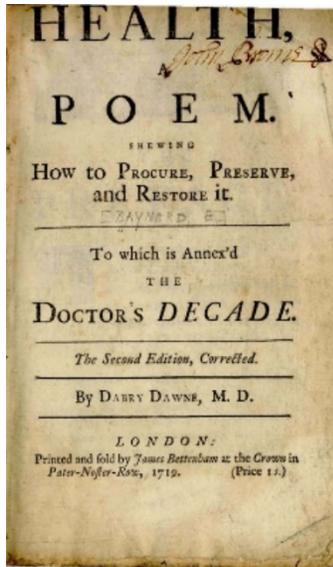


## Health: A Poem by the Physician Poet Edward Baynard

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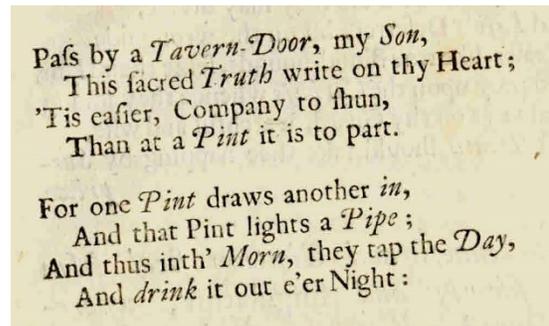
Title Page: *Health: A Poem* by Edward Baynard.

Throughout history poetry and medicine are often intertwined and lists of poet-physicians abound. Physicians have used poetry to heal themselves and their patients, to process the unexpected nature of life and health, and to teach.

In *Health, A Poem*, Dr. Edward Baynard, a seventeenth century poet and physician, uses poetry to teach. He explains in an understandable—at least to someone in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—tone the manner in which to live a long, prosperous life. First published in 1719, the poem as well as the preface and the appendix poem, *The Doctor's Decade*, was republished nine times between 1719 and 1764. Perhaps, what made the volume so popular was that it was written in verse and easy for readers to relate to and understand rather than highly technical. Publishing health advice in a poem allowed Dr.

Baynard to reach a greater number of people than he would have otherwise.

In the preface of the poem, Dr. Baynard warns against the dangers of drinking and advises temperance. In the main poem general advice on maintaining a healthy lifestyle is given. Advice includes eating the proper food and in controlled amounts, sleeping regularly but not being lazy, avoiding alcohol and drinking plenty of water, and wearing the proper attire for the



Excerpt from the Preface of *Health: A Poem*.

Rise early with the Summer's *Sun*,  
Especially when you are young;  
For he that early walks the Fields,  
Takes all the Sweets that *Flora* yields;  
Just as the *Sun* unlocks the Blooms  
Of all their fragrant, rich Perfumes;  
Besides, with Morning *Air* he's treated,  
Not by the Sun-beams over-heated;  
Which cools the *Lungs*, and fans the Blood,  
And makes the Spirits brisk and good;

Excerpt from *Health: A Poem*.

weather and climate. The final poem, describes what a doctor can do to cure his patients and how best to communicate with them.

Dr. Edward Baynard, was born in Preston, Lancashire in 1641. In 1671 he studied Medicine at the University of Leyden and became an Honorary Fellow of the College of Physicians of London in 1684 and a Fellow in 1687. In addition to his *Health* poem he wrote about the healing powers of the waters and spas in Bath. He wrote his poem under the pseudonym Darby Dawne. He died in 1719.

Celebrate National Poetry Month by reading [Health: A Poem](#) in the UMB Digital Archive.

## References:

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