# Centones

# Derivations

John McVey

Aguanga Press Cambridge 2015

	certain swimmings of, blurred swimmings of 5		
Proceedings, Royal Physical Society of Edinburgh (1897-1904)	on, on rotting wrack, even on a moor 7		
	on some results of some crossing experiments, 3 10		
Samuel Lilienthal. Homoeopathic Therapeutics (1879)	considers the stove a tree. makes verses 13		
	and other indifferent things 14		
	wrong words for correct ideas 15		
John Burnet. The Progress of a Painter (1854)	and every object vied with each other 16		
	by the hand through the mazes of the merry dance 19		
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Archives of Surgery (1897)	was an affair of much difficulty 23		
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certain swimmings of, blurred swimmings of

swimmings of barley swimmings of Scotch bigg

the swimmings of bisons and the floatings of dead trees imitating the swimmings of the frogs

swimmings of the brain swimmings of the head

swimmings of the head, and night-mares the darkenings of his own mind, the swimmings of agony

the cure does produce certain swimmings of the head, certain faintnesses of the knees in many constitutions swimmings of the head by reason of swimmings of the heade. Her hayre is all fallen

certain pains and swimmings of the head, and blaming philosophy

with fits and swimmings of the head

not to mistake swimmings of the head for philosophy let the swimmings of a man in the ocean finally end

in his river-side walks, the circular swimmings of trout blurred swimmings of poetic sight

for whom the swimmings of the undulations and graceful swimmings of the very frequent swimmings of my head render walking not only slow, but often hazardous

or swimmings of rapid rivers

5

thro' black swimmings of storm and burst seams of blue rain ?

the various swimmings of the Negroes swimmings of his head swimmings of pots

for "swimmings of pots," suppose for she saves the swimmings of her bacon-pot for this use swimmings of purple valor the morning plunges and swimmings of 1887-8

would anchor in a dreaming silence to watch the curious swimmings of ephemeral moles and watch over the sides the swimmings of their Skye terriers

swimmings of the head, dimness of sight, ravings, and profound sleep

the blurred swimmings of buildings faraway in the free swimmings of the herds

Not the things themselves. Swimmings of light on the smallest things.

John Fowles, The Collector (1963)

the flow of clean water on the back / swimmings of the first

Skimmings of the swimmings (mainly older), rearranged

on, on rotting rack, even on a moor

on our first acquaintance on agates it has been assumed on his back, and yawn again on the banks of the Almond

on a bare sandy spot on *bc*—in both cases on the beach on the borders

on that branch on British fossil sponges on bushes and walls on the cliffs

on the crests on the death on a degree on the denuded edges

on the development on each on the earlier stages on either

on an excursion on their faces of fracture on the figs on fins

on fossil fishes on the genesis on the globe on the ground

on the habits of on the other hand on him on certain horizons on the human race on the inner side on into the on a very large scale

on a larger scale on the larger scale on the leaf

on the line of on the lines here laid down on the maintenance of [ the Earth's Internal Heat ] on the Mammals and Birds of Franz Josef Land

on matters biological
on the *Meteorology of Edinburgh*on the middle
on mineralogy

even on a moor on this occasion on which occasion on the occurrence

on the occurrence of on one part of the earth on the other hand on the part of the inhabitants

on the part of nature on *Pilocas* on the point of extinction on to the primitive

on to the primitive by lines radial on this prolongation another cork on rather thin, good cardboard on the roof of the verandah

on rotting wrack

On Rudimentary Structures and their Meaning
on rushes in a damp hollow
on the same day

on the sea margin and inland on the scapulars on side of field (under stones) on all sides, by solid rock

on each side on the negative side on the right hand side on size and age

on my suggestion on the theory of on thin white card on this view

on his way back on the western side on the white phase of plumage on wrangling, until

and so on

We might take one or two other cases by way of further elucidation.

And so I've done. These phrases are selected from 100 hits in search for the word on in this volume, *Proceedings* of the Royal Physical Society of Edinburgh, for the promotion of zoology and other branches of natural history. Vol. XIV. 1897-1901.

Dates (e.g., "on the 4th and the 27th of July, respectively") and two repetitions are excluded. The arrangement is, in its way, alphabetical.

#### on some results of crossing experiments, 3

on account of solely on account not only on the amount of

lastly, the brilliant orange on

on an average on its long axis on board

on the body

on the body on the upper border on the boundaries of

on to notice the changes

on the cliffs, occasionally colour variation on on the continuity of

on the deductions of philologists

on the discoveries and researches on the domestication of on that of their domestication

the evaporation goes on

on the evening of on that evening on some morphological evidences of

a suggestion on extinction

generally left on the field on the food supplied to them on some forms

of form and colour on

on the genesis of some on a little island like on the nature of the isolation

on some little-known

but are left on the land on the land, could only upon a new lease of life

on lines sufficiently constant

less frequently, on the moors on a deeper or more on the elevated mountains

on Naalsoe

sheltered on the north by a steep ridge on a former occasion on one occasion

on the occurrence of

to a point on on the origin of on some modes of origin of oil

on paper

on these abstruse and difficult problems bearing on the question the evaporation goes on at a high rate

on some results of crossing experiments

on the shore on lake-shores on each side

on each side

on the eastern side, in the narrow bay on the eastern side of that inland lake on the inner side

IO

on the mountain sides (plainly to be seen)

on the one side on the other on the outer side of the thigh and knee

of the paper. on the right-hand side

on both sides on some of the older sites on a malformed specimen

on the dorsal surface

as time went on on the outer side of the thigh on tracing back

on a felled "plane" tree

and so on. colour variation on vertically until on the way

on the shore

on the surface of running water on which to hang my observations on which

on such of the smaller wild

ex Proceedings of the Royal Physical Society of Edinburgh, for the promotion of zoology and other branches of natural history. Vol. XV. 1901-1904 considers the stove a tree, makes verses.

consciousness of his personal identity confused excess of fancy, ecstasy, makes verses

more in the fresh air than in the room errors as to time and velocity of gait

awkward, lets everything drop

13

confounds things of the present with those of the past converses with people who are not present

considers the stove a tree and wants to climb up

undertakes many things, perseveres in nothing as if wrapped in a fog only conscious of himself as in a dream

Selected from entry for *mania*, ex Samuel Lilienthal (1815-91). *Homoeopathic Therapeutics* (M-Z). Second enlarged and revised edition (1879)

#### and other indifferent things

Frightful dreams, causing anxiety.

Vexatious dreams

Agreeable, merry dreams

Disgusting dreams about dirt, vermin, disease, pus, etc.

Dreams with fixed ideas, dreaming about one and the same object

Dreams which continued after waking

Lascivious amorous dreams

Dreams which fatigue the head, about scientific things, etc.

Vivid dreams

Fanciful dreams

Dreams about the common affairs of the day, and other

indifferent things

Confused dreams
Dreams in a waking state

Dreams about thieves and robbers; About ghosts, etc.; About defunct persons, burials, etc.

Dreams about misfortunes, adverse circumstances, chagrin, danger, etc.; About diseases; About quarrels, disputes; About war, bloodshed; About murder

About animals, dogs, cats, etc. About serpents. About vermin.

About water, and danger of water; Fire, and danger of fire...

Entries for *dreams* (falling under the head "Sleep, morbid," in Samuel Lilienthal (1815-91). *Homoeopathic therapeutics* (M – Z). Second enlarged and revised edition (1879)

#### wrong words for correct ideas

sees rats running across the room, sees cats and dogs; tries to jump out of the window.

sits as if in thought, yet thinks of nothing, like a waking dream.

declines to answer questions.

on closing eyes, sees figures of persons. intellect cloudy, though giving correct answers.

falls into a deep sleep, while answering questions. thinks he is well.

constantly jumping from subject to subject. uses wrong words for correct ideas.

thinks she is not at home.

answers correctly, but slowly. thinks he is roaming over fields or hard at work.

all objects appear oblique.

15

Sentences in entry for *delirium*, ex Samuel Lilienthal (1815-91). *Homoeopathic Therapeutics* (A – L). Second enlarged and revised edition (1879)

Compare Fever, Mental Derangement, Morbid Sleep and Dreams.

and every object vied with each other

at sea. On

[a] smack, and a letter of credit several portraits left on his best works, they called on

in the best parlour. On my asking upon an unfinished picture on with so much truth and beauty; and, on

of Italian scenery. On in some measure on the eye to make a drawing on his slate

with cool grey on I have no doubt not a stone lies on that road to me unknown

every object on each bank on a foundation on account of his chaste colour, and

the effect candle-light produces on objects or of large masses of obscurity on the piano

in the morning. on his way when afloat on on the river side. The setting sun

ideas they have heard on the stage and a stroll on the green and on tasting his own

and on these established his theory (of colour) on canvass, the size of life

his small pictures on

his observations on their general appearance and individual character on sauntering to the bottom the shadows on the ground very dark

on their journey homewards on their progress up the river a group of thistles on its bank

\_

their boat on the shallow gravel for years afterwards. On his making never to be forgotten, as

on the reflection of near and distant objects in the water the Seasons. On reaching (the bridge) on Sunday, at six

\_\_\_

on the cloth being removed the one to touch on his pictures, and the other stretched out on the grass

on, cutting down the willow

\_

pass on to Light and Shade on their faults and beauties that feature alone that stamps it on the memory

on the horizontal line on the frontispiece on the present occasion

an object on the horizon on any difficulties that might arise branches grafted on the parent stem

\_

a few words on the subject

a few remarks on Perspective a leek in his hat and rides on a mountain goat

attendant on talent reflecting on the precarious profession on the contrary, looked cold

\_

since taste is on the carpet I often reflect on books on morality

\_

under a bushel. On high on walls dry on the morrow

envoi

all nonsense. I should like it of all things equally absurd and in place of reading all the nonsense

Derived from *on* phrases, scraped/sifted/reordered ex John Burnet (1781-1868), his novel *The progress of a painter in the nineteenth century.* 2 vols. [in 1]. London, 1854

by the hand through the mazes of the merry dance

in his hand the model of a cow's head in his hand a couple of large burdock leaves some bank-notes in his hand

the destructive hand of careless neglect

when palette and brushes are not at hand and the house on the right-hand side at the right hand, as you see

is now tenanted by a boat-builder and as I have on my left hand [a] more practised hand would give a few finishing touches

foxiness on one hand, and rawness on the other ramification of the branches by the right hand and lifted

try my hand

by the hand, exclaiming by the hand, and introduced by the hand, said

the hand under the eye as they come to hand. Of form off his hand into a fire

into his hand, examining it

taking his own sketch-book in his hand in his hand, as a text of the hand, and telling

pretensions of off-hand dexterity

by the hand, he resumed by the hand, alleging by the hand through the mazes of the merry dance

kissed the extended hand

taking him by the hand (on Don Saltero's feats of swimming)

her scrutinizing eye alternatively from his hand to his face to discover those random off-hand dashes

of his picture now in hand

oblique lines a chequered life a species of fungus from the water-cask

in his hand. after reading in his hand ignorant hand

I long to have the etching-needle in my hand

Using perhaps two-thirds of the *hand* phrases in John Burnet. *The progress of a painter in the nineteenth century.* 2 vols. [in 1]. London, 1854

## and some words were altogether lost

```
covered with spines 13
almost entirely covered by the last 14
almost entirely covered 15
punctate and covered with black or brown dots 15
covered with spines 17
each covered with a 50
hole in the ground and cover 56
are told to lie down and keep still, and are covered with rugs, bushes or
grass 59-60
their heads being still covered 60
to remove the covering or look about 60
the women are now told to lie down, and are covered with bushes 64
one is above the other and they are covered 130
claimed that the ice which covered 84
the waters that covered the earth 110
covered with lava sheets thousands of square miles in extent 127
The bituminous matter is found equally in the calcareous rock and the
molasses that covers it 134 *
covered with 140
cover well-nigh 163
it covers an area about 179
with covered words, in a letter 226
omits the reference to the "covered words" (bedecketen worten)
and reads 226
cover of a book,
the edges were cut off,
and some words were altogether lost 249
and other rivers, thus covering all the country 331
immense extent of country covered by 331
```

\* S. F. Peckham. "The Genesis of Bitumens, as Related to Chemical Geology." 108-139

Cover, covered, coverings ex Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society 37 (January to December, 1898)

## was an affair of much difficulty

on the right side, on touching and when asked to touch the spot, put his finger on she said that it was impossible to touch her cannot bear them touched at first firm to the touch firm to the touch, and had the colour of skin rough to the touch

she cannot straighten them, and the slightest touch gives pain

Touching phrases ex Jonathan Hutchinson (1828-1913).

Archives of Surgery 8 (1897); epigram ex explanation of Plate
CLIV Lupus Vulgaris Lumerbosus

the confused language of disordered nature

#### discolored spots inner curve 217 irregular spots an outer curve 217 abraded spots of various size and form, broad curve rather thinly scattered 22 I northerly curve about the axis of the main fold some very dark spots 265 sharp curve spots diffused extensively 177 sweeping curves spots somewhat resembling 501 westward. This curve arsenical spot 498 a curve of the oil table antimonial spot 498 at least one structural curve spot from phosphorous 499 the vicinity of a prominent curve spots. the first 499 fold is suggested in the curves thoroughly examined it in its various aspects by curves assumed personal observations on the spot 356 could point to a spot near 126 broad curve to the southern base of the hills downward curve of the Puente beds a desirable spot 10 in the woods, in the spot where he had fallen 105 first curve south along the curve connected with a spot IIIaround the spots

357

Spots ex Western Lancet: A Monthly Journal of Practical Medicine and Surgery. 2 (1848)

Epigram ex Professor Harrison, "Lecture on the Importance and Mode of Prosecuting the Study of Clinical Medicine" (367-371): 369

Curves ex George Homans Eldridge (1854-1905) and Ralph Arnold (1875-1961). The Santa Clara Valley, Puente Hills and Los Angeles Oil Districts, Southern California. USGS Bulletin No. 309 (Series A, Economic Geology, 91; Series B, Descriptive Geology, 112), 1907

about the axis of the main fold

60

60

60

34

64

76

65

72

76

87

97

87

116

126

199

61

## periods of folding

# signs, and signs of

a series of folds	780- <b>A</b> / 19	with all the signs of	13
overturned folds	780-A / 21	signs of life	33
their folding broke	780- <b>A</b> / 30	no visible sign	36
folds. doubtless	780-B / 40	the ordinary signs	113
also later folding accentuating	780-B / 114	well-marked signs	117
local folding	780-B / 122	absence of all signs	118
more or less complicated folds	781-B / 22	the ordinary signs	135
upward folds	781-B / 22	abnormality, neither could any sign	140
downward folds	781-B / 22		
folds of certain types	781-B / 22	signs are not clear enough	189
complicated by minor folding and much faulting	781-B / 23	the signs that bid us hope	203
these folds therefore offer some encouragement	781-B / 26	ultimately after all signs of depression	214
broad and gentle folds	783 / 43	showed signs	223
and older beds, where the folding	783 / 159	the first visible sign	242
close folding	783 / 161		
in which the folding is more open	783 / 161	(an important diagnostic sign in this condition)	257
folding of	783 / 162	(the deaf take to signs)	265
folding does	783 / 162	if sizes	200
folding which	783 / 162	if signs	288
Totaling Willer	70) / 102	in some of its signs	303
separated one from another by folds that bend	783 / 162	physical signs	304
or by unfolded	783 / 162	physical signs did not	305
,		evident signs	305
experiments in folding	784 / 31	before physical signs developed	306
periods of folding	784 / 71	betote physical signs developed	300
		characteristic physical signs	309
		abnormal physical signs. clearly	310
		physical signs had also	313
About a third of all <i>folds</i> and <i>foldings</i> in entire vol-		showing signs	28
ume Contributions to Economic Geology (Short Papers		signs detected	334
and Preliminary Reports, 1925): Part I. — Metals and			7,71
Nonmetals Except Fuels, Issues 777-783 (1926).		signs on	339
USGS Bulletin number / page number.		and other signs pointing	345

26

the most important differential sign

but whatever he felt he made no sign	395	awnder wander
scarcely an abnormal sign	403	
signs whatever	404	
signs could be detected	407	
signs. on that day	408	to awnder is a matter of fact, and is the subject of evidence
late development of physical signs	408	producing a curiosity seldom met with; one river running south,
1 1 0	·	and another north for half a mile, and having only a path-road of
(This condition was not suspected during life.)	409	about three feet awnder.
11 1 1 1 6 1		uoout inice feet umuei.
and hence the chief sign	409	Righteousness, s[ee]. cysiawnder
signs were detected, and again	410	
the sign and position	•	that he well awnder-stood me
the sign and position	422	4 1 77 1
showed in the cases examined no sign	438	Awnder, see Undern.
no physical sign	473	Web auf Awn der Inneren-ob dem nein wegen
	,	Grund- und Awnder
physical signs	478	awn der sone
well-marked signs	486	awnder Smeth fro' Paisley?
		amuel Shield for Lawley.
to show signs [ in Prussia ]	492	ten or twelve yards awnder on pasture
and universal sign of	542	
stereotyped signs	547	
signs, but where the vital forces are	566	wander
and signs of	583	awnder
involved and signs of	593	oftimes mis-OCR'ed for asunder.
		evidently a word in Welsh.
_		•
signs of failure	130	
signs of congestion	307	
periphery, the signs of	411	
1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	1	
all signs of emotion	349	
signs of consolidation	402	
signs of disintegration	402	
signs of distillegration	520	
all the signs of	597	

A hurried compilation of signs in Edinburgh Medical Journal Vol XXXVI.—Part 1. (July to December 1890), 1891

away

away rest fall away running away from, the (see *move*)

fill space to fill gone long gone long gone by now

hedge hedge beside

if (see line)

latest this latest you're trying to beat

line
a shorter line
that line is slow
you're still there in that line
if you were in this line you'd be (see *gone*, see *out*)

lines a few bare and skeletal lines a few lines instead of a few lines rocky lines

move away moving leaves moving

noise familiar noise (see *racket*)

out

out of here

racket this racket reckless said might have said

that (see *line*) this (see *line*)

track to get back on track what track is that

waves stupid waves

Selections from Pasadena / November-December 1974

lexicon-ized June 2012

manner again in such manner mechanics (see determine) more (see concrete) angry move (see think) don't you ever get angry? new (see nothing) anything (see else) nothing new nothing (see new) around way around occasion there's no way around specific occasion away other (see time(s)) push it away paper (see typing) circles pencil circle and circle no pencil in his hand same circles plain clack clack so plain close plumbing (see walls) concrete pounding (see keys) more concrete read depended I don't read you determine reread can't determine can't determine the mechanics saddle mountain saddle else losing saddle of it anything else simple hand so simple at hand in hand specific (see occasion) (see pencil) story keys an old story on the keys pounding on the keys structure at the dinner table he [who?] erected this linguistic structure

leaves

lithography

that was really impressive right before our eyes and ears

tell difficult to tell

think don't think don't think but move

time(s)
other times
waste of time
wastes of time

understand can't understand

typing so much typing how can you be doing so much typing someone in the building typing, a paper

volumes of it in libraries

walls plumbing in the walls

waste(s) (see time)

ways find ways

work(s)
getting work
nothing works

Derived from 5+ typewritten pages, single-spaced and thin margin, tour de force typewriter miseration 11 March 1974.

20 June 2012

as regards the earliest times

it was not overgrown with wood, but a well

-....1. . . . 1. . . . 1.

further he durst not proceed

\_\_

a voyage to a distant article of their property who was a friend destitute

\_\_\_

a stick in his hand sticks, the scene when next he dined

whereby he is

\_

as regards the earliest times

\_

both

fragments discernible from mis-scanned pages 132/134 (and preceding pages), "Narrative of a Visit to the Ruins of Tahrie, the supposed site of the Ancient City of Siraff, also an Account of the ancient Commerce of the Gulf of Persia, &c" by Captain G. B. Kempthorne, I. N., in *Transactions of the Bombay Geographical Society* 13 (1857)

afterword

This book contains derivations from other texts, all but two of them from sources available via Google Books, and each of *those* (with one exception – the first) being a single pre-1923 volume. Most of these pieces were composed with my tumblr blog *asfaltics* in mind; all of them appeared there, often headed by an image of some sort.

It was the images that in many cases arrested my attention, encouraged me to ramble and prospect through the technical article or entire volume at hand, and even provided some hints about terms that might be found in sufficient abundance to yield some kind of verse.

The images are often accidents of the scanning process, or some interesting and even beautiful flaw in the scanned cover. In their error, they're tangential to their texts. (One recurring tag is *non sequiturs*.) I've tended not to post images without text, and ordinarily have used at least two units of text: (1) an epigram or title, and (2) an extract either from the source of the image, and/or from elsewhere. I have also been at pains to provide bibliographic information, links, and even identification of the holder of the scanned book. Many of my asfaltics posts are emblematic in this way, in which they are the sum — or some other function — of their parts.

It is odd to see these pieces together, outside of their asfaltics context, denuded of their images and of the language making connections to those images, shorn of links to their sources. Odd also to see them one after another, in no particular order, as if they came into being in one fell swoop, rather than over two or three years in tides of densities and thinness, more text and less, more image and less, color and grey. (I have been using tumblr for over four years; my posts total 1,228 as of 25 July 2015.)

URLs of all these pieces are listed on pp 38-39.

#### cento / centone

I came across the term *cento* in *The Guardian*, in one of Billy Mills's "Poster Poem" essays inviting submissions of poetry on a theme, that month's being "found poetry." Wikipedia

offers some information and scholarly references, along with this etymology :

The Latin term *cento* derives from Greek κέντρων (gen. κέντρωνος), meaning "to plant slips' (of trees)." A later word in Greek, κέντρόνη, means "patchwork garment."

A *cento* would appear to be more intentional, more *worked*, than a found poem. The parts are *found*, indeed, but then the elaborations happen: arrangings and re-arrangings, selections and deletions. Groupings. A listening for music, rises and falls of sound and, potentially, sense. This covers some of what I do with my derivations from telegraphic codes and other sources. Hence the title of this volume.

Why derivations?

Probably because they permit an improvisatory attitude that I could not achieve with "original" writing, in which (I imagine, probably wrongly) words and syntax to be drawn from some internal space, and need to *mean* something... I write this with no confidence whatever... except that I become progressively less coherent... Repetition and variation (mumbling) are much in evidence here, deriving either from phrases oscillating around single words or short expressions, or in the index-style — with its repetitive *see also*'s — that appear in two of the pieces (*away* and *again*).

There's some kind of music there, anyway.

http://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2013/aug/09/poster-poems-found-poetry-cutup-collage https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cento\_(poetry)

36 37 afterword

This directory can also be found at http://jmcvey.net/centones

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where titles will link to their respective pages.
             asfaltics.tumblr.com/post/117954500826/certain-swimmings-of-blurred-swimmings-of
certain swimmings of, blurred swimmings of
                               rotting wrack, even on a moor
```

102840072826/on-on-rotting-rack-even-on-a-moor

103778503156/on-some-results-of-crossing-experiments-3 103647723851/on-some-results-of-crossing-experiments-2 on some results of some crossing experiments, 3

103645265501/on-some-results-of-crossing-experiments-1

115586795826/considers-the-stove-a-tree-makes-verses considers the stove a tree. makes verses

and other indifferent things

114963154496/and-other-indifferent-things

114943061196/wrong-words-for-correct-ideas and every object vied with each other wrong words for correct ideas

o6678662396/and-every-object-vied-with-each-other

by the hand through the mazes of the merry dance

105981335496/by-the-hand-through-the-mazes-of-the-merry-dance

and some words were altogether lost

119655009866/and-some-words-were-altogether-lost

was an affair of much difficulty

120873557581/was-an-affair-of-much-difficulty

the confused language of disordered nature

121520679406/the-confused-language-of-disordered-nature

25 about the axis of the main fold

121400031126/about-the-axis-of-the-main-fold

periods of folding

121854415656/awnder-wander

122025343841/periods-of-folding

awnder wander

26041068054/away

away

25612413514/again

as regards the earliest times

109003109051/as-regards-the-earliest-times 35