Selling Shakespeare tells a new story about Shakespeare’s life and career in print, a story centered on the people who created, bought, and sold books in the early modern period. The interests and investments of publishers and booksellers have defined our ideas of what is “Shakespearean,” and attending to their interests demonstrates how one version of Shakespearean authorship surpassed the rest. In this book Adam Hooks identifies and examines four pivotal episodes in Shakespeare’s life in print: the debut of his narrative poems, the appearance of a series of best-selling plays, the publication of collected editions of his works, and the cataloguing of those works. Hooks also offers a new kind of biographical investigation and historicist criticism, one based not on external life documents, nor on the texts of Shakespeare’s works, but on the books that were printed, published, sold, circulated, collected, and catalogued under his name.

Adam G. Hooks is an assistant professor in the Department of English and the Center for the Book at the University of Iowa, where his research and teaching focus on Shakespeare, early modern literature and culture, and the history of the book. He has several publications on Shakespeare, the book trade, and the First Folio and has received awards from the Shakespeare Association of America, the Bibliographical Society of America, and Rare Book School. He runs the book history website Anchora at www.adamghooks.net.
SELLING SHAKESPEARE

Biography, Bibliography, and the Book Trade

ADAM G. HOOKS

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For J. B. and L. J.

Gemina anchora
From a remote period the indispensable tribute to distinguished merit has found expression in the form of biography. Like most good things, it is often abused.

In modern days literary genius asserts its right to a fresh prerogative in the shape of bibliography, a claim no one will grudge.

William Jaggard, *Shakespeare Bibliography* (1911)
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Abbreviations


