



THE NEW CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
SHAKESPEARE

Edited by
Margreta de Grazia and Stanley Wells

CAMBRIDGE

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EDITED BY
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University of Pennsylvania

STANLEY WELLS

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust



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THE NEW CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
SHAKESPEARE

Written by a team of leading international scholars, this *Companion* is designed to illuminate Shakespeare's works through discussion of the key topics of Shakespeare studies. Twenty-one brand new essays provide lively and authoritative approaches to recent scholarship and criticism for readers keen to expand their knowledge and appreciation of Shakespeare. The book contains stimulating chapters on traditional topics such as Shakespeare's biography and the transmission of his texts. Individual readings of the plays are given in the context of genre as well as through the cultural and historical perspectives of race, sexuality and gender, and politics and religion. Essays on performance survey the latest digital media as well as stage and film. Throughout the volume, contributors discuss Shakespeare's long and constantly mutating history of reception and performance in both national and global contexts.

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A complete list of books in the series is at the back of this book

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PREFACE

Shakespeare was the first author to receive a Cambridge Companion. He is also the author to have received the most Companions. This volume of twenty-one newly commissioned essays constitutes the fifth, following the Companions of 1934, 1971, 1986 and 2001.

Shakespeare may indeed be for all time, but as the times change, so also do our ways of experiencing his poems and plays. The chapters of this volume bear witness to those changes on the page, stage and screen. Written by an international group of Shakespearians (from Britain, the United States, Canada, Holland, New Zealand and South Africa), they offer a distillation of recent scholarship and criticism for readers keen to expand their knowledge and appreciation of Shakespeare.

The chapters cover the traditional categories of Shakespeare study – his life, times and work – often with an innovative twist. The facts of Shakespeare's life are provided, but with an awareness of how the biographer's imagination is needed to transform those scant facts into a smooth narrative. Shakespeare's times, his historical and cultural context, are discussed with an eye to both the continuities and differences between his past and our present. Six chapters, organized by genre, focus on the works, reflecting a turn back to literary form and value as well as a heightened sense of their embeddedness in historical discourse. Chapters on Shakespeare's reading habits and writing techniques help account for his singular genius and skill; those on the playhouse and printing house explore the practices by which his works were produced in his own lifetime.

During the four centuries since then, Shakespeare's works have retained their force and vitality, as is apparent in the chapters on the transmission of his texts, on the traditions of theatrical performance, on the critical reception of his works and on the appropriations of popular culture. The volume closes with three chapters designed to steer readers through the dynamic developments of the present: an account of Shakespeare's globalization, an overview of today's transformative new technologies and a guide through

PREFACE

the vast welter of recent multi-faceted materials, published and online, by which interest in Shakespeare continues to be informed and stimulated.

A selective reading list appears after each chapter. Readers wishing to continue to keep abreast of current developments in Shakespearian studies may do so through the review articles in *Shakespeare Survey*, published annually by Cambridge University Press. Quotations from Shakespeare in this volume are from the Oxford *Complete Works* (1986 etc.), General Editors Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor; act, scene and line references are to the reprint of that text in the *Norton Shakespeare* (1998, etc.), General Editor Stephen Greenblatt. Quotations from the works of Shakespeare's contemporaries are normally modernized. Thanks to Sarah Stanton for her keen attention to the volume at all stages of production, to Bronwyn Wallace for her timely help with preparing the manuscript, and to Rebecca Jones and Elizabeth Davey for overseeing the final labours.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: A PARTIAL CHRONOLOGY

Dates of composition below do not in all cases correspond with dates of publication given in individual chapters.

26 April 1564	baptized in Stratford-upon-Avon
28 November 1582	marriage licence issued for William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway
26 May 1583	baptism of Susanna, their daughter
2 February 1585	baptism of Hamnet and Judith, their twin son and daughter
1592	Robert Greene refers to Shakespeare as an 'upstart crow'
1593	publication of <i>Venus and Adonis</i>
1594	publication of <i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>
15 March 1595	Shakespeare named as joint payee of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, founded in 1594
11 August 1596	burial of Hamnet Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon
October 1596	draft of the grants of arms to John, Shakespeare's father
4 May 1597	Shakespeare buys New Place, Stratford-upon-Avon
1598	Shakespeare listed as one of the 'principal comedians' in Jonson's <i>Every Man in his Humour</i>
1598	mention of Shakespeare in Francis Meres' <i>Palladis Tamia</i>
1599	building of the Globe
8 September 1601	burial of John Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon
2 February 1602	John Manningham notes performance of <i>Twelfth Night</i> at the Middle Temple
1 May 1602	Shakespeare pays £320 for land in Old Stratford

1603	Shakespeare named among the ‘principal tragedians’ in Jonson’s <i>Sejanus</i>
May 1603	Shakespeare named in documents conferring the title of the King’s Men on their company
24 July 1605	Shakespeare pays £440 for an interest on the tithes in Stratford
5 June 1607	Susanna Shakespeare marries John Hall
1608	the King’s Men take over the indoor Blackfriars theatre
9 September 1608	burial of Mary, Shakespeare’s mother, in Stratford
1609	publication of the Sonnets
1612	Shakespeare testifies in the Belott–Mountjoy case
10 March 1613	Shakespeare buys the Blackfriars Gatehouse
1613	Globe burns down during a performance of <i>All is True</i> (<i>Henry VIII</i>)
September 1614	Shakespeare involved in enclosure disputes in Stratford
10 February 1616	Judith Shakespeare marries Thomas Quiney
25 March 1616	Shakespeare’s will drawn up in Stratford
25 April 1616	Shakespeare buried in Stratford (the monument records that he died on 23 April)
8 August 1623	burial of Anne Shakespeare in Stratford
1623	publication of the First Folio
16 July 1649	burial of Susanna Hall in Stratford
9 February 1662	burial of Judith Quiney in Stratford
1670	death of Shakespeare’s last direct descendant, his grand-daughter Elizabeth, who married Thomas Nash in 1626 and John (later Sir John) Bernard in 1649

A CONJECTURAL CHRONOLOGY OF SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS

It is particularly difficult to establish the dates of composition and the relative chronology of the early works, up to those named by Francis Meres in his *Palladis Tamia* of 1598. The following table is based on the 'Canon and Chronology' section in *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion*, by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, with John Jowett and William Montgomery (1987), where more detailed information and discussion may be found.

<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	1590-1
<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	1590-1
<i>The First Part of the Contention</i> (2 Henry VI)	1591
<i>Richard Duke of York</i> (3 Henry VI)	1591
1 Henry VI	1592
<i>Titus Andronicus</i>	1592
<i>Richard III</i>	1592-3
<i>Venus and Adonis</i>	1592-3
<i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>	1593-4
<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	1594
<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	1594-5
<i>Richard II</i>	1595
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	1595
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	1595
<i>King John</i>	1596
<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	1596-7
1 Henry IV	1596-7
<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	1597-8
2 Henry IV	1597-8
<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	1598
<i>Henry V</i>	1598-9
<i>Julius Caesar</i>	1599
<i>As You Like It</i>	1599-1600

<i>Hamlet</i>	1600-1
<i>Twelfth Night</i>	1600-1
<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	1602
<i>The Sonnets</i>	1593-1603
<i>Measure for Measure</i>	1603
<i>A Lover's Complaint</i>	1603-4
<i>Sir Thomas More</i>	1603-4
<i>Othello</i>	1603-4
<i>All's Well that Ends Well</i>	1604-5
<i>Timon of Athens</i>	1605
<i>King Lear</i>	1605-6
<i>Macbeth</i>	1606
<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	1606
<i>Pericles</i>	1607
<i>Coriolanus</i>	1608
<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	1609
<i>Cymbeline</i>	1610
<i>The Tempest</i>	1611
<i>Henry VIII (All is True)</i>	1613
<i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i>	1613-14

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I

STEPHEN GREENBLATT

The traces of Shakespeare's life

What are the key surviving traces, unadorned by local colour, of Shakespeare's life? The core set of these traces, of course, consists of the printing of his name as the author of his plays and poems. During his lifetime, eighteen of the plays now attributed to Shakespeare were printed in the small-format editions called quartos. Many such editions of plays in this period were issued without the name of the author – there was no equivalent to our copyright system, and publishers were under no legal obligation to specify on their title pages who wrote the texts they printed. (See Chapter 5.) By the second decade of the seventeenth century, it had become more or less routine to include the author's name, but it remains difficult at this distance to gauge the level of contemporary interest in particular playwrights: some contemporaries compiled detailed lists of the names of those they regarded as the pre-eminent playwrights in different genres; many others, to judge from surviving texts, seem to have been no more interested in the authors of plays than audiences today are interested in the authors of television shows. (See Chapter 3.) Only occasionally were there significant exceptions, and then as now for the same principal motive: profit. By 1597 seven of Shakespeare's plays had been printed, their title pages providing details of plot and of performance but not the identity of the author. After 1598 Shakespeare's name, spelled in various ways, began to appear on the title page of quartos, and indeed several plays almost certainly not authored by him were printed with his name. His name – Shakespeare, Shake-speare, Shakspeare, Shaxberd, Shakespere, and the like – had evidently begun to sell plays. During his lifetime more published plays were attributed to Shakespeare than to any other contemporary dramatist.

Similarly, Shakespeare's name figured prominently in the editions, published in his lifetime, of his non-dramatic works: *Venus and Adonis* (1593), *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594) and the *Sonnets* (1609). Confirmation of Shakespeare's contemporary reputation as a love poet comes from many early sources, including those students in St John's College, Cambridge, who