

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS



The Complete Sonnets and Poems

莎士比亚十四行诗全集

William Shakespeare [英国] 威廉·莎士比亚 著

Edited by Colin Burrow

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COLIN BURROW, the editor of *The Complete Sonnets and Poems* in the Oxford Shakespeare, is University Senior Lecturer and Fellow and Tutor of Gonville and Caius College, University of Cambridge.

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PREFACE

THIS has been a big labour, which would have been impossible had I not been able to share ideas with (and to borrow from) many colleagues and past editors. Several recent editors of the poems have been exceptionally kind in offering advice and additional assistance. John Kerrigan has been particularly helpful and encouraging, especially since his edition of the Sonnets is such an impossibly fine example to follow. His careful reading of the typescript saved me from many errors. Katherine Duncan-Jones has offered many wise words, in print and in person, without which this edition would be much poorer than it is. A helpful conversation with Helen Vendler on punctuation has also left its mark on many lines of the Sonnets, and John Roe has offered many helpful comments over several years. Hyder Rollins's monumental Variorum editions have been daily and invaluable companions.

Many other colleagues and friends have helped me in many ways. Ian Donaldson lent me his extensive and meticulously arranged notes on *Lucrece*. Gavin Alexander assisted with transcriptions of some manuscript material. Anne Barton nobly read the complete typescript, and her shrewd comments have spared me many a blush. Quentin Skinner provided extremely helpful comments and references on the political context of *Lucrece*. Stuart Gillespie gave many useful pointers for reading. I have benefited from conversations with Patrick Cheney, who allowed me to see much of his forthcoming work on Shakespeare's poetic career. MacDonald P. Jackson gave me very early access to some of his most important work on the ordering and date of the Sonnets. Brian Vickers gave me an early view of his sceptical work on *A Funeral Elegy*, and sent copies of some of his extremely valuable essays on the rhetoric of the Sonnets. Heather Dubrow offered some valuable advice as well as showing me copies of recent work. I am especially grateful to Martin Dzelzainis and Roy Booth, the convenors of a stimulating (and for me most timely) conference on Shakespeare's Narrative Poems in the summer of 2000. All the contributors to that conference, especially (but not only) Catherine Belsey, Anthony Mortimer, Mark Rasmussen, Sasha Roberts, and

James Schiffer, provided great stimulus in the final stages of the project, and I fear that the acknowledgements of their ideas in the introduction do not adequately indicate how much I owe to them. Several colleagues at Caius, including John Mollon, Brian Outhwaite, and Vic Gattrell, have given me helpful pointers and references. I am particularly grateful to the series editor, Stanley Wells, and to Frances Whistler at OUP.

I am grateful to librarians at the Cambridge University Library, Trinity College, Cambridge, St John's College, Cambridge, the Bodleian, the British Library, the Folger Shakespeare Library, to Mr Robert Yorke, archivist at the College of Arms, and to the archdeacon of Salop, for their help with queries about manuscript material. I am grateful too to the Master and Fellows of Gonville and Caius College, to the English Faculty at Cambridge, and (above all) to my family for granting me some periods of quiet in which it has been completed.

Some of the arguments in the introduction have been aired at greater length in 'Life and Work in Shakespeare's Poems', The British Academy Chatterton Lecture 1997, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 97 (1997), 15–50—reprinted in Stephen Orgel and Sean Keilen, eds., *Shakespeare: The Critical Complex: Shakespeare's Poems* (New York and London, 1999)—and in 'Editing Shakespeare's Sonnets' (a review article on Helen Vendler, *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets* and Katherine Duncan-Jones, ed., *Shakespeare's Sonnets*), *The Cambridge Quarterly* 29 (1999), 1–14.

COLIN BURROW

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INTRODUCTION

Shakespeare the Poet

Many editions of Shakespeare's poems, and of the Sonnets in particular, present themselves as having solved some or all of the many unanswered questions which surround these works. The questions have varied with each age, as have the answers. Commentators since the late eighteenth century have argued over the identity of 'Mr W.H.' to whom the Sonnets volume is dedicated, and have worked themselves into a fine froth over the nature of Shakespeare's sexuality. Of late *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* have generated suggestive but equally inconclusive debates over a string of slightly different questions: critics have argued about whether *Lucrece* is a republican poem, over the sexual politics of *Venus and Adonis*, and over the ways in which Shakespeare represents sexual desire. The main aim of this edition is not to offer definitive answers to any of these questions, but to provide its readers with enough information to take up an informed position on most of them, and to feed that information back into the way they read the poems. Since its focus is on helping readers to read, this edition makes some use of the rather patchy evidence of how Shakespeare's early readers responded to his poems. It also includes a group of poems which he is unlikely to have written but which were believed to be by him by his early readers. Some of these appeared in *The Passionate Pilgrim* of 1599, and some were ascribed to him in manuscripts which date from after his death. The latter group are included in an appendix in order to help modern readers understand what kind of poet Shakespeare was thought to be by the creators of manuscript miscellanies. None of them can safely be ascribed to Shakespeare, but they are an index of the beliefs which early readers had about the kind of poet Shakespeare was.

And the chief aim of this edition is to pose the question, 'What sort of poet was Shakespeare?' Should we think of him as having produced something which resembles a non-dramatic oeuvre? By uniting the narrative poems with the sonnets, and by printing them along with a number of poems attributed to Shakespeare in

the seventeenth century, this volume stands as a physical encouragement to readers to think about these poems together, and to explore what they might have in common. This has been done surprisingly rarely (Heather Dubrow's *Captive Victors* is a notable exception to this rule). Shakespeare in the past century was perceived primarily as a dramatic poet, and his poems tended to be split into two groups, the Sonnets and the rest, each of which stimulated a different kind of critical attention. From the early nineteenth to the twentieth century the Sonnets were seized upon as objects of biographical speculation. By the late 1930s they also became a central testing-ground for the literary methods of the New Criticism. *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, long on rhetoric, void of biography, did not suit either of these literary critical fashions. With the exception of some brilliant appreciation by Coleridge the poems languished in a pool of faint praise mingled with outright condemnation from the 1790s until the 1970s, when readers began to recognize the power of Shakespeare's early responses to Ovid, and to relish their implied view of personal identity as the improvised product of rhetoric and play.¹

An earlier string of institutional accidents effectively divided the poems (often unthinkingly stigmatized by the dire privative prefix of 'the *non*-dramatic works') from the plays. The poems were not included in the First Folio of Shakespeare's *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies* of 1623. This was partly because many of those responsible for putting the volume together were men of the theatre. But it was also partly because *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* were extremely popular, and remained marketable commodities in their own right throughout the seventeenth century. Their printers would have been very unlikely to wish to surrender their rights to print them, even if they had been asked to do so by the compilers of the Folio. In the eighteenth-century collected editions of Shakespeare (which in many respects constructed the playwright whom we still read today), the poems and sonnets were usually either left out altogether, or shuffled off into final volumes or appendices to the dramatic works. Supplementary volumes, several of which sought to masquerade as the final volumes of prestigious collected editions of the plays, gave eighteenth-century readers the impression the

¹ The best recent survey of critical opinion is Philip C. Kolin, ed., *Venus and Adonis: Critical Essays* (New York and London, 1997).

poems were an optional extra: so Gildon produced a supplement containing the poems to augment Rowe's edition of 1709, and George Sewell did the same for Pope's Shakespeare in 1725. Even Edmond Malone's great edition of the poems in 1780 was a supplementary volume added to George Steevens's edition. Fashion played its part in consigning the poems to the realm of the supplement. In an age in which Steevens could say of the Sonnets that 'the strongest act of Parliament that could be framed, would fail to compel readers into their service',¹ the poems were never likely to help sales of a collected edition of Shakespeare.

These historical accidents have cast a greying residue over the poems, which has proved hard to shift, despite some splendid re-appraisals over the last fifty years. Most collected editions of Shakespeare's complete works continue to relegate the poems to the edges of the canon: the poems are dispersed in the chronological sequence of the Oxford and Norton Shakespeares. In the Riverside edition they moulder at the back. The collected Arden alone reverses the trend, but oddly prints the Sonnets (published in 1609) first in its sequence, apparently for no other reason than that more readers will have heard of them than of *Venus and Adonis* (printed in 1593). If collected editions wished to reflect how Shakespeare wished to be thought of in the 1590s, or how he was generally regarded before the folio of 1623, then *Venus and Adonis* should be at the front of those editions: this was the first work to which he attached his name, and it was the work which made his name. Now, though, even the standard catalogue of early modern printed books, the *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England . . . 1475-1640*, gives bibliographical details of Shakespeare's plays first, then it lists the Shakespearian apocrypha, then it lists the poems. And so *A Yorkshire Tragedy* is made to seem more central to Shakespeare's output—despite the fact that he did not write it—than *Venus and Adonis*, of which there were sixteen editions before 1640 (there were five of *Hamlet* in the same period). Economic pressures and simple limitations of space have usually meant that modern annotated editions of the Sonnets (usually now with *A Lover's Complaint* in its rightful place as the conclusion to the sequence) have appeared in separate volumes from the other narrative poems

¹ Quoted in Rollins 2, ii. 337-8, from *The Advertisement to the Plays of William Shakespeare* (1793).

and *The Passionate Pilgrim*. All of these material forces have conspired to make it seem unnatural to ask the question, 'What sort of poet was Shakespeare?'—unless one wants the answer, 'Well, there are some good lines in *Hamlet*.'

The picture of Shakespeare the poet which emerges from this volume is not one of a writer who wanted to be a poet *rather than* a dramatist, nor is it a picture of someone who sought programmatically to follow any of the number of career patterns available to early modern poets. Being a poet in the period from 1590 to 1610 was not easy, and gave room only for circumscribed autonomy. Poets worked with and within traditions which were made for them (although many poets besides Shakespeare decisively transformed the genres they received). They also learnt, often with frenzied speed and some rapacity, from other poets. Fashions changed rapidly and markedly, and poets who wished to attract the benison of patrons had to adapt themselves to these changes or die. Poets also had to work within the complicated and often haphazard processes by means of which early modern printing presses produced books. The treatment of copy in this period—which was owned not by its author but by the first printer to obtain a manuscript and pay 6d. to have it 'entered' in the Stationers' Register, and which might be set by compositors of varying levels of experience and skill—meant that authorial control over texts, their layout, and even the timing of their publication, was always less than complete. Even if Shakespeare had laid out for himself a literary career, running through Ovidian narrative poetry in *Venus and Adonis*, to the 'graver' offering of *Lucrece*, through Sonnets, to a concluding Complaint, it would have been something which he would have had neither the time nor the power to shape entirely for himself. His non-dramatic works were in many respects the products of occasion: it is likely that periods of plague, during which the theatres were closed, in 1592–4 led to a burst of work on *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*; and it is possible that later periods of plague enabled periods of revision and augmentation of the Sonnets. In the middle of Shakespeare's career as a poet sits the extraordinary, other-worldly lyric 'Let the bird of loudest lay' (the received title 'The Phoenix and the Turtle' is dropped in this edition, since it has no Shakespearian authority, and is first found in 1807), a poem which it is impossible to fit into any sort of planned career.

Shakespeare's career as a poet is likely to have jolted along in fits and starts during periods of enforced idleness (the dominant sense of 'career' in this period was still what a horse does when it bolts under you); but the periods of idleness enabled the emergence of something which looks like an oeuvre, with a distinctive set of preoccupations. Every reader will find a slightly different configuration of concerns here; but the poems in this volume repeatedly meditate on the perverse effects and consequences of sexual desire, on sacrifice and self-sacrifice, on the ways in which a relationship of sexual passion might objectify or enslave both the desirer and the desired, and they repeatedly complicate simple binary distinctions between male and female. The poems are also all marked by a continual and brilliantly various experimentation in juxtaposing speech and narrative circumstance, and, from *Venus and Adonis* to the early Sonnets, recurrently explore how even the most elaborate rhetoric can fail to persuade its addressee. Even the shady volume of mostly non-Shakespearian pieces, *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599), in part builds on, and in part makes up a 'Shakespearian' poetic identity, as its printer, William Jaggard, sought to create a volume of poems which could just about persuade its readers that it represented the hitherto hidden works of Shakespeare the poet.

Each of the poems included in this volume adopts different angles and perspectives in a manner which is distinctively that of a dramatist—of a dramatist who could think about sexual desire in *Measure for Measure* from the viewpoint of a votaress, a Duke's deputy, and the laddish Lucio—and with a combination of cool spectatorship and impassioned participation. The poems, like the plays, meditate on relations between rhetoric, persuasion, self-persuasion, gender, politics, action, and passion. And they do so with a directness and a clarity which marks them not as offshoots of the dramatic works, but as the works in which Shakespeare undertook much of the foundational thought which underpins his dramatic work. In the Sonnets and the narrative poems Shakespeare thinks through what it is to love someone whom you know to be the wrong person to love, and in them too he attempts to construct subject-positions and rhetorical methods to accommodate these multiple perspectives. The poems and Sonnets should not be split apart, and they should not be consigned to the ghetto of 'the non-dramatic verse': they should be regarded as central to an understanding of Shakespeare.

Venus and Adonis

Publication and Date of Composition. *Venus and Adonis* was entered in the Stationers' Register on 18 April 1593 by Richard Field,¹ a printer who was born, like Shakespeare, in Stratford. Field had printed some of the most notable literary works of the 1590s. His list included works which encouraged vernacular authors to use the art of rhetoric in verse, such as George Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy* (1589), and the second edition of Henry Peacham's *Garden of Eloquence* (1593). He had also printed the most elaborately produced work of vernacular literature of the 1590s, Sir John Harington's translation of Ariosto (1591), a work which also included a 'Brief Apology of Poetry'. Field's shop produced books which looked good and which made claims to high literary status, as well as works which sought to define what high literary status was—and it may be notable in this respect that there is a striking lack of theatrical texts among the works he printed. His typesetting was also 'as good as any to be found in London at the time'.² These were good reasons for Shakespeare to use him as the printer of *Venus and Adonis*, the highly crafted and pointedly rhetorical work in which he sought to make his mark on the world of print. Field was also an appropriate printer for an Ovidian poem. He had inherited his business and his presses from Thomas Vautrollier, whose widow he had married. Vautrollier had enjoyed a monopoly in the printing of Ovid in Latin.³ Field had reprinted Vautrollier's edition of the *Metamorphoses* in 1589 and was to reprint Vautrollier's text of the *Heroides* in 1594.⁴

Field had copies of the elegantly presented Quarto edition of *Venus and Adonis* ready for sale by mid-June 1593. The dedicatory epistle to Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, was signed 'William Shakespeare'. This was the first time that Shakespeare's name had been attached to a printed work. (It was quite usual in this period for authors' names to be attached to dedicatory epistles rather than appearing on the title-page.) On 12 June 1593 Richard Stonley recorded in his diary that he bought a copy of the poem for sixpence, which makes him the first known purchaser of a printed

¹ Arber, ii.630.

² W. W. Greg, 'An Elizabethan Printer and his Copy', *The Library* 4 (1923-4), 117.

³ Arber, ii.746. ⁴ Arber, i.144.

work attributed to Shakespeare.¹ The standard of printing in the first Quarto is extremely high, with so few evident errors that it is likely Field worked from a carefully prepared fair copy. Field's compositors doubtless standardized the spelling and punctuation of the manuscript from which they worked, as they are known to have done in the case of Harington's translation of Ariosto (in this case the manuscript from which Field worked survives).² In all respects Q1 is as good a text as any editor could wish for.

There are known to have been at least sixteen editions of the poem by 1640. Few copies of most of these editions survive, which suggests that many eager readers read their copies to pieces. It is likely that there were other editions which were completely destroyed by their eager consumers. Editions after the first of 1593 have no independent authority: they all ultimately derive from the first Quarto (in general each new printing was set from the most recent available edition). Each subsequent edition introduces some compositorial emendations, as well as some errors. The collation to this edition lists readings from late Quartos only when they appear to offer intelligent responses to apparent error.

The very success of the poem is likely to be a major reason why it came to be regarded as peripheral to the canon of Shakespeare's works. *Venus and Adonis* remained a marketable work through the seventeenth century: the right to print the copy was transferred from publisher to publisher, presumably for a fee, and the transactions were recorded in the Stationers' Register.³ As we have seen, this may be one reason why *Venus and Adonis*, like *Lucrece*, did not appear in the first Folio of 1623: since the poems remained popular

¹ Schoenbaum, 175-6.

² BL MS Add. 18920. On Field's setting of Harington see Greg, 'An Elizabethan Printer', 102-18; Philip Gaskell, *From Writer to Reader: Studies in Editorial Method* (Oxford, 1978), 11-28. On Field's career see A. E. M. Kirwood, 'Richard Field, Printer, 1589-1624', *The Library* 12 (1931-2), 1-39.

³ Full details are given in Rollins 1, 369-79. See also Henry Farr, 'Shakespeare's Printers and Publishers, with Special Reference to the Poems and *Hamlet*', *The Library* 4th ser. 3 (1923), 225-50. Field assigned the copyright to John Harrison, Sr., on 25 June 1594 (Arber, ii.655); Harrison assigned it to William Leake on 25 June 1596 (Arber, iii.65); Leake assigned it to William Barrett on 16 February 1617 (Arber, iii.603); Barrett assigned it to John Parker on 8 March 1620 (Arber, iii.666); Parker assigned it to John Haviland and John Wright on 7 May 1626, who re-entered the title on 4 September 1638 (Arber, iv.160, 431); Wright passed it on to his brother Edward on 27 June 1646; Edward Wright assigned it to William Gilbertson on 4 April 1655 (Eyre, i.236, 470).