

A Note on the 1649/1650 Editions on Donne's *Poems*

James S. Baumlin

I have in my possession a hitherto unrecorded copy of the 1649 edition of Donne's *Poems*, which is, as Robert S. Pirie notes, "the rarest of the 17th century printings of Donne's poems, only six copies being recorded."¹ In appearance this particular copy is undistinguished, lacking a portrait, and having some head margins cut too close, affecting some running titles. Yet a significant feature of this text is its inclusion of leaves (aa)⁸-(bb)⁴, an *omnium gatherum* of thirteen pieces first appearing in the 1650 edition; these pieces range from the prose "Newes from the very Countrey" and the *Catalogus Librorum* to the lyric "To Mr. George Herbert, with one of my Seals, of the Anchor and Christ" and the commendatory *In Vulponem*. On the other hand, this particular copy retains the 1649 edition's first quire of leaves: the 1649 title page, the prefatory "Printer to the Understanders," the "Hexastichon Bibliopolae," and the "Hexastichon ad Bibliopolam." (The 1650 edition, besides changing the title page, substitutes the younger Donne's dedication to Lord Craven for the original preface, and adds Ben Jonson's "To John Donne" to the two hexastichs.) In all other respects this copy matches precisely the collation of the 1650 edition, as reported in Keynes.²

This copy, dated 1649, thus offers further evidence of the close relationship between the two editions. Sir Geoffrey Keynes suggests the probability that the 1649 text "was never actually published, the sheets of most of the copies being incorporated in the volume issued by the same publisher in 1650 under the editorship of the younger Donne" (*Bibliography*, p. 163). The particular copy that I have described shows a unique and clear version of just this incorporation.

Notes

¹ Robert S. Pirie, *John Donne, 1572-1631; A Catalogue of the Anniversary Exhibition of First and Early Editions of His Works Held at the Grolier Club* (New York: Grolier Club, 1972), p. 24.

² Geoffrey Keynes, *A Bibliography of Dr John Donne, Dean of Saint Paul's*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1958), pp. 163-64.