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Front Matters: Crashaw in the Seventeenth Century

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> A literary work consists, entirely or essentially, of a text, defined (very minimally) as a more or less long sequence of verbal statements that are more or less endowed with significance. But this text is rarely presented in an unadorned state, unreinforced and unaccompanied by a certain number of verbal or other productions, such as an author's name, a title, a preface, illustrations. And although we do not always know whether these productions are to be regarded as belonging to the text, in any case they surround it and extend it, precisely in order to *present* it, in the usual sense of this verb but also in the strongest sense: to *make present*, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its "reception" and consumption in the form (nowadays, at least) of a book.
>
> —Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*[1]

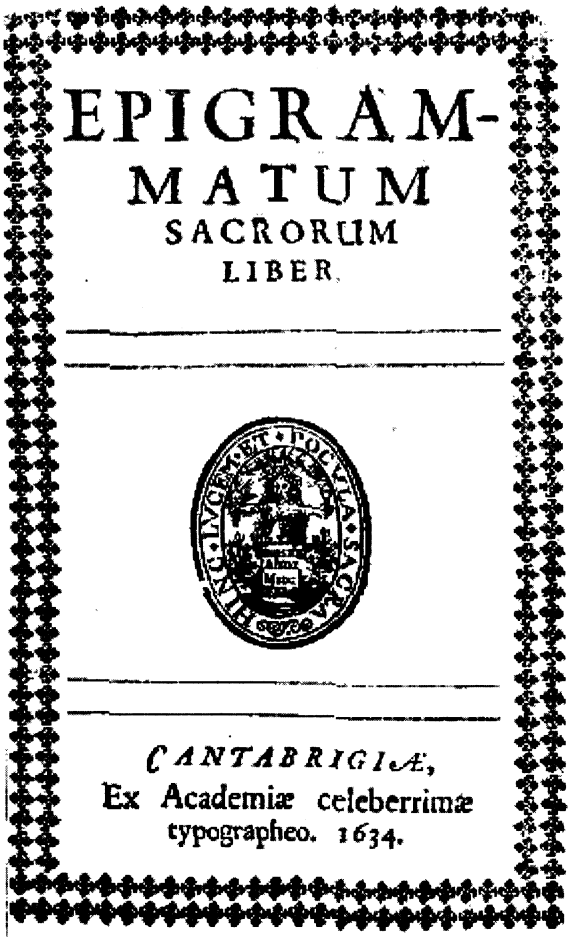
Gérard Genette's study of "paratexts," those elements of a publication that accompany the text but that are not the text itself, is only one of a growing number of analyses that focus not on the literary work but on the physical, verbal, and visual contexts within which that work is presented. Growing out

[1] *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation.* Translated by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 1. Genette's book was originally published in French as *Seuils* by Editions du Seuil (1987).

of attention to the physical book, studies of the history of the book, and more generally to a recognition that focusing exclusively on the literary work is to neglect what readers see when they enter, read between, or leave the written text, studies of paratexts—title pages, illustrations, the author's name (or absence thereof), dedications, inscriptions, prefaces, notes, and epitexts (to cite a partial listing by Genette)—enable us better to recover the whole of the reading experience an audience contemporary with (or following) the author would have had. Such a focus also better enables us to recapture the ways in which authors were regarded by virtue of the *presentation* of their works. In short, there is much to be gained by looking at everything *but* the text as a means to go back to the text but in its fullest *con*text.

It is with this aim in mind, then, the aim not to read or interpret the text, the poetry, but to read and interpret what accompanies and is said *about* the poetry, that I want to turn to the publications of Crashaw's verse in the seventeenth century as it appears in single-author volumes. There are eleven such publications, from the first appearance of Crashaw's epigrams in 1634 to the 1690 re-issue of his *Steps to the Temple*, some of them offering specific and detailed insights into how Crashaw was to be regarded, others more simply repeating what had been said earlier. (Full bibliographical information is provided in the appendix that accompanies this essay.)

The first appearance in print of a book by Crashaw occurs in 1634, when he was a student at Pembroke Hall in Cambridge at the age of 21 or 22. The title page recognizes the poetry contained within the volume ("Epigrammatum Sacrorum Liber"), includes the university's emblem on the center of the page, and indicates the status of the publication ("Cantabrigiae, Ex Academiae celeberrimae typographeo. 1634") (fig. 1). The emblem (long identified with Cambridge University) represents a woman/mother (*Alma Mater*), milk flowing from her breasts, encircled by the Latin motto, *Hinc lucem et pocula sacra* ("From hence light and


EPIGRAM-
MATUM
SACRORUM
LIBER.

CANTABRIGIÆ,
Ex Academiæ celeberrimæ
typographeo. 1634.

Fig. 1. Title page of Crashaw's *Epigrammatum Sacrorum Liber* (1634). This item is reproduced by permission of *The Huntington Library, San Marino, California*; call number RB 60062. Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

sacred drink"). Significantly, the author's name is nowhere displayed, and it is left to the prefatory material to reveal who that author ("R.C.") is.

The prefatory matter in the 1634 volume consists of a dedicatory epistle to Benjamin Laney, Master of Pembroke College ("Reverendo Admodum viro Benjamino Lany"), with a closing poem; a poetic tribute to John Tournay, Crashaw's tutor at Pembroke ("Venerabili viro Magistro Tournay"); a similar tribute to Robert Brooke, Headmaster of the Charterhouse school Crashaw attended before admission to Cambridge ("Ornatissimo viro Præceptori suo colendissimo, Magistro Brook"); and a poetic and prose address to the reader ("Lectori"). Aside from the generic recognition on the title page, in other words, it is left to Crashaw to introduce himself and his poetry to readers for the first time—at least in print.

Crashaw's dedication to Laney is appropriately modest and humble, manifesting the language of a young man still in awe of a distinguished elder. But it is also a dedication in which boldness appears in the midst of modesty, suggesting a confidence and forthrightness that belie the youthfulness of the author and his early appearance in print. Acknowledging that what follows are the "flowers of a tender age" ("Teneræ ætatis flores"), not the "fruits of a late one" ("fructus seræ"), Crashaw simultaneously urges that that very claim justifies attention and even appreciation because of its "precocious rashness" ("præcoci importunitate") (630).[2] More boldly, Crashaw proclaims to Laney the intimate association between the "reverend master" and the poetic flowers dedicated to him:

> Therefore (reverend master) [*let this garland of such flowers be woven for you, truly convivial]: not otherwise will it endure the most auspicious star of your face except (how gracious even that is) by a softer light when it bends down and takes so much from itself. Nor clearly could anything be more suitable

[2]I am, in the main, citing the texts and translations in George Walton Williams, ed. *The Complete Poetry of Richard Crashaw* (1970. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1974). Where I offer a translation that differs from that found in the Williams edition, I insert the phrase in brackets with an *.

> for theological repose than this kind of writing (when it has maintained sufficiently its own character) in which doubtless Theology itself described in poetic graces commends its majesty by beauty. In short, whatever this is, you still will be able to love it; and you will wish to, I know: not as something great, not as something unusual, not as something worthy of you finally, but as your own: yours according to the supreme law: inasmuch as this has been evoked from your soil, through your light, at last into your hand.[3]

Not surprisingly, the young poet does not speak much to the political and theological controversies that will later involve and threaten much of his university, but there are revealing hints nonetheless. Laney is praised for having "adorned the sacred rites among us," and the poem that closes the dedication makes even clearer Laney's, and Crashaw's, allegiance to a Laudian form of worship:

> Under your guidance, Religion arranged [her sacred dress],
> under your guidance, she [*maintained customs]; and [as is]
> to be seen in her own face,
> knows not dust and ashes.
>
> She stands, her beautiful head bound with a leafy crown:
> through you openly confessing her God;
> a Goddess, she gives natural order
> to her hair and vestments.
> . . . . . .
> The case rests. Indeed God himself, God,

[3]Patere igitur (reverende Custos) hanc tibi ex istiusmodi floribus corollam necti; convivalem veró: nec aliter passuram Sydus illud oris tui auspicatissimum nisi (quâ est etiam amœnitate) remissiore radio cùm se reclinat, & in tantum de se demit. Neque sanè hoc scriptionis genere (modò partes suas satìs præstiterit) quid esse potuit otio Theologico accommodatius, quo nimirum res ipsa Theologica Poëticâ amœnitate delinita majestatem suam venustate commendat. Hoc demum quicquid est, amare tamen poteris; & voles, scio: non ut magnum quid, non ut egregium, non ut te dignum denique, sed ut tuum: tuum summo jure; utpote quod è tua gleba, per tuum radium, in manum denique tuam evocatum fuerit. (630-32)

the altar, beautiful through your efforts,
returns this day to you and comes
with glory to meet you, his worshipper.[4]

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[4]Te dante, castos composuit sinus;
Te dante, mores sumpsit; & in suo
Videnda vultu, pulverémque
Relligio cinerémque nescit.

Stat cincta dignâ fronde decens caput:
Suósque per te fassa palàm Deos,
Comísque, Diva, vestibúsque
Ingenium dedit ordinémque.
. . . . . .
Stat causa. Nempe hanc ipse Deus, Deus,
Hanc ara, per te pulchra, diem tibi
Tuam refundit, obvióque
It radio tibi se colenti. (13-20, 29-32)

The prose dedication and the lyric poem that follows in the published volume echo in tone and intent the Epistle Dedicatory that probably accompanied a manuscript collection of Crashaw's epigrams, perhaps one presented earlier to Laney. (The Epistle Dedicatory was first printed in L.C. Martin's edition [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927]). As in the published dedications, the Epistle Dedicatory reveals a respectful student who honors the religious and aesthetic sensibilities of his Master. Perhaps even more than in the dedications of 1634, Crashaw is determined to praise Laney for his allegiance to a Laudian form of worship: "Among us meanwhile under your auspices (most holy man) Religion permits itself to be seen in a more pleasing aspect. It adorns itself as a most beautiful goddess; now decorating its beams with more embellished care, it asks that its grandeur be commended also for its beauty. Much by the example of your face where pleasantness so tempers reverence for severity that it shows by a most beautiful argument how readily something can be lovely and holy at the same time." ["apud nos interim sub tuis (vir sanctissime) auspicijs amæniori facie Religio se spectandam indulget. comit se pulcherrima dea; suosque jam ornatiore curâ distinguens radios, majestatem suam venustate etiam commendari quærit. nimirum ad oris tui exemplum, vbi severitatis reverentiam ita demulcet amænitas, vt pulcherrimo demonstret argumento, quàm bene possit amabile quid esse, & sanctum simul."]

The dedicatory poem to Laney is written in lyric stanzas; the poems to Tournay and Brooke in elegiac couplets, as are the epigrams themselves. This difference in form hints at a more specific poetic connection between Tournay and Brooke and the poems written by their young student. Similar though they are in form, however, the tone and effects of the two poems are quite different. That to Tournay, which follows the longer and more revealing dedication to Laney, lacks a personal tone in most of the poem. Indeed, the references to Tournay are noticeably indirect through the first half of the poem, lacking the overt address to Laney as a "most cherished sir" ("vir colendissime") or the opening salutation in the first two lines of the poem to Brooke. To be sure, Crashaw respectfully acknowledges the tutelage he received under Tournay. His poems are seen as the "tender child" of a "tender mother," his Muse ("Hôc tenero tenera est pignore facta parens"). The poems in turn are seen as the product, the "child," of the tutor Tournay:

> Therefore take your child to yourself: let her go under your wings:
> receive this from us to protect also.[5]

Perhaps because there is greater distance between the student and his Charterhouse headmaster, Brooke, both geographically and chronologically, the second poem is more specific, more interesting, and more witty. Crashaw casts himself as the "most unpunished member" of Brooke's "kingdom, familiar with no labor of your rod" ("Ille ego pars vestri quondam intactissima regni, / De nullo virgæ nota labore tuæ" [3-4]), but the absence of a harsh "rod" is here an occasion for complaint, for what is presented in the volume surely contains much that is "wrong" and wrong in part because the student did not have to fear the scrutiny and correction of the master. The young man who was spared the rod now

[5]Ergò tuam tibi sume: tuas eat illa sub alas:
Hoc quoque de nostro, quod tuearis, habe. (21-22)

anticipates (modestly, perhaps conventionally) that his poems will not be so fortunate:

> Therefore whatever in me the rod once spared too much,
> let it take all its revenge on my child.
> Here your finger will find enough in which it may go wild,
> and which the editor's mark may cross through like a learned spit.
> Obviously these are mine; these which are bad [most] obviously: o if
> here there might be something better (which of course would be yours)![6]

In its mixture of humility and pride, the dedicatory poem to Brooke is reminiscent of the longer dedication to Laney. Modest throughout, the poet nonetheless claims both allegiance and kinship to his earlier master:

> This book also so small (my times may say of me)
> was also the child of a mighty spring.
> For this reason you yourself may wish to have said of me,
> He was the least of my [pupils]. But he was mine.[7]

---

[6]In me igitur quicquid nimis illa pepercerit olim,
Id licet in fœtu vindicet omne meo.
Hîc tuus inveniet satìs in quo sæviat unguis,
Quódque veru docto trans obeliscus eat.
Scilicet hæc mea sunt; hæc quæ mala scilicet: ô si
(Quæ tua nempe forent) hîc meliora forent! (13-18)

Crashaw's "Hîc tuus inveniet satìs in quo sæviat unguis" is surely an allusion to Horace's observation in *Ars Poetic* 291-94: "vos, o / Pompilius sanguis, carmen reprehendite, quod non / multa dies et multa litura coercuit atque / praesectum deciens non castigavit ad unguem." The key final line is usually taken to refer to the action of a sculptor who would inspect a completed work for flaws, even giving it the test of a finger or finger nail ("ad unguem"). As to his poems, Crashaw self-mockingly says, Brooke's finger will have a heyday finding many flaws in his verse. For an extended discussion of the Horatian line and an alternative reading, see Armand J. D'Angour, "*Ad Unguem*," *American Journal of Philology* 120 (1999): 411-27.

The longest of the prefatory examples is "Lectori," the poet's words to the reader, written in both poetry and prose. Read retrospectively, from the vantage point of the better known works of Crashaw yet to come, the preface is remarkable for its identification of poetic interests and qualities that obtain throughout Crashaw's writing. More than half of the preface, in fact, is only barely attentive to the reader, offering instead an explanation and justification for what will (and will not) be found in the poems that follow.

The opening greeting ("Salve") is followed by an immediate "farewell" ("vale"), setting up the contrast the poet plays with throughout the preface: that between lighthearted, secular, and erotic verse (a verse represented by the "boy" ["puer"] Cupid and his mother Venus), which the reader will *not* find among the poems of the volume, and the more serious, purer, sacred verse (represented by another "boy" [Christ] and his mother Mary), which is present.

> Hail. And now farewell. For why would anyone go any further?
> Will you go where playful jesting does not call? Obviously,
> Reader, this is not the reason you will be ours; this book does not aim at your pleasure.[8]

Nearly half of the 136-line poem is about and addressed to the "wicked boy" ("Improbe . . . puer"), whose interests in erotic love the poet disavows. But the effect of the extensive disavowal is a paradoxical one, confirming the poet's detailed familiarity with and

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[7]Hic quoque tam parvus (de me mea secula dicant)
Non parvi soboles hic quoque fontis erat.
Hoc modò & ipse velis de me dixisse, Meorum
Ille fuit minimus. Sed fuit ille meus. (23-26)

[8]Salve. Jámque vale. Quid enim quis pergeret ultrâ?
Quà jocus & lusus non vocat, ire voles?
Scilicet hîc, Lector, cur noster habebere, non est;
Delitiis folio non faciente tuis. (1-4)

understanding of that other kind of love and devotion, one associated with Venus, Adonis, Circe, Lethe, Ida, Bacchus, Apollo, Dione, and Martial, all figures and places that are named in Crashaw's dismissal. The relationship between the secular and sacred is a matter addressed later, in prefatory materials accompanying the 1646 *Steps to the Temple*. In that volume there is an almost hidden, certainly understated, acknowledgment that Crashaw was the author of poems inspired by the classical Muse. Here in the 1634 volume, which reveals the stylistic (though not topical) influence of classical epigrammatists such as Martial and Catullus, such figures and contexts are acknowledged only to underscore their absence:

> No cups of Circe, sweet and serviceable
> for your lustful passion, overflow in my verse;
> no Lethe lies concealed [in my verse], which the [*flowery deceit] pours out for you,
> [*which the untrustworthy rose offers under false cheeks;]
> subtle poison counterfeits no sweets; no snare captures from its ambush.[9]

"Lectori" is not only the longest of the prefatory pieces but also the most revealing in terms of Crashaw's poetic allegiances. Pointedly aware of classical precedents and alluding on several occasions to the secular and profane epigrams of Martial, Crashaw makes clear that his interests are radically different from the bawdy wit for which Martial was so well known. Professing the purity of his verse ("There is rarely a page that is funny; there is never a page that is lewd: there is nothing [*salacious, even if it has some acquaintance with wit]," Crashaw draws a sharp contrast between the purer wit

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[9]Nulla meo Circæa tument tibi pocula versu:
Dulcia, & in furias officiosa tuas.
Nulla latet Lethe, quam fraus tibi florea libat,
Quam rosa sub falsis dat malè fida genis.
Nulla verecundum mentitur mella venenum:
Captat ab insidiis linea nulla suis. (17-22)

of his epigrams and the licentiousness that readers familiar with Martial had come to expect of the epigrammatic form.[10] So as to illustrate the difference even more clearly, Crashaw remarks that in *his* epigrams "[t]here are no nude Venuses: nor, if there is a joke, is it wet [from wine]. Not too much was Bacchus our Apollo. There is nothing whose suggestive leer should make anyone cringe; there is nothing which should be read with a smirk."[11] Dismissive of *that* kind of wit and *that* kind of love, the poet elaborates on the other "Boy" and his Mother whom his epigrams will celebrate. In this section of the poetic dedication, the lines look backward briefly to the praise given to Laney and, more significantly, ahead to the poems of Crashaw we have come to regard as his most characteristic—poems where images of liquefaction, nourishment, and feminine devotion are most evident.

As Laney was praised as one who "adorned the sacred rites among us," so Crashaw's "Lectori" exhibits the poetic adornment we see in some of his later, longer, and better known poems.

> How great a Boy would there press the breasts of how great a Mother!

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[10]Rara est quæ ridet; nulla est quæ pagina prurit:
Nulla salax, si quid nôrit habere salis. (25-26)

While the subjects of Martial's verse have elicited considerable, and often negative, commentary because of their misogyny and vulgarity, the stylistic quality of his poetry most often remarked on is its wit. Indeed, it is a quality Martial himself speaks to, sometimes by noting what he deems the false or prurient wit ("sale pruriente"—12.95.3) of rival poets (cf., e.g., 1.41 and 6.44). Crashaw here wants to claim the wit but not the salaciousness associated with Martial. For more on Martial's reputation and influence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see *Martial in English*, ed. J. P. Sullivan and A. J. Boyle (London: Penguin, 1996), pp. 3-84; and J. P. Sullivan, *Martial: The Unexpected Classic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 262-95.

[11]Non nudæ Veneres: nec, si jocus, udus habetur:
Non nimiùm Bacchus noster Apollo fuit.
Nil cui quis putri sit detorquendus ocello:
Est nihil obliquo quod velit ore legi." (25-30)

And with a face not concealing his own heavens.
In that verse his eyes would be stars enough;
how very safe in his mother's star-studded embrace!
How he would clasp both his arms around his mother's neck
and trace the shining curves on her fair face!
How she would kiss the cheeks of the boy with her sweet lips
and well might they bloom in his cheeks like kindred roses!
How would that moist gem which falls so full of Mary
learn there to swell under its own value!
The saintly Weeper would stand there before her Master.
. . . . . .
O Boy! O Master! O the worship of the great Mother!
sweet wonder and piety of your embrace!
O Love, who possess the sacred [*justice] of a harmless quiver,
your arrow does not burn except in a chaste heart.
O Boy, pierce me whom you pierce with a well-aimed arrow.
O may your quiver become light because of me.
Thence also each thing thirsts and drinks, and drinks and
thirsts forever:
forever may my heart thirst and forever may it drink.[12]

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[12]Quantus ibi & quantæ premeret Puer ubera Matris!
Nec cœlos vultu dissimulante suos.
Ejus in isto oculi satìs essent sydera versu;
Sydereo matris quàm bene tuta sinu!
Matris ut hic similes in collum mitteret ulnas,
Inque, sinus niveos pergeret, ore pari!
Utque genis pueri hæc æquis daret oscula labris!
Et bene cognatis iret in ora rosis!
Quæ Mariæ tam larga meat, quàm disceret illîc
Uvida sub pretio gemma tumere suo!
Staret ibi ante suum lacrymatrix Diva Magistrum. (59-69)
. . . . . .
O puer! ô Domine! ô magnæ reverentia matris!
Alme tui stupor & relligio gremii!
O Amor, innocuæ cui sunt pia jura pharetræ;
Nec nisi de casto corde sagitta calens!
Me, puer, ô certâ, quem figis, fige sagittâ.
O tua de me sit facta pharetra levis.
Quódque illinc sitit & bibit, & bibit & sitit usqué;
Usquè meum sitiat pectus, & usquè bibat. (87-94)

Refocusing his attention on the reader, Crashaw, having desired the piercing of his heart by the sacred "Boy," sees in the reader a partner and companion: "These are my wishes. These too are the wishes of my little book. May these be yours, Reader; if you wish to be mine. If you wish to be mine; to be mine (Reader) your eyes [should be] chaste, but not, I pray, too dry." ["Hæc mea vota. Mei sunt hæc quoque vota libelli. / Hæc tua sint Lector; si meus esse voles. / Si meus esse voles; meus ut sis, lumina (Lector) / Casta, sed ô nimiùm non tibi sicca precor" (109-12).]

Possessing as it does so many of the features we associate with the poetry of the mature Crashaw, the dedication closes, in prose, with an even more explicit anticipation of poetry yet to come: "If it seems too much is promised you here, good reader, in behalf of him to whom this little book shall be satisfying, you should know that I look not only to these [pieces] which you have here in this book but also to those which you will be able to have at some time (by encouraging these meanwhile)." ["Si nimium hîc promitti tibi videtur, Lector bone, pro eo cui satisfaciendo libellus iste futurus fuerit; scias me in istis non ad hæc modò spectare quæ hîc habes, sed ea etiam quæ olim (hæc interim fovendo) habere poteris" (646-47).]

Crashaw's prefatory section closes with a curious and as yet not fully explained reference to a controversy apparently involving Crashaw and some followers of St. Ignatius Loyola, a controversy that has led, he says, to exaggerated claims on the part of his opponents and slander directed against him.[13] Asking for

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(Williams's edition mistakenly omits one of the "& bibit" phrases in line 93 and prints "usquè" in line 94 as usque.")

[13]Crashaw refers to the "Acygnian teachers" ("magistros Acygnianos"), "Acygnian" being an anagram of Ignatian (or Ignacyan), with whom he has some disagreeement. L. C. Martin remarks that though the lines suggest that "a spirited though polite resistance was being made to Jesuit propaganda," Crashaw's "High Anglicanism was clearly well developed by 1634" (*The Poems English Latin and Greek of Richard Crashaw.* 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957, xxii).

forgiveness as an ambitious youth ("ambitioso juveni"), Crashaw puts forth his slender volume of epigrams ("tenui") as a kind of challenge, assuring his opponents (and his readers) that he will remain satisfied and "peacefully contented" ("placidissimè acquiescentem").

The elements of the paratexts to the 1634 volume are in many ways all of a piece, embodying and professing the modesty one might expect of a young poet first venturing into print while exhibiting the confidence and expectation of a writer very sure of himself. His poetic and religious allegiances are already apparent, and, though inexperienced, he is bold to identify them. One could read the self-advertisements in the prefatory material as the brash professions of a poet whose success is far from assured or the first pronouncements of a poet who, already praised and apparently urged to take his early works to print, fully anticipates that this is only the beginning. Twelve years later, with the publication of the first edition of *Steps to the Temple. Sacred Poems, With the Delights of the Muses*, Crashaw's bold promises are fulfilled.

Epigrammatum Sacrorum Liber allows us to read and assess the young poet's observations about himself. Subsequent volumes, including the 1646 *Steps to the Temple*, provide insights into the comments and perspectives of others. The title page identifies explicitly the presence of sacred verse ("Steps to the Temple. Sacred Poems") and suggests another kind of poetry ("With other Delights of the Muses"), the relative importance of the two clearly signaled by the priority assigned to "Steps to the Temple" and its much larger typeface (fig. 2). Indeed, the volume encourages us to interpret the two sections as entirely separate, as if two volumes have been bound together. There is a second title page at page 103, this one repeating all of the information about the author and publication information, expanding somewhat the reference to "Delights of the Muses" ("or, Other Poems written on severall occasions") and including a line from Martial 8.3.12 ("*Dic mihi quid melius desidiosus agas*" ["Tell me, what better will you do in

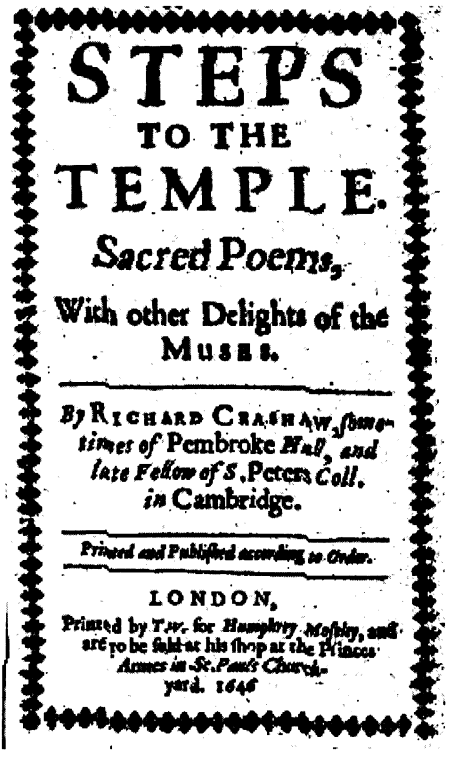
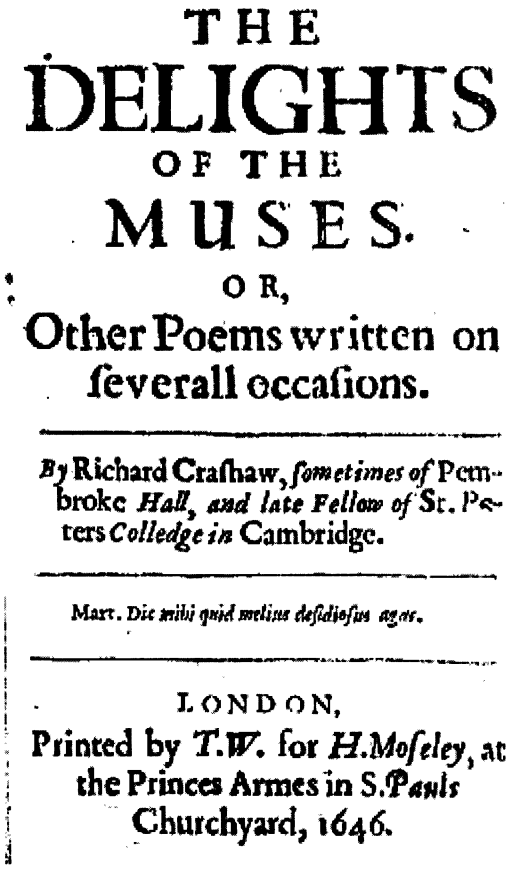

STEPS
TO THE
TEMPLE.
Sacred Poems,
With other Delights of the
Muses.
By RICHARD CRASHAW, sometimes of Pembroke Hall, and late Fellow of S. Peters Coll. in Cambridge.
Printed and Published according to Order.
LONDON,
Printed by T.W. for Humphrey Mosley, and are to be sold at his shop at the Princes Armes in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1646

Fig. 2. Title page of Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple* (1646). This item is reproduced by permission of *The Huntington Library, San Marino, California*; call number RB 102361. Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

your idleness?"]) (fig. 3).[14] Crashaw's allusions to Martial in his epigrams allow him to recognize the classical poet's reputation

[14]The line from Martial was used at least once before, on the title page of a Renaissance jest book printed in London in 1638. (*Gratiae Ludentes. Jests, from the Universitie.* By H.L., Oxon. Mart. *Dic mihi quid melius desidiosus agas.* Printed at London by Tho. Cotes for Humphrey Mosley, 1638). The line comes from a poem in which Martial offers an implicit defense of writing what others might regard as "sweet trifles" ("dulcis . . . nugas").



THE
DELIGHTS
OF THE
MUSES.
OR,
Other Poems written on
ſeverall occaſions.

By Richard Craſhaw, *ſometimes of* Pembroke *Hall, and late Fellow of* St. Peters *Colledge in* Cambridge.

Mart. *Dic mihi quid melius deſidioſus agat.*

LONDON,
Printed by *T.W.* for *H.Moſeley*, at the Princes Armes in S.*Pauls* Churchyard, 1646.

Fig. 3. Second title page (at p. 103) in Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple* (1646). This item is reproduced by permission of *The Huntington Library, San Marino, California*; call number RB 102361 Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

while contrasting his profane verse with Crashaw's sacred epigrams. The epigraph here serves not as a contrast to the verse that follows but as a confirmation of its worth. Nonetheless, the significance—at least to those who helped compile the volume and

see it into print—of this physical separation of sacred and secular verse, is made clearer in "The Preface to the Reader."

In the preface, the "Authors friend," assuming, it seems, that some readers will already know of Crashaw as poet, endeavors to write "for those, whom the name of our Divine Poet hath not yet seized into admiration." Who this friend is we do not know, but he claims considerable familiarity with Crashaw's life and writing and is determined to promote an appreciation of his accomplishments. This effort is, by 1646, made more challenging, since by that time Crashaw had become a convert to the Church of Rome and was living in Paris, shortly to depart to Italy. The author of the preface hints at that development, but only much later, after he has provided reasons to read and admire what follows.

The opening lines of the preface encourage readers to believe that many will already know of Crashaw, as the writer promises to be brief ("not usurpe much upon thy eye") and indicates that the opening comments are intended "onely" for those not already familiar with the poet ("those, whom the name of our Divine Poet hath not yet seized into admiration"). Most of the first four pages of the slightly more than five-page Preface are devoted to portraying Crashaw as the "Divine Poet" whose achievements equal the best of other sacred poets and exceed the accomplishments of others who, whatever their reputation, set their eyes on earth-bound subjects. Setting his initial praises against the backdrop of the work and reputation of Pythagoras, the writer of the preface affirms that Crashaw's verse can "lift thee Reader, some yards above the ground" and asserts that as, in Pythagoras's school, music was used to "tune" the "temper" of each participant so as to prepare each listener for one of the "weighty Lectures" of the master, so each reader may "take a Poem hence, and tune the soule by it, into a heavenly pitch; and thus refined and borne upon the wings of meditation. In these Poems thou maist talke freely of God, and of that other state."

The "Authors friend" seems responsible for the title of the collection of sacred verse, with its allusion to Herbert's *The Temple*,

and he clearly, though briefly, makes that connection explicit, asserting that "Here's Herbert's second, but equall, who hath retriv'd Poetry of late, and return'd it up to its Primitive use; Let it bound back to heaven gates, whence it came." The most audacious claims for Crashaw's verse—fully equal to Crashaw's own self-identified aspirations in 1634 but without his occasional modesty—follow immediately, with a detailed contrast of two types of poetic subjects and aims: the divine, "high-borne" and inspired, on the one hand, and the products of the "generall arraignment of Poets" who give their attention to the ordinary, mundane, and trivial. Associated with the first are Herbert, St. Augustine, and, of course, Crashaw; with the latter "under-headed Poets" are such as Homer, Virgil, Horace, and Claudian. No section provides clearer insights into how the friend seeks to guide our view of the poet, and it is worth citing fully.

> Thinke yee, St. Augustine would have steyned his graver Learning with a booke of Poetry, had he fancied their dearest end to be the vanity of Love-Sonnets, and Epithalamiums? No, no, he thought with this, our Poet, that every foot in a high-borne verse, might helpe to measure the soule into that better world: Divine Poetry; I dare hold it, in position against Suarez on the subject, to be the Language of the Angels; it is the Quintessence of Phantasie and discourse center'd in Heaven; 'tis the very Outgoings of the soule; 'tis what alone our Author is able to tell you, and that in his owne verse.
>
> It were prophane but to mention here in the Preface those under-headed Poets; Retainers to seven shares and a half; Madrigall fellowes, whose onely businesse in verse, is to rime a poore six-penny soule, a Subburb sinner into hell;—May such arrogant pretenders to Poetry vanish, with the prodigious issue of tumorous heats and flashes of their adulterate braines, and for ever after, may this our Poet fill us the better roome of man. Oh! when the generall arraignment of Poets shall be, to give an accompt of their higher soules, with what a triumphant brow, shall our divine Poet sit above, and looke downe upon poore Homer,Virgil, Horace, Claudian? &c. who had amongst them the ill lucke to talke out a great part of their gallant Genius, upon Bees, Dung, froggs, and Gnats,

> &c. and not as himselfe here, upon Scriptures, divine Graces, Martyrs and Angels.

The tone of unabashed adulation continues as the writer proceeds to mix biographical details with praise, noting that the sacred poems are "aptly" styled "Stepps to the Temple" since Crashaw served "in the Temple of God" at St. Mary's Church in Peterhouse and "penned these Poems, Stepps for happy soules to climbe heaven by."

The reality is that a significant number of the poems in the volume are secular poems, those grouped under the heading of *The Delights of the Muses*, but it is evident that the writer of the Preface is interested in only the barest acknowledgment of their presence, providing a mere sentence to identify them and offer a passing justification for their inclusion: "And those other of his pieces intituled, The Delights of the Muses, (though of a more humane mixture) are as sweet as they are innocent." The writer points to Crashaw's academic accomplishments somewhat similarly, confirming the record of achievement—his knowledge of five languages in addition to English, "his skill in Poetry, Musicke, Drawing, Limming, graving, (exercises of his curious invention and sudden fancy)," his moderate diet (such that he "never created a Muse out of distempers, nor with our Canary scribblers . . . cast any strange mists of surfets before the Intelectuall beames of his mind or memory"), his prodigious memory of Greek and Latin poets—but assuring readers that these were "but his subservient recreations for vacant houres, not the grand businesse of his soule."

The writer concludes his praises of Crashaw's "vast perfections" by claiming an unbiased view ("impartially writ") of the poet who is, he says, "now dead to us." Since Crashaw is in fact still alive, the friend surely refers to other senses in which he is "dead"—gone from England, gone from the faith of his birth, gone as a living presence and influence among English poets. But just as the presence of secular poems is seen little to diminish the emphasis on the divine, so whatever sense in which Crashaw is "dead" is seen as

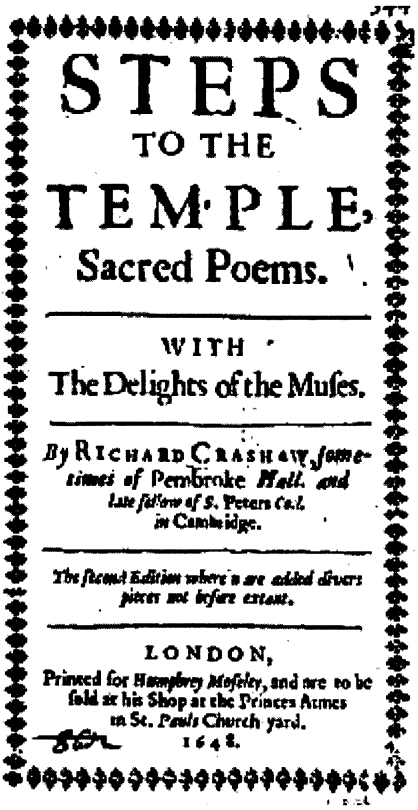
taking little away from the living presence embodied in the verse. The friend cites Crashaw's final line from his poem "Upon Bishop Andrewes his Picture before his Sermons," but the last three lines more fully capture the distinction intended between living verse and a "dead" writer:

> If you think
> Tis but a dead face Art doth heer bequeath,
> Look on the following leaves and see him breath.

One final, and unexpected, element of the paratexts in the 1646 volume is an apology inserted before the first poem in the collection, an apology that further underscores the importance to the editor-friend of distinguishing between the "humane" and the "divine": "Reader, there was a sudden mistake ('tis too late to recover it) thou wilt quickly find it out, and I hope as soone passe it over, some of the humane Poems are misplaced amongst the Divine."

The prefatory material in the 1646 volume is not long or complicated—consisting of a title page (actually, two of them), "The Preface to the Reader," the author's motto ("Live Jesus, Live, and let it bee / My life to dye, for love of thee"), and the brief apology for the misplacement of secular poems among the sacred—but it is ultimately all of a piece, having as its aim a particular representation of the author as a distinctly gifted "Divine Poet." This effort to guide a reader's understanding of what is to come in the volume seems especially suggestive in light of the presence of some twenty-five poems included within *Delights* and the absence of the poet ("now dead to us"), indeed, an absence that is, in the eyes of many, better labeled his apostasy. The examples here confirm Craig Kallendorf's observation that materials separate from the collected texts may "direct readers toward some interpretive possibilities within the text and away from others."[15] In

[15] *Virgil and the Myth of Venice: Books and Readers in the Italian Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 207.



STEPS
TO THE
TEMPLE,
Sacred Poems.

WITH
The Delights of the Muſes.

By RICHARD CRASHAW, ſometimes of Pembroke Hall, and Late fellow of S. Peters Col. in Cambridge.

The ſecond Edition wherein are added divers pieces not before extant.

LONDON,
Printed for Humphrey Moſeley, and are to be ſold at his Shop at the Princes Armes in St. Pauls Church yard.
1648.

Fig. 4. Title page of the second edition of Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple* (1648). By permission of The British Library; shelfmark E.1152.(2). Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

this case, the author's friend permits only one overarching interpretation—that of a divine poet who sits above others and whose verse stimulates, influences, and inspires.

In 1648 a second edition of the *Steps* and the *Delights* was published, presumably again by the unnamed friend, and to the original edition a number of poems were added. The volume announces itself as "The second Edition wherein are added divers pieces not before extant" (fig. 4). Poems were added to both sacred and secular sections, and those that had been "misplaced" are now

where they belong in the *Delights*. Thus, while the canon of Crashaw's secular poetry is expanded beyond the first edition, there is an even greater expansion of *Steps to the Temple*. Beyond these additions, the Table of poems is represented differently in the two editions. In 1646 the table including all poems was printed at the end of the volume; in 1648 the table of sacred verse is placed before the beginning of *Delights*, the table of secular verse located at the end of the volume. The separation of the two tables underscores even more in the second edition the sense of the two parts of the volume as two distinct entities. The most important changes are the additions to the divine poems, including new poems, six translations of Latin hymns, and major revisions of six poems previously printed. In short, while much of the front matter and the intertextual material is retained from 1646, in overall effect the second edition, as George Walton Williams suggested more than thirty years ago, underscores "the positions and attitudes of the earlier volume, and it intensifies the sensuousness and emphasizes the experiences of ecstatic mysticism already expressed."[16]

Two final publications derive directly from Crashaw's acquaintances and his apparent willingness, perhaps desire, to have his writings published. In 1652, Crashaw's friend Thomas Car made arrangements for the publication, in Paris, of *Carmen Deo Nostro,* a selection of 32 previously published sacred poems ("Collected, Corrected, Augmented"), to which is added a new poem to the Countess of Denbigh, "Perswading her to Resolution in Religion, & to render her selfe without further delay into the Communion of the Catholick Church," the volume itself being "Most humbly Presented" and dedicated to the Countess "[i]n hea[r]ty acknowledgment of his immortall obligation to her

[16] *The Complete Poetry of Richard Crashaw*, p. xxi.

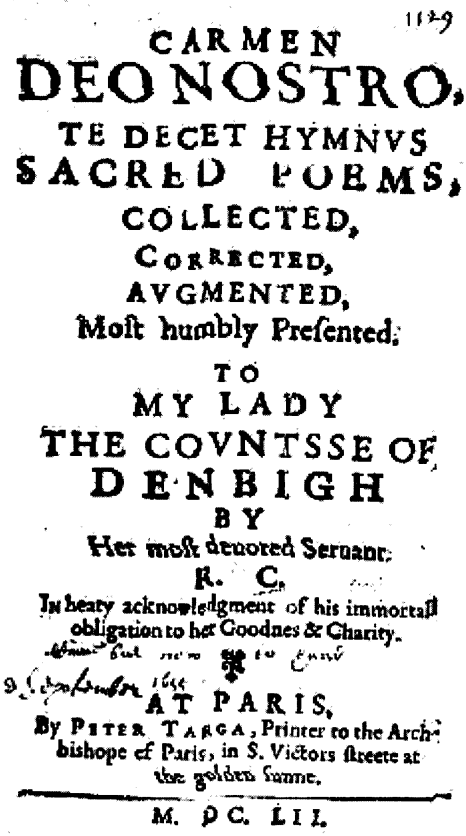

CARMEN
DEO NOSTRO,
TE DECET HYMNVS
SACRED POEMS,
COLLECTED,
CORRECTED,
AVGMENTED,
Moſt humbly Preſented,
TO
MY LADY
THE COVNTSSE OF
DENBIGH
BY
Her moſt devoted Servant,
R. C.
In heaty acknowledgment of his immortall obligation to her Goodnes & Charity.
AT PARIS,
By PETER TARGA, Printer to the Archbishope of Paris, in S. Victors ſtreete at the golden Sunne.
M. DC. LII.

Fig. 5. Title page of Crashaw's *Carmen Deo Nostro* (1652). By permission of The British Library; shelfmark E.1598.(1). Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

Goodnes & Charity" (fig. 5).[17] A longer and less personal version of the poem to the Countess was published separately in London

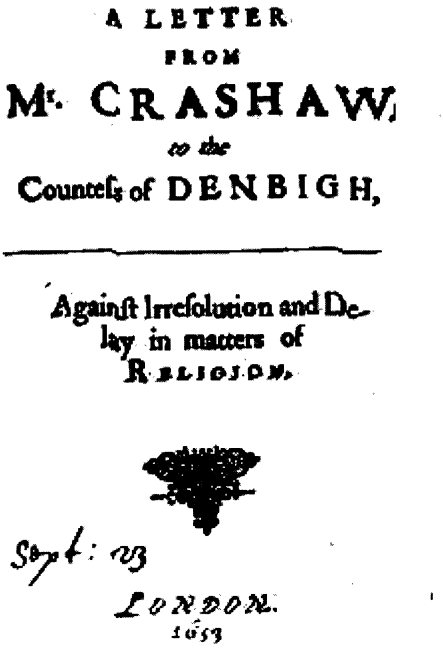
[17]Susan, first Countess of Denbigh, was first lady of the bedchamber to Queen Henrietta Maria. Crashaw likely met her at Oxford, where he stayed briefly after his return to England from Leiden in 1644. The Countess followed the Queen to Paris later that year and converted to Roman Catholicism in 1651, some six years after Crashaw's own conversion.

in 1653 as "A Letter from Mr. Crashaw to the Countess of Denbigh, Against Irresolution and Delay in matters of Religion" (fig. 6). The expressed aims of the 1652 volume are reminiscent of those identified in 1646, but whereas the previous friend was at least obligated to acknowledge a side to Crashaw that was not encompassed by the title "Divine Poet," this friend, Car, is required to make no such gesture. Two prefatory poems precede the poems by Crashaw, which begin, significantly, with the poem to the Countess of Denbigh. The unnamed friend of 1646 claims a personal familiarity with Crashaw; Car claims a linguistic and emotional identity as well:

CRASHAWE,
THE
ANAGRAMME.
HE WAS CAR

Was Car then Crashaw; or Was Crashawe Car,
Since both within one name combined are?
Yes, Car's Crashawe, he Car; t'is love alone
Which melts two harts, of both composing one.
. . . . . .
Sweete Crashawe was his friend; he Crashawes brother.

Car further establishes Crashaw's desire to have his poems printed and his wish that Car oversee that effort: "So Car hath Title then; t'was his intent / That what his riches pen'd, poore Car should print." Establishing his authority based on his intimacy with Crashaw and his knowledge of his wishes, Car proceeds, much in the vein of the earlier friend, to describe the poet with superlatives: he was "belov'd by all; dispraysed by none"; "he pleas'd all. / Nor would he give, nor take offence"; he so "possesse[d] himselfe" that he could "live / As deade (devoyde of interest)," his "well composed mynd" being "forestal'd / With heavenly riches: which had wholy called / His thoughtes from earth, to live above in'th aire / A very bird of paradice." As he was in the 1646 Preface


A LETTER
FROM
Mr. CRASHAW,
to the
Countess of DENBIGH,

Against Irresolution and Delay in matters of RELIGION.

Sept: 23
LONDON.
1653

Fig. 6. Title page of "A Letter from Mr. Crashaw to the Countess of Denbigh" (1653). By permission of The British Library; shelfmark E.220.(2). Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

distant from earth-bound, "under-headed Poets," so here Crashaw has no care of "earthly trashe." Indeed, *this* Crashaw is so *not* of this world that the very basics of existence—e.g., food, shelter, and clothing—seem simply to happen with no desire or effort on his part:

> What might suffice
> To fitt his soule to heavenly exercise,
> Sufficed him: and may we guesse his hart
> By what his lipps brings forth, his onely part

> Is God and godly thoughtes. Leaves doubt to none
> But that to whom one God is all: all's one.
> What he might eate or weare he tooke no thought.
> His needfull foode he rather found then sought.
> He seekes no downes, no sheetes, his bed's still made
> If he can find, a chaire or stoole, he's layd.
> When day peepes in, he quits his restlesse rest.
> And still, poore soule, before he's up he's dres't.

Car's knowledge of Crashaw's verse, his religious allegiances, and the circumstances of his death at Loreto is confirmed in his recognition that his friend "lived to dye / In the virgines lappe, to whom he did applye / His virgine thoughtes and words, and thence was styld / By foes, the chaplaine of the virgine myld."

The second prefatory poem adds an emphasis not seen before, but it is hinted at in 1646 when the author's friend comments on Crashaw's skill in "Drawing, Limming, graving" (though he reminds us that these are "but his subservient recreations for vacant houres"). In the 1652 volume Car devotes a full poem ("An Epigramme") to Crashaw's illustrations which, we are led to believe, are found variously throughout the volume ("Upon the pictures in the following Poems which the Author first made with his owne hand, admirably Well, as may be seene in his Manuscript dedicated to the right Honorable Lady the L. Denbigh"). As we might expect, given the tone of the anagram, Crashaw's art is said to equal the achievement of his writing:

> Twixt pen and pensill rose a holy strife
> Which might draw virtue better to the life.
> Best witts gave votes to that: but painters swore
> They never saw peeces so sweete before
> As thes: fruites of pure nature; where no art
> Did lead the untaught pensill, nor had part
> In the'worke.

In fact, as George Walton Williams has suggested, Crashaw is probably responsible for only two of the images; the figure of a

heart and lock accompanying the poem to the Countess of Denbigh, and the image of the Magdalene and the weeping (or bleeding?) heart accompanying "The Weeper." But that probable fact is perhaps less important than the extent to which the claim about Crashaw's artistic expertise fits with the other claims about Crashaw's exceptional accomplishments as, here, he aptly speaks both to the ear in his writing and to the eye in his images.

There remain in the seventeenth century six further publications of Crashaw's poetry, each almost entirely dependent on one or more of the publications in 1634, 1646, 1648, and 1652. Three of the volumes focus on the Latin epigrams, three on the longer and English poems, as if to endorse the two sources of Crashaw's reputation. In 1670 appears a volume that brings together each of the previously titled volumes except for the 1634 epigrams: *Steps to the Temple, The Delights of the Muses, and Carmen Deo Nostro.* Authorial attribution largely mimics earlier volumes ("By Ric. Crashaw, sometimes Fellow of Pembroke Hall, and late Fellow of St Peters Colledge in Cambridge") for what purports to be "The 2d Edition" printed by T.N. for Henry Herringman (fig. 7). Across from the title page is a representation of a temple with several figures on the steps, at bottom of which is the Latin Vulgate version of Psalms 137.2: "In conspectus Angelorum psallam tibi et adorabo ad Templum sanctam tuum" ["I will sing praise to thee in the sight of his angels [and] I will worship towards thy holy temple" (Douay-Rheims)]. Consistent with the emphasis of previous editions, the image and the scriptural citation thus elevate *Steps* and *Carmen* as works deserving the greatest attention. The prefatory matter in this volume is the same as that found in 1646, with one exception. Here the Table representing the whole of the volume is printed before the poems, following the Preface and the Authors Motto. Perhaps the intent is to offer a sense of completion and authority, representing, as it were, the whole of Crashaw's achievement before the poems are actually encountered.

STEPS
TO THE
TEMPLE,
THE
DELIGHTS
OF THE
MUSES,
AND
CARMEN
DEO NOSTRO

By *Ric. Crashaw*, sometimes Fellow of *Pembroke Hall*, and late Fellow of *St Peters Colledge* in *Cambridge*.

The 2d *Edition.*

In the *SAVOY*,
Printed by *T. N.* for *Henry Herringman* at the *Blew Anchor* in the *Lower Walk* of the *New Exchange*. 1670.

Fig. 7. Title page for volume including Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple*, *The Delights of the Muses*, and *Carmen Deo Nostro* (1670). This item is reproduced by permission of *The Huntington Library, San Marino, California*; call number RB 181355. Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

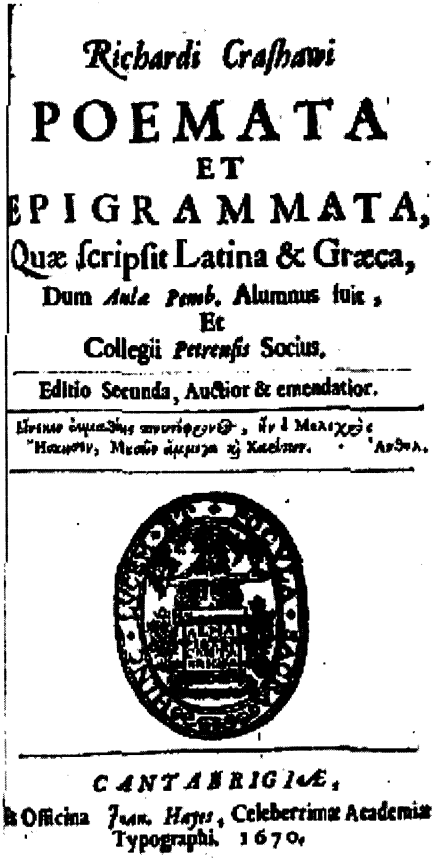
Also appearing in 1670 is a further volume, slightly re-titled and "Printed for John Hayes" at Cambridge, that is a re-issue of the Herringman publication. Omitting reference to *Carmen Deo Nostro*, it is, nonetheless, in its contents an exact reprinting of Herringman, and while it claims (on the title page) "Wherein are added divers pieces not before extant," that claim is either purposely misleading or is simply a reprinting of the accurate assertion made on the title page of the 1648 volume of *Steps*. A final publication of the combined volumes appears in 1690, printed

in London for Richard Bently, Jacob Tonson, Francis Saunders, and Thomas Bennet, and with an almost identical authorial attribution. Labeled "The Third Edition," it is in fact a reprint of volumes from the 1670s.

John Hayes, printer to the University at Cambridge, also produced two volumes of Crashaw's Latin and Greek epigrams, the first also in 1670, the second, an almost identical re-issue, in 1674. The prefatory material and arrangement of poems found in 1634 are reproduced in these later volumes, but one significant difference is apparent. Whereas the young Richard Crashaw did not merit mention on the title page in 1634, "Richardi Crashawi" is displayed prominently at the top of the title page of the 1670 volume (fig. 8). His association with Cambridge—identified in each of the publications of *Steps* and *Delights*—is confirmed here, in Latin, in words that largely repeat the formulaic acknowledgment seen before: "Dum Aulæ Pemb. Alumnus fuit, Et Collegii Petrensis Socius."

A final volume to be accounted for was published in 1682. "Epigrammata Sacra Selecta Cum Anglica Versione" or "Sacred Epigrams Englished" was printed for John Barksdale, Bookseller, and consists of thirteen pages of Latin epigrams, each followed by an English translation. The Latin epigrams are Crashaw's, but the English versions are not. They have been attributed to Clement Barksdale, a sometime poet and parson. Interestingly, neither author is identified on the title page or anywhere else in the volume. The selection of Crashaw's verse is, nonetheless, an anonymous affirmation of the high regard in which his Latin epigrams are held.

All of the verse for which Crashaw is known appears in seventeenth-century volumes, and it is just as evident that paratextual material that appears in those volumes guides us to a particular view of Crashaw, one that has largely persisted to the present day. His self-representation in 1634 is that of a young poet aware of his mentors and elders but not shy in proclaiming his


Richardi Crashawi

POEMATA

ET

EPIGRAMMATA,

Quæ scripsit Latina & Græca,

Dum *Aulæ Pemb.* Alumnus fuit,

Et

Collegii *Petrensis* Socius.

Editio Secunda, Auctior & emendatior.

CANTABRIGIÆ,

Ex Officina *Joan. Hayes*, Celeberrimæ Academiæ Typographi. 1670.

Fig. 8. Title page of 1670 volume of Crashaw's Latin and Greek poems and epigrams. This item is reproduced by permission of *The Huntington Library, San Marino, California*; call number RB 181356. Image published with permission of ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

present achievements and his future aspirations. Subsequent volumes provide an even more insistent image of him as a sacred poet of a particular sort, one who is not quite of this world and who, in his verse, is set apart from the "generall arraignment of Poets" (as the "Authors friend" would have it) and the "wretched We, Poets of Earth" (as Abraham Cowley puts it in his well-

known elegy). If contemporary readers wish to search for the origin of Crashaw's reputation as one of the most unconventional and un-English of early modern English poets, they would be advised to begin with the volumes printed in the seventeenth century.

Texas A&M University

Appendix

Editions of Crashaw's Works in the Seventeenth Century

Epigrammatum Sacrorum Liber. Cambridge, 1634.

Steps to the Temple. Sacred Poems, With other Delights of the Muses. By Richard Crashaw, sometimes of Pembroke Hall, and late Fellow of S. Peters Coll. in Cambridge. London: Printed by T.W. for Humphrey Moseley, 1646.

Steps to the Temple, Sacred Poems. With the Delights of the Muses. By Richard Crashaw, sometimes of Pembroke Hall, and late fellow of S. Peters Coll. in Cambridge. The second Edition wherein are added divers pieces not before extant. London: Printed for Humphrey Moseley, 1648.

Carmen Deo Nostro, Te Decet Hymnus[.] Sacred Poems, Collected, Corrected, Augmented, Most humbly Presented To My Lady The Count[e]sse of Denbigh by Her most devoted Servant R. C. In hea[r]ty acknowledgment of his immortall obligation to her Goodnes & Charity. Paris: Peter Targa, printer to the Archbishop of Paris, 1952.

A Letter from Mr. Crashaw to the Countess of Denbigh, Against Irresolution and Delay in matters of Religion. London, 1653.

Steps to the Temple, The Delights of the Muses, and Carmen Deo Nostro. By Ric. Crashaw, sometimes Fellow of Pembroke Hall, and late Fellow of St Peters Colledge in Cambridge. The 2d

Edition. London: Printed by T. N. for Henry Herringman, 1670.

Steps to the Temple, Sacred Poems. With The Delights of the Muses. By Richard Crashaw, sometimes of Pembroke Hall, and late fellow of S. Peters Coll. in Cambridge. Wherein are added divers pieces not before extant. Cambridge: Printed for John Hayes, 1670.

Richardi Crashawi Poemata et Epigrammata, Quæ scripsit Latina & Græca, Dum Aulæ Pemb. Alumnus fuit, et Collegii Petrensis Socius. Editio Secunda, Auctior & emendatior. Cambridge: Ex Officina Joan. Hayes, 1670.

Richardi Crashawi Poemata et Epigrammata, Quæscripsit Latina & Græca, Dum Aulæ Pemb. Alumnus fuit, et Collegii Petrensis Socius. Editio Secunda, Auctior & emendiatior. Cambridge: Ex Officina Joan. Hayes, 1674.

Epigrammata Sacra Selecta, cum Anglica Versione. Sacred Epigrams Englished. London: Printed for John Barksdale, 1682.

Steps to the Temple, The Delights of the Muses, and Carmen Deo Nostro By Ric. Crashaw, sometimes Fellow of Pembroek [sic] Hall, and Fellow of St. Peters Colledge in Cambridge. The Third Edition. London: Printed for Richard Bently, Jacob Tonson, Francis Saunders, and Tho. Bennet, [1690?].