# Shakespeare's Texts

With the exception of a small part of the play *Sir Thomas More* that survives in what most scholars believe is Shakespeare's handwriting (the play itself not being printed until the 19th century), we have access to Shakespeare's works only in the form of printed books. About half of these books were published in his lifetime, and the other half shortly after his death in 1616. All modern editions are based on these early printed editions. This essay is concerned with the early editions and what later editors have done with them to enable modern readers to enjoy Shakespeare's works.

THE EARLY EDITIONS AND THEIR USES

By the end of 1634, all the works that modern editors accept as Shakespeare's (with the exception of one or two that seem to be lost) had been published. The landmark publication was *The Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies of William Shakespeare,* now commonly known as the First Folio (the term *folio* refers to the book's large format), published in 1623. This was effectively a "complete plays" edition comprising the 36 plays that are the basis of Shakespeare's canon. The only plays that modern editors think are Shakespeare's but were omitted from the First Folio are *Pericles,* which he probably cowrote with George Wilkins, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen,* which he probably cowrote with John Fletcher. (Two other existing plays are also now thought to contain some text by Shakespeare: *Edward III* and *Sir Thomas More.*) It is not clear why these were omitted from the collection, which nonetheless included collaborative plays, such as *Henry VI, Part 1,* which Shakespeare cowrote with Thomas Nashe and others; *Titus Andronicus,* which he cowrote with George Peele; *Timon of Athens,* which he cowrote with Thomas Middleton; and *Henry VIII,* or *All Is True,* which he cowrote with John Fletcher. Moreover, the First Folio included *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth,* which, although originally written by Shakespeare alone were somewhat expanded by Middleton after his death; the originals are lost, and we have only the adapted versions, as represented in the 1623 folio. Of the two glaring omissions from the folio, *Pericles* had already been printed as a single play in 1609, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was printed the same way in 1634, thus completing the canon. A number of other plays were printed with Shakespeare's name on the title page during his lifetime and shortly after, but they are not accepted by modern editors as being his work.

The First Folio, then, plus *Pericles* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen,* conveniently defines Shakespeare's dramatic canon. However, for two reasons, editors cannot simply take the versions of the plays as printed in the First Folio and present them to modern readers. The first reason is that the folio exhibits the common writing habits of Shakespeare's time, which are so unlike modern writing habits as to present problems for readers. For example, here is how *King Lear* begins in the First Folio:
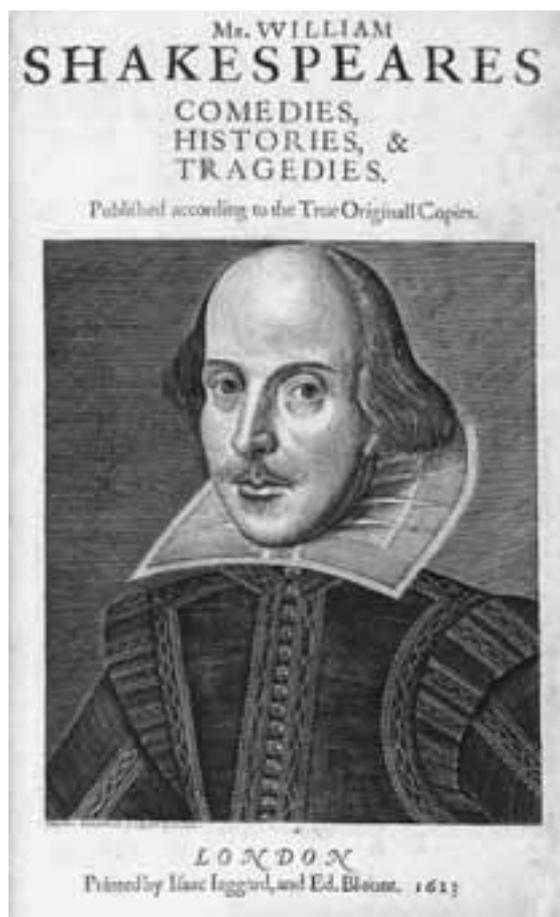
Title page of the First Folio, published in 1623 *(Copper engraving of Shakespeare by Martin Droeshout)*

      Kent.
I thought the King had more affected the
Duke of *Albany,* then *Cornwall.*
Glou. It did always seeme so to vs: But
now in the diuision of the Kingdome, it ap-
peares not which of the Dukes hee valewes
most, for qualities are so weigh'd, that
   curiosity in nei-
ther, can make choise of eithers moity.
               (*King Lear,* 1623 Folio: sig. qq2r)

The first two lines by Kent are reasonably intel-
ligible, but Gloucester's response contains what
seem to modern eyes to be odd spellings *(alwayes, seeme,* and *valewes* for *values),* ungrammatical punctuation (a colon used where we would expect a period or a comma), and transposed letters *(vs* having *v* where we would expect a *u* and *diuision* having *u* where we would expect a *v).* Today's editors routinely modernize these seeming oddities, imposing our standards of spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Whereas we treat *u/v* and *i/j* as distinct letters with distinct sounds, in Shakespeare's time each pair represented alternative shapes for a single letter—just as we treat *g/G* as two shapes for one letter—with the choice of shape being determined by where in a word the letter appears. Modern editors regularize these variations (which, in fact, were only inconsistently applied in the First Folio) to present the plays, although they leave the old-fashioned word order in place, so that Gloucester says "it appears not" where we would say "it does not appear."

The second reason for not simply reproducing the First Folio texts to make modern editions is that for about half the plays, the First Folio was not where the play had been printed for the first time: It had appeared before as a single play in a small book format known as a quarto. Thus, for these plays, there are two or more versions—the First Folio and one or more preceding quartos—and it is not immediately apparent which the modern editor ought to base her or his edition upon. The versions are in many cases quite different from one another, offering different words at key moments. Thus, a modernized *Romeo and Juliet* based on the first quarto, published in 1597, would read "a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet," while one based on the second quarto, published in 1599, would read "a rose / By any other word would smell as sweet." In addition to hundreds of such small but significant verbal differences, the early editions of some plays differ in the order of events and the presence or absence of whole scenes. The first quarto of *King Lear,* published in 1608, contains a mock-trial scene in which Lear imagines that he arraigns his daughters, a scene simply omitted in the 1623 First Folio version of the play. A great deal of editorial labor has been exerted to

Title page of the First Folio edition of *King Lear,* published in 1623

understand the causes of these differences between the early editions.

It is possible that Shakespeare changed his mind between the writing of a first draft of a play and the preparation, after rehearsal, of a final acting version, and that different print editions are based on different manuscripts from different stages in the play's genesis. It is also certainly true that printers made mistakes when reading a manuscript and setting the type for a book, and errors could also creep in when type shifted during a print run; such accidents account for some of the differences between early editions. Plays were undoubtedly altered by the state censor, the Master of the Revels, who read every script before permitting it to be performed. Such censorship explains the curious fact that the swearing in *Henry IV, Part 2* is considerably less colorful than the swearing in its predecessor, *Henry IV, Part 1.* Although both plays were written toward the end of the 1590s, *Henry IV, Part 2* seems to have been printed in the 1623 First Folio from a version of the script that had been cleaned up at some point, its oaths expurgated in response to a 1606 law that clamped down on players' swearing. Even when an editor is fairly confident that a particular early edition is the best one to base her edition upon (what editors call the copy text), there will be certain words that she thinks have been corrupted by the printers of that edition, and she may turn to one of the other early editions to see if it provides a better alternative reading, meaning something more likely to be what Shakespeare actually wrote.

Even if there is only one early edition, so that the editor has no other choice for his copy text, he may well be so confident that a word is wrong and that he can see what it should be that he will emend his copy text to give modern readers the correct reading. For example, at the end of *The Winter's Tale,* Paulina promises to show a statue of Hermione that she keeps separate, apart, and "Lonely" (5.3.18), rather than storing it with her other works of art. In fact, in the First Folio, Paulina says that she keeps the statue "Louely" (that is, lovely), and although this could make some sense—she has been cleaning it and showing it in the best light—editors

are unanimous that when read in context, this word is a misprint: The printer either picked up the wrong letter or else put an *n* into the press upside down, so that is looks like a *u*. Thus, even with no alternative reading from another early edition (*The Winter's Tale* is one of the plays first printed in the First Folio), editors might well decide to fix errors in the text if they are confident they can find them and figure out what went wrong. The main reason that editors have continued to reedit Shakespeare over the centuries, and that modern editions are not identical in all their readings, is that editors have continually disagreed about the existence of

A page from the First Folio edition of *The Winter's Tale*

particular errors in the early editions, what caused them, and what the correct reading should be. Over the centuries, editors have differed in their general level of confidence about this entire activity of emendation; at times they have been reluctant to emend the early editions, and at other times they have been eager to emend.

As well as differing in their readings, the early editions occasionally differ in the names that they give to the plays. As its title indicates, the 1623 First Folio categorized the Shakespeare plays into "Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies," and for most of the plays that tell the tragic stories of English kings, the category of history was used. The First Folio formed the history plays into a coherent sequence showing the development of the English nation from the late 14th to the mid-16th centuries—that is, the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VI, Edward IV, Richard II, Henry VII, and Henry VIII. To achieve this required renaming plays that were first performed in the early 1590s under the titles *The Contention of York and Lancaster* and *Richard Duke of York* as *Henry VI, Part 2* and *Henry VI, Part 3,* respectively, and renaming as *Henry VIII* a play first performed around 1613 under the title *All Is True*. The stories of two English kings from much earlier than this grand sweep of late-medieval history, Cymbeline and King Lear, were categorized as tragedies, but the play of King John (who reigned two centuries before Richard II) was awkwardly used to begin the history cycle in the 1623 First Folio.

With these renamings changed back, the following table shows the publication history of the plays prior to the appearance of the First Folio, which were all in the quarto format (abbreviated to Q), with the exception of *Richard Duke of York* (1595) printed in another small-book format known as octavo (O). Also included in the table are two of Shakespeare's poems, which were also published in quartos. The editions in italics are called Bad Quartos (or octavos) because their versions of the plays seem to suffer from extensive corruption, either in the printshop or by some process of copying before being printed, or most likely both. (That they were put together by one or more actors simply recalling

their lines, the so-called memorial reconstruction theory, is now not widely believed except in the case of Q1 *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.)

Year	First Editions	Subsequent Editions
1593	Q1 Venus and Adonis	
1594	Q1 The Rape of Lucrece	Q2 Venus and Adonis
	Q1 Titus Andronicus	
	Q1 The Contention of York and Lancaster	
1595	*O Richard Duke of York*	Q3 Venus and Adonis
1596		Q4 Venus and Adonis
1597	*Q1 Romeo and Juliet*	
	Q1 Richard II	
	Q1 Richard III	
1598	Q1 Henry IV, Part 1	Q2 Henry IV, Part 1
	Q Love's Labour's Lost	Q2 Richard II
		Q3 Richard II
		Q2 Richard III
		Q2 The Rape of Lucrece
1599		Q2 Romeo and Juliet
		Q3 Henry IV, Part 1
		Q5 Venus and Adonis
		Q6 Venus and Adonis

Year	First Editions	Subsequent Editions
1600	*Q1 Henry V*	*Q2 The Contention of York and Lancaster*
	Q Henry IV, Part 2	*Q2 Richard Duke of York*
	Q Much Ado About Nothing	Q2 Titus Andronicus
	Q1 A Midsummer Night's Dream	Q3 The Rape of Lucrece
	Q1 The Merchant of Venice	Q4 The Rape of Lucrece
1602	*Q1 The Merry Wives of Windsor*	*Q2 Henry V*
		Q3 Richard III
		Q7 Venus and Adonis
1603	*Q1 Hamlet*	
1604		Q2 Hamlet
		Q4 Henry IV, Part 1
1605		Q4 Richard III
1607		Q5 The Rape of Lucrece
c1607		Q8 Venus and Adonis
c1608		Q9 Venus and Adonis
1608	Q1 King Lear	Q4 Richard II
		Q5 Henry IV, Part 1
1609	*Q1 Pericles*	*Q2 Pericles*
	Q1 Troilus and Cressida	Q3 Romeo and Juliet
	Q1 Sonnets	
c1610		Q10 Venus and Adonis

Year	First Editions	Subsequent Editions
1611		Q3 Titus Andronicus
		Q3 Hamlet
		Q3 Pericles
1612		Q5 Richard III
1613		Q6 Henry IV, Part 1
1615		Q5 Richard II
1616		Q6 The Rape of Lucrece
1617		Q11 Venus and Adonis
1619		*Q3 The Contention of York and Lancaster*
		Q3 Richard Duke of York
		Q4 Pericles
		Q2 The Merry Wives of Windsor
		Q3 Henry V
		Q2 The Merchant of Venice
		Q2 A Midsummer Night's Dream
		Q2 King Lear
1620		Q12 Venus and Adonis
1622	Q1 Othello	Q6 Richard III
		Q7 Henry IV, Part 1
1623		Q4 Romeo and Juliet

A good measure of a printed book's popularity is how often it gets reprinted, which indicates a continued public demand for copies after all of the preceding edition (limited to 1,500 copies by the guild that controlled printing) had been sold. Looked at this way, Shakespeare's great successes were not his plays but his poems *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece,* written near the beginning of his career and selling well all through it, reaching 12 and six editions, respectively, by the time that Shakespeare's fellow actors John Heminge and Henry Condell collaborated with a consortium of publishers headed by William and Isaac Jaggard and Edward Blount to put out a volume of the complete plays, the 1623 First Folio. The only play to achieve anything like this popularity in print was *Henry IV, Part 1,* which is not usually considered the pinnacle of Shakespeare's artistic achievement.

But perhaps print sales are not the right way to measure the overall popularity of particular Shakespeare plays. We know that he was a working member of the leading theatrical troupe, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, which was formed in 1594 and renamed the King's Men in 1603 when the new monarch, James I, took over as their patron. We know that Shakespeare owned a share in the open-air Globe amphitheater playhouse built in 1599 (using the main timbers from the company's former home, the Theatre in Shoreditch), and that he also had a share in the indoors Blackfriars Theatre, which the company used as a winter home (alternating with performances at the Globe in the summer) from around 1608. In his will, Shakespeare left money to buy rings for his fellow actors Heminge, Condell, and Richard Burbage to remember him by. Being so much a man of the theater, perhaps Shakespeare saw performance rather than print publication as the primary means for disseminating his works. This may seem odd to us today because we think of theater as a relatively narrow interest for a small section of society, while print publication reaches millions of people. But exactly the reverse was the case 400 years ago. Each of London's open-air amphitheaters could

hold around 3,000 people, and for most of Shakespeare's life, there were between two and four such theaters showing plays on any given afternoon. Over the course of its run in the repertory, a play would be seen and heard by many more people than could buy its book, since most print runs were even shorter than the maximum 1,500 copies. It is distinctly possible that Shakespeare ignored print publication and focused on live performance because that was the mass medium of the age.

This view of Shakespeare as primarily a man of the theater came to prominence in the second half of the 20th century and may fairly be called the current standard position of scholars. Looked at this way, the early editions of Shakespeare are best considered as afterthoughts that followed upon successful performance. It is certainly the case that title pages of printed plays by Shakespeare and others referred back to successful performance; never, so far as we know, was a play printed first and then performed. Typical is the title page of Shakespeare's first printed play, *Titus Andronicus* (1594), which says, under the title, "As it was Plaide by the Right Honourable the Earle of *Darbie,* Earle of *Pembrooke,* and Earle of *Sussex* their Seruants." This tells us that three playing companies—Derby's Men, Pembroke's Men, and Sussex's Men—performed this play, which itself is something of a mystery: Did Shakespeare have connections with all three prior to becoming one of the founder members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men in 1594? Another connection to Pembroke's Men is indicated by the title page of *The Contention of York and Lancaster,* printed the following year, which says that the book offers the play "as it was sundrie times acted by the Right Honourable the Earle of Pembrooke his seruants." Fairly consistently, Shakespeare's printed plays refer back to the occasion of performance, offering the reader the chance to experience its pleasure again by restaging the play in the imagination.

The title pages always tell the reader the play's title, followed by one or more of the following details: the playing company that performed it, the

venue, the date of publication, and the name of the printer, publisher, or bookseller (sometimes all three). For the last of these, the phrasing is generally "Printed by W [the printer] for X [the publisher] and to be sold by Y [the bookseller] at Z [location of Y's bookshop]." A member of the Stationers Guild, which had the monopoly on printing, could fulfill more than one of these roles at once. The printer's name might be omitted, in which case the title page would read "Printed for X," and if the publisher was omitted ("Printed by W and to be sold . . ."), it was the same as the printer.

From a modern point of view, conspicuously absent from the early title pages is the name of Shakespeare himself. This was typical: Until the late 1590s, plays were published as the products of their playing companies, not their dramatists. (A modern analogue would be the way that films for the cinema are advertised using the names of the actors in them, or the names of the directors who made them, but almost never by the names of the screenwriters who wrote them.) Then, in 1598, *Richard II* and *Richard III* were reprinted in second editions that identified Shakespeare as their author,
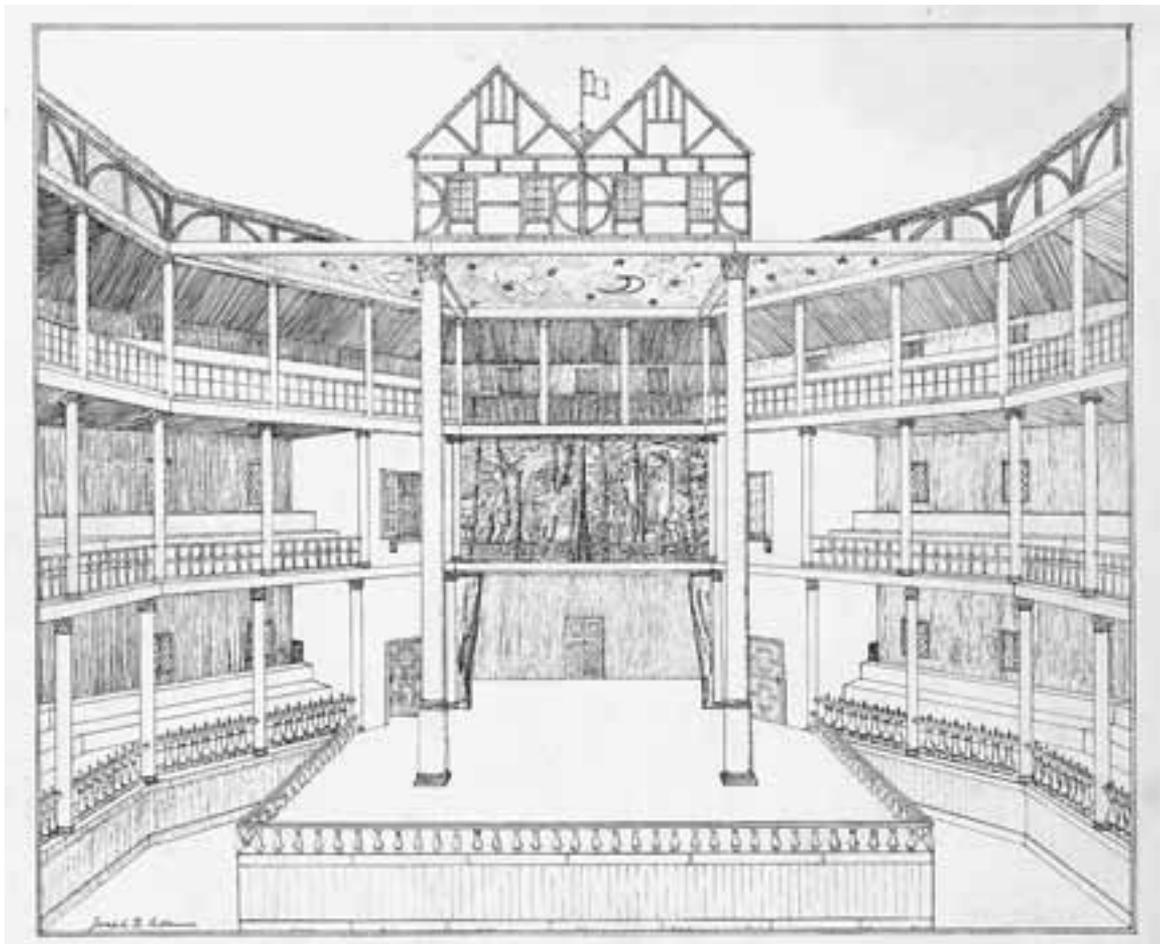
A 1922 conjectural reconstruction of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre *(Drawing by Joseph Quincy Adams)*

even though the first editions did not. Thereafter, Shakespeare's name seemed to become something of a selling point, and it routinely appeared on his title pages.

How did publishers get hold of the plays' manuscripts in order to print them? No one knows for sure, and much effort has been expended trying to find out. There is not a great deal of evidence to go on. Looking at the internal evidence of the texts themselves, there are reasons to suspect that for the good quartos, the manuscripts used were in Shakespeare's own handwriting (or, in a couple of cases, perhaps were faithful scribal copies of his manuscripts) and represent his first complete draft of a play, prior to company rehearsal that might reshape the script. This is suggested by the presence of the kinds of error a dramatist might make in the heat of composition and peculiar spellings such as *scilens* (for *silence*) and *straing* (for *strange*) that also appear in the small part of the manuscript of the play *Sir Thomas More* that is in Shakespeare's handwriting. The printers did not (as they often would) alter these peculiar spellings to something more conventional.

A strong clue that the good quartos may be based on authorial drafts is the presence in them of things that we would expect a rehearsal process to smooth away, such as the following repetition of lines in Q2 *Romeo and Juliet:*

> *Ro.* Would I were sleepe and peace so sweet
>   to rest
> The grey eyde morne smiles on the frowning
>   night,
> Checkring the Easterne Clouds with streaks
>   of light,
> And darknesse fleckted like a drunkard reeles,
> From forth daies pathway, made by *Tytans*
>   wheeles.
> Hence will I to my ghostly Friers close cell,
> His helpe to craue, and my deare hap to tell.
>   *Exit.*
>   *Enter Frier alone with a basket.*
> *Fri.* The grey-eyed morne smiles on the
>   frowning night,
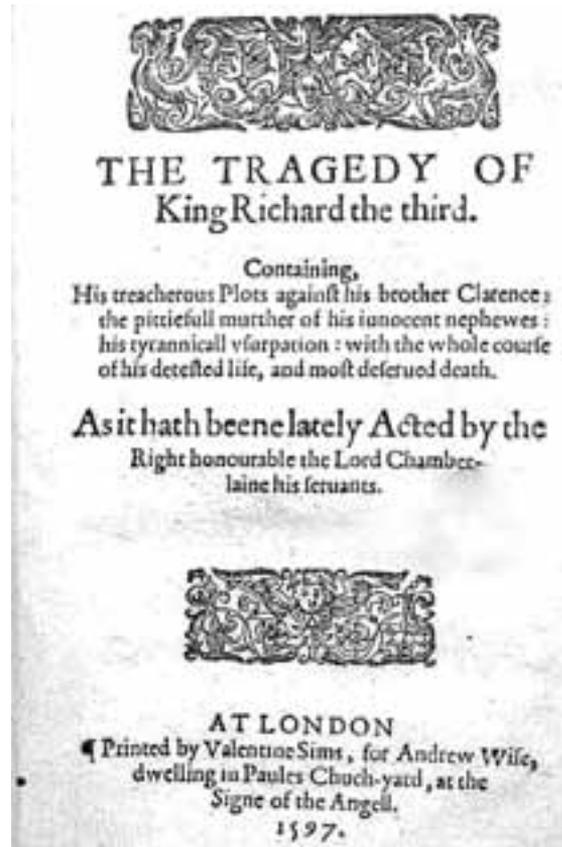
Title page of the first quarto of *Richard III*, without Shakespeare's name, published in 1597

> Checking the Easterne clowdes with streaks
>   of light:
> And fleckeld darknesse like a drunkard reeles,
> From forth daies path, and *Titans* burning
>   wheeles:
>   (*Romeo and Juliet,* 1599 Quarto: sig. D4v)

It is implausible that Shakespeare intended one actor to walk off having painted a memorable poetic picture of the dawn, only for another actor to enter and paint almost precisely the same picture in similar, perhaps slightly improved, language. (Most commentators prefer "fleckeld darknesse" to "darknesse fleckted" and "*Titans* burning wheeles"

to "made by *Tytans* wheeles.") It is more reasonable to suppose that Shakespeare wrote a first attempt at these lines to get Romeo off the stage and to indicate that a full night has passed since the Capulet feast, but as he began the next scene, it occurred to him to try again at some of the phrasing and to give these lines to the Friar, who is out early collecting herbs. If either version was marked for deletion in the manuscript (which would usually be indicated by a vertical line in the left margin), the printer overlooked the mark and set both. In fact, there would have been no need to mark one or other for deletion if this were an authorial draft, since Shakespeare may have intended to copy the play out again and could afford to defer until then the final decision on which version to keep.

It is conceivable that Shakespeare's drafts of his plays were retained by the playing company even after they had made a fresh, clean copy that could be used as a reference document during performances, and the drafts might later have been sold to publishers, while the reference document, what later theater practitioners called the promptbook, was retained to enable continued performance. The practices of early printers often resulted in the destruction of the manuscript they were printing from, so the players would not let them have their only copy, and theaters routinely employed scribes to make extra copies of their important documents. In a sense, what got published was something left over from the company's the main activity, which was performance, rather than something intended for publication. The only exceptions would be the three quartos of poetry, *Venus and Adonis* (1593), *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), and *Sonnets* (1609). The first two books were printed by Richard Field, whom Shakespeare must have known from childhood (they grew up near one another in Stratford-upon-Avon) and who the poet presumably chose to be his publisher. The books were carefully printed, and *The Rape of Lucrece* contains a dedication from Shakespeare to Henry Wriothesley, earl of Southampton; we can be sure Shakespeare intended their publication. The situation with *Sonnets* is less clear, and scholars disagree on whether Shakespeare
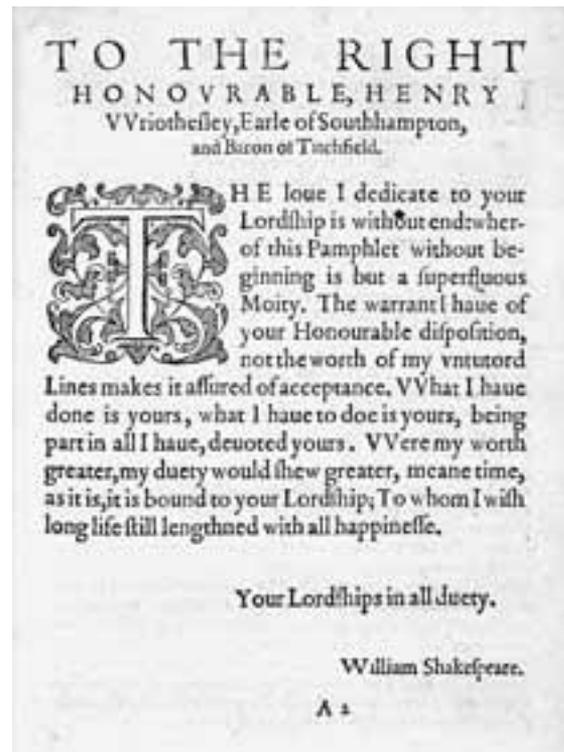
Shakespeare's dedication of *The Rape of Lucrece* to Henry Wriothesley in 1594

authorized the publication. A publisher did not need the author's approval for publication as long as he obtained his manuscript by honest purchase. Since Shakespeare is known to have circulated his sonnets among his "private friends," a manuscript of them might easily and legitimately come into the hands of Thomas Thorpe, who published *Sonnets.*

The early publication of Shakespeare's poetry, then, is a different matter from the early publication of the plays. For the latter, the First Folio collection represents his fellow actors' monument to their dead friend, and the scripts ought to be reliably close to what was performed as Shakespeare's work during and shortly after his life. It might seem that when a modern editor has to decide between one or more early quartos of a play and the First Folio version, the latter should be preferred

because its accuracy is attested by Heminge and Condell's involvement in the project. (They would scarcely have taken part in the publication of seriously flawed versions of the plays if, as they plausibly claim in the book's preliminaries, they wanted it to serve as a monument to Shakespeare's artistic achievement.) However, as we have seen, for some plays the First Folio offers a censored version where we would prefer the uncensored preceding quarto. For several of the plays, it appears that the First Folio itself simply reprints one of the preceding quartos rather than using an independent manuscript, and since the process of reprinting inevitably brings in fresh errors to add to those in the edition being reprinted, editors prefer in these cases to go back to the source: the earliest edition at the head of the line of reprints. The situation gets even more complicated when we consider that for some of the plays, an existing quarto was first annotated by comparison with a manuscript from the theater library before being reprinted to make the folio version. The subtle mixture of what editors call authority in the resulting First Folio texts makes the task of editing Shakespeare's plays extremely complex and time-consuming. No sooner has one modern editor published a new edition of a play after years of diligent labor than another editor, working along other principles, will publish a rival edition that differs in tens or hundreds of individual words and phrases chosen from among the various readings in the early editions or emendations of them. The words of Shakespeare's plays are not fixed but, rather, remade afresh by each generation of editors.

One category of early editions has traditionally been set aside by editors and not used as the basis for modern editions. The term *Bad Quartos* is usually applied to the group of early editions consisting of *The Contention of York and Lancaster* (1594), *Richard Duke of York* (1595), *Romeo and Juliet* (1597), *Henry V* (1600), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602), *Hamlet* (1603), and *Pericles* (1609) and their reprints, because they contain more obvious corruptions than can be laid at the door of the printers. It seems that the manuscripts given to the

printers were already full of corrupt readings. Perhaps the most famous is Q1 *Hamlet*'s "To be, or not to be, I there's the point / To Die, to sleepe, is that all? I all" (sig. D4v), but in fact this is not the worse example. Once the reader has adjusted to the use of *I* for *ay* (meaning yes), Q1's version of Hamlet's speech makes reasonable sense, although it seems uncannily like someone's dim recollection of the more familiar version from Q2 and the First Folio. In the cases of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet,* the Bad Quarto was followed a couple of years later by a Good Quarto, perhaps because the players did not want readers receiving a poor impression

A page from the first quarto, also known as the Bad Quarto, of *Hamlet,* published in 1603

of their work. But the Bad Quartos of *The Conten-tion of York and Lancaster, Richard Duke of York, Henry V,* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* were not followed by good ones, and not until the First Folio were readers offered the much improved versions of these plays that we are familiar with. This may be why Heminge and Condell, in an address to the reader at the beginning of the First Folio, contrasted their book with the "diuerse stolne, and surreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed" that were previously on sale (sig. πA3r). The claim that Shakespeare's plays were surreptitiously printed from stolen property led 20th-century scholars to suppose that memorial reconstruction of the script by a small number of actors—presumably bit players, not regular members of the company—explains the existence of the Bad Quartos.

The above account of the Good and Bad Quartos and their relationship to the First Folio was the dominant scholarly belief for most of the 20th century. Those who did most to establish it were a group known as the New Bibliographers, chiefly W. W. Greg, R. B. McKerrow, and A. W. Pollard in England in the first half of the century and Fredson Bowers and Charlton Hinman in the United States in the second half. However, since the 1980s, this belief has come under attack because it assumes, with little warrant, that behind the various early editions of each play, there was a single archetypal play that Shakespeare wrote, and that the editions differ from only because of various degrees and modes of corruption. Might not Shakespeare simply have revised his plays, so that different editions reflect different stages in its development? The case for this seemingly plausible, but academically contentious, hypothesis was proven to most people's satisfaction in respect to *King Lear* in the early 1980s: The 1608 quarto reflects the play as it stood in an authorial manuscript prior to rehearsal for first performance around 1605, and the First Folio version reflects the play as thoroughly revised by Shakespeare sometime around 1610. For no other Shakespeare play has the case for revision been proven to most scholars' satisfac-

tion, although there is strong evidence that revision (not necessarily by Shakespeare) accounts for some of the differences between the Q2 and First Folio *Hamlet.*

Those who place most faith in the hypothesis of revision see the Bad Quartos not as corrupted versions of Shakespeare's plays but merely his first attempts, which he later improved upon. Part of the momentum gained by the reaction against New Bibliography came from the rejection of singularity and the predisposition toward multiplicity that is characteristic of the post-structuralist and post-modernist schools of thought that came to promi-
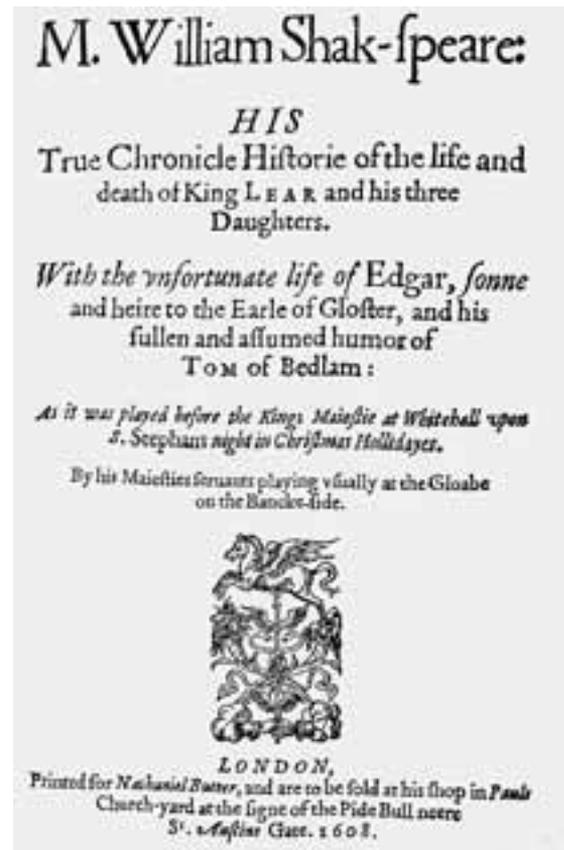
Title page of the first quarto of *King Lear,* published in 1608

nence in literary studies in the 1980s. Because we do not have the manuscripts from which the plays were printed, argue those who hold this view, we should respect the various early editions in all their variety and difference, one from another, rather than trying to abstract from them an imagined singularity of "the play itself." At the start of the 21st century, editors are divided into two main camps. Those who retain most or all of the New Bibliographical view intervene extensively when working from the early editions, in order to arrest the flux of the ever-changing play and to represent it as it existed at one point in time, say as the last authorial draft before rehearsal or as it stood after being reshaped in rehearsal. Those who have abandoned New Bibliography altogether, sometimes called the New Textualists, reject as futile such enquiries into what preceded the first editions and aim to reproduce one or more of those with as little editorial interference as possible.

The terms in which these debates over the nature of Shakespeare's texts are conducted were altered significantly in 2003 with the publication of a book by Lukas Erne entitled *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist.* In it, Erne challenges the foundational assumption, expressed above, that Shakespeare was uninterested in the print publication of his plays. If that were so, asks Erne, how come so many of Shakespeare's plays were in fact published? As can be seen from the above table, 15 of Shakespeare's plays—getting on for half the eventual canon and including most of what he had written by then— had been published by 1603. Erne argues that this could not have been against his wishes and that toward the end of the 1590s, as his name became a valuable selling point worth mentioning on title pages, Shakespeare became conscious of the growing number of readers of his work, and he began to write for them.

It is well known that many editions of Shakespeare's plays are too long to be comfortably performed within the two to three hours that seems to have been the standard performance duration, and Erne suggests that perhaps the long versions contain material directed specifically at readers. The Bad Quartos are noticeably shorter than the other editions; perhaps they represent what was performed in the theaters, while the longer versions represent the expanded versions meant to be read and not performed. One potential objection to Erne's suggestion is the marked decline in the publication of Shakespeare's plays after 1603: Only three more plays were published before his death in 1616. If Shakespeare came to see himself as a literary author halfway through his career, he was rather an unsuccessful one. This possibility should not be rejected without careful consideration, since Shakespeare's reputation in his own time, while significant, was nothing like as elevated as it became in the 18th and 19th centuries. It is to the treatment of his texts in those centuries that we must now turn.

EDITING SHAKESPEARE IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES

It was not until the 18th century that the practice of editing, as we now know it, first began. When new editions of Shakespeare were made in the 17th century, the printers simply took an existing edition and reprinted it, correcting its obvious errors where they could (using only their own insights, not consulting an authoritative manuscript) and inevitably introducing new errors of their own. By this process, the First Folio of 1623 was reprinted as the Second Folio in 1632, as the Third Folio in 1663 (with a second issue in 1664), and as the Fourth Folio in 1685. These names are, of course, modern impositions: The book's title page consistently called it Shakespeare's *Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies.* The quartos of the plays and poems continued to be reprinted independently of the folios, with the same attendant accumulation of error.

The first edition of the 18th century, Nicholas Rowe's of 1709, broke this pattern and issued the complete plays in a new format of six quarto volumes rather than one large folio; he also added the kind of fresh contextualizing material that we

Portrait of Nicholas Rowe, often credited as Shakespeare's first editor, by an unknown artist

expect today from an editor. Rowe is often credited as the first real editor of Shakespeare—he is certainly the first person to be so identified on the title page of a book—because he provided consistent lists of the characters in each play (dramatis personae), divided all the plays into acts, and provided the necessary entrances and exits where these were missing or faulty, as well as correcting the errors in previous editions. The story of Rowe's part acceptance and part rejection of what he found in the folios is a complex one. Rowe followed the folios' division of the Shakespeare canon into comedies, histories, and tragedies and did not depart from it even where they made for an awkward choice, such as putting *Cymbeline* among the tragedies. Rowe's edition was based on the Fourth Folio, presumably at the behest of his publisher, Jacob Tonson, who had the rights to this edition,

as it was still standard practice to base a new edition on the most recent one rather than the earliest available. Rowe also possessed a copy of the Second Folio and consulted it, but because he was basing his edition on the Fourth Folio, he had to include a group of plays now not thought to be by Shakespeare but included in a second issue of the Third Folio in 1664 (and thence into the Fourth Folio): *Thomas Lord Cromwell, Sir John Oldcastle, The Puritan, A Yorkshire Tragedy,* and *Locrine.* On the biblical model, these are now known as the apocryphal plays.

The six-volume edition of 1709 contained no editorial notes on the plays, but in 1710, Rowe published a seventh volume containing the poems, together with critical remarks on the plays and an essay on the development of drama in Greece, Rome, and England. He decided that the apocryphal plays "are none of *Shakespear*'s, nor have any thing in them to give the least Ground to think them his; not so much as a Line; the *Stile,* the manner of *Diction,* the *Humours,* the *Dialogue,* as distinct as any thing can possibly be" (7:423–424). It is to Rowe's credit as a sensitive reader that extensive linguistic and stylistic scholarship since the late 19th century has not overturned this judgement. Rowe brought great literary taste to the job of editing—he was a successful dramatist and the poet laureate—but he also brought the beginnings of a methodical approach. In the edition's dedication to the duke of Somerset at the beginning of the first volume, Rowe noted that because Shakespeare's manuscripts are lost, "there was nothing left, but to compare the several Editions, and give the true Reading as well as I could from thence." Had Rowe done this systematically, he would have needed a set of rules for deciding between the competing readings of the several editions, but such rules were not to be fully formulated for another 150 years.

Shakespeare's next editor was a poet of even greater reputation than Rowe, Alexander Pope. Like Rowe, Pope had no system for editing, but he was convinced of his own innate ability to distinguish Shakespeare's lines from the mass of mate-

rial by lesser writers that, because of the careless practices of the theater and the printshop, had become mixed with it. Some of this material Pope simply deleted, and some he demoted to the bottom of the page to mark its inferiority. Pope broke with the folio order of the plays and instead structured his six-volume edition using his own sense of genre: the comedies; the "historical plays," taken chronologically (so beginning with *King Lear* and continuing from *King John* to *Henry VIII*); the "tragedies from history," comprising *Timon of Athens, Coriolanus, Julius Caesar, Antony and*

Title page of the Fourth Folio, published in 1685

Cleopatra, Titus Andronicus, and *Macbeth;* and the "tragedies from fable," comprising *Troilus and Cressida, Cymbeline, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet,* and *Othello.* At the beginning of the first volume (the last to be published, in 1725), Pope provides a full statement of his views about Shakespeare, rejecting the authenticity of not only the apocryphal plays: "I should conjecture of some of the others, (particularly *Love's Labour Lost, The Winter's Tale,* and *Titus Andronicus*) that only some characters, single scenes, or perhaps a few particular passages, were of his hand" (1:xx).

Although Pope was soon (and long after) ridiculed for his excessive editorial interventions, such as demoting to the bottom of the page those lines he thought unworthy of Shakespeare and highlighting with marginal commas the particularly good bits, he at least partially expressed what was to become the principle of serious editorial scholarship: the search for authority via genealogical inquiry among competing early editions. Pope pointed out that slavishly following the authority of the First Folio would be a mistake, although he was in general pessimistic that much could be done to improve the state of Shakespeare's texts, no matter what principles an editor followed:

> . . . since the above-mentioned Folio Edition, all the rest have implicitly followed it, without having recourse to any of the former, or ever making the comparison between them. It is impossible to repair the Injuries already done him; too much time has elaps'd, and the materials are too few (I:xxi–xxii)

Although Pope's edition, like Rowe's, was planned as a six-volume collection, it was, again like Rowe's, capped with a supplementary seventh volume containing the poems. Throughout the 18th century, these were considered not quite within and not quite outside the canon and were offered in supplementary volumes to the main editions.

For the presumption he had shown in removing from Shakespeare what he thought indecorous,
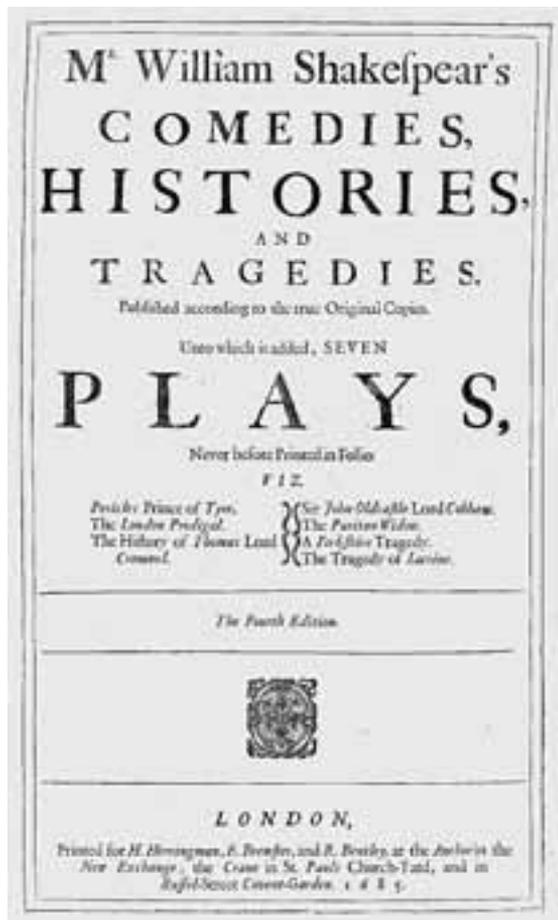
and for anachronistically castigating Shakespeare's perfectly good early modern English, Pope was scathingly taken to task in Lewis Theobald's book *Shakespeare Restored* (1726), the first devoted to the problems of editing Shakespeare. Pope responded with his poem *The Dunciad,* which cast Theobald as the King of Dunces, darling of the goddess Dullness. Theobald was what we would now consider a real scholar, and he was the first to reject editing by instinct and to peruse other drama of the period for parallel passages to help him make his emendations. And yet, in creating his own edition of Shakespeare, Theobald followed the familiar pattern of basing it on the most recent edition rather than one of the early ones, in this case the very edition by Pope that he had criticized so vehemently. However, the durability of Theobald's emendations can be seen by looking at what are called the collation notes of any modern edition:

A 1727 portrait of Alexander Pope *(Painting by Michael Dahl)*

Frequently, he was the first to make a decision with which the modern editors concur. How to read collation notes in modern editions is explained near the end of this essay.

The most celebrated of Theobald's emendations concerns the death of Falstaff in Folio *Henry 5:*

> *Hostesse.*
> . . . for after I saw him fumble with the Sheets, and play with Flowers, and smile vpon his fingers end, I knew there was but one way: for his Nose was as sharpe as a Pen, and a Table of greene fields. How now Sir *Iohn* (quoth I?) what man? be a good cheare
>   (*Henry V,* 1623 Folio: sig. h4r)

The problem is the nonsense phrase "a Table of greene fields." Rowe had reproduced the phrase with no explanation, while Pope characteristically deleted the problem so that his text reads "his nose was as sharp as a pen. How now, Sir *John,* quoth I." Pope explained what happened:

> †*his nose was as sharp as a pen, and a table of green fields.* These words and a table of green fields are not to be found in the old editions of 1600 and 1608. This nonsense got into all the following editions by a pleasant mistake of the Stage-editors, who printed from the common piecemeal-written Parts in the Play-house. A Table was here directed to be brought in, (it being a scene in a tavern where they drink at parting) and this direction crept into the text from the margin. Greenfield was the name of the Property man in that time who furnish'd implements &c. for the actors. A Table of Greenfield's. (3:422n)

There is, of course, no evidence for the existence of a property man called Greenfield, and no reason why a table would be needed at this moment; these are ad hoc inventions by Pope to justify deleting the problem. In his edition of 1733, Theobald changed the offending word so that the line reads "his nose was as sharp as a pen, and a' babled of

A page from the First Folio edition of *Henry V*

this commentary-upon-commentary inflated the size of editions, so that by 1790, when Edmond Malone published his complete works of Shakespeare, there were 10 volumes making up the set, and his revised and updated version of 1821 occupied 21 volumes. Malone's edition marked a distinct break from the past in its striving for authenticity based on new notions of rigorous objectivity and empirical evidence. His obsession with authenticity is exampled by Malone's conviction that the bust of Shakespeare above his grave in Stratford-upon-Avon must originally have been white (like the best classical statues, in his view), and he persuaded the vicar to paint over what we now know are the bust's true colors; they were later restored. To edit Shakespeare, Malone returned to the earliest editions and used them not simply as clues when the later editions offered mysterious readings but as the foundations of his edition. This meant using the First Folio for those plays with no preceding quarto and for the others using the earliest Good Quarto.

To support his research, Malone made extensive searches for documents from Shakespeare's time, turning up the office book of the Master of the Revels Henry Herbert and the theatrical accounts of Philip Henslowe, theater impresario at the rival Rose Theatre, adjacent to the Globe. His discoveries revolutionized and professionalized the study of Shakespeare's working practices and their relationship to the early editions. Previous 18th-century editors had sought to free Shakespeare from what they saw as the barbarous corruptions of his time, and in particular the degenerate language (as they saw it) that permitted double negatives and non-agreement in number of subject and verb. Purged of these flaws—for which the age and not Shakespeare personally should be blamed—the plays could, these editors thought, be properly enjoyed by modern readers. Malone, by contrast, put Shakespeare back into his early modern context in order to make sense of the writing rather than change it. He was what today we would call a historicist.

The historicizing impulse strengthened in the 19th century, and the Cambridge-Macmillan edition of 1863–66 was the first produced

green fields. How now, Sir John? quoth I." The word *a,* meaning *he,* is common in Shakespeare, and in Elizabethan handwriting, "a babled" could easily be misread as "a table." The emendation turns the problematic line into perfect sense—the dying Falstaff raved incoherently—and it has won virtually universal assent from editors.

Eighteenth-century editors tended to include the explanations of their predecessors in their commentaries, so that, in the act of disagreeing with Pope, Theobald quoted almost all of his nonsense about a man called Greenfield. Over the decades,

by university-employed scholars using a clearly expressed bibliographical methodology arrived at after reexamining afresh the entire textual situation of Shakespeare. Its editors—W. G. Clark, John Glover, and W. Aldis Wright—compared each early edition with the others (a process called collating) in order to establish textual priority (which editions were reprints of which), and they used this knowledge to help decide what to put in their edition where the early editions differed. Thus, although their edition of *Hamlet* was mainly based on Q2 of 1604–05, the one they thought had the highest authority in general, they used the First Folio text for the line "O, that this too too solid flesh would melt" (*Hamlet* 1.2.129). In their collation note at the foot of the page, the Cambridge-Macmillan editors wrote "129. *solid*] Ff. *sallied* (Q1) Qq. *sullied* Anon. conj," meaning that in line 129, their reading of *solid* came from the folios, that the quartos all read *sallied* (although Q1 differs significantly elsewhere on the same line), and that the reading *sullied* had been conjectured by persons unknown. (Modern editions' collation notes have developed typographical conventions for compressing even more textual information into a few symbols, and following, there is a guide to decoding them.) This kind of attention to detail was new in the editing of Shakespeare, and the Cambridge-Macmillan editors were explicit about their application of processes that were established and refined for the editing of classical texts in Latin and Greek.

The classical text approach involved the genealogical process known as recension, in which the comparison of the surviving documents (all textual witnesses to the lost original, the author's manuscript) leads to what is called a stemma, a pictorial representation. This picture is a kind of family tree showing the relationships between editions so that a "descendant" is an edition that reprints its "parent." The classical tradition stressed recension over emendation and encouraged editors to try to make sense of the readings of the early edition on which the modern one is to be based rather than depart from it. If departure was unavoidable, then the next

closest relative in the stemma's family tree should be consulted for its reading. This was essentially the process followed by the Cambridge-Macmillan edition, as they explained:

> The basis of all texts of Shakespeare must be that of the earliest Edition of the collected plays, the Folio of 1623. . . . This we have mainly adopted, unless there exists an earlier edition in quarto, as is the case in more than one half of the thirty-six plays. When the first Folio is corrupt, we have allowed some authority to the emendations of F2 above subsequent conjecture, and secondarily to F3 and F4; but a reference to our notes will show that the authority even of F2 in correcting is very small. Where we have quartos of authority, their variations from F1 have been generally accepted, except where they are manifest errors, and where the text of the entire passage seems to be of an inferior recension to that of the Folio. (1:xi)

The Cambridge-Macmillan edition was widely received as the culmination of efforts to recover Shakespeare's true words, and it spawned a single-volume edition, the Globe Shakespeare, that sold nearly a quarter of a million copies and became the standard edition for the purposes of referencing for nearly 100 years.

MODERN EDITIONS: WHAT THEY DO AND HOW TO READ THEM

At the end of the 19th century, most editors thought that there was nothing left to be done regarding the texts of Shakespeare, the Cambridge-Macmillan edition having solved all the problems that could be solved. When the publisher Methuen inaugurated its Arden Shakespeare series of single-play editions in 1899, editors were simply given the Cambridge-Macmillan text and asked to add explanatory notes and an introduction. Two young Cambridge graduates, W. W. Greg and R. B. McKerrow, and the editor of the journal *The Library,* A. W. Pollard, decided that more could be done in respect of the texts of Shakespeare's plays

by minute forensic examination of the early editions. The New Bibliography that they launched treated books as material objects whose means of construction could be revealed by close analysis in the light of expert knowledge about early modern printers and their habits. Under their leadership, the discipline took on a pseudoscientific air that is apparent in such titles as Greg's *The Calculus of Variants* (1927). The New Bibliographers were able to show that most of the Good Quartos were based on authorial papers, so that all that stands between us and Shakespeare's own manuscript is the mediating work of the early modern typesetter.

Close examination of the surviving manuscripts of plays by Shakespeare's contemporaries enabled the New Bibliographers to categorize them variously as "foul papers" (meaning the author's working documents) and promptbooks, being the much cleaner documents used to run a performance. A promptbook would be annotated with such things as sound and property cues, which an author in the act of composition would not stop to put in, and the need for which would emerge during rehearsal. From his knowledge of the characteristics of each category of manuscripts, Greg derived a list of features that, if found in an early edition, would indicate whether it was printed from foul papers or promptbooks, the former being in general preferable since this would reveal what the dramatist initially intended, while the latter might only show what he was forced to accept after the play had been put through the practical process of collective rehearsal.

The New Bibliographers collated the early editions more carefully than previous scholars and put recension upon a firm footing, which made more secure the principle that, having found the most authoritative early edition, an editor should use it alone as the basis for a modern one. However, in a groundbreaking essay of 1950–51, "The Rationale of Copy-Text," Greg broke from this principle. He conceived of a potential conflict "between the essential readings of a text and what may be called the 'accidents' of spelling and punctuation," since a sloppily made early edition based directly on the

author's papers would probably preserve the general character of the author's spelling and punctuation while mangling a number of the individual readings, while a carefully made early edition based on a scribe's recopying of those same papers would be further from the author's habits regarding spelling and punctuation (since scribes tended to apply their own tastes for those features) and yet would record more accurately the words he used. Rather than base a modern edition on one early edition, it might be better to use two: one as the authority for the spellings and punctuation and another as authority for particular words. Greg was thinking of a modern edition that followed the original spelling of Shakespeare's time rather than modernizing it, although much of the New Bibliography could also be used by an editor making a modernized text. The principles that the New Bibliographers established became standard for editing not only Shakespeare and his contemporaries but also later writers.

New Bibliography sought to explain the differences between early editions of Shakespeare by the different provenances of the manuscripts consulted and by corruption in the printshop. That Shakespeare might simply have revised his plays was stoutly rejected by this tradition, but since the 1980s, it has become increasingly obvious to scholars that at least some of the differences can be explained by revision. Just as this was becoming clear, a team of editors at Oxford University Press were developing a refinement of the New Bibliography, based on the assumption that rather than harming a play, the process of group rehearsal would be welcomed by Shakespeare as a necessary step in the play's progress toward performance. Being actively involved with his playing company, Shakespeare's views would carry weight if any alterations were to be made (say, the removal or addition of lines for a practical reason concerned with doubling of parts), and the final script so arrived at would implicitly carry his approval. If it were possible, when editing a particular play, to choose between an early edition based on foul papers and one based on the promptbook, an editor who held this view of rehearsal's

importance might well prefer the readings of the latter where the New Bibliographers had preferred the former. This "new" New Bibliography culminated in Oxford University Press's *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (1986).

Around this time, other editors were becoming increasingly skeptical of our ability to tell what kind of manuscript an early edition was based on, and also of the idea that the Bad Quartos were the result of memorial reconstruction by actors. These editors insisted that one cannot make a modern edition of "the play" imagined as a kind of Platonic essence, or pure authorial vision of originality, preceding the early editions. Since we have only the early editions to work with, any modern edition is necessarily just a reproduction—with corrections—of one (or more if Greg's "Rationale" is being followed) of the early editions. There arose in the 1980s a desire to refocus readers' attention on these early editions and to discourage editors from seeking out the readings of the lost play manuscripts that preceded them. An effect of this impulse has been the tendency of modern editions to provide multiple versions of Shakespeare's plays. Jill Levenson's *Romeo and Juliet* for the Oxford Shakespeare series (2000) gives two fully edited versions, one based on the Bad Quarto of 1597 and the other based on the Good Quarto of 1599. The most recent *Hamlet* in the Arden Shakespeare series (2006) comprises two volumes offering three versions, based on the Bad Quarto of 1603, the Good Quarto of 1604–05, and the First Folio of 1623.

Whether conforming to the old New Bibliographical practices or breaking from them, modern editions have in common a number of things that readers should be aware of. The first is the modernization of spelling and punctuation, as we have seen, and the emendation of error. Speech prefixes are standardized for each character, so that the woman that Q2 *Romeo and Juliet* calls *"Wife,"* *"Mo*[*ther*]*,"* and *"La*[*dy*]*"* is regularized to "CAPULET'S WIFE." For the purposes of correction, a play's stage directions are treated differently from the dialogue. In any early edition, there are usually dozens of errors in the stage directions: Characters are omitted from entrance directions and yet are required to speak onstage, they are included in exit directions and yet remain onstage to speak, and they are called upon to perform impossible actions such as exiting twice in succession without an intervening entrance. Some editors fix these mistakes silently, meaning that they give no indication to the reader that they have intervened. Other editors, however, will always indicate when they have intervened in a stage direction by putting the words they have added into square brackets, as in *"Enter King* [*and Queen*] *and attendants."* Where they have removed words, this will be shown in the collation notes. When making such interventions, it is often the case that the right solution is not immediately apparent; several possible solutions might be equally workable. In editions of Shakespeare from Oxford University Press, brackets are used to mark additions that the editors think are likely to reflect the stage action but are nonetheless disputable. Thus, for the opening direction of scene 1.4 in *Coriolanus,* the Oxford Complete Works reads: *"Enter Martius, Laertius with a drummer,* [*a trumpeter,*] *and colours, with captains and Soldiers* [*carrying scaling ladders*]*, as before the city Corioles; to them a Messenger."* The same convention applies with arguable emendations to speech prefixes, where the early edition gives a line to the wrong character, but just who should speak it is debatable.

In a good modern edition, as well as the main dialogue at the top of the page and the explanatory notes (usually at the bottom of the page, but sometimes tucked away at the back of the book), there will also be a set of collation notes detailing the editorial interventions. These are concerned with what editors call substantive changes, those that alter the meaning of what is spoken, as when the editor substitutes a new word or alters the punctuation in a way that affects meaning. The modernization of spelling (as in *cheare = cheer*) and punctuation that does not affect meaning are not normally recorded in collation notes. The standard format for a collation note is:

line-number(s) reading] authority for this reading; another reading its authority; another reading its authority; etc.

To take a concrete example, the following is how Theobald's emendation of *Table* > *babled* is recorded in T. W. Craik's 1995 Arden Shakespeare edition of *Henry V:*

[HOSTESS]   . . . for 15
his nose was as sharp as a pen, and 'a babbled
of green
fields.
. . .
16–17 and . . . fields] *F* (. . . Table . . .); *not in*
Q 16 babbled] *Theobald;*
Table *F;* talked *(anon. in Theobald)*

There are two collation notes here, one for what is in lines 16–17 from *and* to *fields,* and another for the alteration of *Table* > *babled* in line 16. The two readings under discussion (the presence of *and . . . fields* and the presence of *babbled*) are called lemmas, and the end of each is marked with a closing square bracket. The first note says that the authority for the words from *and* to *fields* is *F* (meaning the 1623 First Folio) and that in the middle of *F*'s reading, the word *Table* appears. The italicized parentheses are used to show that the authority, *F,* has the lemma in a form different from the one used in this edition, since *babbled* appears as *Table* in *F*. The statement of authority for the reading of the lemma ends with the first italicized semicolon and thereafter begins the list of other readings and their authorities. There is only one alternative reading, which is simply to omit the words in the lemma, and that is what is done in *Q* (meaning the 1600 quarto).

The second collation note begins with the line number 16, and its lemma, the reading *babbled,* ends with a closing square bracket. Then comes the authority for having *babbled,* which is *Theobald,* meaning Theobald's 1733 edition. This abbreviation, like the ones for *F* and *Q,* is explained in a

single list of abbreviations elsewhere in the book. The statement of who we have to thank for this reading ends with an italicized semicolon and is followed by the noteworthy alternative readings separated by italicized semicolons. The first is *Table* from the First Folio, and then comes *talked,* which Theobald mentions as being an annotation he saw in someone else's copy of the play, which gave him the idea for *babbled*. The italicized brackets around this anonymous suggestion indicate that it is simply mentioned in Theobald's edition rather than being the reading used by Theobald. Notice that there is no distinction made in the collation note between the spelling Theobald actually uses, *babled,* and the one appearing in the modern edition, *babbled*. These are the same word, and the editor (who has modernized the spelling of the whole play) treats them as though they were identical.

This system of recording changes by editors is compact and yet allows the reader to work out just how the editor has intervened in the text. A collation note allows one to recover the readings (although not the spellings) in the early edition upon which the modern one is based, as well as the readings in other early editions if they exist and are not obviously mistaken. Since there no possibility of unmediated access to the works of Shakespeare in a pure uncorrupted state (because even the early editions are mediated and corrupt), the most we can ask from editors is careful and responsible intervention supported by scrupulous documentation. None of their procedures and methods of reproduction is perfect, but then there are no easy solutions to the problem of presenting Shakespeare's works to modern readers. Anyone who claims to be able to cut through these Gordian knots with simple, transparent methods for editing 400-year-old dramatic texts has failed to understand the problems.

Bibliography

Blayney, Peter W. M. *The First Folio of Shakespeare*. Washington, D.C.: Folger Library Publications, 1991.

Egan, Gabriel. *Reading Shakespeare's Mind: Twentieth-Century Editorial Theory and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Erne, Lukas. *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Greg, W. W. *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare: A Survey of the Foundations of the Text*. Oxford, U.K.: Clarendon Press, 1942.

———. "The Rationale of Copy-Text." *Studies in Bibliography* 3 (1950–51): 19–36.

Honigmann, E. A. J. *The Stability of Shakespeare's Text*. London: Edward Arnold, 1965.

Jarvis, Simon. *Scholars and Gentlemen: Shakespearian Textual Criticism and Representations of Scholarly Labour, 1725–1765*. Oxford, U.K.: Clarendon, Press, 1995.

Murphy, Andrew. *Shakespeare in Print: A History and Chronology of Shakespeare Publishing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Shakespeare, William. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. Edited by William George Clark, John Glover, and William Aldis Wright. 9 vols. London and Cambridge: Macmillan, 1863–66.

———. *The Works*. 6 vols. Edited by Alexander Pope. London: Jacob Tonson, 1723–25.

———. *The Works*. 6 vols. Edited by Nicholas Rowe. London: Jacob Tonson, 1709.

Vickers, Brian. *Shakespeare, Co-author: A Historical Study of Five Collaborative Plays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Wells, Stanley. *Re-editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader*. Oxford, U.K.: Clarendon Press, 1984.

—Gabriel Egan