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21ST-CENTURY  
OXFORD AUTHORS

# *John Donne*

EDITED BY JANEL MUELLER

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21st-CENTURY OXFORD AUTHORS

GENERAL EDITOR

SEAMUS PERRY

*King James said Dr Donne's verses were like the peace of God  
they passed all understanding.*

*A jotting in the notebook of Archdeacon Thomas Plume (1630-1704),  
no. 8 in John Donne: The Critical Heritage, ed. A. J. Smith (1975).*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Early modern advances in knowledge were sometimes represented as fortunate outcomes of the enhanced perspective gained by standing on the shoulders of one's predecessors. In editing Donne I have repeatedly found myself in just such a position, and I want to acknowledge preceding scholarship that has been particularly indispensable to me. First, the series of Oxford editions—R. C. Bald's *John Donne: A Life* (1970), completed by Wesley Milgate; Helen Gardner's *The Divine Poems* (1952, 1978) and *The Elegies and the Songs and Sonnets* (1965); Wesley Milgate's *The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters* (1967) and *The Epithalamions, Anniversaries and Epicedes* (1978); Helen Peters's *Paradoxes and Problems* (1989); and Evelyn M. Simpson's *Essays in Divinity* (1952)—as well as the Cambridge editions of Geoffrey Keynes's *A Bibliography of Dr. John Donne*, 4th edn (1973). Robin Robbins's two-volume *Complete Poems of John Donne* (2008) has yielded a wealth of contextual lore, rivalled on the bibliographical front by the ongoing monumental *Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne* (1995–), under the general editorship of Gary A. Stringer. Critical and contextual overviews assembled in Achsah Guibbory, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to John Donne* (2006), and Jeanne Shami, Dennis Flynn, and M. Thomas Hester, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of John Donne* (2011) have also been invaluable resources for me.

Proceeding from books to persons, I have profited greatly from generous help and counsel provided by Peter Beal, Kenneth R. Johnston, Peter McCullough, Seamus Perry, Daniel Starza Smith, the members of the English Renaissance Workshop at the University of Chicago, and the staffs of the Bodleian Library, the British Library, Cambridge University Library, The National Archives, the Joseph Regenstein Library of the University of Chicago, and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Caroline Hawley, Ela Kotkowska, and Charles Lauder, Jr of Oxford University Press handled the manuscript and proofs of this edition with acute understanding and much professional expertise, for which I am deeply grateful. At the most personal level, my late husband, Ian Mueller, advanced my understanding of relevant aspects of ancient Greek philosophy, astronomy, and geometry as well as scholastic philosophy and theology by sharing with me his own understanding of these subjects. I dedicate this edition to his memory.

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## INTRODUCTION

By the time of his death in 1631, John Donne had become a notable figure among his London contemporaries. A supremely compelling preacher as dean of St Paul's, the cathedral at the city's heart, he also numbered among the select group of the king's chaplains-in-ordinary who were assigned to preach regularly at court and, on royal command, from the open-air pulpit at Paul's Cross.<sup>1</sup> Beyond his personal presence, Donne's literary reputation was gathering momentum. During the last decade of his life and continuing for three decades thereafter—from the later 1620s to the later 1650s—he reached unsurpassed prominence as an author in both manuscript and print transmission. Singly or in gatherings, his poems (and, to a lesser extent, his sermons) circulated ever more widely in handwritten copies made by avid readers or their scribes, which other readers or scribes copied in turn.<sup>2</sup> The first printed edition of Donne's *Poems* appeared in 1633, two years after his death, prefaced by an outpouring of versified tributes to his originality and genius. Two more editions of the poems followed in the next eight years, and three further editions in the following fifteen years. Donne's son John, who had also taken holy orders, saw 145 of his father's 160 extant sermons through the press in three major collections: *LXXX Sermons* (1640), *Fifty Sermons* (1649), and *XXVI Sermons* (1661). The son additionally undertook to burnish his father's aura of prestige by the then unusual expedient of publishing a sizeable portion of his private correspondence as *Letters to Several Persons of Honour: Written by John Donne Sometime Dean of St Pauls London* (1651).

Phenomenal although it was in its magnitude and lustre, Donne's posthumous reputation in the seventeenth century is not the concern that shapes the present volume. Rather, the guidelines formulated by general editor Seamus Perry for prospective editors of the *21st-Century Oxford Authors* series ask each 'to consider how his or her volume might convey something of the circumstances of the original appearances of the texts: the editions should be mindful not only of the chronology of composition but also that of publication'. These guidelines emphasize 'the merits of presenting texts in their initial order of appearance rather than by strict date of original composition' as well as the inclusion of evocative facsimiles to 'pay greater attention . . . to the

<sup>1</sup> See Peter E. McCullough, 'Donne as Preacher at Court: Precarious "Inthronization"', in David Colclough, ed., *John Donne's Professional Lives* (2003), 179–204.

<sup>2</sup> According to the editors of the *Donne Variorum* project, which will present an exhaustive record of the bibliographical specifics, about 5000 manuscripts containing works by Donne survive from the 17th century, as against 739 manuscripts for Ben Jonson and 822 manuscripts for Sir Walter Raleigh.

material history of the writings presented, conveying some sense of the ways in which they originally found their readership'.<sup>3</sup>

In Donne's case, such an edition must address a trio of interrelated questions: What did Donne have to say about his conception of himself as an author? What does his oeuvre look like as an output developing in time, alternating among kinds of verse and prose in the order in which he wrote and selectively allowed what he wrote to circulate, in manuscript or in print? What would be the emerging idea of Donne as author formed by contemporary readers during his lifetime, on the basis of what texts they encountered, and in what manuscripts or printed editions? At this initial juncture, some general observations are in order.

It was a standard view until quite recently that Donne could not have been widely known as an author in his own day. The scarcity of pre-1631 manuscripts of Donne's poetry and prose was taken to indicate that few people could have read any of his work during the greater part of his lifetime.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, we know the names of scarcely two dozen of his contemporary readers. These we know mainly from verse letters or prose correspondence that Donne addressed to them—and they have their place in the present edition. The early readers of his writings in manuscript included associates and friends from his law-student days at the Inns of Court; later, gatherings of literati and wits who clubbed together in their favoured London taverns as well as prospective patrons and patronesses among the nobility and gentry during the long years in which Donne hoped for a secular position at court or in diplomatic service abroad. Such evidence prompted the inference that a social and intellectual elite composed Donne's readership in his lifetime.

This was taken to be the whole picture until it was realized that access to Donne's work in manuscript was not limited to his friends and the elite. We now know that twenty-five of Donne's poems were published in their entirety, and another six in part, during his lifetime by a wider circle of readers, and that 60 volumes containing 154 printings and reprintings of these poems of his had appeared prior to Donne's death in 1631.<sup>5</sup> These findings establish that Donne's poetry had a substantially larger readership in his lifetime than had previously been thought, even though the identities of most of these readers remain unknown to us.

<sup>3</sup> Seamus Perry, general editor, '21st-Century Oxford Authors: Some Guidelines for Editors' (personal communication).

<sup>4</sup> Alan MacColl, 'The Circulation of Donne's Poems in Manuscript', in A. J. Smith, ed., *John Donne: Essays in Celebration* (1972), 28–46; 'Introduction', in *John Donne: The Critical Heritage*, ed. A. J. Smith (1975), 1–13; Deborah Aldrich Larson, 'Donne's Contemporary Reputation: Evidence from Some Commonplace Books and Manuscript Miscellanies', *John Donne Journal* (1995), 12: 115–30.

<sup>5</sup> Ernest W. Sullivan, II, *The Influence of John Donne: His Uncollected 17th-Century Printed Verse* (1993), 5–6, and Sullivan, 'John Donne's Seventeenth-Century Readers', in Jeanne Shami, Dennis Flynn, and M. Thomas Hester, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of John Donne* (2011), 29.

At the same time, however, the appearance of Donne's name (or even his initials) in conjunction with a work of his during his lifetime was a rare occurrence, whether in manuscript or in print. He is not identified as the author of either the Latin or the English edition of *Ignatius His Conclave* (1611); likewise, his poetic tributes to the deceased Elizabeth Drury in *A Funeral Elegy*, *First Anniversary* (1611), and *Second Anniversary* (1612) appeared in print without an attribution, although Donne's friends and some others knew he was the author. Exceptions to such anonymity in print include the two print publications that Donne dedicated to royalty—his *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610) to King James I, and his *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* (1624) to Prince Charles—as well as five sermons he published in the 1620s; their title pages identify Donne as the doctor of divinity he became in 1615 and specify his ecclesiastical appointments. Otherwise, Donne's compositions generally remained unasccribed, including the half-dozen lyrics on love themes that circulated as song texts in print or manuscript, as well as the single or scattered poems in the earliest manuscript miscellanies and the mostly generic groupings of his poems in their earliest manuscript collections. With very few exceptions, both the miscellanies and the collections containing his works are thought to date around 1620 at the earliest, when Donne was 48 years old.<sup>6</sup>

The first surviving evidence of Donne's readership attaches to his satires, a set of five highly circumstantial and tonally scathing critiques of contemporary abuses such as corruption at court and worldly motives in religion, composed between 1593 and 1598, during the height of the initial brief vogue of this genre.<sup>7</sup> But a decade elapses before the first evidence emerges as to who was reading Donne's satires, in an epigram sent by Ben Jonson to his and Donne's principal patron in and around 1608, 'To Lucy, Countesse of Bedford, with M. Donnes Satyres':

...these, desir'd by you, the makers ends  
 Crowne with their owne. Rare poems aske rare friends.  
 Yet, *Satyres*, since the most of mankind bee  
 Their un-avoided subject, fewest see: ...  
 They, then, that living where the matter 'is bred,  
 Dare for these poemes, yet, both ask, and read,  
 And like them too, must needfully, though few,  
 Be of the best: and 'mongst those, best are you.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Peter Beal, *Index of English Literary Manuscripts* (1980), I.1: 250–61.

<sup>7</sup> For this dating which incorporates earlier scholars' work, see Annabel Patterson, 'Satirical Writing: Donne in Shadows', in Achsah Guibbory, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to John Donne* (2006), 118–20.

<sup>8</sup> 'To Lucy, Countesse of Bedford', ll. 5–14, in *Ben Jonson*, ed. C. H. Herford, Percy Simpson, and Evelyn Simpson (1925), 8:60–1.

Jonson writes of Donne and his verse in a familiar, admiring fashion that bespeaks the two poets' closeness in this period when Jonson was sending his epigrams to Donne and Donne contributed a commendatory Latin epigram to preface Jonson's satirical comedy *Volpone* when it was published in 1607.<sup>9</sup> Jonson further implies that Lady Bedford had requested him to obtain copies of Donne's satires for her. He has done this, and now puts himself forward as a connoisseur of these 'rare poems'—'rare' both in their quality and in their mode of circulation, in personalized copies by personalized means of transmission, to 'the best' of readers only. It was daring of her to 'ask' for 'these poemes' but, even more, to 'read, | And like them too' in their unsparing exposure of venality and folly. Lady Bedford's exalted virtue and intelligence qualify her as an ideal as well as a privileged reader. Donne's satires cannot offend in a quarter where no offence can be taken or given.<sup>10</sup>

Jonson comes to the fore again in or around 1608 as a likely source for Donne's satires and other earlier verse compositions. In drawing up a list of 'Manuscripts to gett', Francis Davison, author of *A Poetical Rhapsody*, itemized 'Satyres, Elegies, Epigrams &c. by John Don. quaere [seek] some from Eleaz[er] Hodgson, Ben: Johnson'.<sup>11</sup> Davison evidently knew (or thought he knew) that Jonson would have copies and could be asked, as a friend, for their temporary loan. This inference is strengthened by Davison's list, on the back of the same sheet, of manuscripts he had lent to others; one entry reads 'John Duns Satyres.—my br[other] Christopher'. Still further evidence comes from an epigram published by the minor poet Thomas Freeman in 1614. It indicates that Donne's five satires were circulating in some venues as a manuscript 'book', together with two verse letters, 'The Storme' and 'The Calme', written to a close friend Christopher Brooke, while Donne was serving as a member of the Cadiz expedition in 1596. Freeman addressed Donne in the guise of the Roman satirist Persius *redivivus*:

The *Storme* describ'd, hath set thy name afloat,  
Thy *Calme*, a gale of famous winde hath got:  
Thy *Satyres* short, too soone we them o'erlooke,  
I pray thee Persius write a bigger booke.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Dennis Flynn has detected an emulation of Jonson's bravado in this, Donne's first decision to allow a work of his to be printed, as contrasted with Donne's previous misgivings about circulating his satires, communicated to Sir Henry Goodyere in a Latin letter of 1605. See Flynn, 'Donne's Travels and Earliest Publications', in Shami, Flynn, and Hester, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, 509–12.

<sup>10</sup> Jonson may be alluding as well to the formal order issued by the Court of High Commission in June 1599 prohibiting further printing and circulation of satires and epigrams without explicit permission, this to be sought presumably from the bishop of London. See *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London*, ed. Edward Arber (1878–94), 3:316.

<sup>11</sup> British Library, Harley MS 298, 159<sup>v</sup>, cited in John Donne, *The Satires, Epigrams, and Verse Letters*, ed. Wesley Milgate (1967), lix.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas Freeman, *Rubbe, and a Great Cast* (1614), no. 84, in Donne: *The Critical Heritage*, ed. Smith, 72.

Christopher Brooke (c. 1570–1628) shared a chamber with Donne at Lincoln's Inn while they were fellow students there; later the two would live opposite one another in Drury Lane. Both Christopher and his brother Samuel wrote verse, and Christopher in particular won recognition for his literary and dramatic activities at Lincoln's Inn during and after his student days.<sup>13</sup> Not only was he the recipient of Donne's verse epistles 'The Storme' and (very probably) 'The Calme' but, in all likelihood, of Donne's satires as well. Drummond of Hawthornden made a note that his copy of Satire 2 was 'After C. B. Coppy'.<sup>14</sup>

Little more than half a century ago, another of Donne's close friends, Rowland Woodward, came to prominence not merely as a reader but as the copyist of the most inclusive assemblage of Donne's compositions prior to 1600—satires, elegies, verse letters, epigrams, and prose paradoxes—that has survived to the present. The Westmoreland manuscript, now in the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of the New York Public Library, preserves generally and, in some cases, uniquely sound, early versions of the texts that it contains. Sometime between 1952 and 1965 Alan MacColl identified the handwriting of the Westmoreland manuscript as that of Woodward himself—one of the two most significant identifications among the few that have been made of scribal hands in the manuscripts of Donne's poems.<sup>15</sup> Because it undoubtedly stands in a very near relation to the original compositions in Donne's own papers, this manuscript possesses high textual authority.<sup>16</sup>

In the present edition, the contents of the Westmoreland manuscript are reproduced for the first time, in keeping with its two discrete gatherings: verse and prose composed by Donne before 1600 when he was in service as a secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, and religious poetry composed by Donne between 1607 and (probably) 1620. The Westmoreland assemblage of Donne's pre-1600 writings composes the first unit of readings in the present edition. It is followed by a brief second unit consisting of the autograph letters Donne wrote in the late winter and spring of 1602, first cheekily informing his father-in-law, Sir George More, that he had secretly married More's daughter, Anne, some weeks before Christmas 1601, then rapidly gradating into urgent pleas to Sir George and to Donne's employer, Sir Thomas Egerton, for forgiveness of the rash act that resulted in Donne's dismissal as

<sup>13</sup> Brooke 'entered Lincoln's Inn on 15 March 1587, was called to the bar on 9 June 1594, and formally called to the bench on 11 June 1611' (Michelle O'Callaghan, 'Christopher Brooke', online entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*).

<sup>14</sup> *The Poems of John Donne*, ed. Herbert J. C. Grierson (1912), 2:111.

<sup>15</sup> See John Donne, *The Elegies and the Songs and Sonnets*, ed. Helen Gardner (1965), lxxii.

<sup>16</sup> 'Bibliographical Description of the Westmoreland Manuscript of Donne's Poems', online posting by the New York Public Library, drawing on an unpublished paper by Ted-Larry Pebworth (April 1991).

Egerton's secretary.<sup>17</sup> Donne's marriage had the further effect of bringing to a close his earliest phase of authorship: the satires, elegies, verse letters to male friends, epigrams, and prose paradoxes that Rowland Woodward copied into the Westmoreland manuscript.

Born in 1573, Woodward was Donne's junior by one year; he entered Lincoln's Inn in January 1591. After preliminary studies at Thavies Inn, Donne himself entered Lincoln's Inn in May 1592. There, on the copious evidence of verse letters to male friends in the Westmoreland manuscript, Donne and Rowland Woodward associated with Rowland's younger brother, Thomas, Christopher Brooke and his brother Samuel, Everard Guilpin, and Beaupré Bell—law students melded by their shared literary interests and premium on wit into a companionable group that wrote verses to one another and encouraged each other's efforts. Such was the social context of the pre-1600 Donne materials in the Westmoreland manuscript.

At a later date, in the role of secretary to another of Donne's friends, Sir Henry Wotton, then English ambassador to Venice, Rowland Woodward would again be in direct contact with Donne, who visited Venice during travels on the continent with Sir Walter Chute for a few months in 1605–6. From 1608 Rowland Woodward worked for Thomas Ravis, Bishop of London.<sup>18</sup> Donne would give Woodward a copy of his controversial prose tract, *Pseudo-Martyr*, published in 1610, attesting to continuing contact between the two longtime friends.<sup>19</sup> Rowland Woodward's final appointment was as secretary to Francis Fane (1583/4–1629), first earl of Westmoreland, another alumnus of Lincoln's Inn, admitted in 1597.<sup>20</sup> It was for the earl that Woodward compiled the Westmoreland manuscript.

Fortunately, there is testimony from Donne in other letters that sheds light on his attitudes towards his various writings as well as his handling of the verses he wrote.<sup>21</sup> After his appointment as Egerton's secretary around 1598–9, Donne wrote to the friend who became closest to him, Sir Henry Goodyere, consenting to send some copies of his prose paradoxes while warning about their bravado and advising Goodyere to read warily. Aware of the risk of being

<sup>17</sup> For this collection, superbly reproduced in facsimile, with accompanying transcriptions and annotation, see *John Donne's Marriage Letters in the Folger Shakespeare Library*, ed. M. Thomas Hester, Robert Parker Sorlien, and Dennis Flynn (2005).

<sup>18</sup> M. C. Deas, 'A Note on Rowland Woodward, the Friend of Donne', *Review of English Studies* (1931), 7:454–7.

<sup>19</sup> R. C. Bald, *John Donne: A Life* (1970), 53, 74, 146, 150, 222 n.

<sup>20</sup> Material evidence linking Woodward and Westmoreland includes an alabaster monument to Woodward erected by his wife in the church at Apethorp, the earl's seat (Deas, 'A Note on Rowland Woodward', 457).

<sup>21</sup> The following discussion of the literary and textual ramifications of Donne's friendship with Goodyere is indebted to Daniel Starza Smith, who generously allowed me access to his DPhil thesis, *John Donne and the Conway Papers*, University College, London (2010).

misinterpreted, Donne also asked him not to circulate the prose paradoxes, satires, and elegies any further:

Sir, Only in obedience I send you some of my paradoxes; I love you and myself and them too well to send them willingly for they carry with them a confession of their lightnes, and your trouble and my shame... They are rather alarums to Truth to arme her, than enemies; and they have only this advantadg to scape from being called ill things that they are nothings:... Yet Sir though I know their low price, except I receave by your next letter an assurance upon the religion of your friendship that no copy shal bee taken for any respect of these or any other my compositions sent to you, I shall sinn against my conscience if I send you any more. I speak that in plainness which becomes (methinks) our honesties; and therefore call not this a distrustful but a free spirit... To my satyrs there belongs some feare, and to some elegies and these [paradoxes] perhaps, shame... Therefore I am desirous to hyde them.<sup>22</sup>

Donne carefully distinguishes the grounds for dealing with his writings as limited commodities. His elegies and paradoxes might bring his social credit into question if they were to circulate beyond an envisaged audience of like-minded associates who would register and relish their complexities.<sup>23</sup> His satires, however, caused Donne 'some feare', for they might have been found seditious after the Court of High Commission order of June 1599 prohibited the further printing and circulation of satires and epigrams.<sup>24</sup>

Sir Henry Goodyere (1571–1628), Donne's elder by one year, matriculated from St John's College, Cambridge, in 1587 and entered the Middle Temple, which had close associations with Lincoln's Inn, in 1589. It is not known when Goodyere and Donne first met. In 1593 Goodyere married Frances, a daughter of his uncle, another Sir Henry Goodyere (1534–95), who settled on his nephew his estate at Polesworth—encumbered, however, with sizeable debts. The younger Sir Henry was knighted by the earl of Essex during his Irish campaign of 1599, and it was in that year, from Ireland, that he first made written contact with Donne.<sup>25</sup> From as early as 1600

<sup>22</sup> Leicestershire Record Office, DG. 7/Lit. 2, 308v. The Donne materials in this, the Burley MS, comprise four poems, eighteen epigrams, ten paradoxes, and copies of several letters in the hand of an unidentified scribe, which Peter Beal dates c.1620–33 in *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*, 1.1, 236. After Sir Herbert Grierson mistakenly reported in his *Life and Letters of John Donne* (1912), that the Burley MS had been destroyed, Donne scholars used a transcript of the MS as the source for quotations from this letter. Evelyn M. Simpson believed that it was written to Sir Henry Wotton (*A Study of the Prose Works of John Donne* (1948), 316).

<sup>23</sup> Achsah Guibbory, 'Erotic Poetry', in Guibbory, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Donne*, 134.

<sup>24</sup> The severity of this order had its intended repressive effect; works by Joseph Hall, John Marston, Everard Guilpin, and Thomas Middleton were burned in 1599 (Patterson, 'Satirical Writing', 118).

<sup>25</sup> This discovery will be announced in the Oxford University Press edition of Donne's letters (in preparation). It has been determined that the letter numbered 25 in chap. 12 of Evelyn M. Simpson's *A Study of the Prose Works of Donne* was Goodyere's first letter to Donne, that letter 10 was Donne's reply, arriving after Goodyere had left Ireland, and letter 13 is Donne's explanation that his first letter had not reached Goodyere. I am grateful to Daniel Starza Smith for this



Goodyere and Donne began their largely successful efforts to maintain a weekly exchange of letters; Tuesday was Donne's day to write. Goodyere's prospects for advancement at court were severely hindered for a time by his association with Essex, who had been convicted of treason and executed in 1601. But Goodyere did enjoy the patronage of Edward Russell, earl of Bedford, and his wife Lucy (Harrington), countess of Bedford; her father had been a close friend of his uncle, the elder Sir Henry, and had witnessed his will.<sup>26</sup> What is more, Goodyere undertook to share the benefits of this patronage with Donne. He is credited with introducing Donne to Lady Bedford around 1607, and both men regularly transmitted each other's letters to her.

The character of Donne's and Goodyere's friendship, and specifically that of their literary interrelations, can be gathered from a number of letters in the collection, *Letters to Several Persons of Honour*, and from Donne's verse letters to Goodyere in the present edition. While Goodyere was the superior in social status and connections, Donne did not refrain from giving his friend frank advice regarding his financial extravagance and his religious doubts. More significantly in the context of this introduction, Donne's letters reveal that the two men were exchanging books: specific volumes are mentioned, and Donne reports that Goodyere's books make his own study 'a pretty library'—although this would have been no match for Goodyere's own imposing library at Polesworth.<sup>27</sup> Most significantly of all, Donne entrusted a number of his manuscript compositions to Goodyere for safekeeping. On one occasion Donne assumes that his friend will have 'laid my papers and books by', and asks that they be returned. At another point, when Goodyere was about to depart on a visit to Elizabeth Hastings, countess of Huntingdon, Donne writes: 'I pray send to my lodging my [hand]written Books: and if you may stay very long, I pray send that Letter in which I sent you certain heads which I purposed to enlarge, for I have them not in any other paper'.<sup>28</sup> Goodyere evidently had access to his friend's jottings as well as his finished drafts.

Donne's phrasing of his request that Goodyere return his manuscripts does not merely imply that his friend was safekeeping them, but that Goodyere's library had become Donne's chosen place for storing his work. He elsewhere says that the 'errand' of one verse problem he was sending to Goodyere 'is, to aske for his fellows . . . and such other of my papers as you will lend me till you return'.<sup>29</sup> Donne casts himself as a borrower of his own works

information, which he received from Dennis Flynn, one of the editors of this long-anticipated edition of Donne's letters begun by the late I. A. Shapiro. See further the fine-grained discussion of Donne, Goodyere, and manuscript circulation in Starza Smith, *John Donne and the Conway Papers* (2014), 175–307.

<sup>26</sup> Bald, *Donne: A Life*, 171.

<sup>27</sup> *Letters to Several Persons of Honour: Written by John Donne Sometime Dean of St Pauls London* (1651), hereafter cited as *Letters*, 60, 213, 235, 31.

<sup>28</sup> *Letters*, 69, 225–6.

<sup>29</sup> *Letters*, 99.



from Goodyere's library. Twice in subsequent years he would again ask Goodyere to keep manuscript copies of his poems because he had not retained copies for himself. And in a letter of 1605 Donne revealed that he was revising some of his writings, apparently with the intention of printing them. He asks Goodyere to gather together certain papers he had been sent, including Latin epigrams and a satirical catalogue of books. Donne says he will revise certain items and destroy others.<sup>30</sup> This intention to print some of his compositions in 1605 would not be realized; one crucial factor must have been Donne's own ambivalence. In a facetious but revealing turn of phrase, his mock Latin catalogue of books bears the subtitle 'non vendibilium'—'not for sale', with a play on the tense of the participle, 'not to be sold'.

In all of Donne's letters, Alan MacColl has observed, 'there is only one passage that refers to his actually writing out and distributing copies of a poem', and this occurs in a letter to Goodyere.<sup>31</sup> Regarding 'The Litanye', a moderately lengthy stanzaic poem composed probably in 1608, Donne explains to his friend that 'though a copy of it were due to you now, yet I am so unable to serve my self with writing it for you at this time, (being some 30 staves of 9 lines) that I must intreat you to take a promise that you shall have the first'.<sup>32</sup> Donne implies that his practice was to send Goodyere copies of his poems as soon as they were written and before he sent copies to anyone else.

Other passages in letters to Goodyere contain references to Donne's verse. In one, Donne responds to his friend's request that he write a poem about 'the Countesse'—in this context, evidently the countess of Huntingdon. Donne refuses at first, giving two reasons: to prevent her from thinking of him as a poet rather than one embarked on 'a graver course' in life, and to maintain his 'integrity to the other Countesse', Lady Bedford. Eventually reversing himself with the rationalization that Lady Huntingdon is Lady Bedford's 'Picture', an exact likeness of her virtues, Donne agrees to write, but only on the condition that he will not be 'traduced, nor esteemed light' in Lady Bedford's judgement. If Goodyere finds the verses unsuitable, he is to keep them for himself. Although Donne generally admonished his friends to prevent his compositions from coming to the notice of unintended readers, he was aware that Goodyere was circulating them. At one juncture he would

<sup>30</sup> This letter was first printed in *Poems, by J.D.* (1633), 351–2. Bald, *Donne: A Life*, 241, dated it to 1611, but as Dennis Flynn shows, drawing on I. A. Shapiro's still unpublished commentary, it was sent before Donne's travels on the Continent with Sir Walter Chute in 1605–6 (Flynn, 'Donne's Travels and Earliest Publications', 510–13). Donne's satirical book catalogue is *The Courtier's Library, or Catalogus Librorum Aulicorum*, ed. Evelyn M. Simpson (1930), which she (p. 13) dated to 1604–5.

<sup>31</sup> Alan MacColl, 'The Circulation of Donne's Poems in Manuscript', in Smith, ed., *John Donne: Essays in Celebration*, 32.

<sup>32</sup> *Letters*, 33.