C with the first two in D, the last two in F with the first two in G - finally to 3F & 3G (where only single leaves pertain). Such dog-earing was a preparation for sewing, after which binders would have ploughed off the bolts in a single operation or left the task to the first reader, who, knife in hand, sliced them open one by one.

The next two openings of this essay display all the quires of the Folger text-block with bolts still intact; but the wings are open now, to reveal sewing in the central gutters. A strict correlation pertains between the presence or absence of dog-ears and the configurations of (usually) two stitches (among six possible). I've numbered stitches in the order sewn - *up* † the gutter, in quires A (stitches 6, 4, & 2) and a (5, 3, & 1), or *down* ‡, in quires b (1 & 5) and B (2, 3, 4, & 6).
With its systematic symmetries and asymmetries, the above diagram condenses information from Row 2 on pp. 136-7, a typical six-quire sewing unit. The vertical lines represent the central gutters of quires C–H, identified below by signature. The tilted tops of C, D, F, and G signal which of them have dog-ears (aft or fore, as labelled). The far-left column counts six stitches, the near right seven sewing stations. Dimensions in millimetres appear on the far right. Lettered on the near left are five cords, invisible to readers (but detected as bulges on the spine); three of these cords (a, c, and e) lace into the covers. As we'll soon see in detail, cords dictate the locations of all sewing stations except the first and last: there, kettle stitches link one quire to another; at stations 2-6, however, the thread binds the quires by circling the cords.  

In the cradle days of printing, sewing normally linked all stations in a quire: hence, six stitches per quire for a five-cord binding like this. But by the eighteenth century, sewing quires three on was common: in the Folger volume, only one stitch was sewn initially in each of the first two quires, C and D; then came two consecutive stitches in E; and finally the second and final stitch in each of the first two quires -- all three gutters finally exhibiting merely two stitches each, not six. (Be patient: my next two openings will walk you step by step through the sewing of these quires three on.) It compromised strength, but this corner-cutting required only a third of the thread and a third of the binder's time. It also reduced the swell caused by thread and folds, which threaten to make the spine of a book wider than its fore-edge.  

Having dragged you from an outer corner of the leaf down into the gutter, I owe you an explanation. The obscure evidence here in the underworld of Paradise Lost is textile. Now to understand its textual implications. It is no accident that these words sound alike: both derive from the Italic for “weaving” and have Hellenic and Germanic cognates (like “technique”, “technology”, and “thatch”). The Indo-European root also blossoms in Hittite and Indic, all derivations pertaining to fashioning, fabrication, construction, architecture – in short, to artifice. In the wide-spread etymology, we sense the fecundity of cognate associations – a sisterhood of arts. This essay will address what is deracinated in our understanding of the codex and seek to explore and integrate its complexities. “Complexities” – the root of this Italic word is IE *plekt- cognate with Germanic “fold” – and with folding we began. I am referring not only to the objective textile, but also to our subjective reading of text. We need to fold ourselves body and mind into this mix. What parts of text do we not discover when we open a volume and delve into its depths? What parts of literature hath reading not yet raised to understanding and made pregnant? Venture with me down into the textual unconscious, while I pursue things unattempted yet in prose or diagram.  

From L'Encyclopédie, Philip Gaskell's A New Introduction to Bibliography illustrates Bindery work in eighteenth-century France without comment on Diderot’s error: his quires open toward “b”, Madame Coufeufe, on her side of the cords, but they should lie on ours and open toward us. (There is no table-room between sewer and frame.) The forward thrust of shoulder and elbow is correct, but the forearm is wrong: it should arc forward, so that her hand reaches beyond the cords and into the gutter of the quire (not rests on top of it), there to receive the needle thrust in through the spine by her right hand and dispatch it back through the gutter. In sum, she needs one hand at the spines of the quires on her side of the cords and the other serially in their gutters on ours, the needle shuttling between them (as in badminton, say, but with cords for net, needle for cock, and hands for rackets). It is the work of the gutter-hand as the engraver should have shown it (hidden it, rather), that requires this forward thrust.  

But isn’t weaving a metaphor more apt for this woman’s work? In Old English (spoken when Eve span), “woman” was “wifman” – and wife and weave are cognates.
The gradual piling up and sewing of quires on the frame can start from
tack or front; and either hand can work the gutters. Sewing of the Folger
quire began, I deduce, at the front; and I have arbitrarily chosen the right hand
ferry the quires, open them, and sew in their gutters. Below, to display the
quires as a binder would see them, I have rotated the previous diagram and
flipped it mirror-image. We are leaving that missionary position of the book
known to all good readers: for quires are sewn lying down and from behind.
The gutter stitches, shown black before, are grey now (as the sewer cannot
see them) and only the cross- and kettle-stitches, which connect them on the
spine side (which alone are visible to her at the frame), now appear black.
(The cords are vivid for the same reason.) But understand: black and grey
comprise a single thread - actually six lengths knotted together. The first knot,
in quire C, stitch 6, is shown here (as well as on pp. 136, 140, and 172).7

To begin her sewing of C, D, and E three on, the binder takes, from the
collated pile at the back of her table, quire C, already dog-eared (so I deduce),
turns it over, and places it snug against the cords on top of what had already been
sewn - the (blank) endpaper and the (printed) quires A, a, b, and B. Perhaps D
now also accompanies C, as these two quires were dog-eared together. In any
case, once C is on the frame, the right hand slides down its central opening -
which alone is accessible from the head of the quire (the bolts there being still
intact) - almost to the tail, stopping at what will become sewing station 7 when
her left hand thrusts the needle through the spine there. The right hand takes
the needle, draws it and the (newly-knotted) thread 3cm rightwards (towards the
head of the quire), and thrusts them out at station 6, on the right side of cord e,
to complete stitch 6 (see the top of the next page).

The right hand then withdraws from C to fetch dog-eared D to the frame
(if it had not come earlier, along with C) and slides almost as far down its
central gutter, to catch the needle being thrust in at sewing station 6, now,
however, on the left side of cord e. (Around e, therefore, the binder's left
hand has in the meantime essentially looped the thread, upward one quire.)
Having received the needle at station 6, her right hand draws it further up the
gutter, and passes it out of D at station 5, just to the right of cord d, where the
binder's left hand receives it, to complete stitch 5 - as shown in this diagram.

The right hand then brings quire E to the frame (it surely comes alone),
and slides down its central opening to catch the needle thrust into it at station
5, left of cord d, and (as expected now) draws it along to station 4, and thrusts
it out through the gutter on the right side of cord c, so completing stitch 4.

But now the pattern alters (and this change will explain why E has no
dog-ears). Before bringing new quires to the frame, the binder must make
these quires stable by sewing the second and final stitch in each of E, C, and D.
First, she thrusts the needle into the spine of the very quire from which it just emerged and at the same station, though into a new hole now, slightly to the left of cord c (and also somewhat off the gutter, so as to avoid piercing the previous stitch). Having waited all the while at this station, the right hand receives the needle, draws it rightward to station 3, and thrusts it out through the gutter, right of b, to the waiting left hand. And so concludes stitch 3.

But turned as her body is to access both it and the gutter, the binder cannot see down to the right hand’s points of access to the gutter of C — or of D: her view of them is obstructed from above. With many gutters to choose from in the dark — A, a, b, B, C, D — her hand will grope,blind as Milton, unless led by It must be Guided by this Woman’s Best Friend, her trusty Seeing Eye dog-ears. (Atop the next page, survey the scene of guided entry in the very thick of the action — from a vantage point just off Gladys Brochure’s right elbow.)

This illustration shows how easily dog-ears can lead a blinder’s right hand under them into the central gutter of C (its first destination), or above them into that of D (its final destination). No dog-ears are required for E, of course; having once entered and exited this quire, Gladys’s right hand never returns. She never saw how different is C.12.h.17,18, a British Library copy of Spenser’s Faerie Queene, 1590 & 1596: all of its quires are dog-eared, for the binder had to enter each three times. The format of these volumes, by the way, is quarto-in-8s and the sewing — on five cords again — is two-on (not three-).10

One more stitch in Paradise Lost brings needle and thread to the right of the frame and to the head of the gutter. Exiting D at station 1, they will pass in a kettle stitch through the loop of thread linking the endpaper and quire at station 1, where the tail of the first stitch will be knotted (see above and p. 142) — now, by the way, is time to unfold the dog-ears in C and D, to facilitate the functioning of those in F and G — then needle and thread will rise to sew F, G, H (see p. 142), just as they sewed C, D, E (but mirror image, now), then conclude with another kettle stitch. This whole pattern will be repeated in the next six quires (I, K, L, & M, N, O), in the next five (!), in the next six . . . .
Sewing from station 7 to 1 and back again (with some 60 cm of thread), *performs a reading*, for the order of quires depends on *letter* signatures present at the base of the first two rectos of each quire. In Italian, the connection is more obvious: *literature is letteratura*. For many, to read labelling and ordinal functions of the alphabet as "literary" will be a stretch; but toward that antique understanding I'm now heading. To some, this signing alphabet may look foreign: there is no "J", for example, in the run of quires just listed overleaf. In the early eighteenth century, English did not separate "J" from "I" or "V" from "U" as letters - I, J, U, and V - had been in the English upper case since the 1630s, when J and U first appeared there. A century later, English still had only 24 upper-case letters (though it did have our 26 shapes). Thus, it is not really the absence of "J" and "V" from the signatures that makes this signing alphabet unEnglish. It is, rather, the lack of venerable Germanic "W". Our book is signed with the 23-letter Latin alphabet - and stutteringly so: "A, a, b, B, C . . . ", with a partial lower-case sequence worked into an upper-case one. In an age when biology conceives of "libraries" of genetic codes, literary criticism may well speak of the splicing of signing alphabets as examples of intertextual genetics. Reading these neglected signatures will now help lead us to novel insights into literary form.

Below, I have started a numbered list (to be concluded on p. 154) of this volume's texts and paratexts - with indications of sequence, signatures, quire sizes, and the numbers of quires originally planned. ("Originally" allows for any unforeseen structures that may have - that did arise during production.)

1  A²  half title and title  1  half-sheet quire
2  a²  Bentley's Preface; Milton's The Verse  1  full-sheet quire
3  b²  Milton's Argument; Bentley's Errata  1  full-sheet quire
4  B–3E⁴  Paradise Lost  50  full-sheet quires
last  3F–3F  Index  4  half-sheet quires

From col. 2 of this list, we can devise a codicological formula for the book:

4°: A² a²–b² B–3E⁴ 3F–3F

The format (4°) is quarto: a sheet is folded twice, to make a four-leaf quire. (*The Faerie Queene* just referred to is also quarto, but it requires superscript "8", not "4" because it has *two* sheets per quire.) Signing of a book's main text commonly begins with "B" and proceeds through as many alphabets as necessary - "B, C, D . . . 2A, 2B, 2C . . . 3A, 3B, 3C . . . ", as happens here. Signatures of paratexts are often non-ordinal symbols: §, ¶, †, ‡, ‡‡, Ⅱ, Ⅲ, and Ⅳ, for example. Like "a" and "b" in *Paradise Lost*, they are often syntactically ambiguous with regard to "B, C, D . . . ", the main sequence.

The format (4°) is quarto: a sheet is folded twice, to make a four-leaf quire.

*A glance ahead shows that 2C is indeed dog-eared, aft - so far so good - but 2D is not dog-eared, and it is the only quire to be signed in the middle. Where we expect a plain quire, 2E is dog-eared - aft again. And these last two quires exchange their pattern of stitches. This pattern is not actually impossible, but our logic of folding, sewing, and signing certainly does not explain it. Though 2E is sewn unexpectedly, the anapestic rhythm is apparent thereafter and continues regular to the end of *Paradise Lost* - but now out of synch. That's something. Our obsession with the relation of dog-ears and stitches pays off in a vision of the inflected body language of this book: some structural deformity exists in or near 2C–2D. As it involves letters, it is (need I repeat?) a matter of *literary* organization. To higher criticism, rhythmic irregularity in mere signatures may be no more communicative than a stutter, hiccup, or sneeze during speech. To frame the matter loftily, then, consider coordinate bibliographic evidence in copies at other libraries: Bayley/Howe (University of Vermont), Clark (UCLA), and Houghton (Harvard). I'll focus now on just five consecutive openings in these copies, 2C₂v–2D₃r, within which must lie the deformity. (By sublimation gradual, I'll work bodily functions up to spirit.)

First, let me read the texture of the paper - another cognate! Made from 1E tekhib-rag fibres in a wire mold, a sheet of laid paper is conspicuously marked by the wires on its under side. The mold gives its name to this surface of the sheet.
When a sheet leaves the mold, its upper side is turned onto felt, whence the name for that surface. In raking light, corrugated mold and smooth felt sides have distinct textures, as the frontispiece shows: more vivid chain lines on all but p. 238 indicate mold sides. (See n. 4 for an even clearer mold example.)

Suppose we arbitrarily print the inner forme on the felt side of a sheet and the outer on the mold side. The first (of two) folds to make a quarto quire of a sheet is across its longer axis. This fold creates the bolt and also moves the felt side to the interior (hence the name “inner forme”). The second fold creates the spine and gutter (and moves half of the mold side to a new interior). After the quire is sewn and its bolts are cut, readers experience regular alternation of felt and mold sides from one book opening to the next. Thus, in the first opening here, the facing pages 1 verso & 2 recto are both felt; 2v & 3r (the central opening) are both mold; and 3v & 4r are both felt. (At the outsides of this sheet, the mold sides can, of course, variously face mold or felt sides of the flanking sheets.) In the interiors of single-sheet quires, therefore, one always expects symmetry of mold or felt across the gutter. (Between quires, however, where 4v and 1r confront each other, the odds for symmetry are 50/50.)

For the Vermont copy, the diagram opposite above displays the mold and felt locations for each leaf of the chosen range (see “M” and “F” atop the gutters). The first and last openings here should be at the centres of consecutive quires. Their “mold” and “felt” designations are paired as expected: in each example of internal openings, both pages should have the same value, “F” or “M” – and both happen to be “M”. Both pages of the middle opening here (the face-off between these quires) should therefore be “F” – and so they are.

But in the two other openings, each internal to a different quire, mold and felt are asymmetrical across the gutter. Something is fallen in Bentley’s Paradise Lost: neither 2C nor 2D can be as originally created.

Having read texture closely enough to differentiate felt and mold, we may also have noticed an uncanny multiplication of text. (I will represent it with arrows in a recasting of this diagram, below.) Before the ink of Paradise Lost cured, it set off, and created a mirror-image. At the top of the diagram, for example, the texts of pp. 196–7 set off symmetrically (as we might expect), verso onto recto, recto onto verso – and so at the bottom, on pp. 204–5. Our book is revealed as self-reflective. Try as we might to dismiss this obscure dimension of literature as mere echolalia of the text we have been conscious of reading thus far, we really can’t ignore it, for offsets in the three other openings are asymmetrical. We behold “EEL” on p. 202 of the Clark Library copy (not “E0E”) and “S0E” (not “80E”) appears on p. 199. Such remote offsetting adumbrates a brave new word of literary form.17
In a metasubtextual perception such as this, consciousness floods back to the medium, from which reading has abstracted it. But no more abstraction now. The same configuration of arcs in Fisher and Clark copies as in the Vermont copy helps convince us that this asymmetry is not a fluke. The Folger copy (opposite) may seem to offer a symmetrical map of offsets; but the mutual offsetting of 2C4v and 2D1r is darker than normal. (I have registered the differences in offset density by varying the size of arrowheads.) The offsets of 2C4r onto 2C3v and of 2D1v onto 2D2r are just as dark: thus, all four pages of 2C4 and 2D1 set off more vividly than the other six pages in this range. 2C3v and 2D2r do talk back to 2C4r and 2D1v, their dominant mates, but softly. In these diagrams, asymmetrical densities and arcs tell us exactly where to focus within 2C and 2D: on 2C4 and 2D1.

But the clincher is the presence of stubs in the gutters of the Fisher and Folger copies. We can read them for felt and mold to determine their conjugacies through the gutter: the stub between 2C3 and 2C4 is conjugate with 2C1, the one between 2D1 and 2D2 with 2D4. All this evidence of conjugacy, remote offset, density of offset, and stubs points unequivocally to cancellation of the original 2C4 and 2D1 and their replacement by a single bifolium (as diagrammed below).18

The lower model on p. 147 was deficient: it represented neither the stubs present in many copies, nor the actual sewing in this range. If we take into account the stitching of the cancelling bifolium in this copy, the anapestic rhythm of dog-earning proves absolutely regular, quire by quire. What is irregular, and what derailed my proleptic reading of signatures, is the placing of the lone signature “D d” on the second recto of the cancel, for no other quire is signed in its centre – or only there; and no other signature appears on more than one sheet: the fifty different signing letters thus do not disclose this belated fifty-first quire. (We already knew in life to read between the lines. From now on, we will also have to read between the signatures.)

Random Cloud

Fearful Asymmetry

We certainly can read the conjugacy of 2C4 and 2D1 in the gutter between them. Amid debris there, one often discerns the continuous surface of the facing pages, or at least the collinearity of their chain lines. We can also deduce the conjugacy of these pages from the very presence of sewing in this gutter and from the two pages’ always being both felt (as in the Vermont and Fisher copies) or both mold (as in Folger). Our earlier notion that quire 2C had dog-earning but 2D did not was right only misleadingly: those quires are no longer as originally printed, each now has only three leaves (and sometimes stubs of a fourth), and a cancelling bifolium has replaced their two adjacent leaves. What I had formerly presented as dog-earing on the last leaf of 2C was wrong; dog-earing pertains instead to the first leaf of the cancel. The collation advanced on p. 146 was adequate for the book as planned, but not for the book as produced. And so, I offer to improve it herewith: the signing alphabet has grown in subtlety and complexity – for 2C is not quite 2C, nor 2D 2D. (Such alphabetic reformulation is a matter of literary criticism.)

4°: A2 a–b2 B–2C4 {±2C4} 2D1±(±2D1) 2E–3F4 3F–3P [cancels 2C4 and 2D1 comprise a bifolium: 2C4-2D1]

Other pathways can lead to this structural awareness. First readers of a Harvard copy experienced a gap between 2C3 and 2D2: for the intervening cancelling bifolium had been bound after the remains of 2D. This copy is now in narrative order, but notes on 2C3v and 4r disclose the original disarray. My reconstruction certainly makes sense of the latter note, “turn two leaves for p. 209”19. But the note on 2C3v contradicts, saying that the cancel is “inverted”. If this is not a mistake for “inserted”, it may mean upside down or folded inside out. The latter was a common condition of the cancel, as offsets show; but if the bifolium had been so folded, 2C4r would have been no more than two pages from p. 209, not (as I show it) two leaves. Was “leaves” a mistake for “pages”? (If it was, a bifolium both inverted and inside out could also be said to have begun two pages from p. 209.)19
Traditionally, a pile of booked sheets was consolidated for beating, pressing, or storage by being folded roughly in half across its longer axis, in anticipation of the first precise fold of each sheet (as diagrammed on p. 148). In such a structure, the six half-sheets (A, 3F-3I, and cancel 2C4-2D1) could have remained flat. The frequent misfolding of the cancel thereafter served to bring its interior signature to the front of the quire for the routine alphabetical collation of quires prior to sewing: what more conventional (absent instructions from the printer) than to fold each half-sheet signature-out (as all but one of them indeed required), so that the first signatures in this range read “Cc”, “D d”, “D d 2”, “E e”? Such retrofolding of the cancel allows us to reconstruct a common literary misinterpretation from 1732, consequent, I suppose, on the revising compositor’s literal response to “D d” (the only signature in the cancels), who could have saved the day by signing “Cc 4” instead on the cancel’s other leaf. Perhaps some of the cancel’s other paratextual features (its catchwords, or page- or verse-numbers) eventually provided Gladys with accurate, less equivocal clues of narrative sequence; but she and her sisters must initially, at least, have read only signatures, and so folded the cancel inside out. In scores of copies seen, only Harvard gives evidence of ever having been wrongly bound so. So, be not hard on Gladys (or on Amaryllis or Neæra). Who at first does read (or understand) everything printed in Paradise Lost or Stanzas.

We now know that the original printing of this edition was altered before publication. Was an error removed? a clever idea added? Alas, the sixty copies of this work I have seen reveal no precancelled state, either as it was first stamped in the printing press or as it subsequently set off. Many copies of this work are yet to see, however, and chances are that one of them (or some printer’s waste in the binding of an early eighteenth-century book) will turn upon the Epistles of Phalaris, a monument of Greek philology and a stalwart in the Battle of the Books, the guerdon lies near the surface. Offsets in the Fisher copy (mapped opposite) and the Brotherton Library copy, Leeds University (on this page) reveal traces of the cancelled states of e7 and of A1, the title page. A comparison of the text of the offsets in these (and many other) copies with those of the cancels now bound where the leaves that set off once stood allows for a detailed reconstruction of an earlier plan: this volume was to have contained not only Bentley’s text, but also one by William Lloyd. However, Bentley’s Dissertation and the bishop’s A Chronological Account of the Life of Pythagoras parted ways at the eleventh hour. With the exception of an unsung copy at the University of Alberta, they everywhere seem to be bound separately, each with cancels smoothing over the separation. In the Alberta copy, Bentley’s text does have the usual four cancels; but Lloyd’s text is, uniquely, without any cancels at all.

In A Dissertation, cancels A1 and e7 adapt the very settings of the pages they cancelled. Thus, by the end of the runs of the relevant forms, the printer must have known he needed to replace these two leaves, and so did not immediately distribute the type of the (three) relevant pages. Every offsetting copy of this edition proves an anachronism of its own production, no two copies quite the same in their patterns of remote offset. We take for granted that each manuscript copy of a text is unique; but the same often holds true — praise the Lord — for early printed books. Mechanical reproduction did not stabilize their texts.

There is much more to say about remote offsets in the 1732 Paradise Lost, even if there are no more cancels to generate them. Half the copies I have seen exhibit unique patterns of such kiss-and-tell. Let us go first to Toronto, to the Fisher Library, for mirror-image offsets; then, to London, to the British Library for right-image examples.
In the Fisher copy, remote offsets usually connect 1r and 4v pages. Such evidence points to the stacking of folded quires before sewing. Consider (left) the four arcs in the 50 (now 51) poem quires (B1r–3E4v). Their being parallel hints that they are systematic: evidently, all these quires were once divided into five groups of ten, as follows — to each of which I will assign an ordinal, continuing the count from the “4 . . . ” that I began to define on p. 146:


— after which, the concluding Index, can now be numbered “9”. In the switchboard atop the next page, the final ideal order of all nine sections stands on the right. On the left is the binder’s prior practical arrangement, attested to by the map on the present page. The four paratexts crowned the pile (see opposite, below) in the order 2–9–1–3 (as they also did, I see, in the McGill University copy). Beneath it lay the five groupings of the poem quires in a striking arrangement 8–7–6–5–4 (see opposite, mid page). The offsets internal to each of these five sections reflect narrative order, but the sections themselves ranged in the other direction. Arrows between the columns reveal the eventual chiastic reordering of these five sections of poem quires, as 4–5–6–7–8.

The early configuration of the pile and its parts was alphabetically structured, no more random than the bound (or, in Harvard’s case, re-bound) book. Forget your “A B C”: here B touched X (not A); M, 2H (not L); Y, 2S (not X); 2I, 3E (not 2H). These contacts cast a spell, set off in the book as text. Whenever text is legible, read it. Read it — so you’ll know who slept with whom. For this is literature X B C letterature is this.

Perhaps these nine units were gathered by genres? We can be read the stratiform pile geologically for a history of production: perhaps the sheets of paratext

were printed after the poem. (Refering to a printing error in Bk. 12, quire b must have been.) Such a reading reflects literary criteria at play in the manufacture of the book. There is no departure from the text of this copy in an anarcheological reconstruction. Text can now be read not only abstractly, as a linear string of words, The Verses of Milton, say (unhappy though in Heaven), but also concretely, as disjunct articulations of the codex itself. And when text echoes so within the volume, the very tissue of these locations (that root *IE*tekh again!) signifies, enchanting the book’s *Song of Itself*, if you will — Even if you won’t. Who gives a damn that No One Up There is watching? Stand on Mother Earth. Open a book of leaves, hands dirty with printer’s ink. Lo, a star falls on your left sandal. Your barbaric yawm arcs o’er the rooftops of Mississauga. Turn a new leaf. Stride forth into Eternity. Read. Read the medium.
Return, Credit. Remote offsets in the Folger copy that have not yet been discussed are mapped opposite; they point to different prior structures. Three runs of quires seem clear: 2B ← 3I ↔ A1; 3H ↔ 2C; and cancel 2C4-2D1 → Y. It is not clear yet how to link them. But we are on somewhat familiar ground: the first and last pages touch again. The text block was divided at roughly its midpoint, between 2B and 2C, and the lower-right corner of 2C1 was dog-eared forward. Its projecting beyond the spine must have facilitated reordering. When this structure came under pressure, in a standing press, say, the fold was remotely debossed (as indicated in the diagram by the circle-heads instead of arrow-heads). Such folding at text-block divisions is another kind of dog-earing, not uncommon. Witness the University of Virginia Black copy (left). Its lone remote offsetting links first and last pages (why are we not surprised?), but the folded corners of R1 and 311 deboss 2H4 and Q4, respectively, hinting at the facet postures of this copy. The two halves of the Folger copy (right) may once have been reversed— or if not all of the first half, perhaps only through quire X, for offsetting shows that the cancel once stood before Y1r.

In the eighteenth century, when the run of a sheet was finished and all the copies of it were dry enough to handle, they would have been stacked in a heap and warehoused until ready for collation. So, there would have been fifty-seven heaps of sheets of Paradise Lost (eventually fifty-eight) when gathering began in earnest. It was impractical to gather one sheet from each pile in order to comprise a single copy: over 25 metres of table top are required to lay out that many heaps, and gathering from them all at once is too cumbersome. The earliest printer's manual, Moxon's, is mum on the practical issue, but a later one, Caleb Stower's The Printer's Grammar, 1808, advises a man to gather a large book in stages, ten or eleven sheets at a time, "beginning with the first signature of the body . . . which is sometimes marked A, but in general B . . . he then follows with C, D, &c . . . till he has laid down a sufficient number of sheets, which is commonly from B to M [B-L is the corresponding unit in the Fisher copy] . . . where a volume runs through the alphabet two or three times, several gatherings must be made. [Stower says nothing about where one stores the first gathering when the next is begun. We shall return to this question shortly— for that is where our eureka is hiding.] In such cases, eleven or twelve sheets in a gathering is enough. The title, little a, b, c, cancels, &c if any, should be left till the last, and placed at the end of the gathering, so that, when [it is] folded, they may be found within the gathering". To gather Paradise Lost by elevens would see the fifth gathering starting at 2Z. It could be the last, for the remaining bulk of paper, 2Z-3E4, 3F-3F A1 a-b4, is just under that of eleven sheets, even though it includes fourteen signatures (for five of them are on half sheets). Such a final gathering, with its full sheets folded in half and its half sheets left unfolded, would bring 2Z to the outside—and A could be "within the", cheek by jowl with 3I, thus creating the striking contact we have often noted of the first and last pages.

The next stage is a "booking" of these gatherings. Whether it merely bundles or integrates them could be revealed by offsets: does 2Z1r set off on 2M4v, for example, or on 2Y4v? In Paradise Lost, I have not seen unambiguous evidence of setting off in gatherings or bookings (as opposed to setting off in full sheets or in quires); but offsetting certainly can take place within and between bookings. I have seen it frequently in early-sixteenth-century quartos and octavos printed in Venice and Lyons—as I will document in a note.

It is not clear whether, in the case of the Fisher copy, an integrated booking (if it ever existed) was subdivided for folding into units of ten, or the original gatherings were in units of that size. But after folding of the first ten sheets made ten quires in alphabetical order, we can suppose they were set aside together, B-up; and when the next ten, M-X, joined them, they were placed on top, M-up and X-down, so that extreme pages X4v and X1r touched and, with sufficient pressure, set off on each other. (There is our Εὐκάνα.) According to Moxon, this pressure would have come simultaneously in a standing press; it could have applied to the sewn text-block (as illustrated in "d" in the plate on p. 186), or, as is relevant here, to the gatherings, each now quired, but before narrative order prevailed among them. Thus such stacking of alphabetically-arranged quires from five of the Fisher gatherings can explain the backwards sequence revealed in that copy by the five leap-frogging arrows in the remote-offset diagram on p. 154.

But there is another source of pressure, which Moxon does not mention. In the diagram for the Clark Library copy (on p. 159), contrast the leap-frogging arrows with the non-overlapping ones that directly link pages
Which two great Sexes adambreak the Word (VIII, 151)

Fearful Asymmetry

R1r & 2L4v (19 quires apart) and 2M1r & 3E4v (17 apart). (The rest, 15 quires of poem and 7 of paratexts comprise a third group, which I will come to in a moment.) The absence of leap-frogging here demands a different explanation: whereas in Fisher all the remote offsets could have come about simultaneously in a standing press, the remote offsets in Clark must have occurred over time, during which each of the three quire groups was briefly reconfigured. Consider the first group, R1r-2L4v. IMAGINE dividing it and interchanging its halves, so that its extremes, 2L4v and R1r, kissed each other in the middle. "Hammered", a recent study by R. MacGeddon, offers a cogent rationale for such an astonishing tryst.25 To flatten it for binding, a text block was routinely divided into equal units (three in our case) and a man wielding a broad-faced hammer, Diderot's "a" (see him at work, opposite) repeatedly struck each "beating" (aptly named) on both sides. Next, dividing it and interchanging its halves, he beat it again, front and back, then restored its original order.26 Remote offsets thus arise in the second phase under the hammer, when the beating's outer faces randy vous briefly in the interior; and local offsets arise in both phases—and also in the standing press (where even remote-offset pages can acquire local offsets).

Beating 3 consists of B-Q, the remaining poem quires, plus all three paratext quires from the front of the book and all four from the back. As in the prebound order of merely the poem quires in Fisher, that of the mixed quires of beating 3 shows that internally the subsections were basically in narrative order at the time they set off, but they themselves ranged backwards.

But all this is tame, don't you think? Why not come upstairs with me now and see my princely collection of intertextual right offsets. They'll leave you in stitches.
LXXXVI.
E in atto sì genof; languir tremanti
Gli occhi, e cadere sul teso il collo s'ira:
Così vago è il pallor, e da' sembianti
Di morte una pieta à dolce spira;
Ch'ammolliti il cor, che fù dur marmo avanti,
E'l pianto scaturì di mezo à l'ira.
Tu piangi Soliman; tu, che diftrutto
Mira' il regno tuo col ciglio afciutto?

LXXXVII.
Ma come ci vede il ferro hostil, che molle
Fuma del sangue ancor del giovinetto;
La Pietà cede; e l'ira avampa, e bolle.
E le lagrime sue fтанa nel petto.
Corre fover Argillano, e'l ferro esfolle,
Parte lo scudo opposto, indi'l elmetto,
Indi il capo, e la gola; e de lo degeno
Di Solimano ben quel gran colpo è degeno.

LXXXVIII.
Nè di ciò ben contento, al corpo morto
Smontato del destriero ancor fa guerra;
Quasi maffin, che'l fasso, ond'à lui porto
Fu duro colpo, infelionito afferra.
O d'immenso dolor vano conforto,
Incrudelir ne l'infensibil terra.
Ma fra tanto de' Franchi il Capitano
Non spendea l'ire, e le percosse invano.

LXXXIX. Mille

CANT. IX.

LIBERATA

LXXXIX.
Mille Turchi havea qui, che di loriche,
E d'elmetti, e di scudi eran coperti,
Indomiti di corpo à le staniche,
Di spirto audaci, e in tutti i casi esperti:
E furon già de le militie antiche
Di Solimano, e feco ne' deserti
Seguir d'Arabia i suo' errori infelici,
Ne le fortune avverse ancora amici.

XCl.
Questi riavvinti insieme in ordin folto
Poco cedeano, o nulla al valor Franco.
In questi urtò Goffredo, e ferì il volto
Al fier Corcutte, & à Roffeno il fianco:
A Selin da le spalle il capo hà sciolto:
Tronco à Roffano il destro braccio, e'l manco.
Nè già soli costor: ma in altre guise
Molti piagò di loro, e molti uccise.

XCI.
Mentre ci così la gente Saracina
Percoete, e loro percosse anco sostiene:
E in nulla parte al precipitio inchina
La fortuna de' Barbati, e la spene:
Nova nube di polve ecco vicina,
Che folgori di guerra in grembo tiene;
Ecco d'arme improvise uscir un lampo,
Che sbigotti de gli infedeli il Campo.

XCII. Son
Here in London, the King's Library Milton bears remote offsets from both itself, in mirror image (the kind we have been dealing with so far), and, in right image - not from itself, but rather from Tasso's Gerusalemme Liberata, "Printed . . . Upon Royal Paper in Quarto", dedicated to the monarch, and published in two volumes in London in 1724 by Giovanni Watts and Giacob Tonson, the very Tonson who, as mere "Jacob", had published Bentley's edition of Paradise Lost in London in 1732. (Don't ask me to explain how ink in Tasso could have been so alive as to set off in Milton up to nine years later!)

The Offsetting Saga does not end here. Besides setting off remotely on itself, the King's Library Tasso receives offset, mirror-image, from a yet-to-be-identified 32mo French psalter and also from something in our own language. In these volumes we overhear a multitude of tongues - English, Italian, and French, the last translating Hebrew. ("All Europe contributed to the making of Volume 1 begins with Tasso's Vita ("*a-*b a-u) and concludes with the beginning of the epic (B–Z 2A–2U). I have not yet identified any of the dozens of psalter pages, but I have charted the sources of a hundred offsets of the poem onto itself and of the Vita onto both itself and the poem. Opposite, I arbitrarily bend the two alphabetical sequences of these signatures, as if they were flexible docking proteins, to display their transfer of information efficiently, the poem on the left and the Vita on the right. Now, whereas, in the Fisher copy of Paradise Lost, remote offsets are mainly from and to the outsides of quires (i.e., 1r or 4v pages), any of the eight pages of a quire in this Tasso can give or receive offset from any page in another. Offset originating in Vita p and projecting into Vita p points to a fact (confirmed by other evidence) that the source of remote offsets in Tasso came from another exemplar of the same edition. (So don't be taken in by the shorthand of my diagram: the royal paper of George III's crazy copy of vol. 1 was talking not merely to itself.)

Offsets on the two pages of an opening (within a quire or between quires) usually reproduce the two pages of another opening: overleaf, pp. 160–1 show Vita d2v–3r (pp. 28–9) – plus sixteen psalter pages – setting off on 2Q2v–3r (pp. 300–1) in the poem. (The psalter tilts 5°, the Vita 8°.) These offsets point to slip-sheets as the means of textual transmission. They would have been inserted into an opening prophylactically, to keep adjacent pages from setting off onto each other during beating or pressing; but then (and here is the madness of it all), they were recycled to other openings before the ink they had sucked up was dry, where they served not only the intended function, to be set-off upon again (again in mirror image) – to blot, but also, contrary to intention, to set off themselves (now in right image) – to blot in quite another sense.
Now, James Joyce conceived of *Finnegans Wake* as a círc, a simultaneous short-circuit of all myth (Every Thing Equally and Immediately Remote), an indefinitely wyrm-edened book – in a word, an apocolypse. But its practicable embodiment 70 years ago by Fabbro & Eliot in no way challenged the inearity of the codex. In these pre-bound quires of our *Paradise Lost* and *Gerusalemme Liberata*, however, we do witness sexamples of a novel (if erotic) structure, each a book in them aking, with its head up its asp.

The diagram opposite spells out what I have divined of such literature in a hundred examples of right-image offset from vol. 1 of *Gerusalemme Liberata* into *Paradise Lost*. The middle column is an alphabetical ordering of the quires of the 1724 Tasso as bound. The right column lists quires in the 1732 Milton almost as bound, but commencing abruptly in E. Quires B–D, starting the epic, begin in the lower left of the chart, with the preliminary quires above them. (To establish continuity, I have snaked a grey line along the circumference to join these parts of *Lost Paradise*.) Many arrows of intertextual offsetting link these epics in sustained and intimate conversation across the years. (Sample it three openings back, p. 69, in the union, tête-bêche, of Tasso 1r and Milton 3v.) The alphabets of the epics run parallel, in two basic orders: witness the more or less horizontal arrows of the conversation, above, and the gracefully sloping ones, below – with an overlapping weave of the two styles of line beside *Paradise Lost* quires O–S. When, in utero, Tasso addressed Milton, each text seems to have been in narrative order, but variously out of phase.

*Quick now, find it.* Our pot of gold lies low in the central column: here pages in Tasso 2C–2U set off, not only as expected, into the very end of Milton, 3C–3H (dexter), but also (sinister) into the very begin, concluding where they startled, in the midst of things. IMAGINE instead that Milton Unbound ran as presently stitched. Now Projecting Tasso would have started midway, returning thither, having passed through end into beginning. IMAGINE, ultimately, both texts – or more (recall the psalter) – undressing each other as uroboroi, projecting tane into tother through narrative cycles that could have begun and ended any where in the muddle of things?

**ENVoi**

*Jerry, man of three-score years & ten, tell me if you know: this shuffling of epics like decks of cards – will we ever more closely map the Sex of Angels?*
Not echolalia, but echolocation. In radar, the interest lies not in the megawatt, coherent, crafted signal, but in its faint, fragmented, and unscripted reflections read against the original whole: such a dialectic of pulses intact and broken echoes maps the directions, distances and surfaces of remote objects, and even (Enter Doppler) their speeds. The practice of reading printed books in this fearful asymmetry is similar, but with an awful difference, of course, for literary signals are not monotonous electronic beeps. They are instead, as it were, the precious life-blood of master and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. The gambit of my textual criticism has sacrificed the desired encounter with sublime literature to changed into a THING, like a brain-dead stroke victim or a dead god.

Despite appearances, however, reflected letters are not mere dust and noise; nor are they hovering near death. Like echoes in radar, these remote reflections fragment - bearing precise new messages, rich and strange, cohering in a fresh narrative, like fingerprints at a crime scene, treasured up without the books they inhabit, dealing out that being indoors each one dwells. No Webster's defines these echoing songs: what they amount to is scarcely to be generalized, at least in the dawn of our study. As I have endeavoured to show, however, their meanings may come clear, not only in their own locales, the structures of which they articulate, but also remotely, as in offset from the cancelled title page of Bentley's Dissertation, which (as in a comic anagnorisis) brings word of a Lost Twin, separated at birth - not alien, but a second self. A book's Song of Itself, as I have called it, spells out a diachronic codicology of the book in hand - of this book in this hand. But a books like Paradise Liberata sings more, anticipating that apocalyptic Librarhyth, where (Amen) euerie books shall lie open to one another.

My thanks foremost to Moira Fogarty, who, in 2001 directed my attention to remote offsetting in the Fisher Library copy of Bentley's 1732 edition of Paradise Lost and provoked the decade of research that has led to this essay; to Betsy Palmer Eldridge of the Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild, for information on sewing as I started out; to Brandon Besharah for help with diagrams and design; to Anthony Ossa-Richardson for research at the British Library; to the conservators of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Stephen Galbraith, Frank Mowery, and Renata Mesmer for their help, understanding, and teaching during my excavations, and also for allowing photography of the Folger copy of this edition before it was rebound, near the end of my study (partly because of it). Thanks also to those with whom I discussed this research and to readers and auditors of drafts for their encouragement and corrections: Alex Brett, Rebecca Bullard, Michael Cahn, Joshua Calboum, Bradin Cormack, Yuri Cowan, Joseph Dane, Gabriel Egan, Jeremy Ehrlich, Susan Green, Pamela Harris, Charles Lock, Scott Mandelbret, Steve McCaffrey and Karen Mac Cormack, Raimonda Modiano (who supplied the phrase "textual unconscious" on p. 107), Rebecca Niles, Philip Oldfield, Thomas O'Reilly, Mark Owens, Stephen Pender, Varun Raj, Annie Russell, Matt Schneider, Scott Schofield, Jyotsna Singh, Sean Starke, Michael Suarez, Steve Tabor, Elisa Tersigni, Elizabeth Barnath Walker, Michael Warren, and Matra Werner. Thanks ultimately to Bill, my father, a Repairer of Books. This is his cenotaph.

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1. Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library (E-10 02647, c. 1), by whose courtesy the photos on p. 134, 141, and 186; and Folger Shakespeare Library (214-216f). The crease on p. 328 is fainter than that on p. 240; the latter leaf cushioned the former when they were folded forward together. (See n. 16 for more on the relevant quires, 2H and 2I.) The Folger's four leaves routinely folded together also show progressive softening of the crease leaf by leaf outward from the centre of the fold.

A raking light is one that skims along a page, brightening the face of whatever obstructs it and casting a shadow thereafter and also into depressions. In n. 4, for example, raking light effectively reveals the slightly recessed chainlines in the paper (every five lines of text apart), and three depressions, of increasing size, centred on l. 350, 355, and 360. It may be no accident that these latter contours of the leaf coincide with these locations of type, for it is the bite of typeface that creates them.
In this essay, I focus on dog-ears at the head of the leaf. But binders also dog-earned the tail: these diagrams show folio-in-fours format (left) and octavo (right). (I have not found a book with both kinds; but see an apparent exception in n. 22.) Dog-earned at bottom are the Fisher copies of Dryden’s *Fables Ancient and Modern*, 1699 and Diderot’s *Encyclopédie*, both folios-in-fours.

In folio format, such folding not only locates a quire’s central gutter during sewing, but also consolidates its loose bifolia until they are bound. The latter explanation does not pertain, however, to the similarly dog-earned Valerius Maximus discussed in n. 24, because of the presence in octavo format of the bolt across the top of the quire, usually not removed until after sewing.

2. In quarto format, point holes for registering a sheet during printing pierce the bolt. They are somewhat obscured if the bolt is cut open (see Fisher c. 2), and disappear entirely if it is *ploughed*. (See p. 186 for an illustration of ploughing by workman “c”.) We must allow for the elimination of small dog-ears during ploughing; thus, some books once dog-earned may now give no evidence of that fact.

3. The diagrams on pp. 136–9 and the collation begun on p. 146 (and revised on p. 151) are for the *text*-block only, not the whole *book*-block, which includes endpapers: at front and back of each of the Fisher and Folger copies are marbled bifolia (paste-down and fly-leaf), sewn all along. Also, both copies have the two engravings often, but not always, found in this edition (and not in it alone), of Milton Young and Milton Old. (In the illustrations opposite, they are depicted grey.)

Before the Folger copy was rebound, in the fall of 2009, the direction of sewing from Row 1 to 2 as diagrammed on pp. 136–7 could be deduced from a difference in thread colour before and after the knot in quire C. All the stitches in B were dull brown, as was the bottom half (up to the knot) of the lower stitch in C. The top half of this stitch, after the knot, as well as the upper stitch in C and all the stitches in D and E, were copper coloured. The sewing therefore joined the bottom of B and C – in my analysis, down B and up C. Consequently, the sewing of Row 1 began at the tail of A. In the diagram, the numbers “6, 4, 2” under quire A and “5, 3, 1” under quire a assert that the first stitch (only somewhat arbitrarily numbered “6”, as I’ll make clear below) appeared in the gutter close to the tail of A; the second (no. 5), slightly higher, in a; the third (no. 4), higher still, in A; and so on, as the needle and thread shuttled back and forth from one quire to the next, circling the cords *en route*, advancing stitch by stitch toward the head of the quire.

After the needle and thread left the gutter at the head of quire a (at the top of stitch 1), they would have made a kettle stitch on the *spine* side. (That stitch is thus not visible in this diagram, though it is in those on pp. 142 and 143.) Needle and thread appear next in the gutter at the head of quire b (for the first stitch there); then lower down, in B, in three adjacent stitches (nos. 2–4); then lower still, in b (no. 5); and finally near the tail of B (no. 6), in preparation for the next kettle stitch. So, Row 1 (on p. 136–7) documents the usual tally of twelve gutter stitches in a complete sewing cycle, in this case, from tail to head and back.

In a book like this, sewn mainly “three-on”, terminal text-block quires are commonly sewn “two-on” for extra strength, as was done here, or even “all along”. (See pp. 140–5 for more on these terms.) Terminal Row 11 (p. 138) offers the sole example in this chart of sewing a single quire all along, though it does not employ every station. Surviving holes and two adjacent stitches in each bifolium endpaper suggested that they were originally sewn all-along, i.e., with the full six stitches. (This reconstruction of the sewing of the endpapers with stitches 1 through 6 explains why I began Row 1 of my chart (on p. 136) with stitch 6 rather than 1.)

With one exception, the sewing holes exist only at the stations where there is thread: holes were made by the needle in the act of sewing, not collectively beforehand, by a saw cutting a notch or “kerf” across the spine of the book block. Frequently, especially in cols. 3 and 6 (on pp. 136–9), a sewing-station hole stands eccentric, and the stitch passing through it therefore runs to the next station not merely *along*, but also *off* or *across*, the gutter. Whenever there are adjacent stitches, I diagram this eccentricity, for it shows the binder’s care not to run the needle through a stitch just made. When stitches are isolated, however, as in quire a of the Folger copy, I ignore the occasional random eccentricity of the holes. (Contrast the more-accurate representations of three off-centre holes in quire a in the above diagram with the *pro forma* holes in the depiction of this same quire on p. 136.)

Also shown above are three other quires in which irregular sewing is of particular interest. The engraved portraits (in grey) are tipped in in A and sewn in in B. In A, the binder sewed not in the original gutter, but in the new one created once the plate had been tipped in – obviously, then, before sewing. The dog-earing malfunctioned, steering the binder (see pp. 144–5) to the wrong opening! This new gutter is displaced some 5mm toward the fore-edge. Consequently, thread is conspicuous six times on the verso side of A2, running horizontally for this distance between the (normal) gutter separating A2 and a1 and the back side of the (displaced) gutter on A2. In B, the presence of four stitches rather than the two expected for a quire so deep into the text block may have been the binder’s tactic for securing an engraving printed on heavier stock than the rest of quire B. Note that, although this plate, standing between coordinate dog-earings (in b and B), is not itself dog-eared: the plate must have taken up its present position *after* the letter-press quires had been dog-eared. It seems that this dog-earing did not take place on the frame. (Dog-earing there is a binding option, however, as the discussion in n. 9 will reveal.)

As shown above, there is an empty hole in 2B just under the hole of the top sewing station, on the lower side of cord b, which runs behind these two holes. The empty hole suggests a false start for the third stitch in the run Z–2A–2B. This lone empty hole reminds us that stations in this volume did not predate sewing.

4. The 286mm height is of the text-block after it was ploughed head, tail, and fore-edge. But if part of a leaf folds away from an edge, it can escape the plough, and so preserve earlier dimensions. The photo opposite (by permission of the Folger...
Shakespeare Library, as are those on pp. 170 and 172) shows a deckle-edged fold-out from the gutter of 2Z, where it had slept for almost three centuries until I woke it. An earlier height was at least 301 mm; but even this calculation is not final, for the head was also ploughed. (Page height in the unploughed Fisher c. 2 averages 304 mm.) The sloped lines extending from the gutter to near the present bottom (trimmed) edge of the leaves and lines running parallel to that edge reveal the posture of this fold-out before it opened. (A trace of thread of the lost tail band visible at the top of this photo is not part of stitch 6; it occupies a higher position, as the map on p. 139 shows.)

In many books, a sewing station is a single hole through which thread enters or exits the gutter or spine of a quire. This is the case for books in which the stations are created with a saw before sewing. In the present volume, the station is indeed single at the top and bottom holes in the gutter, where there is no cord, and also for the top and bottom of any isolated stitch (except for the doubled top station on 2B just referred to). With adjacent stitches, however, we should conceive of a station as a pair of holes: when the needle punches an exit hole in the gutter on its way to wrap the thread around the cord, it returns to the same quire but re-enters the gutter about 4 mm back (and 5 mm out from the gutter, to avoid sewing through the previous stitch, an act that would have prevented stitch 3 from being pulled taut).

The bright nipple below station 4 on 2G2v – it is shown enlarged, opposite, below – corresponds to the dark hole above it where stitch 4 emerges. When text-block, or book-block, or bound book, or all three, were pressed, as Moxon describes in Mechanick Exercises (see p. 157 and n. 24), 2G2 met no resistance from the hole on 2G3, and welled up into it. Such great pressure causes paper to conform even to the slight recesses of chain lines on adjacent leaves, a phenomenon seen in many copies of this edition of Paradise Lost.

Note also that the holes in stations 3 and 4 are wider than the thread passing through them. At the eye of the needle, the thread would have been doubled at the time of sewing. More importantly, however, when the thread was pulled taut, it tore a small channel for itself down the gutter (often creating a chad), until it was tight against the cord. (Such chads are dragged in the direction of sewing. The face of this one reveals a small part of the other, verso, side of leaf 2G3.)

5. The IE root is "tekth-". Surprisingly, "testament" and thus "testes" are not cognate with "text", but "ête" and "test" are. See Eric Partridge, Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English (New York: MacMillan, 1958). Grimm's Law formulates the relation of Hellenic and Italic i- and p- to Germanic th- and f-. Interchanging of a vowel and a liquid [l] (see Italic pl/i- and Germanic fol-) is metathesis; the unmetathetic form appears in English "flax" (< IE "plek-, "to intertwine"). (Flax is the source of both paper and ink! See Joshua Calhoun, "The Word Made Flax", PMLA, 126:2, March 2011, pp. 327-44.)

6. Philip Gaskell, A New Introduction to Bibliography (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 150. Diderot's Encyclopédie appeared about 4 mm back (and 5 mm out from the gutter, to avoid sewing through the previous stitch, an act that would have prevented stitch 3 from being pulled taut).
between 1751 and 1780. “1771” is the date of Vol. 8 of the plates, where “Relieur” Planche 1 appears. It misrepresents the block of quires — flush against the cords, its left edge absurdly not parallel to the sides of the table. (As the table is represented foreshortened, I am not speaking of Euclidean parallels, but of ones that should meet in the evoked depth of the engraving — but the vanishing point for this book is absurdly in the foreground!) Also, although, at the cords, the quires’ height appears to be several centimetres, their far edge is collinear with the edge of the sewing table, so that the quires appear to taper there to no height at all. Of course, from some angles, the edges of the quires and the table could indeed align; but so to relate them in an expository perspectival engraving was, at that time, to evoke Hogarth’s 1754 Satire on False Perspective, or, in ours, the surreal alignments of Magritte’s 1933 La Condition Humaine.

The draping of the binder’s skirts implies that her legs extend directly under the table. But at the sewing frame, the “forward thrust” of the shoulder, as I called it on p. 141, is actually achieved largely by the binder’s facing along the front edge of the sewing table. The thrust is rather to the side, therefore, as is apparent in Noel Rooke’s drawing two centuries later (see above) in Douglas Cockerell’s Bookbinding: Its Background and the Care of Books (New York: Appleton, 1903 [c. 1901]), p. 104, fig. 29.

Dudin’s L’art du Relieur: Dorure de Livres (Paris, 1772) (see overleaf, reproduction courtesy of the Toronto Public Library) is also spectacularly wrong. This time, the quires do lie correctly across the cords from the binder, but both of her hands now appear there as well, in defiance of the cords, which should block the way of at least her right arm. As shown in the blow-up, also overleaf, she unconvincingly grips an oversized needle in the palm of her hand, as if it were a gouge (Why, it’s as thick as her thumb!) and although the other hand looks poised to receive a needle, no leaves stand between her hands to be pierced by it. (See n. 9 for more on the needle.) As in Diderot, the vanishing point of the quires her hands rest upon is absurdly in the foreground, and the quires seem well away from and not attached to the cords. Charmingly, however, the thread exiting the needle appears to become the screw-thread of the sewing-frame upright! (This pun works in French too. Vt poesis pictura.) But the artist does correctly depict the end of the table towards us as a workspace: scissors and thread are there, for example. But it would have been more representative if the sine qua non, the stack of quires about to be sewn, was so near to hand, for madame must take a quire from this pile at least every few stitches.

A reliable test of whether a book was sewn from front or back is the structure of the “kettle” or chain stitches. From Latin catena, “chain”, comes Old High German ketina, then Modern German Kette, and its diminutive, Kettel. (Kessel, the German word for a “water kettle”, comes from Latin catillus, diminutive of catinus.)
The image overleaf, below, shows triple dog-eating in Toronto's Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies copy of Domenico Delfino's Sommario di Tutte le Scienze (Venice, 1621) (B 785 D4356 1621). The sewing here is two-on on three cords from the front of the volume, which collates 8°: a-b-c-d-e-f-g-h-i-j. There are no endpapers. The beginning of the sewing, at the tail of a, is knotted to the thread exiting at the tail of b (I have not shown the knot in the diagram, left); that loop received the first kettle-stitch, passing from A to B. There are but three kettle-stitches at the tail, for every second opportunity was missed: A to B, I to K, and R to S employ this stitch, but E to F, N to O, and X to Y do not. For this reason, designating every head or tail stitch a "kettle stitch" is wrong. Often, only an archæological examination of an uncovered or dissected book can identify such a stitch.

The blow-up opposite, below, shows the exposed foot of the spine of this copy of Sommario. Its cords are recessed; and the thread merely passes over and does not circle them, as it does in the Folger Paradise Lost. A kerf at the foot slopes gently down right, 2 mm below the chain stitches. It may be that the tail stitches originally terminated in this kerf, but that, with tension on the thread, they tore upward. But the systematic double and occasionally triple dog-eating in this copy of the aft half of each quire argues that the present stitching is not original: it may not have used this kerf at all.

Mirjam M. Foot reports that German and Dutch books were sewn from back to front, whereas the French and English were sewn from front to back (Bookbinders at Work: Their Rules and Methods (London: The British Library and New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2006), p. 51). But surely individual binders would suit themselves in this matter, as they would on which hand to employ in the gutter. (I conclude that the direction of sewing the Fisher copy was back to front.)

A detailed English description of sewing in this direction can be found in n. 9.) For engravings of a binder with the right hand in the gutter, see Foot, pp. 39, 138, and 144. As engravings print their image on miroir, one cannot be sure they report right and left without reversing them. However, in the image of a Dutch bindery on p. 138, the sewer has his left hand at the spine and a beater hammer with his right.

8. Most stitches in the endpapers were missing, but indications were that the sewing was all along. A, a, b, and B were sewn in two units of two-on, as shown in Row 1, on pp. 136–7 and as discussed in n. 3.

9. The reach of Gladys's arm can be guessed from the length of thread between knots, the longest of which I calculate as approximately 115 cm.

almost four feet, or (mindful of her elbow) about one ell, a cubit. When she started a new thread, the needle could sit in the middle of its doubled length; therefore, the maximum length to pull through the first hole need not have exceeded 27 inches or so. (In all, about twenty feet of thread were required to sew the Folger copy.)

The sewing of C, D, and E is better appreciated if just the top part of the illustration on p. 143 is considered, as you see it here, enlarged. On that page, I represented the needle as straight, as is common in modern sewing. Ephraim Chambers, however, reports "a long Needle a little crook'd" (Cyclopaedia, 1728, "Bookbinding", 1: p. 116, col 2), a detail originating with him, it seems, nor his source, Jacques Savat des Brusius, Dictionnaire Universel de Commerce, d'Historie Naturelle, d'Arts et Mériés (Paris: Jacques Estienne, 1723), as identified by Graham Pollard (cont. by Wehster Porter), Early Bookbinding Manuals, Occasional Publication No. 18 (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographic Society, 1984), items 70 and 41. Dudin speaks of the needle as curved: "une aiguille d'acier courbée est de huit lignes ou environ" (p. 23). He depicts it as shown opposite, lying on the sewing table beside a ball of thread. (A curl of thread approaches the eye of the needle, but seems not to enter it.)

If, for contrast, we imagine the heads of the quires lying to the left and with the left hand, say, accessing their central gutters (with the aid of dog-ears), we can appreciate the relative difficulty in sewing the Folger pattern of three-on from the back of the book.

kettle stitch from R to S loops forward around that from F to K at K

kettle stitch from I to K loops forward around that from A to B at K

back

front

keef

S

K

keef

keef

1.5 mm
to sew on two or three sheets in once passing from head to tail, by taking one stitch in the first sheet laid down, and placing a bit of card in the middle [i.e., in the central gutter] of the sheet before the left hand is withdrawn in order

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COWIE: [After the sewing of the fly-leaf all along from head to tail,] the first section of the work is then placed on the bands, ready for sewing; the needle is first put through the ketch-stitch mark with the right hand, and drawn through with the left, and by the same hand put through close to the band on the side next the tail of the page; and, being drawn through with the right hand, with the left corner of the top half of the section is folded down; the next section is then taken up, and the band being placed in the saw-marks, the needle is put through on that side the band next the head of the book; it is then brought out on the left-hand side of the band, and passed through the section turned down on the right-hand side of the band, and brought out on the ketch-stitch mark of the same section . . . .

*It is better, perhaps, to sew the first and last sections of a work entirely through [i.e., all along], and turn down the third and following.

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CLOUD: "The first (kerfed) section or quire of the work, drawn from the end of the book, is then placed on the two bands, ready for sewing, this time from tail to head; (1) from the spine side, the needle is first put through the ketch-stitch mark at the tail of the page with the right hand, and drawn through into the gutter with the left; (2) and by the same left hand it is put back through to the outside, close to the first band on the side next the tail of the page; and, being drawn through to the outside with the right hand, and (3) with the left hand now leaving the gutter, the corner of the top half of this the first section is folded down (i.e., the fore-quire is dog-eared at its head toward the back of the book); the next (penultimate) section is then taken up, and the two bands being placed in the two middle saw-marks, (4) the needle is put by the right hand through the new section on that side of the first band next the head of the book (the thread having
one quire being entered once only (for adjacent stitches) needed no dog-earring (as in the Cowie example, in n. 9). Example a collates: [A] B–M8 (±M4) N–2K8 2L5 (±L5); example b: [a]–b8 (±b7 = F5 cancel) B–F8 (±F5), G–2M9.

A Fisher Library copy of Francis Bacon's Twome Bookes, 1605 (bac. B33 A38 1605: STC 11164), mapped below, has a structure reminiscent of the three-on sewing of the Folger Paradise Lost. Here, however, each dog-earred quire is folded aft, and separately. Also, the sewing of the second stitch in the first two quires of each of the two groups of three in this sample does not have a constant order. (I have arbitrarily chosen the direction of sewing for numbering stitches: "6, 1" could be "1, 6".)

11. Ancient letters have arithmetic as well as phonetic functions. In Greek, "α, β, γ" are "1, 2, 3". In Latin, "i" is "1", "v" is "5", "x" is "10", "i" is "50", "c" is "100", "d" is "500", and "m" is "1,000". Every word in Hebrew has a number made by adding together the numerical value of each of its letters: alef is "1", bet is "2", gimel is "3". Words are thus opened to mystical interpretation, and can, as it were, rhyme by number. In modern practice, algebra continues to represent quantities with letters: "x" and "y", for example, are variables, though "π" and "e" are constants. Literate Greece marshalled its oral inheritance by naming each book of The Iliad and The Odyssey with one of the twenty-four letters of its alphabet. Epic came to seem "the alphabet writ large".


13. "Quarto" derives from Latin "quattuor", the number 4, and is cognate with Italic reflexes "quart" and "quarter" in English. There seems to be something fundamental to book-making about quarto format: French and Italian cognates, "cahier" and "quaderno", having
both lost their specific numerical associations, now mean merely "notebook". Few can be the native speakers of English who associate "quire" with "four"; but indeed, Germanic "four" is cognate with this Romance term, though seeming to violate Grimm's Law, which derives Germanic "f" from IE *p- (as "flax" from IE *plek-, in n. 4). IE *kweto- is supposed to have mutated into something like *ptewo- before Grimm's Law came into effect. This mutated form, the ancestor of Germanic "four", does obey Grimm's Law.

14. The Aldine Caesar, 1576 collates as follows:

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e6 a-e² f6 ±34² HS-2HS³-2f² §-2g² A-2S² 2T² 10 7-A-1² a-e² Θ-3Θ²
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No logical order pertains among e, f, and §. Some may when Θ follows e: the second Greek ε, eta (letter 7), is followed by theta. But isn't there solid allegory when three crosses precede three "HS" ligatures? Isn't "HS" part of the Christian "IHS", in hoc signo (as ligature "ơ" is part of "ơơ")? But no, "HS" (or "IHS" or "IIS" crossed) denotes a Roman sestertius (< semis tertius), as Stephanie Treloar and John Grant have taught me. (So it does in Aldus's 1521 Suetonius, on Clr, C2v, etc.)

15. For no discernable reason, the second last row. Hence, in searching out arrhythmia, I have started my projection before sewing began, an error had been made at T in the count during dog-earing, and it was not noticed until much later. It might have been easier to read the whole page of the sheet from which the bifolium comes was printed twice with identical content (by work-and-turn), then roughly folded for pressing, the offset onto 2D1v observed in the Rylands copy would have come from the 2D1r on the other half of the sheet, before it was cut in two (on a more precise fold). There are good (but wrong) reasons to fold the cancel, but not any other part of the book, inside out. Remote offsets make clear that Sheet G of the Humanities Research Center copy was once inside out. The interlocking remote-offset pattern in the diagram, right, is typical of such inside-out folding.

16. The four leaves shown in the frontispiece are 2H2, 2H3, 2H4, and 2Il. (Models of quires 2H and 2I are in the previous opening: 2H(o) is mold; 2I(o) is felt.) Before sheet 2H was folded, pp. 236 and 240 were coplanar, as could easily have been deduced even with the sheet folded, as long as its bolts were still intact. The texture of mold and felt sides can be differentiated in modern books too.

17. The photographs are reproduced courtesy of the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library.

18. Often, a fold crosses 2C4v-2D1r; it is concave in McGill, convex in Fisher (see the diagram, opposite). Such can exist only on conjugate leaves, of course, which are not expected here. If the sheet from which the bifolium comes was printed twice with identical content (by work-and-turn), then roughly folded for pressing, the offset onto 2D1v observed in the Rylands copy would have come from the 2D1r on the other half of the sheet, before it was cut in two (on a more precise fold). There are good (but wrong) reasons to fold the cancel, but not any other part of the book, inside out. Remote offsets make clear that Sheet G of the Humanities Research Center copy was once inside out. The interlocking remote-offset pattern in the diagram, right, is typical of such inside-out folding.

19. On pp. 68 and 71 in the Fisher diagram and xcvi in the Brotherton, a hollow-headed arrow arising from the tip of a dark-headed arrow shows a right-image local offset from an adjacent mirror-image remote offset. (Such ricochet-arguing that these diagrams combine evidence from different times, as from multiple pressings or beatings.) The various interconnections of pages from F, K, and 2N in these copies argue that cancels F3 and K5 were printed on the same octavo sheet as 2N6. That K5 sets off on 2N3v in one copy and on 2N6v in another argues that the sheet was folded in two different ways, inside out in Fisher and outside in in Brotherton. Folding the final sheet in order to locate the edges of the cancels prior to extracting them makes good sense, though it may seem odd also to press the whole sheet beforehand. But this practice does explain copies, like that of Scripps College, that bind the cancels in the last quire: the binder must have received the last sheet intact. (For an extensive study of the Bentley-Lloyd project, see my forthcoming essay, "The Librarynth").

20. McGill also divides between quires X and Y and between 2S and 2T. A dog-eared corner of a 1r leaf (see the illustration) may now be too short for its tip to reach beyond the spine, to serve as a flag for restoring narrative order. But recall, from n. 3, that planing of the fore-edge and tail after binding reduces the dog-ears' dimensions.

The diagram of Folger remote offsets, p. 157, excludes facts about the cancel previously offered, on p. 150. (Of interest, if the two diagrams were integrated, would be the setting off of 2D1v on both 2C4r and Y1r: as in n. 20, different pile structures over time are thereby implied.) The Clark copy diagram, p. 159, also excludes previous information, from p. 149.
23. Caleb Stower, *The Printer's Grammar* (London, 1808), pp. 407–8. 11 + 12 = 23, the number of letters in the Latin alphabet. See pp. 416–7 for Stower's use of "booking". He is not specific about how a number of once-folded gatherings for a single copy relate to each other physically — whether they are stacked one on top of another to make the booking, or are integrated in a single, once-folded pile. (For dog-ear-reating related to ordering or heating sheets, rather than to sewing them, see n. 22.)

Note my use of "signature" strictly to mean "symbols that sign a sheet or leaf", not to mean "quire". Nor do I use "gathering" for "quire". Like Stower, I use it to mean a consolidation initially of at least some of the unfolded sheets for a volume, generally in alphabetic order, as B-L, for example. (The term might well continue to apply after a gathering had been folded.) In a larger work, like the 1732 *Paradise Lost*, a booking might normally require six gatherings.

24. Moxon lays out heaps in "Signature succession", A, B, C, but gathers in the order Z, Y, X, setting no limit to the number gathered in one stint (Joseph Moxon, *Mechanick Exercises: or, the Doctrine of Handy-Works. Applied to the Art of Printing. The Second Volumne*, London: Joseph Moxon, 1683–4 ([Wing M 3014], § 25, §§ 2–3 (Of Laying the Heaps) and "Of Gathering of Books"; or see the modern facsimile edition, *Mechanick Exercises on the Whole Art of Printing*, Herbert Davis and Harry Carter, eds. [London: Oxford University Press, 1958, 1962 (2nd ed.)], p. 315). Sheets would have been made to "stand in Press about a Day and a Night". This pressure would help flatten both the cockling that afflicts sheets (when the water added to ink set off, all sheets except the half-sheet preliminaries were rotated as well as L and O.) That both forms of the preliminary half-sheet re-set off on full-sheet cc(i) at the end of the volume indicates that the gathered full-sheets were not flat, but folded in half as a unit, with the outer formes generally facing outwards and with half-quire π unfolded "within-side" and setting off as shown in these two diagrams.

This is an example of a more integrated format than that Stower advocates. For him, I suppose, the booking of a vast work, like Holinshed's *Chronicles*, would have bundled all the separate gatherings, each folded in half, and not integrated them in a single once-folded pile, which, for so massive a work, would have been unstable and unwieldy. But booking the Valerius Maximus would have required only two of Stower's half-alphabet gatherings, or three at most. A once-folded integration of these gatherings would have been only 1/4 of the 15 mm-thickness of the sewn book-block — not at all unwieldy.

Now, the width of a once-folded pile grows at the fore-edge as a function of the number of sheets and of their thickness. See what I mean by contrasting the bottom fore-edges of two copies of Ian MacEwan's *On Chesil Beach* (printed on paper stock of comparable thickness). These so-called "perfect-bound" books have no sewing to divulge the original quire structure; nor do they have visible signatures. But the original quiring can be deduced. The upper copy (Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 2007), opposite, has six quires (1–4: 6 16 5 8 6 16); the lower (Vintage Canada Edition, Random House, 2008) has four (1–3: 4 16 8 6). Numbering beside the photograph locates the centre of each quire. As only head, tail, and spine were ploughed, the fore-edges of the original bifolia of each quire continue to protrude more so as they are more central to the folded quire. Quires of the upper book are two-thirds the thickness of those below; and, accordingly, their projections are in the same proportion.

In the production of the Valerius Maximus, intertextual offsets among the outer faces, A(o), of the once-folded bookings show that they were stacked and pressed with other copies of the same edition in alternating orientations, as shown here to the right. The middle booking (for UCLA copy 1) received offsets (represented in grey) from the two flanking ones, with Alr, A4v, A5r, and A8v of the top copy setting off on the same, outer, face of the middle copy and with A3r of the bottom copy setting off on the corresponding
I assume Fisher and Clark copies were routinely beaten and pressed, but that remote offsets in Fisher resulted from pressing and in Clark from beating. The sequence of these means of flattening paper seems open to me: as pressing could occur several times in production, so too might have beating. Foot, p. 49, has folding of individual sheets followed by beating of a pile of them. In De Bray’s Onderwijs van’t Boek-Binden (facsimile edition: Amsterdam: Nico Israel, 1977), B[1]r, beating and collation of a pile follow folding and pressing. (Unusually, De Bray signs the second leaf of his quires with the number “1”, as “B1”; the first is plain “B”.)

The diagram below shows a rearrangement rightward to narrative order of just the subsections of beating 3 in the Clark copy. Contrast it with the diagram atop p. 155 of the reordering of the whole Fisher copy after it left the standing press. Both diagrams reveal that the paratext quires were clustered. (The sequence of Fisher quires there anticipates the bound order more efficiently than does the Fisher sequence.) Below, I have added three dots in the left column of beating 3 to mark the end and beginning of the work as bound. Only the present diagram has a two-headed arrow (on the left) connecting top and bottom: whereas the left side of the Fisher diagram represents the actual top and bottom of the pile, the two-headed arrow in the present diagram reminds us that, though Clark beating 3 must have had an original top and bottom (and also a subsequent temporary top and bottom, in the second phase of beating), their identity can now only be guessed at. My diagram below thus assigns these positions arbitrarily. In The Art of Bookbinding (London: G. Bell, 1880 [i.e., 1879]), pp. 9–10, the scrupulous William Zangsdorf warns that “it is advisable always to have a piece of paper at the top and bottom of the sections when beating, or the repeated concussion will glaze them”. But hammer-glazing is very frequently observed in old books. So, if a protective paper was not used for beating the Clark copy, I could possibly be less arbitrary: of the ten outer surfaces of the five subsections in beating 3, only four might appear glazed. These four would identify merely two candidate pairs for original top and bottom, if only one of their exterior recto (or verso) leaves should be dog-eared (as in n. 22), it would be a strong candidate for the original top (or bottom).

Gaskell’s New Introduction appeared twice in 1972, from Clarendon and Oxford University Presses. It was a technical advance on McKerrow’s pioneering 1927 Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students. As a simultaneous reader of Gaskell’s two impressions on a collector, I learned of many variants, not just those listed in the “Preface to the Second Impression”. For example: all Gaskell says about beating is that after the folding and collating of sheets, “The folded book was then beaten flat with a hammer”, a variety of signatures at a time, in order to get it down to its proper thickness. Next the book was placed on the sewing frame” (pp. 147–8). We already know that Gaskell drew his illustration of bindery work uncritically from Diderot, but may not have realized (I certainly didn’t) that he excerpted only what, overleaf, I frame in white, presenting us with
merely the trochaic b-c, not the iambic a-b and c-d. His exclusion of hammer and press suggests why it has taken me four decades to think outside his tight box and begin to integrate the 
iliterary effects of a and d into textuality. Where, in the previous quotation (eight lines above), I have placed an asterisk, the second impression of A New Introduction silently added "and block". That Gaskell states that one beats "with a hammer and block" (as he calls the stone) rather than "with a hammer on a block" suggests that, even in revision, he did not have beating in sharp focus as a practice in time and space. The same holds true for his statement that the quires were collated for beating, as beating also routinely entails rearrangement or "uncollating" under the hammer, as the remote offsets attest. Gaskell concludes, "next the book was placed on the sewing frame". But next it was placed on the sewing table, whence it came to the frame only quire by quire.

27. Milton 83.k.23 and Tasso 80.h.17 are reproduced by permission of the British Library. (It has other copies of each work.) The reference to "Royal Paper" comes from an Advertisement of books "Lately Publish'd, printed by J. Tonson and J. Watts"

that appears in the Library's copy of Tonson's 1724 printing of Longinus (837.1.35). Mere body language would suffice for identifications of the psalter pages, if only I knew the edition. Can you help me find it? (randall.mcleod@utoronto.ca) In the illustration opposite from Tasso 21.1v, one of the clearest, staves were evident; and the three lines of text seem to begin with "Quo . . . un", "plus", and "Grand ROI, pour".

28. Horace, Ars Poetica, ll. 148-9: "sempra ad eventum festinat et in medias res / non secus ac notas auditorem rapit". (This could be my epitaph! mean my epigraph

The struggle for the text is the text.