

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO



SPENSER

Edited by Andrew Hadfield

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COMPANION TO
SPENSER

EDITED BY

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The Cambridge Companion to Spenser provides an introduction to Spenser that is at once accessible and rigorous. Fourteen specially commissioned essays by leading scholars bring together the best recent writing on the work of the most important non-dramatic English Renaissance poet. The contributions provide all the essential information required to appreciate and understand Spenser's rewarding and challenging work. The *Companion* guides the reader through Spenser's poetry and prose, and provides extensive commentary on his life, the historical and religious context in which he wrote, his wide reading in classical, European and English poetry, his sexual politics and use of language. Emphasis is placed on Spenser's relationship to his native England, and to Ireland – where he lived for most of his adult life – as well as the myriad of intellectual contexts which inform his writing. A chronology and further reading lists make this volume indispensable for any student of Spenser.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CI	<i>Critical Inquiry</i>
CL	<i>Comparative Literature</i>
Colin Clout Cummings	<i>Colin Clouts Come Home Againe</i> R. M. Cummings, ed., <i>Spenser: The Critical Heritage</i> (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1971)
ELH	<i>English Literary History</i>
ELR	<i>English Literary Renaissance</i>
ESC	<i>English Studies in Canada</i>
FQ	<i>The Faerie Queene</i>
Hamilton	Edmund Spenser, <i>The Faerie Queene</i> , ed. A. C. Hamilton (London: Longman, 1977)
IUR	<i>Irish University Review</i>
JEGP	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
JMRS	<i>Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies</i>
Met.	Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i>
MLA	<i>The Modern Language Association of America</i>
MLN	<i>Modern Language Notes</i>
MLQ	<i>Modern Language Quarterly</i>
MLR	<i>The Modern Language Review</i>
MP	<i>Modern Philology</i>
MRTS	<i>Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies</i>
MS	Manuscript
N&Q	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
P&P	<i>Past and Present</i>
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
PL	John Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i>
PMLA	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Society of America</i>
Poetical Works	<i>The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser</i> , ed. J. C.

ABBREVIATIONS

- Smith and E. De Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1912).
- PQ *Philological Quarterly*
- RES *Review of English Studies*
- RP *Renaissance Papers*
- RQ *Renaissance Quarterly*
- SC *The Shepheardes Calender*
- Sidney, *Apology* Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973)
- SEL *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*
- Selected Shorter Poems* Douglas Brooks-Davies, ed., *Spenser's Selected Shorter Poems* (London: Longman, 1995)
- SP *Studies in Philology*
- Spenser Encyclopedia* A. C. Hamilton, ed., *The Spenser Encyclopedia* (London, Toronto and Buffalo: Routledge and Toronto University Press, 1990)
- Sp. St.* *Spenser Studies*
- State* *A View of the State of Ireland, from the first printed edition (1633)*, ed. Andrew Hadfield and Willy Maley (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997)
- TLS *The Times Literary Supplement*
- TSLL *Texas Studies in Language and Literature*
- TUSE *Tulane University Studies in English*
- UTQ *University of Toronto Quarterly*
- Variorum *The Works of Edmund Spenser*, ed. Edwin Greenlaw et al., Variorum Edition, 11 vols. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1932–58)
- View* Edmund Spenser, *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, ed. W. L. Renwick (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970)
- Yale* *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, ed. William A. Oram et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989)
- YES *Yearbook of English Studies*

CHRONOLOGY

- c 1552–4 Spenser born in London.
- 1553 Death of Edward VI and accession of Mary.
- 1554 Mary marries Philip II of Spain.
Execution of Lady Jane Grey.
English Church reconciled to Rome.
- 1555 Persecution of Protestants; Bishops Ridley and Latimer burnt at the stake.
- 1558 Death of Mary and accession of Elizabeth.
- 1559 Acts of Uniformity and Supremacy passed, renouncing papal authority in England.
- 1561 Enrols in Merchant Taylor's School under the headship of Richard Mulcaster as a 'poor scholar'.
- 1567 Accession of James VI of Scotland.
Revolt in Netherlands against Spanish rule.
- 1569 *Feb.* Publishes anonymous translations of 'Visions by Petrarch' and 'Visions of Du Bellay' in Jan van der Noot's *A Theatre wherein be represented as wel the miseries and calamities that follow the voluptuous Worldlings, As also the greate joyes and plesures which the faithfull do enjoy.*
May Enters Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, as a sizar (i.e., servant's duties are required in return for a grant of ten shillings p. a.); friendship with Gabriel Harvey begins.
Nov. Northern Rebellion in favour of Mary, Queen of Scots, breaks out.

- 1570 *Jan.* Execution of 450 rebels.
July 8 Elizabeth excommunicated by Pope Pius V.
- 1572 *June 2* Execution of Earl of Norfolk, Catholic conspirator.
Aug. 24 Massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day; Huguenots seek refuge in England.
- 1573 Graduates with BA degree from Cambridge.
Pierre Ronsard publishes *Sonnets Pour Hélène* in France;
Torquato Tasso publishes *Gerusalemme Liberata* in Italy.
- 1573–5 Attempts to colonise Ulster half-heartedly supported by Elizabeth.
- 1576 Awarded MA degree.
March 15 Puritan MP Peter Wentworth imprisoned in the Tower of London after he claims that free speech should exist in Parliament.
First public theatre built in London.
- 1577 Possibly in Ireland, as Irenius in *A View of the Present State of Ireland* claims that he witnesses the execution of Murrough O'Brien at Limerick in July.
May Archbishop Grindal placed under house arrest after refusal to suppress 'prophesyings' at queen's command.
- 1578 Secretary to John Young, Bishop of Rochester (Kent).
- 1578–81 Elizabeth contemplates marriage to François, Duke of Alençon.
- 1579 In service with the Earl of Leicester as a confidential emissary.
Oct. 27 Marries Maccabaeus Chylde in Westminster with whom he will have two children, Sylvanus and Katherine.
Nov. 2 Earl of Desmond proclaimed traitor after his rebellion.
Nov. 3 John Stubbs loses his right hand after publishing a book arguing against Elizabeth's proposed marriage to Alençon.
Dec. 5 *The Shepheardes Calender* is entered into the Stationers' Register and subsequently published.
Some of Spenser's lost works – *Court of Cupide*, *Dreams*, *Pageants*, and the critical treatise, *The English Poete* – probably composed at this time.
- 1580 Publication of correspondence with Harvey in two volumes: *Three proper, and wittie, familiar Letters* and *Two other, very*

- commendable Letters, of the same mens writing.* Mention of *The Fairie Queene* for the first time, and of other lost works (*Epithalamion Thamesis, Dying Pellicane, Nine Comedies*).
Aug. 12 Arrives in Dublin having become secretary to Arthur Lord Grey de Wilton, the new Lord Deputy.
Nov. 10 Grey massacres Irish rebels at Fort d'Oro, Smerwick. Spenser may have witnessed the event.
 Sir Philip Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* (published 1591) and *Apology for Poetry* (published 1595) in MS circulation.
- 1581 *The Shepherdes Calender*, second edition.
 Appointed to civil service jobs in Dublin and leases land in Wexford.
 Munster Rebellion at its height.
- 1582 Leases more land in Kildare and is accorded the rank of gentleman.
Aug. 31 Lord Grey recalled from Ireland probably because of his harsh methods of dealing with the Munster Rebellion.
 Sir Walter Raleigh's poetry circulates at court.
- 1582–8 Successful career as civil servant. Friendly with other English writers in Ireland (Barnaby Rich, Geoffrey Fenton and Barnaby Googe).
- 1583 Death of Earl of Desmond and end of Munster Rebellion.
- 1584 Sir Richard Genville's voyage to establish colonies in the Americas. Elizabeth grants aid to the Dutch against the Spanish.
- 1586 *Oct. 17* Death of Sir Philip Sidney in Zutphen, Netherlands.
- 1587 *Feb. 8* Execution of Mary, Queen of Scots.
May 8 Raleigh attempts to establish colonies in the Americas.
 Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine, Parts I and II* performed.
- 1588 Spenser occupies Kilcolman Castle, County Cork, with estate of 3,000 acres from forfeited lands of the Earl of Desmond.
July 28 Spanish Armada defeated.
- 1588–99 Continues civil service career in Cork with a series of important appointments.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1589 Oct. Journeys to England with Sir Walter Raleigh and claims to have read parts of *The Faerie Queene* to Elizabeth.
Start of extended lawsuit with Lord Roche over land claims.
- 1590 Publication of *The Faerie Queene*, Books I–III.
- 1591 Publication of *Complaints*, *Daphnaïda* and fourth edition of *The Shepheardes Calender*.
Feb. 25 Granted life pension of £50 p.a. by the queen.
Nov. 21 Proclamation against Jesuits. Many Catholics and radical Protestants executed in subsequent years.
Sir John Harington publishes his translation of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.
- 1592 Publication of *Axiochus*, a translation from the Greek (possibly not by Spenser).
Sept. Fear of second Spanish invasion in England.
Shakespeare's *Richard II* and Marlowe's *Edward II* first performed.
- 1593 May 30 Death of Christopher Marlowe in Deptford.
July Henri IV of France converts to Catholicism.
Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* and Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* published.
- 1594 June 11 Marries Elizabeth Boyle, related to Richard Boyle, the Great Earl of Cork with whom he will have one son, Peregrine.
- 1595 Publication of *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion* as one volume; *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* and *Astrophel*, a lament for the death of Sir Philip Sidney.
Oct. Spanish fleet intending to invade Ireland lost at sea.
John Donne's early poetry circulates in MS at court.
Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* performed.
Michel de Montaigne's *Essais* published.
- 1595–1603 Nine Years' War in Ireland after Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, challenges the right of English rule.
- 1596 Publication of second edition of *The Faerie Queene*, Books I–VI; *Fowre Hymns*, *Prothalamion*.
King James VI of Scotland complains that his mother, Mary Queen of Scots, was slandered as Duessa in *FQ*, v, ix, and demands that Spenser be tried and punished.

- June 20* Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex seizes Cadiz in a surprise raid.
Oct. Fear of Spanish invasion in Ireland but fleet again wrecked.
- 1597 Fear of second Spanish Armada.
 Shakespeare, *Henry V*.
- 1598 *April 14* *A View of the Present State of Ireland* is entered into the Stationers' Register; not published until 1633, but circulating in MS.
Sept. Nominated sheriff of Cork.
Oct. Kilcolman sacked and burnt; family takes refuge in Cork.
Dec. Leaves for London with dispatch for Privy Council from President of Munster.
- 1599 *Jan. 13* Dies in Westminster and is buried in Westminster Abbey next to Chaucer at the expense of Earl of Essex.
 Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, *Julius Caesar*; Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*.
- 1601 *Feb. 25* Essex executed after rebellion.
Dec. 24 Mountjoy defeats Tyrone at Kinsale to effectively end the Nine Years' War.
- 1603 Death of Elizabeth and accession of James I.
- 1609 First folio edition of *The Faerie Queene*, I–VI with 'Two Cantos of Mutabilitie'.
- 1611 First folio of Spenser's collected works.
- 6420 Funeral monument erected in Westminster Abbey.
- 1633 Publication of *A View of the State of Ireland*, ed. by James Ware as part of a volume of *Ancient Irish Chronicles*.

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