Scholars of John Donne (1572–1631) need little reminding that they have at their disposal a comparatively large corpus of manuscripts containing texts of Donne’s works: primarily poetry, but also prose and correspondence. The poetic manuscripts are by far the best known and most widely studied: to date, The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne has accounted for 239 manuscripts, which jointly “amount to well over 5,000 separate transcriptions of individual poems.” There are fewer manuscripts of Donne’s sermons and other prose works, but scholars have recently signaled a renewed interest in them, especially the sermons, in large part owing to the fact that early-modern sermon studies as a whole is experiencing a surge of activity. Scholarship of Donne’s sermons has also been revitalized by Jeanne Shami’s discovery of three previously unknown manuscripts, one containing the unique evidence of emendations in Donne’s hand. A total of 160 sermons are extant in full texts.

1. All manuscripts from Woburn Abbey are quoted by kind permission of His Grace the Duke of Bedford and the Trustees of the Bedford Estate. This essay would not have been possible without the invaluable assistance of Woburn Abbey archivist Nicola Allen and retired archivist Ann Mitchell.

2. Gary A. Stringer, ed., The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne: Volume II, The Elegies (Bloomington, 2000), xl–l.

3. See, e.g., Peter McCullough, Sermons at Court: Politics and Religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean Preaching (Cambridge, Eng., 1998); Lori Anne Ferrell, Government by Polemic: James I, the King’s Preachers, and the Rhetorics of Conformity, 1603–1625 (Stanford, Calif., 1998); Jeanne Shami, John Donne and Conformity in Crisis in the Late Jacobean Pulpit (Cambridge, Eng., 2003); Arnold Hunt, The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and Their Audiences, 1550–1640 (Cambridge, Eng., 2010); Mary Morrissey, Politics and the Paul’s Cross Sermons, 1558–1642 (Oxford, 2011); Peter McCullough, Hugh Adlington, and Emma Rhatigan, eds., The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon (Oxford, 2011).

4. Jeanne Shami, “Donne’s 1622 Sermon in the Gunpowder Plot: His Original Presentation Manuscript Uncovered,” English Manuscript Studies 1100–1700 5 (1992): 63–86; Jeanne Shami, ed., John Donne’s 1622 Gunpowder Plot Sermon (Pittsburgh, Penn., 1996); Jeanne Shami, “New
The majority of these were printed, a few in Donne’s lifetime, and the remainder after his death in three folios of 1640, 1649, and 1660/61.\textsuperscript{5} Twenty sermons also circulated in manuscript, and counting duplicates across ten witnesses, the total number of Donne’s sermons in manuscript is fifty-six.\textsuperscript{6}

It may come as a surprise, then, that there was until recently rather a shortage of ancillary manuscript evidence: that is, hearing notes taken at, or shortly after, attendance, or reading notes from print or manuscript. Sermon note-taking was widely practiced by early-modern congregations, in part to assist in what Arnold Hunt has described as the “art of hearing.”\textsuperscript{7} Donne enjoyed a high contemporary reputation as a preacher, and his sermons were not infrequently talked about, for instance by the letter writer John Chamberlain, or the diarist Simonds D’Ewes. Nevertheless, Donne scholars have had to make do with notes from only two sermons, taken by John Burley (Burleigh) in his commonplace book (Trinity College Dublin, MS 419). P.G. Stanwood, who discovered these notes in 1978, was unsure whether “Burley could have taken down these notes from hearing Donne preach,” or that “he might also have seen the notes and written them out as he found them.”\textsuperscript{8} I.A. Shapiro later suggested that Burley’s notes must have been made during or shortly after attendance, not least given the number of evident mishearings, which would not have occurred if Burley had a written source.\textsuperscript{9} Stanwood was correct, however, to conclude that such notes had enormous potential: they could “bring us nearer than we have ever been to Donne’s
actual preaching, to his first thoughts as contrasted with the eloquent contrivances of his later study.”

It is the purpose of this essay to confirm that Burley was not unique in his attention to Donne as a preacher, by presenting a significant and almost entirely overlooked collection of manuscripts that contain sermon notes from Donne, and much else. These are the notebooks and commonplace books of Francis Russell, fourth earl of Bedford (1587–1641), held at Woburn Abbey in Bedfordshire. Born into a family that had established great political influence during the Elizabethan period, Russell pursued a successful career: as a member of the House of Commons, then the Lords, and as an increasingly powerful parliamentarian. As a frequent attender at the courts of James VI and I and Charles I, Russell was ideally placed to hear Donne preach, and his notebooks reveal that he was an avid sermon-goer, at court and elsewhere. He was also an inveterate scribbler, and his manuscripts contain notes from ten Donne sermons: six of these are hearing notes taken during or shortly after attendance, and the other four taken from reading. And this is not all, since Russell also read, annotated, and extracted from several of Donne’s prose works and his poetry. The full extent of these transcriptions is so voluminous as to make Russell one of the most sustained and wide-ranging contemporary respondents to Donne; and a respondent, moreover, who has hitherto escaped nearly all critical attention.

The fourth earl of Bedford does not regularly surface in literary history; instead, he is better known for his parliamentary work in the lead-up to the Civil War. In the words of his ODNB biographer Conrad Russell, “he was the leading figure in the junto of parliamentary leaders in 1640,” and a patron to men such as John Pym and Oliver St John. As an indication of his contemporary esteem, he was described by the earl of Clarendon as “the one man who, if he had lived, could have prevented the civil war from taking place.”

Far less is known of his earliest years, but it

10. Stanwood, “Sermon Notes,” 315, 317.
11. The archive was summarily catalogued in 1874, when 300 shelf-marks were listed. [HMC], Second Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, Historical Manuscripts Commission (London, 1871), pp. 1–4. Further commonplace books by Russell have since also been added to the collection.
12. For biographical records, see Conrad Russell, “Russell, Francis, Fourth Earl of Bedford (bap. 1587, D. 1641),” in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, online ed. (Oxford, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24307; Andrew Thrush and John P. Ferris, ed., The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1604–1629 (Cambridge, Eng., 2010), pp. 114–15.
13. Cited in Russell, “Russell, Francis.”
appears that he spent them in Ireland, where his father, William Rus-
sell, first baron of Thornhaugh, was Lord Deputy from 1594–1597. He
returned to England to be schooled, graduating from King’s College,
Cambridge, in 1602, and enrolling at Lincoln’s Inn in 1608. Russell
sat in the House of Commons from 1610, and, as Lord Russell of
Thornhaugh, in the House of Lords from 1614–1626. In 1627, he in-
herited the earldom of Bedford, after the death of his uncle the third
earl, Edward Russell (1572–1627). It is at present unclear how much
experience Francis Russell might have had of Edward Russell’s wife,
Lucy Harington Countess of Bedford, or of her extensive networks
of literary and cultural patronage, which famously included Donne. Russell
was certainly in frequent contact with another of Donne’s fe-
dale patrons, Lady Anne Clifford (1590–1676). Professional connec-
tions (for instance by way of Lincoln’s Inn, where Russell witnessed
Donne preach his *Encaenia* sermon, discussed below), make it possible
that Francis had at least a passing acquaintance with Donne. Russell’s
interest in Donne as a preacher and political thinker may be explained
further by shared politico-religious allegiances. Conrad Russell has noted
that “among clergy Bedford’s sympathies span the spectrum with acro-
batic skill,” and Russell was “probably the only man in England who
could come to the Long Parliament in 1640 claiming the personal friend-
ship of both Pym and Laud.” Furthermore, Russell’s reading centered on
“good Jacobean Calvinist conformist Episcopalians such as Joseph Hall,
John Davenant, George Carleton, and Robert Sanderson.” Questions
as to Donne’s conformity has been the most hotly debated by recent
scholars and so Donne cannot readily be entered into the above list
of clergymen, but it is safe to say that Russell’s attendance at Donne’s
preaching would have exposed him to one of the most sophisticated

14. John Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses* (Cambridge, Eng., 1922–1954), 1/3, 499; W. Paley Bail-
don, ed., *The Records of the Honorable Society of Lincoln’s Inn: Admissions*. (London, 1896), p. 147.

15. On Donne and the Countess of Bedford, see P. Thomson, “John Donne and the Countess
of Bedford,” *Modern Language Review* 44 (1949), 329–40; R.C. Bald, *John Donne: A Life* (Oxford,
1970).

16. Clifford (1590–1676) was the daughter of George Clifford, third Earl of Cumberland, and
Margaret Russell, the youngest daughter of Francis Russell, the second Earl of Bedford. She grew
up among Russell relations, and in her diary refers to the fourth earl as “Coz Russel.” She also
recorded that on the evening of July 26, 1617, “Dr Donne came hither” to Knole House in Kent
(Donne was the incumbent rector at Sevenoaks). The next day, “the 27th being Sunday I went to
Church forenoon & afternoon Dr Donne preaching & he & the other Strangers dining with me
in the Great Chamber.” Katherine O. Acheson, ed., *The Diary of Anne Clifford, 1616–1619: A Critical
Edition* (New York, 1995), pp. 88–89.

17. Russell, “Russell, Francis.”
pulpit rhetoricians of the age, and a preacher, moreover, who quite possibly influenced Russell’s own ideas about the Jacobean and Caroline politics and religion that would so profoundly shape his own life and career.¹⁸

II

Extracting Donne’s Works

The largest part of Russell’s manuscripts under scrutiny here are notebooks: small and portable quarto volumes that would fit inside a pocket, but also larger folios that were kept on a writing desk. Russell’s copying of Donne’s verse and sermons side by side is uncommon, since the greatest part of surviving Donne manuscripts segregate the genres (however, the prose *Paradoxes and Problems*, also copied by Russell, did often feature alongside Donne’s poems in manuscript). The presence of extracts from Donne’s poetry among Russell’s papers was not discovered until Peter Beal surveyed a few volumes from the Woburn collection, including HMC 26, which he noted contained “some other prose extracts,” which remained unidentified.¹⁹ The core of this essay will deal with the sermon notes, but since the corpus of manuscripts at Woburn Abbey is not well-known, the following list gives for the first time Russell’s entire collection of extracts from Donne, organized by HMC shelfmark, and followed by a select bibliography of extant witnesses and some cross-references.²⁰

¹⁸. On Donne’s conformity, see, e.g., Debora K. Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture* (Berkeley, Calif., 1990); Jeffrey Johnson, *The Theology of John Donne* (Woodbridge, 1999); Achsah Guibbory, “Donne’s Religion: Montagu, Arminianism and Donne’s Sermons, 1624–1630,” *English Literary Renaissance* 31: 3 (2001), 412–439; Daniel W. Doerksen, “Polemist or Pastor? Donne and Moderate Calvinist Conformity,” in *John Donne and the Protestant Reformation*, ed. Mary A. Papazian (Detroit, 2003); Shanti, *Donne and Conformity*; Peter McCullough, “Donne as Preacher at Court: Precarious ‘Inthronization,’” in *John Donne’s Professional Lives*, ed. David Coldlough (Cambridge, Eng., 2003), pp. 179–204; Emma Rhatigan, “Knees and Elephants: Donne Preaches on Ceremonial Conformity,” *John Donne Journal* 23 (2004), 185–213.

¹⁹. Peter Beal, “More Donne Manuscripts,” *John Donne Journal* 6 (1987): 213.

²⁰. All dates of preaching have been modernized and assume the year to start on January 1. Cross-references are to STC and Wing for printed items; Keynes, PS, Grierson, and CELM refer to Keynes, *Bibliography of Donne*; Potter and Simpson, *Sermons of Donne*; Herbert J.C. Grierson, ed., *The Poems of John Donne*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1912); Peter Beal, “Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts 1450–1700,” 2014, http://www.celm-ms.org.uk/. CELM references are cited only when the item in question has been indexed there, but at present not all extracts from Donne have been included in CELM.
Sermons

- HMC 18, fols. 1–6: reading notes from a funeral sermon for Magdalene Herbert, Lady Danvers, July 1, 1627. Printed 1627, STC 7049. Keynes 23, PS VIII.2, CELM DnJ 4052.8.
- HMC 19, pp. 101–02, 114–15: hearing notes from a sermon to the King at Whitehall, February 16, 1621. Printed 1660/1, Wing D 1872. Keynes 31, PS III.9, CELM DnJ 4174. Bodleian Library MS Eng. th. c. 7; Houghton Library, Harvard University MS Eng D66.4; National Library of Scotland MS 5767; St Paul’s Cathedral Library MS 52.D.14.
- HMC 20, pp. 5–6: reading notes from a sermon at Paul’s Cross, the “Directions sermon,” September 15, 1622. Printed 1622, STC 7053. Keynes 12, PS IV.7.
- HMC 20, pp. 13–14: reading notes from a sermon to the Virginia Company, November 13, 1622. Printed 1622, STC 7051. Keynes 15, PS IV.10.
- HMC 20, pp. 42–43: hearing notes from a sermon at Whitehall, February 28, 1623. Printed 1640, STC 7038. Keynes 29; PS IV.13, CELM DnJ 4175. British Library MS Harley 6946.
- HMC 20, pp. 77–78: hearing notes from a sermon at Lincoln’s Inn, “Encaenia,” May 22, 1623. Printed 1623, STC 7039. Keynes 16, PS IV.15.
- HMC 21, p. 1: hearing notes from a sermon at Whitehall, March 4, 1625. Printed 1640, STC 7038. Keynes 29, PS VI.11, CELM DnJ 4177.
- HMC 21, pp. 179–80: hearing notes from sermon at Whitehall, February 24, 1626. Printed 1626, STC 7050. Keynes 21, PS VII.2, CELM DnJ 4178.
- HMC 21, pp. 62–65 reversed: reading notes from a sermon to King Charles, April 3, 1625. Printed 1625, STC 7040. Keynes 19, PS VI.12, CELM DnJ 4179.
- HMC 26, fol. 87r–88r: hearing notes from sermon at Whitehall, March 8, 1622. Printed 1640, STC 7038. Keynes 29, PS IV.1, CELM DnJ 4181. Bodleian Library MS Eng. th. c. 71; Cambridge University Library MS Add. 8469.

Poetry

- HMC 19, fols. 29–36: headed “Dunns Satires.” In fact, these are short extracts from the following poems (not itemized but listed under a single heading in CELM, DnJ 4173): “Satyre IV” (Grierson I, 158),

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“Loves War” (Grierson I, 122), “Going to Bed” (Grierson I, 119), “Satyre V” (Grierson I, 168), “Satyre II” (Grierson I, 149), “To the Countesse of Bedford” [“You have refin’d mee”] (Grierson I, 191), “To the Countesse of Bedford” [“Reason is our Soules left hand”] (Grierson I, 189), “The Anagram” (Grierson I, 80), “The Dreame” (Grierson I, 95), “The Autumnall” (Grierson I, 92), “His parting from her” (Grierson I, 100), “The Perfume” (Grierson I, 84), “Epitaph on Himselfe: To the Countesse of Bedford” (Grierson I, 291), “Omnibus” (Grierson I, 292), “Death” (Grierson I, 284), “To The Lady Bedford” (Grierson I, 227), “Elegie on the Lady Markham” (Grierson I, 279), “Elegie on Mrs Boulstred” (Grierson I, 282), “The Storme” (Grierson I, 175), “The Calme” (Grierson I, 178), “The Litanie” (Grierson I, 338), “Womans Constancy” (Grierson I, 9).

- HMC 21, pp. 25–26: extracts from “An hymne to the Saints, and to Marquesse Hamylton” (CELM DnJ 1587.5).
- HMC 26, fols. 50–54v: extracts from the following poems, in order of appearance, “The Autumnall” (CELM DnJ 280.5), “Loves Alchymie” (CELM DnJ 1984.5), “The undertaking” (CELM 3708.8), “The Storme” (CELM DnJ 3086.3), “The Calme” (CELM DnJ 569.5), “Elegie on the Lady Markham” (CELM DnJ 1086.5), “Breake of day” (CELM DnJ 452.3), “A Letter to the Lady Carey, and Mrs Essex Riche, From Amyens” (Grierson I, 221; CELM erroneously lists DnJ 1894.5, “A licentious person”), “Loves Progress” (CELM DnJ 2149.5), “Natures lay Ideot, I taught thee to love” (CELM DnJ 2356.5), “Loves War” (CELM DnJ 2224), “The Anagram” (CELM DnJ 74.5), “Satyre II” (CELM DnJ 2785.3), “Satyre IIII” (Grierson I, 158), “Going to Bed” (CELM DnJ 3191.5), “The Litanie” (CELM DnJ 1946.5).

Other Works and Unidentified items attributed to Donne

- HMC 20, p. 161: extracts from “Duns deuotions upon his seknes.” Printed 1624, STC 7033. Keynes 34, CELM DnJ 4176.
- HMC 22, p. 43: unidentified extract, “Some tiems the croses of this world driues a man intoe a new church for ther ar sume that think that cannot be a good church in which thay haue liued ill or not prospered it may be a way of gods Iustice when a man will loue the cross superstitiously to giue hime inough of it by multipliing crosses uppon him: Doc: Dunn for Sir Frat Harrise.”
• HMC 22, p. 258: unidentified sermon notes, commencing “Suidas calls Jobe the Anvill of patience, and Prosper will haue him to be the only man for patience except our Sauiour,” headed “Deane of Pauls Sermon Text Job: 7.20.”
• HMC 24, back flyleaf: unidentified extract, “moer stars under the north then western poell: dunn.”
• HMC 26, fols. 44-47: extracts from seventeen “Paradoxes and Problems,” headed “Dunss problems.” Eleven “Paradoxes” and ten “Problems” were printed in 1633, STC 7043; circulated extensively in manuscript during Donne’s lifetime. CELM DnJ 4081.5.
• HMC 26, fol. 81v: unidentified extract headed “out of dunn,” commencing “Helth is the peace of the humers, harmony the peace of the instrument, truth the peace of the [politician], strength the peace of the memberse.”

The three lists above are not quite complete, since Russell also caused to be copied, by his secretaries, yet more materials from Donne into a formal commonplace book under headings (HMC 11), consisting of nearly four thousand pages in a large folio format. HMC 11 was the end-station for Russell’s reading notes that were initially gathered in the much looser organized notebooks (such as the ones listed above), so there is a certain amount of duplication across the two kinds of manuscript. The commonplace book is so vast that it is impracticable to prepare an exhaustive inventory of all the extracts culled from Donne in it, but, in order to illustrate the function of these manuscripts within the larger context of Russell’s library, some examples will be drawn from HMC 11 below. A great deal more also remains to be said about Donne’s poems listed above. The extracted poems in HMC 19 are interspersed with works from other poets, for instance Francis Beaumont; Edward Herbert, Lord Herbert of Cherbury; Benjamin Rudyerd; and William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and Thomas Overbury. All of these poems commonly circulated with Donne’s in manuscript, and so doubtless Russell had at his disposal a verse miscellany from which he copied. The poetic extracts in HMC 26 follow a similar pattern, and even draw from some of the same poems as those in HMC 19, but Russell’s selections are different. Russell thus either repeatedly visited the same exemplar, or he took notes from different manuscripts as they passed through his hands. This essay cannot accommodate further discussion of the poetic extracts, nor of the prose items listed under “Other Works,” but suffice it to say at this stage that
these extracts demonstrate Russell’s extensive interest in Donne’s works and his wide access to prints and manuscripts.

Regarding the items listed under “Other Works” that relate to the sermons, several still require more research, such as the notes taken from the “Deane of Pauls sermon” on Job 7.20. HMC 22 was “begann 1626: 18 of May” (fol. 1), and the latest explicitly dated items are the sermon notes from “Mr Tho. Blech.” at “Woburn this ester 1633” (fol. 325) two years after Donne’s death. The Dean’s sermon appears in a long stretch of notes taken by Francis Russell’s secretary, which cannot readily be dated. As no Donne sermon on Job 7.20 survives, it is possible that the notes derive from a lost Donne sermon (predating February 25, 1631, when Donne preached Death’s Duell); more likely, however, they relate to a sermon preached by Donne’s successor as Dean, Thomas Winniffe. The attribution to Donne given in HMC 26, fol. 81v, a page-long extract, may relate to another lost Donne sermon. It is exceedingly difficult to piece together an entire sermon from a set of reductive notes, and the present essay cannot accommodate such speculative work, but it is important to recognize here that several conundrums relating to the extracts from Donne remain to be solved.

Finally, the fragment in HMC 22, p. 43, is of special interest, and a brief discussion of it can help to contextualize the other sermon notes. The fragment is short (quoted in full above), and subscribed “Doc: Dunn for Sir Frat Harrise.” In other words, this is a text by Donne for a certain Sir Francis Harris (perhaps a pastoral letter or other type of record of Donne’s counsel), or, a passage from Donne extracted by Russell for the benefit of Harris. The text plays on the worldly “crosses” (trials) that may drive a dissatisfied believer into another (presumably Roman) church and onto the crucifixes “superstitiously” adored by Catholics, which ironically result in God’s “multipling crosses uppon him.” No exact source for the entire fragment can be identified, but in at least three Donne sermons close analogies can be found, for instance: “as soon as our sins induce any worldly crosse, any calamity upon us, we come to think of another Church, another Religion, and conclude, That that cannot be a good Church, in which we have lived in.”

21. Contextual research in this volume may yield further clues as to dating: selected sermons immediately preceding to include “Dr Howitt preached at Whitthall Luke 17.32,” “Dr Wrens sermon Hosia 14.2,” “Mr Browns sermon Math. 15.28,” and “Bp of London, Jer. 6.16.”

22. John Donne, Fifty Sermons (1649), sig. 214v; for two more examples, see Donne, Fifty Sermons, N4; John Donne, LXXX Sermons (1640), sig. 2F2v.
subscription indicates a record of pastoral care, then Donne probably drew from his stock sermonic imagery to underscore his argument. It is well known, moreover, that Donne kept a record of what he termed “cases of conscience.” For example, he wrote to Sir Thomas Lucy referencing his “little book of Cases” and to Henry Goodere, suggesting that the latter had borrowed Donne’s “Cases of conscience.” Walton, finally, recorded that Donne kept “Copies of divers Letters and cases of Conscience that had concerned his friends, with his observations and solutions of them.”

This in itself is interesting enough, but more can be said about the confluence of Donne, a certain Harris, and Francis Russell. Whereas it cannot be proved they were the same people, a Sir Francis Harris of Southminster was an impoverished knight living in squalid conditions in London, and he, by his own admission, suffered a crisis of faith at exactly the time Russell compiled this notebook. Most of what is known about this Harris arises from the fact that he was allied by kinship to the Barrington family of Essex. He was so destitute as to be entirely reliant on their charity, and especially that of the matriarch Joan Barrington, a patroness of considerable influence in Puritan circles. On December 15, 1628 he wrote to thank her for a new set of clothes, asked for funds to purchase a new sword, and reported that he was in bad health and so had come “to a loe ebbe.” He also narrated the circumstances of his recent conversion: “It was my purpose to have send yow a new booke of Sir Humphry Loynde his setting forthe which hathe a coherence in some sorte with that booke (caled Via Tuta) which was the meanes of my convertione, beseeching yow to bee perswaded that noe wordey respect moved mee thereunto (for that waye I have disadvantaged my selfe if it weare to bee valewed) but meerely the favor of God towardes mee most especyally, and next the reasons of the aforesaid boke and the perswations of my loveing freindes.” The book that affected Harris conversion was Humphry Lynde’s *Via Tuta*, in which Lynde set out to prove that “the

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23. John Donne, *Letters to Severall Persons of Honour: Written by John Donne Sometime Deane of St Pauls London* (1651), sigs. 2C4v, 2G1v.
24. Izaak Walton, *The Lives of John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Richard Hooker, George Herbert, and Robert Sanderson*, ed. George Saintsbury (London, 1927), p. 68.
25. Sean Kelsey, “Barrington, Joan, Lady Barrington (c.1558–1641),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, online ed. (Oxford, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/65888.
26. Arthur Searle, ed., *Barrington Family Letters 1628–1632*, Camden Society IV (London, 1983), p. 42.
Protestant Church was in all ages visible, especially in the ages before Luther." Harris letter detailing his conversion is striking in relation to the note in Russell’s manuscript, but what complicates matters is that Harris most likely converted to Anglicanism not as a moderate Catholic (Lynde’s prime audience), but as a non-conformist Puritan, especially since he was patronized by the godly Barringtons who took pride in their particular brand of predestinarian Calvinism. If indeed Harris followed Lynde’s advice and abandoned non-conformity, then it would also follow that Donne would welcome the move and have no need to caution Harris. From this perspective, Francis Russell’s note and Harris letter may not speak of the same event, or may even relate to different people. However, Russell himself also corresponded with Joan Barrington, and with other members of that family, in order to negotiate the marriage of his protégé Oliver St John to Joanna Altham, Barrington’s granddaughter. Joan Barrington, moreover, was born Joan Cromwell: Oliver Cromwell was her nephew. Russell, then, may have known Harris, and could have therefore either obtained a record of Donne’s counsel, or alternatively, put Donne’s works to good use for Harris benefit, himself.

This short and tantalizing fragment associated with Donne, in tandem with the further potential contexts offered by Harris letter, illustrates a larger hermeneutical problem associated with Russell’s reading records. In the words of Francis Bacon, “in general one man’s notes will little profit another, because one man’s conceit doth so much differ from another’s; and also because the bare note itself is nothing so much worth as the suggestion it gives to the reader.” Bacon understood that any notetaker’s “conceit” and “suggestion”—or, contextual thought processes—crucially inflect a manuscript notebook, and these processes could be difficult to retrieve even for contemporary readers, let alone later scholars. Thus, exactly how to read the fragment regarding Donne and Harris remains unclear, at least until more can be discovered of Donne’s relation with the latter. When assessing Russell’s notebooks, we should

27. Humfry Lynde, Via Tuta: The Safe Way Leading All Christians … to the True, Ancient, and Catholique Faith, Now Professed in the Church of England (1628), sig. A2v. At least one copy of this work was contemporaneously bound with Donne’s 1627 commemorative sermon on Magdalene Danvers, now at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, 8° P 128(2) Th.

28. Another reason for Harris to send the book might have been the fact that Joan Barrington was herself experiencing a crisis of faith following her husband’s death, see further Kelsey, “Barrington, Joan, Lady Barrington.”

29. Brian Vickers, ed., Francis Bacon: The Major Works (Oxford, 2002), p. 105.
keep Bacon’s advice in mind; however, Russell’s responses to Donne can be contextualized by close examination of his note-taking techniques, by biographical and topical inference, and more generally, by attention to the political circumstances of Donne’s sermons and their delivery.

III

Sermon Notes

This brings us to a detailed assessment of Russell’s extracts of ten sermons, which will be organized by kind (first the hearing notes, and then the reading records), and will pay particular attention to textual variance (between notes and later witnesses) and any evidence of the sermon in delivery. All notes relate to sermons preached by John Donne between 1621 and 1627. Six relate to court sermons delivered at Whitehall (five of which were attended in person by Russell); the other four were preached at Lincoln’s Inn, Paul’s Cross, Merchant-Taylors Hall, and Danvers House in Chelsea. Further, six relate to sermons that were also printed within Donne’s life-time, between 1622 and 1627: HMC 18, fols. 1–6, HMC 20, pp. 5–6, HMC 20, pp. 13–14, HMC 20, pp. 77–78, HMC 21, p. 179, and HMC 21, pp. 62–65 reversed. Three relate to sermons for which manuscripts were in contemporary circulation: HMC 19, pp. 101–2, 114–15, HMC 20, pp. 42–43, and HMC 26, fols. 87–88. Owing to Russell’s presence at court and given the intellectual milieux in which he moved, it is not impossible that he had access to a sermon manuscript. Yet, the existence of a contemporary witness (print or manuscript) does not pre-empt the possibility that Russell attended the sermon in question, and in such cases, the style of note-taking indicates whether we are dealing with reading or hearing notes. Distinguishing between the two is not necessarily straightforward, since the sermon which is most actively referred to in terms of biblical citations—a feature we would more readily expect from reading notes, with the benefit of marginalia—is in fact one that Russell attended in person.

The clearest case of notes from hearing are those in HMC 21, p. 1, for the simple reason that this sermon was not printed until 1640 (in LXXX Sermons), and no other contemporary witness has survived. Despite its brevity, Russell’s note of this sermon therefore has claim to being its earliest known textual witness. Since HMC 21 is a folio, the practicalities of writing would suggest that Russell took his notes not long
after the event. Donne preached this sermon on Matt. 19.17 at Whitehall on the first Friday in Lent, March 4, 1625, and it is a tour-de-force: a philosophical inquiry into the essential good of God.\textsuperscript{30} Donne opened with a comparison between the word of God and his earthly representation, the Church, and, in acknowledgement of the occasion, a brief consideration of the fast, expressed in the printed text as “In the Scriptures you have \textit{Preceptum}, The thing itself, What: In the Church, you have the \textit{Nunc}, The time, When.”\textsuperscript{31} Francis Russell responded to this essential distinction, and wrote down that “in The word we haue the presep-tum that we must fast from the Church we haue the tempus when we must fast” (HMC 21, p. 1). This closely paraphrases Donne, and Russell clearly recalled the Latin parallelism, \textit{“Preceptum”} and \textit{“Nunc,”} but replaced the latter with “tempus” instead. Such small but distinctive textual variants invite speculation: either Russell misremembered Donne’s exact wording, or Russell’s notes reflect accurately what Donne delivered extemporarily.

Russell took notes solely from the \textit{divisio}, yet he largely disregarded Donne’s governing architectural metaphor designed to structure and make accessible to his auditory a complex train of argument: “the Context, as the situation and Prospect of the house, The Pretext, as the Access and entrance to the house, And then the Text it selfe, as the House it selfe as the body of the building.”\textsuperscript{32} Such omission of Donne’s figurative ploys is, on the whole, typical of all of Russell’s sermon notes: his eye or ear was mostly drawn toward quotable moralisms and \textit{sententiae}, and only rarely toward Donne’s rhetorical artifice. That is not to say, however, that Russell’s notes do not at times achieve an admirable economy of expression, or hint at Russell’s appreciation (or echoing) of Donne’s pulpit rhetoric. For example, in this sermon’s \textit{divisio}, Donne, as part of his “Context,” relates the dangers of worldly possessions. After considering both the richest and the poorest, Donne concludes that “Every man hath some such possessions as possesse him, some such affections as weigh downe Christ Jesus, and separate him from Him, rather then from those affections, those possessions.”\textsuperscript{33} Russell expressed this differently, but no less attractively, as “every man hath sumthing to send

\textsuperscript{30} Cf. Potter and Simpson, \textit{Sermons of Donne}, 6:18–21.

\textsuperscript{31} Donne, \textit{LXXX Sermons} sig. P5.

\textsuperscript{32} Donne, \textit{LXXX Sermons}, sig. P5.

\textsuperscript{33} Donne, \textit{LXXX Sermons}, sig. P5.
hime heuy from christ.” Furthermore, where Russell repeats some of Donne’s examples of rich and poor men, he adds another: “he that stiks in the muer [wall] of the dungen as he that deuls [“dwell”] in the High-est stories of honor” (HMC 21, p. 1). Donne, in the full text as eventu-
ally printed, contrasted “he that is ground and trod to durt, with oblo-
quie, and contempt, as well as he that is built up every day, a story and story higher with additions of Honour.”

Donne’s “stories of honour” that build up honorable reputations (contrasted with those of slander or “obloquie”) neatly pun on “story.” In fact, Russell’s note of the “muer [wall] of the dungen” fits into this imagistic framework of the divisio.

The fact that this example is lacking from the printed sermon may be attributed to Russell’s own poetic license, but more likely, this image was included during oral delivery of the sermon, and discarded when Donne wrote out the text at greater length.

For a final example of the ways in which Russell’s notes reflect Donne’s sermon as preached, consider the following two passages, first from Donne in print, and then Russell’s corresponding note of the same:

There are some sins so rooted, so riveted in men, so incorporated, so con-
substantiated in the soule, by habituall custome, as that those sins have
contracted the nature of Ancient possessions. As men call Manners by
their names, so sins have taken names from men, and from places; Simon
Magus gave the name to a sin, and so did Gehazi, and Sodom did so: There
are sins that run in Names, in Families, in Blood; Hereditary sins, entailed
sins; and men do almost prove their Gentry by those sins, and are scarce
beleeued to be rightly borne, if they have not those sins; These are great
possessions, and men do much more easily part with Christ, then with
these sins.

but when he telse them one thing is wanting and so as to this young man
false uppon his privaet bousum sinn the sinn that hath consubstantiated it
self into the soull the sinn thay poses or rather that which posseth them
then thay goe away as hevy as this young man for in that sens thay have
great and large possesions sume sinns ar Intayled hereditary sinns sinns by
what a man proves his pedegre. for if a man be not taynted with sinn [one
illegible word] off his fathers thay conclud hime a spurius and unligiti-
mat issee. [Marginal note: “Concluding children from [vi]ses not vertues”]
(HMC21, p. 1).

34. Donne, LXXX Sermons, sig. P5v.
35. Donne, LXXX Sermons, sig. P5v.
Evidently, Russell’s account here deviates from Donne’s printed text in a number of ways, most importantly the fact that Russell’s singular “young man” is replaced with general and plural “men” in the later text. The “young man” originates of course from the neighboring context of Donne’s chosen verse (Matt. 19.17), which features the discussion between Christ and the rich young man who fails to renounce his earthly riches. In delivery, the singular would effectively address each “young man” in the congregation, and therefore reflects a rhetorical strategy of direct appeal, based in part on the audience’s presumed knowledge of this chapter of Matthew. Also, this young man “goe[s] away hevy,” echoing the earlier note that “every man hath sumthing to send hime hevy from christ.” Given this repetition, it seems likely that this image of “heaviness” (the Authorized Version reads “sorrowful”, cf. Matt. 19.22) was repeatedly played up throughout the sermon as preached, but that this device was abandoned in the written version.

For the kinds of textual divergences discussed so far, a number of potential causes could be advanced, not least Russell’s mishearing, misunderstanding, failing memory, or his inevitable tendency towards reductive paraphrase. Commenting on sermon note-taking more generally, Arnold Hunt has asserted that “what we can occasionally glimpse, in surviving sermon notes, is a gap between the preacher’s intentions and the hearer’s response—and it is this gap that can help us measure the effectiveness of the art of hearing.”36 Possibly, Russell did not “hear” Donne as the preacher intended to be heard and understood. Yet if we allow for the possibility that Russell did, by and large, hear correctly, then we must draw attention to another kind of “gap,” that between the sermon as preached and the sermon as written. And, without losing sight of the possibility that Russell at times simply misrepresented Donne, discussion of his other hearing notes can allow for the valuable negotiation of “gaps” between two distinctive kinds of text: one the authorized, fully argued, and written sermon, and the other a sermon that was heard, remembered, and subsequently cast into notes, which retained some crucial markers of orality.

Russell’s sermon notes are not, despite their similar physical appearance in the manuscript, entirely of a kind. Instead, they preserve subtly different modes of reading and note-taking, and for each set of notes, their relationship to the source must be individually evaluated.

36. Hunt, Art of Hearing, p. 95.
Furthermore, it is crucial to assess not only what Russell took from his source, but also what he may have added to it. Good further testing grounds for these issues are the notes in HMC 20, pp. 77–78, taken from Donne’s sermon preached at Lincoln’s Inn on May 22, 1623, at the consecration of its new chapel. This occasion is one of the best documented for a sermon by Donne: two detailed manuscript narratives in Latin of the entire consecration service by George Montaigne, Bishop of London, of which Donne’s sermon formed a part, survive. The service was also briefly mentioned by John Chamberlain, who, though he did not attend, reported in a letter to Dudley Carleton that “the Deane of Paules made an excellent sermon (they say) concerning dedications.”

Yet another manuscript, Society of Antiquaries of London, MS 201, no. 37, is an eye-witness account of the entire service in English that uniquely includes a summary of Donne’s sermon (the other reports only record Donne’s appearance). Francis Russell’s interest in the sermon can be explained by a fact omitted from his ODNB biography, namely that on February 22, 1608 he had been admitted to Lincoln’s Inn and on October 23, 1611 was elected as an Associate Bencher. On November 5, 1612, the Inn’s Black Books recorded their debt to Russell for a £10 loan for building works, and this loan appeared in the records again on February 11, 1613, at which time portions of outstanding loans from others (though not Russell’s) were bequeathed to the Inn “towards the buildinge of the new Chapell.” His name does not appear again in the records of the Inn, but given Russell’s association it is at least probable that in May 1623 he was one among the “Concourse and Confluence of people” that jostled for space to witness the consecration and to hear Donne preach.

Even if Russell had not himself been present, he would not have had

37. Norman Egbert McClure, ed., *The Letters of John Chamberlain* (Philadelphia, 1939), II, 500.
38. On the Latin reports in manuscript, from the Black Books of Lincoln’s Inn, and a report written or commissioned by George Montaigne, see further John N. Wall, “Situating Donne’s Dedication Sermon at Lincoln’s Inn, May 22, 1623,” *John Donne Journal* 26 (2007), 159–239; John N. Wall and Zola M. Packman, “Worship at Trinity Chapel, Lincoln’s Inn, London, 22 May 1623,” *Anglican and Episcopal History* 81, II (2012), 113–207. The Society of Antiquaries manuscript was hitherto unknown to Donne scholars, and allows, with Russell’s, for the unique opportunity to contrast two distinct hearers’ accounts of the same sermon by Donne. Further on the occasion of Donne’s sermon, and the various textual witnesses, see Ettenhuber, *Sermons Preached at Lincoln’s Inn, 1620–1623*, pp. 318–26.
39. Baildon, *Records: Admissions*, I, 147; William Paley Baildon, Ronald Roxburgh, and Paul Vivian Baker, ed., *Records of the Honorable Society of Lincoln’s Inn, The Black Books Vol. II from A.D. 1586 to A.D. 1660*. (London, 1897) II, 140, 147, 150.
40. Cited from Society of Antiquaries, London, MS 201, [fol. 1].
long to wait to read Donne’s sermon, for it was printed in the same year as *Encaenia. The Feast of Dedication. Celebrated at Lincolnes Inne, in a Sermon there upon Ascension day, 1623*.

One feature sets Russell’s Lincoln’s Inn sermon notes apart from the rest, and that is the presence of scriptural references. The majority of these correspond to the marginal apparatus provided by the printed text, but Russell at times gave more precise biblical citations, adding verse to book and chapter—“Leviti. 23.32” for “Levit 23.,” “Exodus 31.16” for “Exod. 31.” In one instance he provided a reference that is lacking from the printed book, “Nehemia:9.” Russell was not in the habit of scholarly annotation or source hunting, so we can reasonably assume that whatever he wrote down, he found in his source (spoken or written). This means that the 1623 printed book was not his most likely exposure to the sermon’s text. Russell may have been present in person, and this is indeed supported by the otherwise very loose relationship between the printed text and his notes. Consider, from the latter, the following: “god infused not a morality upon the day of the saboth but upon the duty of the saboth for then it could not have bien changed and wher it is caled pactum perpetuum Exodus 31.16 sayth Austin it wase not ever lasting for the duration but in the duration for then it could not be intermited god wase as it were insellibative when he sayd faciamus but after he wase espoused to the church 2 cantekils 15 then he sayth capite vos take ye he delicats his churches” (HMC 20, p. 77). This note conflates Donne’s long discourse on holy days and the Sabbath—a discussion occasioned by “the times of our meeting there,” the feast of Ascension Day—which unfolds over five of the printed quarto’s pages. There are also a number of divergences between the note, and the text as printed. For the quotation from Exodus, the printed text follows the Vulgate reading of “Pactum sempiternum,” but Russell rendered this “pactum perpetuum.” If we assume that this is indeed what he heard, then this may reflect Donne’s backformation from the Authorized Version’s “a perpetual pact,” a quotation only corrected when the sermon was prepared for print. Russell’s notes further contain the coinage “insellibative” (not attested elsewhere, and English “celibate” was also rare, cf. *OED*, s.v., “celibate,” n. 1). Donne here reads “In Cœlibatu,” a word perhaps misheard or misunderstood by

41. John Donne, *Encaenia. The Feast of Dedication, Celebrated at Lincolnes Inne, in a Sermon There Upon Ascension Day, 1623* (London, 1623), sigs. B3, B4, C1; cf. HMC 20, pp. 77–78.

42. Donne, *Encaenia*, sigs. B3; the full passage runs from sigs. B3-C1v.
the notetaker. Russell’s implied parallelism between “faciamus … capite vos” is intelligible only with recourse to the printed text’s fuller quotation from the Song of Solomon 2.15, “Capite nobis vulpes, do you take the little Foxes, you the Church,” which Donne contrasted to “Faciamus, let us, us the Trinity make man.” Russell’s “delicates,” finally, is a curious verb in the context (“to make delicate”, an extremely rare usage for the period, cf. *OED*, s.v., “delicate,” v.), but at least two other verbs hover in the background here: “delegate” and “dedicate.” While we may be dealing with the simple fact of scribal error, Russell’s note also hints at a typical kind of polysemy arising from orality: God and Christ “delegate” man in the collaborative maintenance of the church, but God also “dedicates” his church to man.

Immediately following this passage, Donne turned to an apt legal exemplum: “The Tables of the law God himselfe writ, and gave them written to Moses: he left none of that to him; not a power to make other Lawes like those lawes: but for the Tabernacle, which concern’d the outward worship of God, that was to be made by Moses, Iuxta similitudinem, according to the paterne which God had shewed him.” Russell responded as follows: “when moses rescevved the law of god then he had noe facsimile he could not make commaundements liek unto it but when he came to the outward work of the Tabernakell then he had a Iuxta semilitudine toe doe it according to the pattern he had seen. so for essentall things we cann nether add nor deminish but for externall service we may doe things according to the patron” (HMC 20, p. 77). What is striking about this, besides the lexical variance ("facsimile" is not otherwise commonly used by Donne) is the paraphrase commencing “so …,” and perhaps this reflects Russell’s own rephrasing, and can therefore be read as evidence of his own “hearing” or application of the sermon and its message of “essentiall” and “externall” law-giving. Alternatively, and possibly indicated by the etymological play on “pattern” and “patron,” which may itself be another example of polysemous meaning arising from orality (cf. *OED*, s.v., “patron,” n.), the paraphrase reflects Donne’s oral strategy to drive home the application.

Russell was of course but one man among a larger congregation that listened collaboratively to their preacher. This fact emerges from another set of notes, in HMC 19, pp. 101–02, 114. These relate to a court sermon on 1 Tim. 3.16 that Donne preached “before the King, At

43. Donne, *Encaenia*, sigs. C1v–C2.
Whitehall, February 16. 1620. [1621].” The earliest Donne sermon from which Russell took notes. The sermon is in two parts and discusses, first, the “Mystery of godliness,” and second, “the manifestation of the Mystery” in Christ. Potter and Simpson commented that “Donne had evidently taken great pains with this sermon, and it is written throughout in a style full of paradox and antithesis.” This lushness of style might in part account for the sermon’s evident popularity in manuscript: four witnesses are extant, and the sermon was in relatively wide circulation (see above). However, nothing indicates that Russell had direct access to such a manuscript: on the contrary, it is certain that he attended the sermon’s delivery in person, and took notes not long after the event. The notes are divided between two places in his notebook, with the two entries linked by cross-references: “vide postea” and “vide antea” (HMC 19, pp. 101, 114). The fact that unrelated materials intersperse the sermon notes indicates that there was a time lapse between commencement and completion. This, in turn, makes it likely that Russell penned his notes from memory (or just possibly, from another intermediary source such as loose leaves or writing tablets), shortly after the sermon’s delivery, and not in one continuous sitting, as would more obviously occur if he had taken notes \textit{in situ} during the sermon.

Russell’s diction provides further evidence that these are hearing notes. He wrote, for example, that “Dunn spake of the father and the sunn be of one sied what nede we fere what the divell doth” (HMC 19, p. 102). This is emphatically a record of spoken discourse, and moreover one that causes an immediate problem, because nowhere in the sermon as it survives in full does Donne “speak” of such a thing. In the second part, Donne discourses extensively on Christ as “he was seen of Angels.” It is in this passage only that the devil makes a short appearance: “when he [Christ] was tempted by the Devil, Angels came and ministred to him.” Russell’s note, which on account of his orthography is once more ambiguous, did not quite make it into the written sermon: neither the notion that God and Christ sprung of one “seed”, nor the idea that God and Christ are on one ‘side’ and united against the devil appears in the printed text.

44. John Donne, \textit{XXVI Sermons} (1660), sig. G3.
45. Donne, \textit{XXVI Sermons}, sig. G3v.
46. Potter and Simpson, \textit{Sermons of Donne}, III, 18.
47. Donne, \textit{XXVI Sermons}, sig. H3.
Consider also the following passage from Donne’s text, found in its second part, on angels. Following his scriptural meditation on how Christ was “visus ab Angelis” [seen by angels], Donne moved to his application, that “Christ is seen by the Angels, in us and our conversation now.”

This “now” arrestingingly brought his congregation to the speaking present (and indeed their futures), where, so Donne wrote, “the Angels do see mens particular actions: and then, if thou would’st not sollicite a womans chastity, if her servant were by to testifie it; as in copy; if thou canst slumber in thy self, that main consideration, That the eye of god is always open, and always upon thee; yet have a little religious civility, and holy respect, euen to those Angels that see thee.”

Russell heard Donne speak those words (or whichever form they took in delivery), and took the following note: “If a man will not commit ane offense of venery afoer his man though god sese it why much moer when the angelse louks one: lo: Shefeld mislieked this proportion” (HMC 19, p. 102). Clearly, Russell condenses to only one Donne’s multiplication of things seen by angels; his note, furthermore, disagrees with Donne’s written text in matters of small detail (e.g. “her servant,” “his man”), and paraphrases strongly, as when to “solicite a womans chastity” becomes “ane offense of venery.” But most importantly, Russell recorded that “lo: Shefeld” misliked Donne’s “proportion” (that is, his expression, signification, or idea). “Shefeld” was perhaps Edmund Sheffield, later first earl of Mulgrave (1565–1646). He was Russell’s senior by about twenty years, but the two men were of like mind: they would steer a similar political course in the troublesome 1630s, and keep similar Parliamentary allies. A salient detail from Sheffield’s life is that in 1619, a year before the sermon, at the age of sixty-four, he married the sixteen-year old Mariana Irwin. One contemporary commentator, Anne Clifford (herself a Russell relation and admirer of Donne), condemned the match in no uncertain terms: the marriage “was held a very mean match & indiscreet part of him.”

While Russell’s note does not exactly reveal why Sheffield misliked Donne’s advice to his congregation, it seems that the warning not to solicit “a womans chastity” afforded a moment of private amusement.

48. Donne, XXVI Sermons, sig. H4.
49. Donne, XXVI Sermons, sig. H4.
50. Victor Slater, “Sheffield, Edmund, First Earl of Mulgrave (1565–1646),” in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, online edn (Oxford, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25293.
51. Acheson, The Diary of Anne Clifford, 1616–1619: A Critical Edition, p. 102.
between Russell and Sheffield, as they shared a gentleman’s joke, perhaps over the memory of what some conceived was Sheffield’s indiscreet marriage. In these notes in HMC 19 then, there is uncommon evidence of collaborative hearing. Sheffield and Russell were seated or stood side-by-side at court while Donne preached, and discussed Donne’s choices of exempla either during or shortly after delivery.

In addition to the hearing notes from the three sermons discussed so far, three others survive: HMC 20, pp. 42–43, HMC 21, pp. 179–80, and HMC 26, fols. 87–88. All are court sermons at Whitehall, preached in February 1623, February 1626, and March 1622 respectively. The first derives from a section in the manuscript that is more fully devoted to court Lent sermons. Its note-taking strategies follow the patterns already discussed, and its most distinguishing feature, a cross-reference from one Donne sermon to another, will be discussed below. The notes from HMC 21 relate to a sermon that was also printed in 1626. Russell’s notes here are extremely concise (about one hundred and twenty words), suggesting recollection and transcription sometime after the event.

The notes in HMC 26, fols. 87–88, relate to a sermon preached at court but in the absence of the king. It found a readership beyond Donne’s immediate congregation, in the form of two manuscripts. Once more, however, there is no reason to assume that Russell saw such a manuscript, as his notes are typically terse and loosely paraphrase the full sermon text, rather than quoting from it verbatim. They do, though, occasionally hint at Donne’s plainer language in delivery. His text was 1 Cor. 15.26, “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (as transcribed by Russell). As Donne stated in his divisio, the body of the sermon is “but a larger paraphrase upon the words” (fol. 1). This attention to the “words” of the scriptural text led Donne to discuss the metaphorical resonances of the word “enemy:” “the holy = ghost […] chooseth the metaphor of an Enemie, and enmity, to avert us from looking for true peace, from anie thing that presents it self in the waye. Neither trulie could the holy = ghost imprint more horror, by any word then that which intimates warre, as the word enemie doth” (CUL, MS Add. 8469, fol. 5). These words provide the crucial context for what follows: Donne’s elucidation of the “horror of War” by discussion of its companions, “famine” and

52. Cf. Potter and Simpson, Sermons of Donne, IV, 29.
53. All contrasting quotations are cited from one of the two contemporary manuscripts: Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 8469.
“pestilence.” It is only at this point that Russell’s note picks up the argument: “In the famien thay eat ther childrenen of a span longe sayth the propeth Esa, that is one sayth thay gave them selves phisieik to cast out the embrios so to have wher one toe fede” (HMC 26, f. 87). Russell’s “to cast out the embrios” puts in more startlingly physiological terms what Donne eventually wrote, namely that the mothers “take medicines to procure abortions, to cast their children” (CUL, MS Add. 8469, f. 5). Russell’s more gruesome note is perhaps indicative of Donne’s more direct approach in delivery. What Russell did not record, however, is the guiding interpretative context for this quotation. Donne’s striking image carries first and foremost a metaphorical meaning, as the descriptions of the horrors of war moderate a question Donne asked earlier, namely “howe trulie a warrfare is this life, if the kingdome of heaven it selfe have not this peace in perfection?” (CUL, MS Add. 8469, f. 1v). Russell chooses to copy only a single detail that was presented by Donne in service of an overarching idea. This may suggest that Russell could perhaps rely on his memory to fill in the gaps; conversely, however, if he was in commonplacing mode, then Russell may simply not have been concerned with the rhetorical patterning and larger aims of the sermon.

Russell’s notes from the four remaining Donne sermons arose from his reading of printed sermons (or, in the case of HMC 18, his secretary’s reading). A different process of note-taking can be assumed for these reading records, since Russell had more time to reflect on his material and could freely move back and forth in the text. These are of interest for what they reveal about Russell’s further response to Donne, but they are fundamentally different from the hearing notes in that they preserve fewer clues about Donne’s pulpit rhetoric.

Russell’s notes in HMC 21, (pp. 62–65 reversed) are the longest he took from Donne, and close textual correspondence shows that he worked from the 1625 printed quarto, The First Sermon Preached to King Charles.54 These notes immediately demonstrate that he did, in fact, freely move around the printed text, especially at the end of his set of notes, where after a first round of extracted quotations, he returned to earlier parts of the sermon for further materials. Russell also strikingly retitled the text as “Do: Dunns sermund uppon the deth of K Ieamse.,” thereby foregrounding the memory of his recently deceased monarch at the expense of the

54. John Donne, The First Sermon Preached to King Charles (1625); see further Colclough, Sermons at the Court of Charles I, pp. 257–73.
sermon’s prime intended hearer, King Charles I (HMC 21, p. 62 reversed). This privileging of James is further marked by Russell’s small addition to Donne. Russell had elsewhere in his notes found opportunity to exercise his local knowledge. For instance, in the “Directions to Preachers” sermon, where when Donne remarked how “Queen Elizabeth was the great granchild of a Lord Maior of London”, Russell identified that mayor as “Bullen” (HMC 20, p. 5). In similar vein, Russell added further detail to the first sermon preached to Charles. There, Donne spoke of the way in which the “Lambe of God [...] hath taken away the sinnes of the world, and but changed the Sunnes of the world, who hath complicated two wondrous workes in one, To make Our Sunne to set at Noone, and to make our Sunne to rise at Noone too.” This paradoxical representation of the royal succession was addressed by Russell with the note “K Ieamse diing about ii acloke” (HMC 21, p. 65 reversed). While the death of James may have shocked Russell’s world, his reading the sermon also occasioned a note of wry humor, in the shape of a somewhat feeble pun. Following his note of Donne’s discussion of the statutory requisite of acreage (land) belonging a cottage, Russell quipped that “though noe massacerse yet moer mass Akers than here toe foer.”

Even when copying from a printed sermon, Russell still completely disregarded its structural conceits. In the sermon to Charles, Donne structured his argument around the governing conceit of “foundations,” following his text from Psalms 11.3. There is, however, virtually no trace of Russell’s response to this imagistic framework of “foundations.” Instead, Russell mined the sermon text for sententiae (very frequently anti-Catholic gibes), following the tried and tested conventions of the early modern commonplacer. There is also another instance of a marginal comment, relating to Donne’s “Survay of the second House, the State, the Kingdome, the Common-wealth, and of this House, the foundation is the Law.” Donne quoted Justinian’s Digest, and offered the following application: “Lex Communis Reipub. sponsio, says the Law it selfe: The Law is the mutuall, the reciprocall Suretie between the State and the Subject. The Lawe is my Suretie to the State, that I shall pay my Obedience, and

55. Geoffrey Boleyn (1406–1463), Lord Mayor of London in 1457–1479.
56. Donne, First Sermon, sig. H3v.
57. Donne, First Sermon, sig. F3v; cf. HMC 21, p. 65. The pun may have been helped along by Donne’s “massacers” (sig. G1v), although the word is used here in an entirely different context.
58. Donne, First Sermon, sig. E4v.
Russell copied this out, but added that “A stat Adultery the brech of Laws by a king” (HMC 21, p. 64). David Colclough has commented that Russell probably confused “sponsio,” meaning a compact or wager, with “sponsalia” or betrothal: a “state adultery” therefore signifies a king’s legal breach of that union.60 This reflection, even if resulting from misreading, shows Russell’s formative thinking on the respective responsibilities of state and subject.

Russell also responded to the one sermon which has received most critical attention to date, not only from recent scholars but also from his (and Donne’s) contemporaries, that preached at Paul’s Cross on September 15, 1622, in defense of the King James’s controversial Directions for Preachers. As Mary Morrissey has shown, “the Directions appeared to many to be an attempt to muzzle the pulpits from discussing James’s unpopular decision to negotiate a ‘Spanish match’ for Prince Charles. Even more alarming to many in England, these negotiations went on at a time when James appeared to be doing little to recover the patrimony of his daughter’s children in the Palatinate. Appearing only two days after the formal suspension of the laws against recusants, the Directions to Preachers were seen by those already alarmed by James’s foreign policy as the first sign of a plot by the Spanish to manipulate James into fatally weakening the Reformation in England.”61 These circumstances turned Donne’s defense into a formidable task, issued as it was from one of the nation’s foremost pulpits. In fact, the sermon was sufficiently ambiguous as to divide critical opinion among Donne scholars: on the one hand, that Donne sycophantically supported royal absolutism and therefore showed himself to be both a careerist and an opportunist, and on the other, that Donne cast himself as “a preacher whose politics did not stifle his conscience, but who found, even within the narrowing limits decreed by the Directions, the possibilities of discreet and religious counsel.”62 Certainly, some contemporary hearers struggled to understand Donne, most famously John Chamberlain, who reported that he found Donne’s choice of Bible text “somewhat strange for such a business.” Chamberlain was

59. Donne, First Sermon, sigs. E4v–F1.
60. Colclough, Sermons at the Court of Charles I, p. 257.
61. Mary Morrissey, “John Donne as a Conventional Paul’s Cross Preacher,” in John Donne’s Professional Lives, ed. David Colclough (Cambridge, Eng., 2003), p. 167.
62. Jeanne Shami, “‘The Stars in Their Order Fought Against Sisera’: John Donne and the Pulpit Crisis of 1622,” John Donne Journal 14 (1995): 6.
nonplussed, too, about its structure and rhetorical efficacy, for “how he made yt hold together I know not, but he gave no great satisfaction.”

Simonds D’Ewes attended in person and stood close to the pulpit, and “ther wrote as much as I desired.” Then, “the most parte of the afternoone and a prettye [while] after supper I spent in noting it out” — that is to say, he expanded into fuller prose his succinct hearing notes. D’Ewes could have spared his transcription labors if he had known that the sermon was soon to be printed by royal command, and that it would prove popular enough to warrant two reissues.

It was by way of one of these three printed issues that Francis Russell gained access to this important text on pulpit management and foreign policy. Russell’s notes (Figure 1) follow the wording of the printed book very closely, and in one of the instances where he did deviate, he pithily rendered down the entire sermon to the simple notion that the “K [‘king’] not hinder preching but reduse it to the primitive tiemes” (“hinder” is not Donne’s term in this context; the primitive times were when, so stated Donne, “God gave so evident, and so remarkable blessings to mens Preaching”) (HMC 20, p. 6).

Russell’s notes further broadly cover the sermon’s major concerns, from Donne’s discussion of foreign intervention (in the face of examples like “Iosuas ruien in ingaging himsef in the unnecessary warse of other prinses”), and the monarch’s responsibilities (“Ks accions walks not always in the sight of men and so thay lack ther thanks but canot goe out of the sight of god and soe not lowse ther reward”), as well as those men of Russell’s own class, “great offisers,” who “ar liek the Intelligenses that moves great sphers but ar not to be moved out of them” (HMC 20, pp. 5–6). Russell was also not adverse to hammering home the obvious, for instance where Donne drew an analogy between the heavenly battle against Sisera and “that deliuerance, which God gave us at Sea,” recorded by Russell as: “The starse fought which as Iosephus sayth wase the storms blowing in enimies faces in [15]88” (HMC 20, p. 5).

It is not yet clear where Francis Russell himself stood with regards to the contemporary debates treated in Donne’s sermon. Conrad

63. McClure, Letters of Chamberlain, II, 451.
64. Shami, “Pulpit Crisis,” 25–26; cf. Elisabeth Bourcier, ed., The Diary of Sir Simonds D’Ewes, 1622–1624: Journal D’un Étudiant Londenien Sous Le Règne de Jacques Ier (Paris, 1974), p. 97.
65. Cf. John Donne, A Sermon Upon the XV. Verse of the XX. Chapter of the Booke of Judges (1622), sig. H1.
66. Donne, Sermon Upon Judges, sig. E3.
Russell has suggested that he kept a relatively low profile during the early 1620s, and that “there is no evidence in the parliamentary record of the 1620s to indicate Bedford’s attitude on questions of religion.”

67. Russell, “Russell, Francis.”
study of the notebooks may be more illuminating. But from his extracts of Donne’s sermon alone, it is not in principle clear whether Russell was always in agreement with Donne. For example, Russell copied that “men begins to be shaken in ther religion at home since god neglects it abroad” (HMC 20, p. 5). This note lacks Donne’s crucial distinction that these men wrongfully “think” that God neglects his foreign flocks. Donne advanced this idea only to refute it, since God “by a little … will do much,” and so the wrongfully thinking men should never “suspect Gods power, or Gods purpose.” When Russell explicitly quibbled with Donne and so betrayed a personal response, as he did on two occasions, his disagreements did not always pertain to the major political and ecclesiastical debates. The first of these quibbles was likely written in jest. Donne quoted St Augustine on the hereditary possession of Israel by the Jews and God’s ultimate restoration of the lands to them who “scarce know their own title.” Russell copied the section closely, namely that “St Austin maks a useful Historical note that land to which god brought the children of Isarel toe wase ther land beföer linial desended from hime whoe wase possessor of it beföer the flud,” but then added a gloss: “I thent all rights were drowned of meum et tuum at the flud” (HMC 20, p. 5). Russell’s ungenerous comment was likely a legal joke (much like the gentleman’s joke discussed above), drawn from one of the fundamental principles of property rights (“meum et teum,” or “what’s mine is mine, what’s yours is yours”), to somewhat feebly counter Donne’s exemplum which could hardly be contested, namely that God does “Much with few, much though late.”

Russell’s second response occurs at the sermon’s conclusion, where Donne asserted that “Preachers … are not ignorant, unlearned, extem- poral men.” This statement followed immediately upon Donne’s reading of preachers as his text’s “stars,” this time typifying them as “you, you whom God hath made Starres in this Firmament, Preachers in this Church.” Russell extracted that “The star by which we make our wayes is nether of the greetest nor least magnitud.” This follows Donne to the letter, but Russell then added, firstly, that “planets [are] not stars” (a point not

68. Donne, *Sermon Upon Judges*, sig. C1.
69. Donne, *Sermon Upon Judges*, sig. C2v.
70. Donne, *Sermon Upon Judges*, sig. C2v; Donne employed the phrase “meum et tuum” elsewhere in his works: twice in the Devotions; in the Essays in Divinity; and most significantly in his first extant sermon, preached on January 23, 1615: Donne, *XXVI Sermons*, sig. Y2.
71. Donne, *Sermon Upon Judges*, sig. K1v.
contesting Donne), but also, by way of another interlinear gloss, that “all stars above [“are”?] the lik magnitud” (HMC 20, p. 6). Donne is unequivocal on this point, namely that “as you know from St. Paul, that Stars differ from Stars in glory, but all conduce to the benefit of man.”72 Russell’s annotation is characteristically terse, but it may be suggested that he took issue here with Donne’s fundamental observation of greater and lesser preachers.73

In November 1622, Donne accepted the invitation to preach to a meeting of the Virginia Company, held at the Merchant-Taylors Hall in London. The Company promptly requested Donne to print the sermon, and Donne agreed, wittily addressing them in his epistle with the words “now I am an Adventurer; if not to Virginia, yet for Virginia; for, every man, that Prints, Adventures.”74 It appears that Russell took at least an intellectual interest in colonialist endeavors in the New World, as he owned and read a manuscript treatise dealing directly with this topic, “A Discourse upon our Foraigne Plantations discovering the defects and failings of them wth their Remedies, and the grounds of Erecting a West India Companye” (HMC 264), and vigorously annotated another such text, dealing with the governing of plantations, “An extract [of chapters six and seven] of the antiquity of the Batavers Comon wealth which is now the Hollanders […] translated for the right honorable Sir Edward Ccijl knight etc” (HMC 10). Russell’s extracts from Donne’s printed sermon are rather compressed, under 300 words, and are wedged in between another set of sermon notes, “Hall at court,” and reading notes from the Scottish John Weemes’s theological treatise, The Christian Synagogue (printed five times between 1623 and 1637). Despite their brevity, however, the notes do range across the entirety of the printed sermon, from Donne’s opening gambit on the book of Acts (in Russell’s words, “Reckned in this Bouk 22 sermunds of the Apostels yet not 1 caled the preching, but Acts of Apostles,” HMC 20, pp. 13–14), to Donne’s concluding remarks on the art of oratory.75 Typical of Russell’s notetaking is his eye for bite-sized witticisms (e.g., “God taught us in ships not

72. Donne, Sermon Upon Judges, sig. K1v.
73. On April 18, 1626, Donne would preach again to the king, and this time he explicitly addressed the question of degrees of glory in heaven. See further Colclough, Sermons at the Court of Charles I, pp. 290–91.
74. John Donne, A Sermon Upon the VIII Verse of the I. Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles (1622), sig. A3r.
75. Cf. Donne, Sermon Upon Acts, sgs. G1v–G2.
to transport ourselves as [“but’] him),” and for anti-Catholic gibes, for instance that “The Bish of Rome hath nothing moir rightfull Aposto- tical but his thinking of a temporall kd.” [“kd.” is Russell’s common abbreviation for “kingdom”] (HMC 20, pp. 13–14). The latter note is followed by Russell’s own interlinear addition, that the “pop [is] in noe thing liker peter then dening his master,” and the notes are concluded by yet another of Russell’s anti-Catholic sentiments, signed “FR” to mark this as his own invention: “You ar for the Roman and we for the text hard [“heard’]” (HMC 20, p. 14). “Roman” here may refer to Roman Catholic Latin, but, in context, it seems more likely that it refers to “Ro- man” oratory — the “lofty, elevated, stately” discourse of preaching (cf. OED, s.v., “Roman,” n.1 and adj.1, 3b), as opposed to the plain style fa- vored by English Protestants. Russell’s attention to Donne on the art of oratory in support of persuading princes is especially resonant in light of Russell’s own political career, when his own art of persuasion would be deployed to the full in the House of Lords. The panegyrists of Roman emperors would, as Donne says, “procure things to bee done, by saying they were done.”\(^76\) As Russell phrases this, “In art of oratoers in showing what princes should doe in telling them I haif had claim it which increased love in the subiect and conveyd counsell unto the k.” (HMC 20, p. 14). Donne speaks of “Emperours” and rulers in the abstract, but Russell speaks of “the k.,” that is, the King. The latter note, finally, is also complemented by another of Donne’s disparaging remarks on “city preaching” copied by Russell, suggesting his interest in public speaking and pulpit rhetoric: “prechers that biends themselues to great auditories becum occasionall prechers maksthe immergent afayrs of the tiem ther text and the humers of the herers ther bibell” (taken nearly verbatim from Donne) (HMC 20, p. 14). As Donne continued, such preachers “may loose their Naturall Notes, both the simplicitie, and the boldnesse that belongs to the Preaching of the Gospell.”\(^77\) This was a sentiment certainly shared by Russell, who so clearly preferred “the text hard.”

Russell read Donne critically and comparatively. Two-thirds into his Virginia Company text, Donne briefly meditated on the legal punish- ment of “intestabilitie,” or “not to bee admitted to be a witnesse of any other.”\(^78\) He applied this inability to witness to any good man’s potential

\(^{76}\) Donne, Sermon Upon Acts, sig. G2.  
\(^{77}\) Donne, Sermon Upon Acts, sig. E4.  
\(^{78}\) Donne, Sermon Upon Acts, sig. E2.
to be “a Christian in life,” not just in profession. Donne then turned to the example of John the Baptist in the wilderness, sent as a “Witness of Christ,” and urged the Virginia Planters to “preach to one another by a holy and exemplar life,” as witnesses to Christ, and so uphold their Christian morality “unto the uttermost parts of the Earth.”79 Russell responded to this in summary. However, to this note he also added an interlinear gloss: “And yet christ is led into wilderness to be tempted vide postea dunn’s sermund” (HMC 20, p. 14). This reference points toward another Donne sermon, preached at court, from which Russell extracted some thirty pages later in the same notebook (HMC 20, pp. 42–43). What connects these two sermons is the image of the wilderness. In the latter court sermon, Donne stated that “Christ was alwayes safe, hee was ledd of the Spirit; of what Spirit, his owne spirit, led willingly in the wildernes, to bee tempted of the Divell Noe other man may Doe that.”80 Russell heard rather than read this court sermon, and took the following note: “Christ is sayd to be led into the wildernes to be tempted which shows noe man must voluntary expose himself to temptation yet he sends Iohn into the wildernes vide antea dunn’s sermund” (HMC 20, p. 18). In the Virginia Company sermon (the “anterior” text), John the Baptist’s “wilderness” was a welcoming place: as Donne described, “there were fewe witnesses to oppose Iohns Testimony, few tentations, few worldly allurements, few worldly businesses. One was enough for the Wildernes. […] but to Jerusalem, Christ send all his Apostles, and all little inough.”81 The “wildernesse” inhabited by Christ, conversely, was a place of great temptation. Russell’s cross-references between these two sermons demonstrate that he engaged with Donne’s exempla across different texts (and across sermons, moreover, that were preached to very different audiences). Russell could have bought and read the Virginia Company sermon at any point after November or December 1622, and the court sermon was preached on February 28, 1623. It is most likely, then, that Russell took his notes from the earlier text, and after hearing Donne preach at court, he returned to his earlier notes for further annotation. Perhaps Russell’s insistence on the wilderness as a place of temptation betrays something of his own beliefs about the uncertain fates of the Virginia planters (and

79. Donne, Sermon Upon Acts, sigs. E3v, E2v.
80. Cited from the only extant manuscript of this sermon, British Library MS Harley 6946, fol. 38.
81. Donne, Sermon Upon Acts, sigs. E2v–E3.
so takes mild issue with Donne), or alternatively, his cross-referenced annotations are indicative of a more literary interest in the deployment of biblical imagery by preachers.

All the sermon notes considered so far were written by Francis Russell himself. The single exception (and the final set of notes to be discussed) occurs in HMC 18, a set of notes written by his secretary. This secretarial assistance is an otherwise common feature in the Woburn manuscripts: many so-called “collections” were produced for Russell. They were doubtlessly commissioned to enable his faster consumption of the text in question. The subject of professional readers, or household scholars, has garnered considerable interest from book historians. Their purpose was often to read actively and politically, and to produce for their employers a reading that was goal-and action-oriented. Although more research is necessary in relation to Francis Russell and his secretary, it appears likely that the latter performed such readings for Russell. At the very least, on the basis of the widespread evidence of this secretarial hand across the Woburn corpus, this individual (who remains to be identified) not only wrote the “collections,” but was also wrote indices on the volumes’ flyleaves. He was also predominantly responsible for another scribal project, the maintenance of Russell’s gigantic compilation of commonplaces (HMC 11).

The notes in HMC 18 relate to Donne’s sermon for Magdalene Herbert (the mother of the poet and clergyman George Herbert), preached on July 1, 1627 and printed in the same year. They were a collaborative effort, because after Russell received his secretary’s eight-page “collection,” he himself numbered all paragraphs and underlined salient words and passages. From each numbered paragraph, Russell then extracted a single key-word, written onto the blank versos: for example, from the first two pages, “souls,” “salvation,” “Jests,” “sorrow,” “Jests,” “Jesting,” “sewring” (that is, swearing, in relation to oaths and blasphemies), “protestants,” “day of Judgment,” and “displese se[e] distast” (HMC 18, fols. [*]v, 2v). These keywords (an otherwise common feature across the corpus) direct the reader from the individual notebooks to an entirely different type of manuscript: HMC 11, the above-mentioned commonplace book. This collection appears to have been conceived as a single volume, but soon expanded to four (and a fifth volume can be inferred,

82. Cf. Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, “‘Studied for Action’: How Gabriel Harvey Read His Livy,” Past & Present 129 (1990): 30–78.
but this may have disappeared). For an example of the movement of Russell’s reading notes within this wider textual ecosystem of his manuscripts, we can follow a trail that commences in HMC 18 with the Magdalene Herbert, Lady Danvers sermon. Russell’s secretary extracted from Donne’s printed sermon that “All tribulations to the Godly fall under the definition of sacraments, are visible signes of invisable grace” (HMC 18, fol. 3). Russell boiled this down to a single keyword: “affliction.” This heading was already present in the first volume of HMC 11, p. 77, but by the time Donne’s sermon was extracted, far more material had been gathered than could be accommodated on this single page.

As a result, a system of internal cross-references (e.g., “see more of this 1794”) sends the reader on a chase across the four volumes: from p. 77, to 1794, 2088, and 1575, where entries on “afflictions” are filed under the related notions of “Trouble, see Crosses et Unquietness.” From there we move to 1175 (under “Persecution”), 1573, 1578 (under “Tribulation”), 482 (under “Crosses”), 531, 627, and 1028, 2826, 2982, 3027, 3091, 3238, 3467, 3543, 3810, and 3824 (all under “Crosses et Trobles” and “afflictions”), at which point the cross-references cease. In the process of navigating these hundreds of entries on “afflictions,” only some of which were attributed, and some of which were cross-referenced back to the notebook from which they came (e.g., “L[iber]. A.”, “L[iber] D.”, see below), the works of Donne are frequently encountered. (Other notable entries include poetic extracts from George Withers, Francis Quarles, and George Herbert.) Donne’s extract from HMC 18 is included here, but also, “Some man Antidats misery by professing of ruyn they contribute to misery that over feare it before it came / Dr Dunns:”, which derives from the reading notes in HMC 21 of Donne’s first sermon to King Charles (HMC 11, II, 1794, III, 2089). That set of notes is not furnished with the marginal keywords, but this material was nevertheless transferred to the commonplace book. Other extracts are attributed to Donne: “Afflictions are but chaffings of the wax that wee may be sealed unto thee. Dunn,” and “Affliction is a treasure that noe man hath enough of it, for by it man is made fitt for god. Dunn” (HMC 11, II, 1794). These both derive from the Devotions upon Emergent Occasions, extracted more fully in HMC 20 (see above). Another extract copied is that originally noted in HMC 22, p. 43, on the crosses of this world and the temptation of other churches, and finally one that has not yet been traced to its source: “Persecution filled Egipt soe full of Hermites that hee said it was

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nothing ells but a cittie of Hermites [...] Dr Dunn." (HMC 11, II, 1578, 1175).

Even from this most cursory inspection of HMC 11 it is clear that Donne’s sermon texts and other works extensively feature in the commonplace book, the research potential of which remains very considerable, not least as an indicator of how Russell systematically organized his reading over many years. To adapt a term employed by William Sherman, the commonplace book functioned not only as a repository but also as an early-modern “search engine.” For instance, under the heading “Navigation” appear not only quotations on this topic but also further directions, for instance “vide the large paper booke with yellow Cover and leaves written by Sr Arthur Gorge: folio 93: the booke marked with the greater Letter A” (HMC 11, II, 1781). That manuscript is still extant, now HMC 23, and it indeed features several tracts by Gorges, and is marked upon the fore-edge with a thickly inked “A.” HMC 23, incidentally, is yet another manuscript filled with sermon notes, from such luminaries as Joseph Hall preaching at court in 1629, and from many other preachers who have today been largely forgotten.

IV

Conclusion

The notebooks of Francis Russell constitute by far the largest body of evidence discovered to date of hearing Donne preach. Given the primary nature especially of the hearing notes, Russell’s manuscripts can therefore assist students of Donne. But as seen above there are also limits to their usefulness, not least since the notes (inevitably) reduce Donne’s finely crafted prose. The longest set of notes from a Donne sermon (HMC 18) represents only around ten percent of Donne’s text as printed, while the shortest (e.g., HMC 19) covers less than four percent. If these notes do not provide text sufficient for an editor’s copy, they do provide vital evidence of the possible gaps between sermons as delivered and as printed. And there is no doubt that even such succinct records were of value to Russell. A marginal scribble in HMC 21 constitutes Russell’s instructions

83. William H. Sherman, Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England (Philadelphia, 2008), pp. 127–48.

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to himself, namely that “Thes sermunds to be often redd but espetially when I am siek” (HMC 21, p. 1). Another instruction to this effect was written into the margin of sermon notes from a “Docter Smith” in the same volume (“For Siekness”), or the notes from “Sir John Benets meditations upon the psalm of mersies” (HMC 21, fol. 49, 81). Other notes were conceived for the more practical purpose of textual recycling, such as “Sidonius Apollinaris epistelse,” designed as a storehouse for Russell’s own “leters or spech” (HMC 21, fol. 46). There is also some evidence that Russell revisited other notes from Donne, for instance in HMC 26. In the sermon here extracted (preached at Whitehall on March 8, 1622), Donne asserted that “there is a trade driven, a staple established betweene heaven and earth: *Ibicaronostra, hicspirituseius. Thither have wee sent our flesh, and hither hath hee sent his spirit*” (CUL, MS Add. 8469, [fol. 15v]). Russell was evidently taken with this image, as he copied “Ther is a stapel established betwixt heven and erth we have sent our flesh unto heven, and god hath sent his sperit into the erth.” Russell then returned to this note at a later visit and added to Donne’s mercantile metaphor: “our Terse and prayers ar Bilse of exchange sent unto heven” (HMC 26, fol. 89). It appears then that he primarily derived spiritual solace from his notes, as well as the occasional joke or pun, and the many *sententiae* for potential reuse. The process of note-taking was, then, not simply an intellectual exercise, but also an expression of practical, personal piety.

Russell’s notes can also offer important contextual evidence for preaching rotas at court (and elsewhere). The notes in HMC 20, for instance, accrued chronologically, and the first dated items after the extracts taken from Donne’s *Devotions* are a series of Lent sermons at court in 1624 (HMC 20, pp. 161–64, 164–76). Publication of the *Devotions* can be precisely dated: it was entered into the Stationers’ Register on January 9, 1624, and by February 1 the work was in print. Russell acquired it hot off the press, since his notes from the *Devotions* precede the Lent series that commenced on Ash Wednesday on February 11 with a sermon by Lancelot Andrewes, which Russell attended and extracted in much the same fashion as his notes from Donne. The remainder of named preachers dovetails exactly with the courtly Lent sermon rota preserved in the muniment books of Westminster Abbey, which lists, in order of appearance, Lancelot Andrewes, John Donne, Richard Wright, Matthew
Wren, Richard Senhouse, Arthur Lake, Richard Corbett, Walter Balcanquall, John Hanmer, William Juxon, George Warburton, William Laud, John Young, Thomas Winniffe, Richard Neile, Walter Curll (Curle), John Bowlie, George Abbott, John Warner, William Laud, John Williams, George Montaigne, and Lancelot Andrewes. Russell heard and noted the sermons by the preachers listed in bold in the same order, demonstrating his attendance at most of the series from February 11 (Andrewes) to March 7 (Laud), and his final attendance of John Bowlie on March 19. Russell’s notes not only confirm Peter McCullough’s court sermon calendar, but add to it where Russell provides the preacher’s text, as well as concise summaries, of sermons that have not otherwise survived (e.g., those of Wren, Senhouse, Lake, Corbett, Balcanquall, Hanmer, Juxon, Warburton, Curle, and Bowlie). Commenting generally on Francis Russell’s reading habits as encountered in the large commonplace book (HMC 11), Conrad Russell concluded that “Bedford was a zealous reader of poetry with a particular affection for John Donne, George Herbert, and Francis Quarles. The combination of some of Donne’s most predestinarian material, from sermons as well as divine poems, with Herbert on communion, again indicates the ecclesiastical sympathies of a Jacobean.” This may hold true for the extracts in HMC 11, but closer attention to the notebooks has demonstrated that, in fact, Russell gathered a great deal more from his hearing and reading of Donne’s sermons than reflections on predestination. It is striking, for example, that Russell attended in person a number of sermons delivered between 1620 and 1622, culminating in the “Directions” sermon, which Russell read in print. Jeanne Shami has reviewed the reiteration of a series of political and ecclesiastical questions that recur throughout, which suggest “a political and religious sensibility attuned to current events, but filtered through the medium of Biblical exegesis and commentary.” Russell’s notes show that he actively transcribed those sections of Donne’s sermons that treat the same questions characteristic of these years. By hearing, reading, and noting Donne, Russell left a distinct record of his desire to keep a finger on the pulse of contemporary debates on politics, religion, and the law as filtered through the pulpit.

85. McCullough, Sermons at Court, Appendix: pp. 278–83.
86. Russell, “Russell, Francis.”
87. Shami, “Pulpit Crisis,” p. 10.
The full extent of the formation of Francis Russell’s political convictions is a subject unto itself. Russell’s reading records must figure into this subject much more broadly. The nineteenth-century historian J.H. Wiffen described Francis Russell as one “peculiarly qualified, having received at one of the inns of the court the education of a lawyer, which had induced, upon a mind naturally strong, inductive, and sagacious, a habit of patient thought and close investigation.” Long before even the Historical Manuscript Commission first catalogued the Woburn manuscripts, Wiffen had noted, too, the “voluminous observations entered into [Russell’s] common-place books, which also shew, though written in a rapid hand unfortunately little legible, that there was scarce a parliamentary debate to which he listened, a book which he read, a sermon which he heard, or a subject to which he gave his steady thoughts, that was not systematically subjected by him to analysis, and in some shape or other made to furnish accessories to his wit or weapons for his wisdom.”

If nothing else, this essay has sought to demonstrate that these manuscripts are a crucial early-modern resource, and not only in relation to John Donne. Russell’s manuscript library as a whole spans nearly four decades of reading and intellectual development, and bears witness to the formative first decades of the seventeenth century. Russell owned, read, and often annotated, manuscripts containing nearly every kind of early-modern text, including works of heraldry, history, genealogy, travel, navigation, trade, law, philosophy, politics, antiquarianism, correspondence, mythology, theology, poetry, and drama. Those manuscripts, in tandem with Russell’s role as an increasingly important agent in seventeenth-century life and politics, make clear the continued importance of his efforts.

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88. J.H. Wiffen, Historical Memoirs of the House of Russell: from the Times of the Norman Conquest (London, 1833), II, 125–26.