

## Metaphysical and Cavalier poetry

**The Metaphysical Poets** are known for their **ability to startle the reader** and coax new perspective through **paradoxical images**, subtle argument, **inventive syntax**, and imagery from art, philosophy, and religion using an **extended metaphor known as a conceit**.

Donne entered the world **during a period of theological and political unrest** for both England and France; **a Protestant massacre occurred on Saint Bartholomew's day in France**; while in England, the **Catholics were the persecuted minority**.

**John Donne** is the first poet that scholars identify with the English Metaphysical School

Poets who adopted a style similar to Donne's.

In his 1693 essay on satire, English poet and critic John Dryden argued that Donne's poetry makes absurd and overly elaborate use of philosophical and metaphysical concepts to describe love.

Dryden felt that Donne and other poets of his time were guilty of over- intellectualizing love, and claimed that they would be better served by using more emotionally grounded metaphors.

In 1779, **Dr. Samuel Johnson coined the phrase "metaphysical poets"** to identify Donne and his contemporaries, including Andrew Marvell.

**Johnson faulted these poets** for their unruly versification, metaphoric distortions, and overly elaborate conceits.

**T.S. Eliot** started to recognize and value the metaphysicals' work, **praising its anti-Romantic and intellectual qualities**.

**The list of English poets identified as "metaphysicals" includes**

- John Donne
- George Herbert
- Richard Crashaw
- Henry Vaughan
- Andrew Marvell.

### John Donne (1572–1631)

He came of a Roman Catholic family, and his mother, as the daughter of John Heywood, was great grand-daughter of Sir Thomas More. His father died before John was four, but the boy studied at Oxford and the Inns of Court and, after travel and foreign service, he **became secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, the Lord Keeper**.

But in **December 1601** his prospects were ruined by his secret marriage to Lady Egerton's niece, Ann More, whose father had him dismissed and, for a time, imprisoned. **'John**

**Donne—Ann Donne—Un-done'**, the young husband wrote in a letter to his wife, and though he managed to make his peace with his father-in-law, he was not reinstated, and he and Ann brought up a rapidly increasing family in very straitened circumstances.

Donne, who had early **become critical of the Roman Church, joined in the polemical writing of the time and was pressed to take Anglican orders**, but declined until pressure from James I, together with developments in his own thinking, brought him to the view that it was God's will that he should do so, and he was ordained in 1615.

The death of his wife in 1617 was the end of a most loving partnership.

Donne wrote most of his love lyrics, erotic verse, and some sacred poems in the 1590s, creating two major volumes of work: *Satires* and *Songs and Sonnets*.

**Izaak Walton**, in his *Life of John Donne*, tells how Donne was now 'the careful father of seven children then living, to whom he gave a voluntary assurance never to bring them under the subjection of a step-mother; which promise he kept most faithfully, burying with his tears, all his earthly joys in his most dear and deserving wife's grave...'

Donne's sonnet on his wife's death (**'Since she whom I lov'd'**) is one of his loveliest:

Here the admiring her my mind did whett  
To seeke thee God; so streames do shew their head...

It was in 1621 that Donne was made Dean of St Paul's, where he achieved a great reputation for his sermons and his piety.

Donne's importance is enhanced for us today by his influence upon twentieth-century poetry. T.S. Eliot found in his work a blend of emotional and intellectual quality which was an example and an inspiration in the revivification of the poetic tradition.

What earned Donne and his fellows the label 'metaphysical poets' was the habit of philosophical argument of the kind just illustrated, and the use of extravagant and far-fetched imagery, sometimes technical in substance.

### 'The Flea'

In **'The Flea'**, the lover playfully builds a persuasive argument for feminine surrender on the basis of the fact that a flea has sucked the blood of speaker and lady alike, thereby already mingling their bloods.

### Satyres & Elegies

Donne is at his finest in his short poems, but he worked on a more extended scale in the **Satyres**— busy commentaries on topical affairs and current types, harsh in tone, and in the

**Elegies**, a series of extremely diverse poems on various aspects of love.

**Satyre III**, serious in tone, voices the indignant resolution of a searcher after truth in an age of violent strife between religious bodies, while **Satyre IV** is a devastating representation of being pinned at court by a pretentious social bore.

There is an earnest simplicity in **Elegy XVI**, 'On his Mistris', while **Elegy XIX**, 'To His Mistris Going to Bed', is a frank yet mannered prologue to coition:

Licence my roaving hands, and let them go  
Before, behind, between, above, below.

### Anniversaries

Two **Anniversaries** were written in memory of **Elizabeth Drury**.

Donne did not personally know her: he made the poems reflective studies of the human soul's pilgrimage and destiny.

### Holy Sonnets

In the **Holy Sonnets** the urgent voice of the lover is heard again in tortuous **dialogue with his beloved**: but now **the beloved is God. The reluctance of the beloved has become the reluctance of God to sweep away the reluctance of the poet**. He calls upon God to show the full force of his love by taking him from the grip of his rival, the Devil. 'Except thou rise and for thine own work fight', I shall be left in the possession of the Satan who hates me, he proclaims (Sonnet II). And he invites God to batter his heart, overthrow him, break and burn him, indeed to divorce him from betrothal to the diabolical enemy and imprison him:

for I  
Except you'enthrall mee, never shall be free,  
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me. (XIV)

Never have the paradoxes of Christian vocation and surrender been more forcefully expressed than in the recapitulation of this loving contest with God. To have transposed the mock-hostilities of erotic dialogue onto this level of spiritual truth was a fine and sensitive achievement.

But perhaps the high point of Donne's poetic exploration is reached in '**Good Friday 1613 Riding Westward**', where the paradoxical theme of rising by dying is handled with subtlety of image and intensity of personal devotion.

He published the *Divine Poems* in 1607.

In *Pseudo-Martyr*, published in 1610, Donne displayed his extensive knowledge of the laws of the Church and state, arguing that Roman Catholics could support James I without compromising their faith.

Donne's complimentary verse letters is one to **Lady Magdalen Herbert**, the mother of **George Herbert (1593–1633)**, the next most important poet of the metaphysical school, and a friend of Donne, of Bishop Andrewes and of Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding.

In 1621, he became dean of Saint Paul's Cathedral. In his later years, Donne's writing reflected his fear of his inevitable death.

He wrote his private prayers, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, during a period of severe illness and published them in 1624.

His learned, charismatic, and inventive preaching made him a highly influential presence in London. Best known for his vivacious, compelling style and thorough examination of mortal paradox, John Donne died in London on March 31, 1631.

## Poetry

*Satires* (1593)  
*Songs and Sonnets* (1601)  
*Divine Poems* (1607)  
*Psevdo-Martyr* (1610)  
*An Anatomy of the World* (1611)  
*Ignatius his Conclaue* (1611)  
*The Second Anniuersarie. Of The Progres of the Soule* (1611)  
*An Anatomie of the World* (1612)  
*Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions* (1624)  
*Deaths Dvell* (1632)  
*Ivvenilia* (1633)  
*Poems* (1633)  
*Sapientia Clamitans* (1638)  
*Wisdome crying out to Sinners* (1639)

## Prose

*Letters to Severall Persons of Honour* (1651)  
*A Collection of Letters, Made by Sr Tobie Mathews, Kt.* (1660)

## Essays

*A Sermon Vpon The VIII. Verse Of The I. Chapter of The Acts Of The Apostles* (1622)  
*A Sermon Vpon The XV. Verse Of The XX. Chapter Of The Booke Of Ivdges* (1622)  
*Encania. The Feast of Dedication. Celebrated At Lincolnes Inne, in a Sermon there upon Ascension day* (1623)  
*Three Sermons Upon Speciall Occasions* (1623)  
*A Sermon, Preached To The Kings Mtie. At Whitehall* (1625)

*The First Sermon Preached To King Charles* (1625)  
*Fovre Sermons Upon Speciall Occasions* (1625)  
*Five Sermons Vpon Speciall Occasions* (1626)  
*A Sermon Of Commemoration Of The Lady Dāuers* (1627)  
*Six Sermons Vpon Severall Occasions* (1634)  
*LXXX Sermons* (1640)  
*Biathanatos: A Declaration of that Paradoxe, or Thesis that Selfe-homicide is not so* (1644)  
*Naturally Sinne, that it may never be otherwise* (1647)  
*Essayes in Divinity* (1651)

### George Herbert (1593–1633)

A friend of Donne, of Bishop Andrewes and of Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding.

It was into Nicholas Ferrar’s hands that Herbert entrusted the manuscript of his poems at death, leaving him the option of publication or incineration, so it was Ferrar’s wise decision that gave us **The Temple**, a collection of religious poems of extraordinary power and sincerity.

Herbert came of an aristocratic family, but after early ambitions in the way of public office, he eventually found his vocation in the Anglican priesthood and spent his last years as rector of Bemerton in Wiltshire. He died at the age of forty, a loved and saintly parish priest. That he knew the value and delight of what he sacrificed in entering the priesthood is made evident in ‘The Pearl’. ‘I know the wayes of Learning.... I know the wayes of Honour.... I know the wayes of Pleasure...’

The two poems called ‘**Jordan**’ make it clear that Herbert thought carefully about the use of poetry in expressing love for God, and the character it should have.

In ‘**The Sacrifice**’ Herbert sustains a reflective sequence on the Passion through sixty three stanzas of cumulative meditation which has its paradoxes.

Like Donne, Herbert indulges in controversy with God, but less heated and, it is fair to say, less one-sided.

No.	Title	Subject Matter	Key Quotation
1	The Sacrifice		
2	The Reprisal	Dramatic Dialectic: Persona sees weakness, and tries to fight his	“I will overcome / The man, who once against thee

		disobedience of God. Key bits: Dying for God vs. God dying for him	fought.”
3	The Agony	Social Commentary/Dialectic: Man knows many things, but NOT Sin and Love. (Mt Olivet, Wine=blood)	“Love is that liquor sweet and most divine, / which my God feels as blood; but I, as wine.”
4	The Sinner (S)	Dramatic: acknowledgement of the “shreds of holiness” in him and asks God to “restored [His] image”.	“Remember that thou once didst write in stone.”
5	Redemption(S)	Narrative: Tenant looking for his landlord only to see him die to pay his debt.	“Your [Tenant] suit is granted, said, and died.”
6	Easter-Wings	Concrete poem. God is strong in Man’s weakness.	“...he became / most poor: / With thee / O let me rise...”
7	Prayer (1) (S)	Cumulative list of images/ideas of prayer.	“The soul’s blood, / The land of spices; something understood.”
8	Love (1) (S)	Dramatic: God’s Creative beauty vs. Man’s invention and wit.	“Wit fancies beauty, beauty raiseth wit”; “Only a scarf or glove/Doth warm our hands, and make them write of love.”
9	Love (2) (S)	Dramatic: God’s love as great flame purifies man’s love (lesser flames) so that they seek and see Him.	“ O let thy greater flame/ Attract the lesser to it”
10	The Temper (1)	Dialectic: Man feels spiritually high and low (stretch), but since God’s everywhere, it doesn’t matter.	“ rack me not to such a vast extent”; “Whether I fly with angels, fall with dust,/thy hands made both.../ thy power and love, my love and

			trust/make one place everywhere."
11	The Temper (2)	Man asking God to fix his fleeting emotions to His "chair of grace", so that he will always revere God.	"Scatter, or bind them all to bend to thee"
12	Jordan (1)	Satirical Dialectic: Poetry is a construction. Must poetry employ literary devices for it to be good?	"Nor let them punish me with loss of rhyme,/Who plainly say, <i>my God, my King</i> "
13	The Church-Floor	Description of the church floor shows how sin and death cannot affect man permanently	"Blest be the <i>Architect</i> , whose art/could build so strong in a weak heart."
14	The Windows	Dramatic: Man's described as "brittle crazy glass", unfit to "preach [God's] eternal word", but God makes him able to	"thou dost anneal in glass thy story,/making thy life to shine within/the holy Preacher's"
15	Humility	Parable of virtues	"I saw the Virtues sitting hand in hand."
16	Denial	Persona pleading for God to tune his "heartless breast", to fix the broken relationship between him and God.	"my bent thoughts, like a brittle bow/Did fly asunder", "O cheer and tune my heartless breast...and my mind may chime,/and mend my rhyme."
17	The World	Parable: Love builds a house that gets weakened by superfluity and sin but a "braver Palace" is established with love, grace and glory	"But Love and Grace took Glory by the hand,/ And built a braver Palace than before."
18	Vanity (1)	Man's predicament: He has "sought and	"Poor man, thou searchest

		found” many things but God.	round/To find out death, but missest life at hand.”
19	Virtue	Days, roses and spring all must die. Only a virtuous soul will live	“Only a sweet and virtuous soul ... chiefly lives”
20	The Pearl	Persona knows many “ways” of learning, honour and pleasure and still loves God.	“Therefore not sealed but with open eyes/ I fly to thee”
21	Man	Man is a magnificent creature that creation is made for, just as Man is to house God.	“Since then, my God, thou hast/ so brave a palace built; O dwell in it,/ that it may dwell with thee at last!”
22	Life	Just as flowers’ short lives are spent sweetly and usefully even after death, so does the persona wishes his life to be.	“sweetly your [flower] time was spent”; “if my sent be good, I care not, if/it be as short as yours.”
23	Charms and Knots	Cumulative list of proverbs in the form of rhyming couplets	“In shallow water heav’n doth show; /But who drinks on to hell may go”
24	Mortification	Man faces death at every stage of his life, therefore he should die to himself so that he can live.	“Yet Lord, instruct us so to die,/ that all these dyings may be life in death.”
25	Misery	Man’s “foolishness” turns Man from “treasure” to a “sick tossed vessel”, including persona	“But sin hath fooled him. Now he is/ a lump of flesh”; “Man is a foolish thing, a foolish thing”
26	Jordan (2)	Poet falls prey to his own wit when he writes to show his love for God and loses focus on Him.	“There is in love a sweetness already penned:/Copy out only that, and save expense.”



27	Vanity (2)	Admonition to the soul whose focus is on “earthly joy” and that shows his immaturity and need for repentance “lest thy relenting/may come too late”	“silly soul take heed; for earthly joy/is but a bubble”
28	Dialogue	Dramatic Conversation: Man tells God he’s experiencing no hope, delight nor purpose and wants to resign, but God tells him about how He departed from His glory and man is ashamed by it.	Man: “I can see no merit/leading to this favour” God: “That as I did freely part/with My glory and desert,/left all joys to feel all smart.”
29	Peace	Narrative where persona sets out on a quest to find peace and finds it in making bread.	“peace which ev’rywhere/with so much earnestness you do pursue/Is only there [bread making]”
30	Man’s Medley	Duality of man explored. Spiritual and physical joys and troubles.	“his joys are double;/so is his trouble”; “happy is he, whose heart/hath found the art/ to turn his double pains to double praise”
31	The Storm	Just as there are physical storms, there are spiritual/emotional ones that purify man.	“Poets have wronged poor storms: such days are best;/ they purged the air without, within the breast”
32	The Collar	Internal debate conflict: persona feels disheartened and “grew more fierce and wild” but meekly responds to God when He calls.	“as I raved and grew more fierce and wild/ at every word,/ me thoughts I heard one voice calling, <i>Child</i> and I replied, <i>My Lord.</i> ”
33	The Pulley	Pulley = rest, God witholds rest from man so that they will not “adore my [God’s] gifts instead of” Him, and that weariness will lead man back to Him	“Let him be rich and weary, taht at least,/If goodness lead him not, yet weariness/may toss him to my breast.”

34	The Flower	As a flower withers and buds, so does man	"these are thy wonders, Lord of Love,/to make us see we are but flowers that glide"
35	Aaron	Physical description of Aaron // persona symbolising man's sanctification process	"My doctrine tuned by Christ (who is not dead,/but lives in me while I do rest),/... Aaron's dressed."
36	The Forerunners	Need for literary creativity to be sanctified. Even when literary creativity leaves the persona, God in him gives him the life, which contrasts the "winter" and leaving of birds of spring.	"Thou art still my God, is all that ye/perhaps with more embellishment can say."
37	Discipline	Plea for God to use love, not severity to discipline him.	"throw away thy rod/throw away thy wrath"; "Love is swift of foot;/Love's a man of war"
38	Death	Changing perception of death because of Christ's sacrifice, from "sad effect of sadder groans", to "gay and glad"	"we can go die as sleep, and trust/Half that we have/Unto an honest faithful grave"
39	Heaven	List of questions probing the nature of God/Heaven that is replied by echoes.	"Light, joy and leisure; but shall they perserver?...ever"
40	Love (3) (S)	Narrative, persona feels unworthy to approach Love(God) but God accepts him and feeds him	"Love bade me welcome, yet my soul drew back/guilty of dust and sin."

### Richard Crashaw (1612–49)

**Richard Crashaw (1612–49)** too belonged to the circle of Nicholas Ferrar's friends, but he became a Roman Catholic.

Not in the evening's eyes  
When they red with weeping are  
For the Sun that dyes,  
Sitts sorrow with a face so fair...

So he writes of **St Mary Magdalene** in 'The Weeper'. It is in the same poem that Crashaw's taste for hyperbole leads him to describe the eyes of the tearful woman following Christ not

only as 'two faithfull fountains' but even as:

Two walking baths; two weeping motions;  
Portable & compendious oceans.

Crashaw paid Herbert the tribute of calling his own volume of poems **Steps to the Temple**.

### Henry Vaughan (1622–95)

He was more indebted to Herbert, whose influence is reflected in detailed echoes in many poems.

Vaughan's volume **Silex Scintillans** was published in 1650.

Vaughan's brightest lines are those in which the mystic's glimpse of the divine brings joy to himself, light and life to the whole of creation:

I saw Eternity the other night  
Like a great Ring of pure and endless light.  
(‘The World’)

There is anticipation of Wordsworth in **The Retreat**, a reminiscent poem of those early days of 'Angell-infancy' when heaven was about him and, seeing the 'weaker glories' of a gilded cloud or a flower he could spy 'Some shadows of eternity'. This is the authentic Wordsworthian experience. He feels through all his 'fleshly dresse/Bright shootes of everlastingness'.

### Thomas Traherne (1637–74)

Thomas Traherne (1637–74), a parish priest, and later a household chaplain, whose prose work **Centuries of Meditations** is full of Christian joy in creation and in the love of God.

He begins his ode '**On Christmas Day**', a paean of unclouded praise. But the same urgency runs through '**Solitude**', a poem vastly different in tone, in which he laments the absence in the world around him, and even in the Church's rites, of that 'Eden fair', that 'Soul of Holy Joy' which he is vainly seeking to ease his mind. The poems in praise of infancy, however, like 'The Rapture' and 'The Salutation', represent the more constant mood of delight and wonder.

### Robert Herrick (1591–1674)

Poems like '**A Thanksgiving to God for his House**' ('Thou mak'st my teeming Hen to lay/ Her egg each day') and the justly admired 'Letanie to the Holy Spirit':

When (God knowes) I'm tost about,  
Either with despair, or doubt,  
Yet before the glasse be out,

Sweet Spirit comfort me,

are religious only in the sense that they are addressed to God. The poet's concern is with the earthly pleasures he delights in and the earthly pains he fears. The prayers are sincerely directed, but they are not outbursts of love for God, still less of impatience to know Him more closely.

### Andrew Marvell

**Andrew Marvell** was a 17th century English metaphysical poet and an infrequent **member of the English Parliament's House of Commons**.

Marvell was known as a strong supporter of Republican ideals during the English Revolution of 1649.

Andrew Marvell was born in 1621 in Winestead-in-Holderness, East Riding of Yorkshire to a clergyman father, also named Andrew Marvell. The younger Marvell matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, when he was 13 years old.

During this time, Marvell briefly converted to Catholicism and moved to London, but, at the urging of his father, he returned to Cambridge and completed his Bachelor of Arts degree.

After graduating from Cambridge, Marvell spent the next decade traveling abroad. He eventually took a position as the tutor to the daughter of Lord Fairfax and moved into their home in Nun Appleton, Yorkshire.

His time in Fairfax's employ inspired one of Andrew Marvell's most well-known poems, "Upon Appleton House."

He also wrote several lyric poems during this time. Later, **Marvell wrote poems to honor Oliver Cromwell**, the military leader who led the English Revolution and eventually **became the Lord Protectorate of the Commonwealth**.

In 1653, Marvell took a position as the **tutor to Cromwell's ward, William Dutton**.

Four years later, **Marvell became the assistant to John Milton** while the controversial poet served as the Latin Secretaryship to the Council of State.

After Cromwell died, the monarchy of Charles II was restored.

**Marvell publicly defended John Milton** against the royalists, contributing a poem praising Milton to the second edition of Milton's epic, *Paradise Lost*.

Marvell then served as a Member of Parliament (MP) for Hull from 1659 until his death in 1678.

During this time, Marvell became known for his satirical pamphlets and political writings, especially *The Rehearsal Transposed*, his infamous **attack on Samuel Parker, the Archdeacon of Canterbury**. Marvell's sudden death was a shock because of his seemingly good health, and led to **rumors that political adversaries had poisoned him**. However, these notions were later proven false.

His poems range from the love-song "To His Coy Mistress", to evocations of an aristocratic country house and garden in "Upon Appleton House" and "The Garden", the political address "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland", and the later personal and political satires "Flecknoe" and "The Character of Holland".

### 'Cavalier poets' (Royalists)

Much of the poetry of the Cavalier poets is, as peripheral to their true inner and active lives as to represent a fashionable accomplishment rather than an art.

#### Thomas Carew (1594–1640)

Thomas Carew (1594–1640), in 'Disdain returned', explains to Celia why, having learned her arts, he will never return to her.

Wordsworth spoke of poetry as 'emotion recollected in tranquillity', but this is emotion dissipated in tranquillity. So is the poem 'Ingratefull beauty threatned'. 'Let fools thy mystique forms adore', says the poet, explaining that his verse created Celia's image and he himself cannot be taken in by it. This is the poetry of disengagement, even, very often, of disenchantment.

#### Sir John Suckling (1609–42)

#### Richard Lovelace (1618–c.1657)

Carew died too young to suffer under the Commonwealth; but Herrick lost his living for over twelve years, Suckling, an ardent royalist but not a hardliner, had to flee abroad after supporting Strafford, and Lovelace was in prison more than once. It may be that the posture of libertinism and the devil-may-care stance were roles played out defensively when passion and anguish were about them in action too immediate for transmutation into literature.

#### John Cleveland (1613–58).

A royalist whose quality sets him a little apart from this group is **John Cleveland (1613–58)**.

Cleveland was Milton's contemporary at Christ's College, Cambridge.

I am not Poet here; my pen's the spout  
Where the rain water of my eyes run out.

So he writes in his elegy to Edward King, published in the same volume that contained **Lycidas**.

His elegy on Ben Jonson is more restrained and tasteful; and there is a charming tribute, 'Upon Phillis walking in a morning before Sun-rising'. The roses mix amicably in her cheeks—'no Civil War/Between her Yorke and Lancaster'.

Cleveland and Samuel Butler were friends.

### Abraham Cowley (1618–67)

He was a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge until the Civil War, and then, having moved to France, became cipher-secretary to Queen Henrietta Maria. In this post he coded and decoded letters between the queen and the king. His status as a poet was at its peak in his own day.

His technical gifts were immense and he had a lasting influence in establishing the Pindaric ode, with its freedom for irregular patterning of line length, rhyme and stanza, as an English form.

*Mastery of the heroic couplet* in the massive biblical epic,  **Davideis**, but as often with Cowley, the work shows him occupied energetically with interests he fails to communicate to the modern reader.

More approachable is **The Mistress**, *a cycle of love poems* in which familiar themes of Cavalier poetry are handled with fine artistry.

'It was a dismal, and a fearful night', the **elegy on Mr William Hervey** begins, and later one can find 'He was my Friend, the truest Friend on earth'.

The essay, '**Of Myself**', includes a lively visionary dialogue in which the royalist sets the record straight against Cromwell. It also includes verses on himself written when he was only thirteen:

This only grant me, that my means may lie  
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.

### Edmund Waller (1606–87)

'Goe, lovely Rose' and 'On a Girdle'

### Sir John Denham (1615–69)

#### Cooper's Hill

Denham's most significant work is **Cooper's Hill**, a long topographical poem in which descriptions of scenery are mingled with reflective consideration of subjects brought to mind by what is pictured.

His most quoted lines come in the description of the view of the Thames from **Cooper's Hill**:

O could I flow like thee and make thy stream  
My great example, as it is my theme!  
Though deep, yet clear, though gentle, yet not dull,  
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

To Denham goes the credit for paying an immediate tribute to **Paradise Lost** in the House of Commons when it was first published.

### Francis Quarles (1592–1644)

**Francis Quarles (1592–1644)**, who is still remembered for his **Emblems**, a book highly rated by his contemporaries. It consists of symbolic engravings illustrated by biblical texts, quotations from the Fathers, and verses in various metres. Thus Quarles comments in verse on, 'My beloved is mine, and I am his; He feedeth among the lillies':

Ev'n like two little bank-dividing brooks,  
That wash the pebbles with their wanton streams,  
And having rang'd and search'd a thousand nooks,  
Meet both at length in silver-breasted Thames,  
Where in a greater current they conjoin:  
So I my best-beloved's am; so he is mine.

### George Wither (1588–1667)

**A Collection of Emblemes** by George Wither (1588–1667).

### William Browne (1591–1643)

Wither collaborated with **William Browne (1591–1643)** in **Shepherds Pipe**, but Browne is chiefly remembered for his **Britannia's Pastorals**, a long narrative poem in couplets, treating of the loves of shepherds and shepherdesses and interspersed with lyrics.

### Giles Fletcher (1585–1623) & Phineas Fletcher (1582–1650)

Two brothers, **Giles Fletcher (1585–1623)** and **Phineas Fletcher (1582–1650)** call for attention if only because they exercised some influence on Milton.

### Giles Fletcher's **Christs Victorie** and **Triumph in Heaven and Earth**

Giles Fletcher's **Christs Victorie** and **Triumph in Heaven and Earth** deals fluently and readably with the Fall, the Incarnation, the Redemption, the Ascension, and ends with a vision of the marriage of the divine Spouse and his mystical Bride, the Church.

Its section dealing with the temptation of Christ influenced Milton in **Paradise Regained**.

Phineas Fletcher's influence on Milton may be gauged from **'The Locusts'**, a harsh attack on the Jesuits, who are Metaphysical and Cavalier poetry involved in a diabolical conspiracy against healthy religion, originating in Hell:

The Porter to th'infernal gate is Sin,  
A shapeless shape, a foule deformed thing,  
Nor nothing, nor a substance...

### **Andrew Marvell (1621–78)**

Though he seems to have been in royalist circles in his twenties, he became Cromwell's admirer. He lived for a time in the household of Lord Fairfax, the Parliamentary commander, at Nun Appleton in Yorkshire, acting as tutor to Fairfax's daughter Mary; and it was here that he wrote 'Upon Appleton House', a descriptive and reflective poem in stanzas made up of octosyllabic rhyming couplets. Later Marvell was tutor to Cromwell's ward, William Dutton, and eventually he had a post in the Latin secretaryship under Milton. He became a member of Parliament in 1659.

Marvell's admiration for Cromwell can be measured from his three poetic tributes, **'An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland'**, **'The First Anniversarie of the Government under O.C.'** and **'A Poem upon the death of O.C.'**

The famous **'Horatian Ode'** exalts Cromwell as the mighty man of destiny, picked out from his 'private Gardens' to 'cast the Kingdome old/Into another Mold'; yet it also speaks with respect of Charles's dignity at his execution:

He nothing common did or mean  
Upon that memorable Scene...

In **'The First Anniversarie'** foreign ambassadors are moved to question where Cromwell can have learned the arts of rule:

He seems a King by long succession born,  
And yet the same to be a king does scorn.

The poem on Cromwell's death includes a note of more private and personal sorrow which indicates how Marvell's appreciation of the Protector grew.

Crisp couplets are taut with such tension in the **'Dialogue between the Soul and Body'**. Moreover the implicit dialogue threaded through **'To his Coy Mistress'** is more than a confrontation between lover and beloved, for the plea to seize the moment is given the dimensions of man's outcry against finitude:



*But at my back I alwaies hear  
Times winged Charriot hurrying near:  
And yonder all before us lye  
Desarts of vast Eternity.*

Marvell's best-loved poem, '**The Garden**', is at once richly sensuous and packed with thought. The implicit contrast between the beauty of women and the beauty of the garden leads to an emphasis on the paradisal purity and sweetness of the place so intense that it seems to predate even the creation of Eve. The idea that an Eveless Paradise would be two Paradises in one, and a delight beyond the lot of mortal man, matches the idea that the mind finds greater pleasure within itself than in the loveliest garden.



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