

The John Donne Papers of Wesley Milgate

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Emeritus Professor Wesley Milgate was the editor of the Oxford edition of John Donne's *Satires, Epigrams, and Verse letters* which was published in 1967 and which has been described by Theodore Redpath as a

carefully revised text in old spelling and punctuation, with full *apparatus criticus*, critical and textual introductions, and commentary: a standard edition.¹

He was also responsible, after the death of R.C. Bald, for completing the standard biography of the poet, *John Donne: A Life*, published in 1970. Professor Bald was an Australian, as is Professor Milgate, who now lives in retirement in Sydney. In June, 1994, he generously gave me what he described as his "Donne bric-a-brac," which includes his annotated proof copy of the Bald biography and other interesting material which I believe that it behoves me to bring to the attention of Donne scholars.

1) Unpublished annotations to R.C. Bald's *John Donne: A Life*.

Milgate received the uncorrected proof copy on 26 November, 1969. He has annotated it with numerous corrections and additional information. Many of the corrections are of typographical errors, several of which—but not all—were eradicated from the reprinting of the biography, "with corrections," in 1986. However, Milgate's more substantial annotations (including several which refer to the scholar-

ship of I.A. Shapiro, in various journals) were not incorporated. Some are significant queries of Bald's suggestions and conclusions, a few are outright contradictions, others provide more detail. Fortunately, the pagination of the original hardback edition of 1970 and of the paperback of 1986 is the same.

I have decided to reproduce here only a selection of the more substantial annotations. I have not, for example, included several different versions of punctuation of documents by Donne which refer to (for example) different manuscript collections (for instance, that at the Folger Shakespeare Library) from those Bald used. I have italicized Milgate's underlinings.

page 21. In reference to the "famous triptych by Memling at Chatsworth" of one of Donne's fifteenth-century ancestors and his wife, Milgate, underlining "at Chatsworth," writes in the margin:

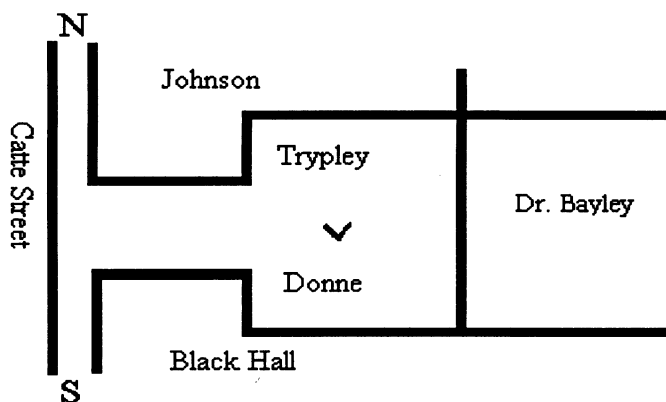
in National Gallery London since 1956.

page 22. In annotation of note 1, a reference to the will of a "John Don" of London, Milgate adds to "P.C.C. [i.e. Prerogative Court of Canterbury], 2 Logge":

28 Aug. 1480, proved December 1480. Childless, but his wife Joan Hopper had sons by earlier marriage. He speaks in his will of the Hoppers as "cousins" in Kidwelly. Will transcribed in *Trans. of the Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Soc.*, xxv, part lx (1935) p.63.

page 31. In annotation of note 3, concerning the poet's father's investment in Oxford real estate in 1571, "in Catts Streete in parochia Sancte Marie in villa Oxon," Bald confesses that he "cannot make proper sense" of the compass description of the site in the Public Record Office document. Milgate has sketched in "I.A. Shapiro's solution":

Immediately beyond Black Hall was Hart Hall (to become Hertford College in 1740) where John Donne and his brother were later members.



page 46. Bald remarks that “there is no record at Cambridge of [John Donne] ever having had any connection with the University” and in the note to this comment, adds: “Even Donne’s honorary degree is not recorded.” Milgate has written next to this: “Entry found in Grace Book.” (See also page 308 note 2.)

page 96. Milgate corrects Bald’s statement about Egerton’s only daughter’s marriage to Francis Leigh of Cheshire “about three months before her father married again,” to “four” months, noting “she was m. 9 June 1597.”

page 100 note 1. Donne is quoted, in a letter to Sir Robert Ker, expressing thanks for “all the favours that I have received from my Lord Chancellor.” Bald assumes, in his subsequent commentary, that this is Francis Bacon (appointed Lord Chancellor in 1618). But Milgate notes that “I.A.S[hapiro]. is certain that this was John Williams (‘Lord Chancellor’).”

page 139 note 2. Bald refers to “William Winstanley’s *Englands Worthies* (1660), p.379.” Milgate notes that this page reference is to the second edition of 1684. In the edition cited it should be p.301.

page 150. With regard to Donne’s friendship with Sir Henry

Wotton—described by Henry King as “a Friendship begun in *Oxford*, continued in their various Travels,” Milgate notes:

I.A.S. thinks (rashly?) that this can only mean “while separated by the travels of one or the other,” because “after 1598 they cannot have travelled together.”

Shapiro is presumably referring to Donne’s entry into the service of Sir Thomas Egerton in 1597-8.

pages 196 and 197. Considering Donne’s role as a mediator between Ben Jonson and his “touchy” friends, Bald refers to a letter from Donne to Goodyer of 17 July, 1613, containing a “cryptic passage” about the change of a character’s name in a play. Bald opines that this refers to the character in *Bartholomew Fair* originally called Inigo Lanthorn but later named Lantern Leatherhead, allegedly in deference to “Inigo Jones’s friends... who had taken offence.” Milgate notes:

I.A.S. thinks that to suggest that the play was written + known to some people in July 1613 is to put that date too far back, unless there is (other) evidence.

The editor of the Oxford Jonson, G.A. Wilkes, has told me that he agrees with this judgment.

page 218 note 1. With regard to Donne’s consideration of the controversy over the Oath of Allegiance, Bald argues that Donne’s uncertainty suggests that it is “unlikely that he had been assisting [Thomas] Morton for three or more years previously” for Morton’s views on the Oath were clear. Milgate writes:

I.A.S. says that as Morton’s earlier publications did not concern the Oath, this need not mean that D. was not helping M. (But presumably M. was concerned about the Oath long before he published on it?)

page [237]. Bald begins:

Early in 1611 Donne found a new patron.... This was Sir Robert Drury.

Milgate notes (with regard to the date) that Shapiro

points out that this is an inference—no evidence. But a fair enough inference?

page 250. With regard to Donne's visit to Paris with Drury's party where "stomach collick... kept me in a continuall vomiting," Bald suggests that he was attended "by an English physician, Richard Andrews, with whom he was soon on terms of familiarity." But, Milgate notes, that

Shapiro says it can't be R.A. "who was in London all the while."

page 267. Bald speculates of Donne's sons, that George Donne "inherited his father's precocity" and "probably entered Broadgates Hall in Oxford in 1615, at the age of ten. John, though the elder, stayed on at Westminster, in due course became a King's Scholar (1619), and then passed on to Christ Church, Oxford." Shapiro is doubtful about the information on George, Milgate notes. He and "the other Donne, John, also entered [at Broadgates Hall, were] more likely sons of Rev. J.D. of London."

page 308 note 2. Bald again states that no records of the conferring of Donne's doctorate at Cambridge survive. Milgate points out that

Donne's name is entered with those of Younge, Cheeke, and Derham, as D.D's "made by ye King," 1615, in University Grace Book E: entry in facsimile in Catalogue of exhibition of U. Library Cambridge, 1972, to mark the Quatercentenary.

page 324. The letter of Jean l'Oisseau de Tourval to Francis

Windebank concerning the death of Donne's wife is annotated by Milgate to correct "combien" to "comment," "fist de iour" (to which Bald has appended "[?]") to "fait de iours" and "Mary" to "mari."

page 359. Regarding a letter of Donne to Toby Mathew, Milgate notes that "Shapiro thinks the letter dates 'almost certainly' from December, not August." The material on pp.359-60 concerning George Gage, "then in Spain," is (according to Shapiro) "erroneous" because of the incorrect dating of Donne's letter.

page 367 note 2. Referring to the close relations between Donne and Viscount Doncaster, Bald suggests that a letter reading "my L. of Dov." should read "Don" and continues: "that the letter belongs to 1620 is established almost beyond doubt." Milgate points out that Shapiro has considerable doubts:

I.A.S. thinks "*Don*" an unverifiable conjecture (true) and dates the letter pretty surely to July 1616 (it *might* be later).

page 393. Annotating Bald's reference to Matthew Griffith, "mentioned in more than one seventeenth-century account as 'Dr. Donne's favourite,'" Milgate writes:

"Whose favourite he was (as 'tis said)," [Anthony a] Wood, *Ath[enae] Oxon[iensis]*, ed. Bliss, iii. 711; and D. Lloyd, *Memories of the Lives, Actions, Sufferings & Deaths of those... that suffered... in our late Intestine Wars*, 1678, p.521 (but, was this Wood's source?) I can't find another C17 account; Bald might have.

page 403. As a reference for the anecdote about a man "haled before the authorities for urinating within the building [St Paul's], apologized and gave as his excuse that he did not know he was in a church," Milgate gives "H. Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud*, 1940, p.123."

page 422 note 2. Milgate completes the note by pointing out that Murray was bishop of Llandaff.

page [431]. Bald's contention that Donne refers in a letter to having spoken to Doncaster is queried:

D. says to "My Lord": I.A.S. thinks it v. unlikely that this was Doncaster.

page 477 note 1. Milgate changes the Bald transcription of the Loseley MSS letter which gives its date as "29 of June 1625" to July.

page 495. Bald says that Lady Bedford, Donne's friend, died "on 31 May." Milgate notes:

26th May, acc. to J.H. Wiffen, *Historical Memoirs of the House of Russell* (1833), ii.120.

page 517. Bald quotes Donne's remark that he was one "from whom, one Scholler in each Universitie sucks something, and must be weaned by me." Milgate writes:

I.A.S. thinks this refers to John + George, D's sons, more probably [rather than, as Bald suggests, "the Lords Carlisle and Percy"] (but he has *no* evidence, presumably, that George was at Cambridge!)

page 563. In the Appendix of Documents, in the section where Donne's Will is printed, and Donne names as his executors

my welbeloved Frendes Henrye Kinge Doctor of Divinitie & John Montfort Doctor of Divinitie both Residentiaries of the Church of St Pauls London

Milgate writes:

Puzzle. John M. was not a Residentiary. Was he the executor, or his father, D's friend, Thomas M.? (T.M. died 27 Feb in 1632; was he ailing when D. made the will?)

In the **Index**, the entry "Pluralism among the clergy" should have, as the first citation, "115n." And the entry "Saint-John, Ist Viscount Grandison" should read "Saint-John, Oliver, Ist Viscount Grandison."

2) Letter of Frank Kerins.

Writing to Milgate about the *Life*, on 5 February, 1974, Frank Kerins, then a graduate student at Fordham University in New York, points out the following error on page 192 which remains uncorrected in the 1986 reprinting:

... the commendatory poems composed by Donne and the London Wits for Coryate's *Crudities* are said to have been published at the command of Prince Henry and "accordingly Coryate published them in *The Odcombian Banquet* (1611) as a sort of preliminary puff, and again in the *Crudities* itself." Michael Stratton (*The Life and Adventures of Thomas Coryate*: London: Oxford University Press, 1962, 130-5) has, I feel, conclusively shown that the *Odcombian Banquet* was another pirate publication of Thomas Thorpe (the same who two years earlier had published Shakespeare's Sonnets under questionable circumstances). The fact that the *Crudities* was in print before Thorpe's publication is evidenced by the inclusion in the title page of the latter work the motto, "Asinus Portans Mysteria," (the ass carrying the mysteries), the motto that Coryate had inscribed on a box filled with presentation copies of the *Crudities*. The box was carried by a donkey on Coryate's trip from Royston to London. In Coryate's *Crambe* (1611), which followed on the heels of the pirated work, the furious author notes the inclusion of the motto in the *Odcombian Banquet* and states that the pirate had "most sinisterly and malignantly applied it (as all the Readers doe interpret it) to myself." The *Odcombian Banquet*, far from being "a preliminary puff" is no more than a pilfering of the witty commendations meant to introduce and promote the sale of Coryate's *Crudities* and this kind of publicity blurb by many of the best known wits of the age

could not fail to help the sale of the book. The *Odcombian Banquet*, however, did the opposite, for not only did Thorpe steal the witty commendations, that part of Coryate's book most talked about, but he insulted Coryate by the misapplied motto and, worst of all, by writing a final apology for not printing the body of the *Crudities* because, according to Thorpe, there was nothing in them worth printing.

Although this error is indeed a small point, it is something to which Coryate, himself, would have violently objected and therefore I feel it should not pass unnoticed.

Kerins then remarks on another aspect of the *Life*—the possible relationship between Donne and persons associated with the Elizabethan stage in the 1590s, in reference to the letter from Edward Alleyn (the actor who originally created Tamburlaine, Faustus, and Barabas), quoted on page 74 by Bald:

If Donne did know this group in the 1590s, could it not be possible that the funereal poem "Sorrowe which to this house scarce knew the way" is a witty lament on the death of Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon, the Lord Chamberlain, on behalf of the acting companies (esp. the Lord Chamberlain's men)? In 1635, as you know, it was entitled "Elegie on the L.C." and Giles Oldisworth expanded it to Lord Carey in his 1639 copy. Bald says that the description doesn't seem to fit Carey and that Donne laments a man "who had died by a 'strange chance' and was grieved for by his 'children'" (p.78). The poem itself does not say that the man died by any "strange chance." "Strange chance" refers merely to the fact (ll. 1-2) that "Sorrow" which had previously been unknown in "this house" is now "heire of it." The reference to "His children" (ll. 23-26) need not be taken literally and may well refer to the company of players who depended on him as patron and protector. It is primarily these functions that the poem laments (cf. ll. 7-16). The lines

though no familie
 Ere rigg'd a soule for heavens discoverie
 With whom more venturers more boldly dare
 Venture their states, with him in joy to share (ll.13-16)

acquire a much more lucid meaning if we think of the acting company. The death of Carey was a real disaster to all acting companies in general and the Lord Chamberlain's men in particular, and when William Brooke, a man who disliked plays, became Lord Chamberlain, the Mayor of London was freed to attack the theatres. Marchette Chute in *Shakespeare of London* (N.Y.: Dutton, 1949, 190-1) notes that "The Mayor of London... rushed to the attack as soon as their powerful protector was dead; and Tom Nash found there was no market for new plays in London because the actors 'are piteously persecuted by the Lord Mayor and however in their old lord's time they thought their state settled, it is now so uncertain they cannot build upon it'."

If the poem is read in this light, perhaps the title "Elegie on the L.C." and Oldisworth's identification can be vindicated.

3) Milgate's collation of the verse-letter to the Rich sisters, the Lady Carey and Mrs Essex Rich - this verse-letter being the subject of much controversy in 1972.

That Milgate had shown this material to Dame Helen Gardner is indicated by her handwriting (which I recognise) on it in two places. In his letter to me, Milgate notes that "Dame Helen, of course, spotted my boo-boo in the textual apparatus re line 5 (not very vital)." Milgate had overlooked the fact that the Trinity College Dublin MS is in agreement with that in the Dobell and O'Flaherty Collections at the Harvard College Library - an observation which Gardner published in a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement* of 21 January, 1972, in which she deals with A.J. Smith's examination of the text of the holograph of the verse-letter in his *TLS* article, "A John Donne poem in holograph" of 7 January of that year. Dame Helen's transcription was subsequently queried by P.L. Heyworth (*TLS*, 24 March, 1972) and corrected by Nicolas Barker in the *Book Collector* 22 (1973), 487-93.

Milgate concludes his collation with the warning:

Even if there were not the virtual certainty that the copy circulated was *not* that actually sent to Lady C., no firm conclusion can be drawn about the reliability of MSS. for punctuation, elision-marks, capitals, etc. at any given point. Donne himself is not wholly consistent in *any* of these matters.

Also amongst Professor Milgate's papers are:

1) a 32-page typescript of an essay by Edward Le Comte entitled "Jack Donne: from Rake to Husband";

2) the catalogue of "An Exhibition to celebrate the work & reputation of John Donne" at the Cambridge University Library, 23 October to 23 December, 1972;

3) the program of "A City Tribute to John Donne", at St Paul's Cathedral and the Mermaid Theatre, to celebrate the 400th anniversary of his birth, 1-8 October, 1972,

plus several signed offprints of articles on Donne by such as Clayton Lein, Geoffrey Keynes, Pierre Legouis, and Karl Josef Holtgen.

And, amusingly, there is a letter from the Australian poet, A.D. Hope, enclosing in typescript

a very rare manuscript not even known to yourself or Helen Gardner I suspect. Scholars I have consulted reject the view that the signature indicates a jest by Ben Jonson.

THE SUN'S ANSWER TO MR. DONNE

Idle young foole, unruly Donne,
 Why must thou thus
 Through windowes and through curtaines rail at us?
 Must the great Globe to thy light fancies run?
 Saucy young slug-abled, goe chide
 Thine owne impatience yesternight.
 Hadst thou not been so hott to mount and ride,
 Those curtains drawne had made a lasting night.

Why, for that matter, all this coil, since thou
Hast but to rise, young sir, and drawe them now.

Thy tropes so brilliant and so fine
Why shouldst thou thinke?
Conceits so stale, poor poet, they fust and stinke:
Winkes that eclipse; fair eyes that dazzle mine
When thou hast blusht, look forth and see
Both Indias bide, Kings keep their thrones,
But over all the world, in bedde like thee,
How many young rogues, how many love-sick drones
Spin thriftless rhymes and, fondling a warm titt,
Addle their brains with metaphysical witte.

Nay, more, there's one close by thee, lad,
Like thee runs on:
He's the Great Turk, Sophy and Cham in one
Yet lies in chaines and straw and is horne-madde.
Thinke, of green rascals, thou art not
The first to get a wench to bed,
Nor, who, to make her laugh, his bolt being shot,
With crazy boasts and phansies filled her head.
But stay to warm ye both? Nay Jack, goe to!
Thou mayst rant on, but I have work to doe.

B.I.

The author, of course, is Hope himself.

I am happy to make any of this material available, in photocopied form, to any Donne scholar who cares to write to me, c/o Department of English, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia.

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Notes

¹*The songs and sonets of John Donne*, 2nd ed., (London: Methuen, 1983) 360.