GENERAL · READERS
FOLGER · LIBRARY
SHAKESPEARE

PERICLES

Edited by LOUIS B. WRIGHT and VIRGINIA A. LaMAR
Illustrated with material in the Folger Library Collections

The Folger Library General Reader's Shakespeare

Pericles Prince of Tyre

by

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

WSP

WASHINGTON SQUARE PRESS
PUBLISHED BY POCKET BOOKS
New York London Toronto Sydney Tokyo Singapore

WSP

A Washington Square Press Publication of
POCKET BOOKS, a division of Simon & Schuster, Inc.
1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10020

ISBN: 0-671-66914-1

First Pocket Books printing February 1968

10 9 8 7 6

Printed in the U.S.A.

THE FOLGER LIBRARY SHAKESPEARE

Designed to make Shakespeare's classic plays available to the general reader, each edition contains a reliable text with modernized spelling and punctuation, scene-by-scene plot summaries, and explanatory notes clarifying obscure and obsolete expressions. An interpretive essay and accounts of Shakespeare's life and theater form an instructive preface to each play.

Louis B. Wright, General Editor, was the Director of the Folger Shakespeare Library from 1948 until his retirement in 1968. He is the author of *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England, Religion and Empire, Shakespeare for Everyman,* and many other books and essays on the history and literature of the Tudor and Stuart periods.

Virginia Lamar, Assistant Editor, served as research assistant to the Director and Executive Secretary of the Folger Shakespeare Library from 1946 until her death in 1968. She is the author of *English Dress in the Age of Shakespeare* and *Travel and Roads in England,* and coeditor of William Strachey's *Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania.*

The Folger Shakespeare Library

The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., a research institute founded and endowed by Henry Clay Folger and administered by the Trustees of Amherst College, contains the world's largest collection of Shakespeareana. Although the Folger Library's primary purpose is to encourage advanced research in history and literature, it has continually exhibited a profound concern in stimulating a popular interest in the Elizabethan period.

GENERAL EDITOR

LOUIS B. WRIGHT

Director, Folger Shakespeare Library, 1948–1968

ASSISTANT EDITOR

VIRGINIA A. LaMAR

Executive Secretary, Folger Shakespeare Library, 1946–1968

Preface

This edition of *Pericles* is designed to make available a readable text of a romance that is not entirely of Shakespeare's composition but that exemplifies a popular type of drama in the closing years of Shakespeare's career. In the centuries since Shakespeare, many changes have occurred in the meanings of words, and some clarification of Shakespeare's vocabulary may be helpful. To provide the reader with necessary notes in the most accessible format, we have placed them on the pages facing the text that they explain. We have tried to make them as brief and simple as possible. Preliminary to the text we have also included a brief statement of essential information about Shakespeare and his stage. Readers desiring more detailed information should refer to the books suggested in the references, and if still further information is needed, the bibliographies in those books will provide the necessary clues to the literature of the subject.

The early texts of Shakespeare's plays provide only scattered stage directions and no indications of setting, and it is conventional for modern editors to add these to clarify the action. Such additions, and additions to entrances and exits, as well as many indications of act and scene divisions, are placed in square brackets.

All illustrations are from material in the Folger Library collections.

L. B. W.

V. A. L.

June 1, 1967

A Greek Romance for Shakespeare's Stage

The play of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre,* probably dating from 1608-09, was acted in a period when tales derived from ancient Greek romances were becoming popular on the London stage. It immediately precedes the late romances that are undoubtedly of Shakespeare's authorship, and scholars have generally agreed that Shakespeare had a hand in its composition but was not responsible for the entire play. No general agreement, however, exists as to precisely which parts Shakespeare wrote and which were the work of another. Most opinion leans to the view that someone else wrote most of Acts I and II and that Shakespeare was responsible for most of Acts III-V. Edmond Malone, in the eighteenth century, suggested that some friend of Shakespeare wrote the play and that Shakespeare helped to strengthen the dialogue, especially the last act. "Without accepting the speculation about Shakespeare's friendship," Professor Geoffrey Bullough comments, "I accept the conclusion (held by many other critics) that he [Shakespeare] revised someone else's play."

The attempt to parcel out the portions that may be Shakespeare's and may be another's has occupied the ingenuity of many scholars, but no conclusive solution is likely to be found. Most modern scholars think the brothel scenes and the dialogue with the fishermen have a Shakespearean ring.

One difficulty in analyzing the qualities of the play stems from the miserable text that survives. For what reason we do not know, *Pericles* was not printed in the First Folio of 1623, perhaps because Heminges and Condell, who put together the Folio, did not have an accurate text of the play to print. *Pericles* was first brought out in a quarto version in 1609 as *The Late, And much admired Play, Called Pericles, Prince of Tyre. . . . As it hath been diuers and sundry times acted by his Maiesties Seruants, at the Globe on the Banck-side. By William Shakespeare.* The text was so corrupt that *Pericles* is usually listed among those versions known to Shakespeare bibliographers as "bad quartos." It bears evidence of having been "reported" either from the memory of one or two actors or in shorthand. At any rate, verse is often printed as prose, and verse lines are frequently imperfect. Some lines are so corrupt as to make their interpretation a puzzle. Editors, who perforce must base an edition on this first printing, have to emend and correct passages as best they can.

The play was so popular with the reading public that six quarto versions were called for by 1635. Each succeeding quarto, however, was essentially a reprint of the previous one, with only such corrections as the printers chose to make and with further corruptions. None of these later quartos has any validity greater than the first. The play was not included in the Second Folio, but, when the printers of the Third Folio in 1664 added seven plays which they

Ancient Gower.
From George Wilkins, *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, edited by J. P. Collier (1857).

chose to attribute to Shakespeare, they included *Pericles* in the second issue of that edition. For all the scholarly ingenuity and skill lavished upon the study of *Pericles*, this play remains one of the most puzzling that Shakespeare had a hand in.

The ultimate source of the play goes back to classical antiquity, to a tale of Apollonius of Tyre, and it survived in a variety of forms through the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Professor Bullough reports that the tale is still repeated orally by Greek shepherds. A contemporary of Chaucer's, John Gower, retold the story in his collection entitled *Confessio Amantis*. It also appears in another medieval collection of tales, the *Gesta Romanorum*. The tale of Apollonius of Tyre was also excerpted and printed separately. Lawrence Twyne printed the story about 1594 as *The Patterne of Painefull Adventures*, and another edition attributed to Lawrence's brother, Thomas, was published in 1607. The play derives from both Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and *The Patterne of Painefull Adventures*.

The name Pericles has nothing to do with the historical Pericles of Athens. The play probably adapted the name Pyrocles from one of the heroes in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*.

Another parallel to the story of the play is a prose romance by George Wilkins entitled *The Painfull Adventures of Pericles Prince of Tyre. Being the true History of the Play of Pericles, as it was lately presented by the worthy and ancient Poet Iohn Gower* (1608). This publication appeared a year before the printing of the First Quarto. But in the preface Wilkins begs his readers "to receiue this Historie in the same maner as it was vnder the habite of ancient Gower the famous English Poet by the Kings Maiesties Players excellently presented." Some scholars have argued that Wilkins, who was also a dramatist, may have been Shakespeare's collaborator in *Pericles.* Sir Edmund Chambers remarks that "The relation of the novel to the play is obscure." The probability is that Wilkins was capitalizing upon a popular dramatic hit by getting out a prose version.

For, strange as it may seem to a modern reader or playgoer, *Pericles* was a success, as attested by its six printed editions and by contemporary references to stage versions. This was a period when tragicomedy was coming into popularity, when plays with fantastic settings in faraway opera lands attracted attention, when no absurdities concerned with the recovery of lost children and wives long-believed-dead were too great to gain acceptance on the stage. Shakespeare himself in *The Winter's Tale* was shortly to present another of these romances to please a public which had acquired an appetite for this sort of thing. It is not hard to understand that a Shakespearean audience would have found *Pericles* acceptable and made much of it. This romance for centuries had attracted and entertained listeners who heard it read or recited.

Although Shakespeare occasionally uses a Chorus to report events that cannot be presented easily on the stage, as in *Henry V*, *Pericles* is unusual in depending upon a "presenter" in the person of Gower to tell the audience what it needs to know. Through-out the play Gower appears to explain and to clarify the action. Although the play has some fine lines here and there in the later portions, it is not characteristic of Shakespeare's usual style and technique.

Pericles enjoyed considerable popularity through the Jacobean period; on the reopening of the theatres after the Puritan Interregnum, it was one of the plays chosen for revival in 1660, apparently with some success. Other plays, however, soon crowded it off the boards. But in 1738 George Lillo undertook to revise it and brought out a three-act version entitled *Marina*, which, as its title implies, concentrated action upon the heroine. Lillo's play did not have a long life. *Pericles* was revived again in the mid-nineteenth century and has had occasional revivals from time to time, usually by academic or experimental groups. But not since Shakespeare's day has it been popular in the professional theatre. During the season of 1967, the Oregon Shakespearean Festival at Ashland, Oregon, staged *Pericles* successfully. Their performance, played straight as the drama was written, once more proved that Shakespeare and his collaborator or collaborators knew precisely what were the requirements of the stage. They were writing for playhouse performance, not for later critics.

THE AUTHOR

As early as 1598 Shakespeare was so well known as a literary and dramatic craftsman that Francis Meres, in his *Palladis Tamia: Wits Treasury*, referred in flattering terms to him as "mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare," famous for his *Venus and Adonis*, his *Lucrece*, and "his sugared sonnets," which were circulating "among his private friends." Meres observes further that "as Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latins, so Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage," and he mentions a dozen plays that had made a name for Shakespeare. He concludes with the remark that "the Muses would speak with Shakespeare's fine filed phrase if they would speak English."

To those acquainted with the history of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, it is incredible that anyone should be so naïve or ignorant as to doubt the reality of Shakespeare as the author of the plays that bear his name. Yet so much nonsense has been written about other "candidates" for the plays that it is well to remind readers that no credible evidence that would stand up in a court of law has ever been adduced to prove either that Shakespeare did not write his plays or that anyone else wrote them. All the theories offered for the authorship of Francis Bacon, the Earl of Derby, the Earl of Oxford, the Earl of Hertford, Christopher Marlowe, and a score of other candidates are mere conjectures spun from the active imaginations of persons who confuse hypothesis and conjecture with evidence.

As Meres's statement of 1598 indicates, Shakespeare was already a popular playwright whose name carried weight at the box office. The obvious reputation of Shakespeare as early as 1598 makes the effort to prove him a myth one of the most absurd in the history of human perversity.

The anti-Shakespeareans talk darkly about a plot of vested interests to maintain the authorship of Shakespeare. Nobody has any vested interest in Shakespeare, but every scholar is interested in the truth and in the quality of evidence advanced by special pleaders who set forth hypotheses in place of facts.

The anti-Shakespeareans base their arguments upon a few simple premises, all of them false. These false premises are that Shakespeare was an unlettered yokel without any schooling, that nothing is known about Shakespeare, and that only a noble lord or the equivalent in background could have written the plays. The facts are that more is known about Shakespeare than about most dramatists of his day, that he had a very good education, acquired in the Stratford Grammar School, that the plays show no evidence of profound book learning, and that the knowledge of kings and courts evident in the plays is no greater than any intelligent young man could have picked up at second hand. Most anti-Shakespeareans are naïve and betray an obvious snobbery. The author of their favorite plays, they imply, must have had a college diploma framed and hung on his study wall like the one in their dentist's office, and obviously so great a writer must have had a title or some equally significant evidence of exalted social background. They forget that genius has a way of cropping up in unexpected places and that none of the great creative writers of the world got his inspiration in a college or university course.

William Shakespeare was the son of John Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, a substantial citizen of that small but busy market town in the center of the rich agricultural county of Warwick. John Shakespeare kept a shop, what we would call a general store; he dealt in wool and other produce and gradually acquired property. As a youth, John Shakespeare had learned the trade of glover and leather worker. There is no contemporary evidence that the elder Shakespeare was a butcher, though the anti-Shakespeareans like to talk about the ignorant "butcher's boy of Stratford." Their only evidence is a statement by gossipy John Aubrey, more than a century after William Shakespeare's birth, that young William followed his father's trade, and when he killed a calf, "he would do it in a high style and make a speech." We would like to believe the story true, but Aubrey is not a very credible witness.

John Shakespeare probably continued to operate a farm at Snitterfield that his father had leased. He married Mary Arden, daughter of his father's landlord, a man of some property. The third of their eight children was William, baptized on April 26, 1564, and probably born three days before. At least, it is conventional to celebrate April 23 as his birthday.

The Stratford records give considerable information about John Shakespeare. We know that he held several municipal offices including those of alderman and mayor. In 1580 he was in some sort of legal difficulty and was fined for neglecting a summons of the Court of Queen's Bench requiring him to appear at Westminster and be bound over to keep the peace.

As a citizen and alderman of Stratford, John Shakespeare was entitled to send his son to the grammar school free. Though the records are lost, there can be no reason to doubt that this is where young William received his education. As any student of the period knows, the grammar schools provided the basic education in Latin learning and literature. The Elizabethan grammar school is not to be confused with modern grammar schools. Many cultivated men of the day received all their formal education in the grammar schools. At the universities in this period a student would have received little training that would have inspired him to be a creative writer. At Stratford young Shakespeare would have acquired a familiarity with Latin and some little knowledge of Greek. He would have read Latin authors and become acquainted with the plays of Plautus and Terence. Undoubtedly, in this period of his life he received that stimulation to read and explore for himself the world of ancient and modern history which he later utilized in his plays. The youngster who does not acquire this type of intellectual curiosity *before* college days rarely develops as a result of a college course the kind of mind Shakespeare demonstrated. His learning in books was anything but profound, but he clearly had the probing curiosity that sent him in search of information, and he had a keenness in the observation of nature and of mankind that finds reflection in his poetry.

There is little documentation for Shakespeare's boyhood. There is little reason why there should be. Nobody knew that he was going to be a dramatist about whom any scrap of information would be prized in the centuries to come. He was merely an active and vigorous youth of Stratford, perhaps assisting his father in his business, and no Boswell bothered to write down facts about him. The most important record that we have is a marriage license issued by the Bishop of Worcester on November 27, 1582, to permit William Shakespeare to marry Anne Hathaway, seven or eight years his senior; furthermore, the Bishop permitted the marriage after reading the banns only once instead of three times, evidence of the desire for haste. The need was explained on May 26, 1583, when the christening of Susanna, daughter of William and Anne Shakespeare, was recorded at Stratford. Two years later, on February 2, 1585, the records show the birth of twins to the Shakespeares, a boy and a girl who were christened Hamnet and Judith.

What William Shakespeare was doing in Stratford during the early years of his married life, or when he went to London, we do not know. It has been conjectured that he tried his hand at schoolteaching, but that is a mere guess. There is a legend that he left Stratford to escape a charge of poaching in the park of Sir Thomas Lucy of Charle-