

Donniana

Author(s): G. C. Moore Smith

Source: *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Jan., 1913), pp. 47-52

Published by: [Modern Humanities Research Association](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3712647>

Accessed: 16-02-2016 15:52 UTC

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



*Modern Humanities Research Association* is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Modern Language Review*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

## DONNIANA.

IN that almost forgotten journal *The Modern Language Quarterly* (IV, 91), I gave under the above title some notes on Mr Gosse's *Life and Letters of John Donne*. Having now re-read that most interesting book, I venture to send a few more notes on it.

I, p. 134. Donne is said to owe nothing to Shakespeare. It is possible however that his phrase 'Th' expense of brain and spirit' (*Progress of the Soul*, stanza 5) is a reminiscence of Shakespeare's Sonnet cxxix, l. 1, and the line 'She to whom all this world was but a stage' (*Second Anniversary*, l. 67) of *As You Like It*. One may also think that a passage in the *Funeral Elegy* (ll. 21—25) was suggested by the almost contemporary *Coriolanus* (I, 1, 105—107 and the Fable of the Belly).

p. 187. Lancelot Andrews is said by Mr Gosse to have been 'by eight years Donne's senior.' Should not 'eight' be 'eighteen'?

p. 189. The fragment of a letter 'Probably to Sir H. Goodyer' 'From my Hospital at Mitcham, August 10' is here assigned to the year 1608. The same passage, however, with the slightest possible verbal differences, occurs in a letter 'To the Honourable Sir R. D[rury]' printed in vol. II, p. 36 as written in February or March, 1614. Does the letter really belong to the latter date? and was it written at Mitcham? And, if so, must we not assume that Donne, even after his acquaintance with Drury and his obtaining rooms at Drury House, still kept up his old Mitcham home, or returned to it after an interval? A letter of 17th July, 1613 (II, 16, 17) is dated 'From my Hospital' and another of 28th July, 1614 (II, 46, 47) 'At my poor hospital.' Does this throw any light on the mystery of Donne's relations with Sir R. Drury, which Mr Gosse points out (II, 53)? 'We are to believe that since 1610 he had been, with all his family, the guests of [Drury]. Yet no mention of Sir Robert or Lady Drury is to be found in Donne's copious correspondence, with the exception of one colourless letter... Were it not that experience teaches us that those with whom we are

in daily intercourse are those of whom our letters, sometimes, speak the least, we should be tempted to think the lodgings in Drury House a myth.'

p. 200, middle. Mr Gosse says that 'M. Mole,' mentioned in Donne's previous letter, 'may doubtless be identified with Mathieu Molé the President.' The man referred to is however John Mole or Molle. See L. Pearsall Smith's *Life and Letters of Sir H. Wotton*, II, 473.

p. 203, l. 16 from bottom, 'this would be the worst degree of the ill-fortune if that fail.' Query 'of that fail [= failure]'? The substantive 'fail' is used repeatedly by Shakespeare.

p. 203, l. 10 from bottom, 'to live in your memory is advancement enough, and I shall by your Lordship's favour be bold to refresh by my often letters.' We ought probably to read 'refresh it.'

p. 217, l. 11 from bottom. Either emend 'having' to 'have,' or begin the sentence 'Except you repent... and continue to 'so ill.'

p. 223, 'our soul, which is but one, hath swallowed up a negative and feeling soul.' 'Negative' should be 'vegetive' or 'vegetative.' Donne is referring to the triple division of souls thus stated by Jo. Seton in his *Dialectica*:

Vegetatiua	} Vita triplex	{	Plantis brutis hominibus
Sensitiua			Brutis & hominibus
Rationalis			Homini tantum.

Cp. Donne's *Anatomy*, II, 160: those two souls which then thou [my soul] found'st in me, My second soul of sense and first of growth: *Verse Letter to the Countess of Salisbury*, 52:

We first have souls of growth and sense: and those  
When our last soul, our soul immortal, came,  
Were swallowed into it, and have no name.

p. 302, l. 7 from bottom, 'the magnificence which have been here.' Query, 'magnificoes'?

p. 307. 'Monsieur de Rohan...son in law to D. Sally,' i.e. to the Duke of Sully. This is Henri, Duc de Rohan, who among other things was godfather to Charles I.

p. 315, l. 2, 'we charged our whole gests.' For 'charged' read 'changed.'

II, p. 8, l. 11 from bottom, 'comite.' Query 'comiti'?

p. 16, middle, 'I did your commandment with Mr Johnson, etc.' This is an interesting reference to some objection taken about July, 1613 to some work of Ben Jonson, which led him to change its name. I learn from Mr Percy Simpson that it has not hitherto been noted.

p. 29, l. 4. 'Mr M.' is clearly Albertus Morton.

p. 41, l. 10, 'whatsoever to appear to me.' Query 'whatsoever should [or 'do'] appear to me'? The sentence runs on over the close of the paragraph.

p. 46, l. 9 from bottom, 'in your business.' Query 'in their business' ('their' in the MS. being probably 'y').

p. 51. If this letter were addressed to Somerset, would it open with 'Sir'?

p. 71, l. 5 from bottom. Butler is no doubt the Cambridge physician.

p. 94, l. 10, 'dies' should be 'die.'

p. 125, bottom. Mr Gosse says of the letter which follows: 'Whether it was, indeed, written to Sir Thomas Lucy I greatly doubt; the tone is more that of a letter to Sir Henry Goodyear. No verse-letter which can be identified with that which is here announced, exists addressed to either friend.'

The letter (whether its recipient was Lucy or Goodyear) was clearly addressed to the same person as the letter on p. 121 which is superscribed 'To Sir H. Goodyer at Polesworth.'

The second sentence which I quoted from Mr Gosse rests on a misunderstanding. There is no question of any 'verse-letter...addressed to either friend.' Goodyear [or Lucy] had asked Donne to write an elegy on a Mr Martin. Donne has found himself unequal to doing so—but encloses to his correspondent 'to his own condemnation' a verse-letter which he had received from a very busy man.

p. 143, l. 11 from bottom, 'since by retiring.' Query 'since his retiring'?

p. 150. This letter is addressed to Sir Thomas Lucy and the one following it to Sir H. G[oodyer]. Yet it seems obvious that the two were written to the same person. This seems to dispose of Mr Gosse's suggestion that Donne's 'little book of Cases' mentioned in the postscript to the former letter was identical with his *Paradoxes and Problems*.

p. 170, middle. 'Why Sir Francis Nethersole should be imprisoned for debt etc.' I think the man imprisoned (pp. 166, 167, 171) was not Nethersole, Goodyer's son-in-law (though called 'his son' on p. 171), but his actual son, John Goodyer, who was still alive at this time (cp. p. 248).

p. 179, l. 8 from bottom, 'jests' = 'gests.'

p. 208, bottom. 'He preached on the 13th of June (1624) to the new Earl of Exeter, William Cecil and his company in his chapel of

St John's.' This chapel is, I suppose, the chapel of St John the Baptist, Westminster Abbey, in which the first Earl (ob. 7 Feb. 1622) had been buried, and where a great monument was (perhaps already) erected in memory of him.

p. 210, middle. 'The address of this letter is very extraordinary.' Is there, however, anything to show that it belongs to the year 1624?

p. 222. Mr Gosse thinks this letter 'may possibly be addressed to Dorset.' It is clearly written however to someone who had lately come into 'a place,' and who at the time was living in a monastery abroad on account of the prevalence of plague where he was, 2000 people dying a day as against 1000 dying in London at the same time.

Is it possible that the recipient of the letter was Sir Isaac Wake, who had lately succeeded Sir H. Wotton at Venice? The fact that he is addressed as 'Your Lordship' would be accounted for by his being an Ambassador. Cp. the letter to Sir T. Roe, p. 173. Donne had no doubt met Wake in the course of his diplomatic travels in Germany with Lord Doncaster in 1619. (Cp. p. 127, l. 4 from bottom.)

Against this suggestion are Donne's words 'I owe no man more.' I am not aware of any obligation to Wake which would account for them. Again Wake went to Venice in May 1624, and we should judge from Donne's letter that his friend's appointment had been more recent. There had been rumours that the unknown correspondent was to be Secretary. This would be, as Mr Gosse says, in the place of Sir Albertus Morton, who had died on the 6th of September 1625, this letter being written on the 25th of November following. I do not know if there is any other evidence of Wake's having been thought of in this connexion.

A last piece of evidence is ambiguous. Donne tells his friend that a protégé whom Donne had recommended to him 'hath embraced another employment for Savoy.' If these words mean 'another employment instead of Savoy,' they practically prove that Wake is the person addressed: as he was accredited not only to Venice, but also to Savoy. If they mean 'another employment, viz. one in Savoy,' they prove as decisively that Wake was not Donne's correspondent, as there would then have been no need for Donne to give Wake the information.

p. 223, l. 7, 'to be as near as I could to your inspection of the Church, I removed for a time to Chelsea.' Query 'to the inspection of the Church'? Cp. p. 270, l. 12: 'to be nearer to the service of the Church...I purpose to be at London.'

p. 224. The persons referred to in the first paragraph are no doubt

Buckingham and John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, who had just been removed from the office of Lord Keeper.

p. 224, ll. 14, 13 from bottom. 'Amongst your men-midwives I shall always assist it with my humble prayers both for the birth of your daughter and your honour in this world and of your son with your happiness in the next.' Query 'the birth of your daughter, your honour in this world, and of your son, your happiness in the next'? The metaphorical use of 'daughter' and 'son' seems to have been misunderstood, and the words 'and' and 'with' inserted.

p. 226. Donne writes in a letter of '21 December [1625]' (the year is no doubt right): 'I never went to Knolle nor Hanworth nor Keton, nor to the Court since the Court came into these quarters.' For 'Keton' (this is apparently the form found in the *Letters* of 1651) Mr Gosse prints 'Ke[ys]ton.' He tells us however (II, 156) that Donne had been obliged to relinquish the living of Keyston in 1622. There would seem no reason therefore why he should go there in 1625, and he is hardly likely to have written 'Keton' if he meant 'Keyston.'

Probably like Knole and Hanworth it was some place much nearer London than Keystone near Thrapstone.

p. 241, l. 9 from bottom, 'at this miserable chezmey.' Did not Donne write 'chez moy'?

p. 245, l. 10, 'the breaking of the bed of whisperers by casting in a bone of making them suspect and distrust one another.' Query, for 'bed' read 'band'?

p. 280. The lines

As west and east  
In all flat maps—and I am one—are one,

seem to point to the poem's having been written as the Julius Cæsar MS. says, in the Dean's 'great sickness in December 1623' and not (as Walton gives) on March 23, 1631. Cp. the letter to Sir R. Ker (p. 191), dated by Mr Gosse in Feb. or March, 1624: 'if a flat map be but pasted upon a round globe, the farthest east and the farthest west meet and are all one.' The fancy however also occurs in Donne's lines *The Annunciation and Passion* (written on 25th March 1608, when Good Friday coincided with Lady Day):—'As in plain maps, the furthest east is west'—and once again, as Professor Grierson informs me, in one of Donne's sermons.

p. 306, l. 7. 'And save his body in the grave hath none.' Mr E. K. Chambers' text, 'and sure his body,' etc. is obviously the right one.

p. 315. 'No letters of Wotton to Donne have been preserved, and very few of Donne to Wotton.'

Mr L. Pearsall Smith (*Life of Wotton*, II, 469) says he has found a number of letters of Donne to Wotton in the Burley Commonplace book, which he hopes will soon be published.

Two suggestions which I made in *The Modern Language Quarterly*, those on I, 279 and II, 209, I now withdraw.

G. C. MOORE SMITH.

SHEFFIELD.