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Peter W. M. Blayney

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The Texts of *King Lear*  
and their Origins

Volume I

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# The Texts of *King Lear* and their Origins

Volume I  
Nicholas Okes  
and the First Quarto

PETER W. M. BLAYNEY

*Assistant Professor of English*  
*University of Chicago*

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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To the shades of  
NICHOLAS OKES and LEWIS THEOBALD  
who made it necessary

To  
PHILIP GASKELL and KATHARINE F. PANTZER  
who made it possible

And to the memory of  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE  
who made it worthwhile

*this book is gratefully dedicated*

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## Preface

The research for this book began in 1972, after I had been awarded a Research Studentship at Trinity College, Cambridge. The investigation was intended to lead to the preparation, after three years' work, of an 80,000-word dissertation on the texts of *King Lear* to be submitted in application for a PhD. After some months, however, it became evident that the printing of the First Quarto presented problems which could not be investigated properly within those limits. In 1974 I had the good fortune to be elected to a four-year Research Fellowship at Trinity, and it thus became possible to concentrate more on the needs of the investigation itself than on the particular requirements of the eventual dissertation. In 1978 the College Council very generously extended the privileges of my Fellowship for an additional year, enabling me to complete the work of which the present book forms the first volume. Only those who have shared the rare privilege of being able to spend so long undertaking full-time research of their own choice and in their own way, and who have, moreover, enjoyed constant and privileged access to a research collection as magnificent as that housed in the Wren Library, can begin to appreciate the incalculable debt of gratitude which I owe to the generosity of the Master and Fellows of Trinity.

It is impossible to count, let alone to name, all those who have helped in the preparation of this volume. In the list of locations at the end of Appendix II I have indicated the libraries which I have visited. Even were I to thank only those whose names I know (thereby excluding many whose anonymous help has been no less deserving of mention), and to limit the list to those whose assistance has been 'above and beyond the call of duty', it would still be necessary to mention at least one member of the staff of most of those libraries. I have, of course, incurred the most numerous debts of gratitude in the libraries in which I have spent most time or in which I have examined the greatest numbers of books. Since it is necessary to be selective I hope that the many whose names I have omitted, and who know as well as I do that they have earned my sincere thanks, will not interpret the absence of individual mention as a sign of either forgetfulness or ingratitude.

My most particular thanks are due to David McKitterick of the Cambridge University Library. He has answered so many difficult questions, has drawn my attention to so many interesting bibliographical phenomena, and has volunteered so much useful information of all kinds, that I am tempted to describe him as my most frequently-consulted work of reference. Julian Roberts twice wrote to

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inform me that the British Library had acquired books which ‘might be of interest’ (the unique copy of *Greenwood* in Appendix II and the 1618 proofsheets described in Chapter 7), and has helped in other ways both before and after his move from the British Library to Bodley. Paul Morgan of the Bodleian Library allowed me to consult his notes of proofsheets and fragments of printers’ copy preserved in Oxford colleges, and later sent me more detailed information concerning a number of single-sided proofsheets of the late 1630s. I have received a great deal of valuable assistance from Trevor Kaye in the Wren Library; from J. C. T. Oates and Brian Jenkins at Cambridge University Library; from Ian Willison (British Library), Christina Mackwell (Lambeth Palace), Mr N. Buck (St John’s College, Cambridge), and the late A. N. L. Munby (King’s College). When visiting several libraries in the United States I had to make arrangements to examine a large number of books in a very limited time. For helping to make those brief visits so fruitful, and for answering subsequent requests for additional information, I should like to express my particular thanks to Virginia Renner at the Huntington Library; to John F. Andrews, Karen Grina, and Laetitia Yeandle at the Folger Shakespeare Library; and to Tim Crist, Stephen Parks and the late James M. Osborn at the Beinecke Library, Yale University. For answers to queries concerning books and manuscripts in libraries which I have been unable to visit, I am grateful to I. F. Grigorieva of the M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library, Leningrad; to M. Y. Ashcroft, M.A., County Archivist of North Yorkshire; to Miss M. Pollard at Trinity College, Dublin; and to David Carnegie, A. Chinnery-Haldane, Miss Robin Myers, D. B. Prentice, Gordon Willis, Margaret A. Witten-Hannah, and Stephenie Yearwood. My thanks are also due to a number of booksellers – most particularly to the entire staff of Deighton Bell (Cambridge) Ltd and to Paul Grinke of the Waveney Bookshop, Eye, Suffolk – for allowing me to use their stockrooms as research libraries.

A number of colleagues and friends have generously communicated findings from their own research, and others have allowed me to consult unpublished work. For their assistance in this respect I should like to thank David Carnegie, John Feather, Trevor Howard-Hill, D. F. McKenzie, David McKitterick, Keith Maslen, Ian Masters, John Sibbald, Gary Taylor, and Margaret A. Witten-Hannah. Separate acknowledgement of unpublished material more directly concerned with the text of *Lear* itself will be made in Volume II.

This book has not been an easy one to prepare for the press, and it has helped considerably to have been able to anticipate problems of production and design by discussing them with those at the Cambridge University Press, both before and during the preparation of the final typescript. In particular, I owe much to the expert advice of Paul Chipchase and the late Alan Spilman. As regards the text itself, an early typescript of much of the material contained in this volume was read by Fredson Bowers, Philip Gaskell, and D. F. McKenzie. Their valuable criticisms and encouragement have played a great part in shaping the text as it now stands. Some of the chapters have been read in their near-final form by

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D. F. McKenzie, most of them by David McKitterick, and all of them by Philip Gaskell. Without their suggestions for correction and improvement, both minor and major, this book would be considerably more imperfect than it must anyway inevitably be. That is not to say, however, that each or any of them shares all the views that are here put forward, and I have not always accepted their advice in every particular. For the mistaken opinions, factual errors, and faults of all kinds which I have no doubt remain despite their efforts and mine, I am alone responsible.

During the past four years my wife Eleanor has not only read every word I have written but has had to listen to all those which I have refrained from writing. She has helped to examine books, to collate the texts of Sherley's *Relation*, and to compile a card-file of all the spellings in *Lear*. For these and for numerous other tasks: for coping so often with the 1970s while I was away in the 1600s; for finding ways of extracting me from my study when necessary without actually setting fire to it; and for understanding without overt objection that dedication and obsession are the same side of the same coin, I owe her more than I can say.

Appendix II draws heavily on information from the revised *STC*, of which only one volume has yet been published, and for this information I am deeply indebted to Katharine F. Pantzer. Without Appendix II, Chapter 3 could not have been written. Without Chapter 3 it would have been impossible to draw some important conclusions about *Lear* as a book, and those conclusions prove to be of surprising importance to an evaluation of the Quarto as a text. For six years Miss Pantzer has patiently and cheerfully endured my frequent requests for (and has often volunteered) the latest available news about Okes and his books, and has spent far more of her already fully-occupied time in answering my queries than I could reasonably have expected. Mere acknowledgement cannot do justice to her generous and willing assistance, or to the example which her scrupulous standards of scholarship have constantly set me. I hope that she will not mind sharing a dedication with (amongst rather better company) the disreputable printer about whose work she has helped me learn so much.

The dedication also records my other major debt, which is to Philip Gaskell. As Trinity Librarian he has drawn my attention to numerous bibliographical rarities and valuable pieces of out-of-the-way information, and as my research supervisor he proved an unfailing source of advice and encouragement. I have already mentioned the valuable and perceptive comments which he made after reading this book in its successive stages of development, and I have often had cause to be grateful for his encyclopædic knowledge of the art of printing. A dedication is but small return for what I owe to Dr Gaskell and Miss Pantzer, mentors and friends.

*Trinity College, Cambridge*

1972-9

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Victoria and Albert Museum: Appendix IIIA Woodcut 4



## Conventions and Abbreviations

All passages which are quoted from early printed books for their typographical form (as in discussions of press-variants and misprints) follow the original typography as closely as possible. Where exact fidelity is required, the passages have been reproduced. All passages quoted for their substantive content follow the originals in most typographical details including the use of long ‘f’, with the following exceptions.

Prose lineation has not been followed, and line-end hyphens which appear to serve no purpose other than word-division have been silently omitted. Swash capitals have been ignored, spacing has been normalized, and single wrong-fount types have been silently corrected. Black-letter quotations are printed in roman, with italic for emphasis replacing the original roman. Pointed brackets enclosing a word or phrase in a quotation from a printed source indicate an emendation, and the original reading is given in square brackets to the right of the quotation. Empty pointed brackets indicate lacunæ in unique and damaged originals.

All printed passages *cited* at second hand (such as quotations from Jonson which are footnoted as from the edition by Herford and Simpson, and the passages re-quoted from Simpson’s *Proof Reading* in Chapter 6), except quotations within quotations, have been transcribed from the original sources. The one exception to this rule is Moxon’s *Mechanick Exercises*, which has been quoted without alteration from the magisterial edition by Davis and Carter.

Passages quoted from manuscripts have been more extensively normalized. This is a book about printed books, and each retention of long ‘f’ records a compositor’s choice between two pieces of metal. Print can never adequately record a scribe’s choice between, for example, four different styles of minuscule ‘a’, or between a variety of initial or terminal flourishes on one or other of his versions of ‘w’. I have therefore considered the purpose of transcription to be (in this book at least) the recording of letters rather than forms, and have ignored long ‘f’.

In Chapter 8 and Appendix 1 manuscript passages have been reproduced as accurately as type will reasonably permit. Elsewhere, since the manuscripts are quoted for what may be called their ‘paraphrasable content’, I have attempted to *communicate* (rather than to reproduce) that content. Abbreviations and contractions which are unlikely to impede a fluent reading and which might have been retained by a contemporary printer (&, Mr, y<sup>e</sup>, frō) have been retained. All others

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(except in Latin words) have been expanded, with the supplied letters printed in italic. Interlineations have been silently inserted at the indicated points, line-division has been ignored, and flourishes with no apparent meaning (such as those which fill space at the ends of lines) have been omitted. Pointed brackets indicate lacunæ, and letters inside them have either been inferred from the remaining traces or (where indicated by a footnote) supplied from another manuscript. Deletions are indicated by deletion.

Stationers' Company records have all been transcribed from microfilm of the originals, but have been cited as from standard published transcripts or editions where such exist. State Papers transcribed from the originals are cited as from *CSPD*, but with the manuscript source identified in parentheses. Manuscript quotations cited as from any other published source have been printed from that source and not from the originals.

The usual conventions are adopted in collational formulæ and bibliographical references with a few minor exceptions. Two-letter signatures are not contracted, since 'Aa' is no more cumbersome than '2A'. Inferred alphabetic signatures are printed in italic, but inferred symbols (such as '¶ ¶') are given in square brackets. Conjugacy is indicated by a colon, as in 'K2<sup>v</sup>:5<sup>r</sup>'. Since there seems to be no logical reason for omitting it, and since its omission can and does cause ambiguity, superior 'r' for 'recto' has been used throughout. The use of (i) or (o) *before* a signature indicates the inner or outer *sheet* of a quarto quire in eights. 'A(o)' means, as usual, the outer forme of sheet A, while '(i)A(o)' means the outer forme of the inner sheet of quire A<sup>8</sup> – pages A3<sup>r</sup>, 4<sup>v</sup>:5<sup>r</sup>, 6<sup>v</sup>.

With the exception of those from *Lear* itself, quotations from Shakespeare are taken from what is in each case generally accepted as the most authoritative text. Line-references are to the Riverside edition, to which Marvin Spevack's *The Harvard Concordance to Shakespeare* (1973) is keyed. Reference to any Shakespearean reading recorded as a bibliographical phenomenon (such as a Folio press-variant), and to all readings from *Lear*, is by signature and line of type.

Each book listed in Appendix II has been given a checklist number and a short-title, the latter usually being either the author's surname (*Bucanus*, *Sparke* 2) or a single prominent word from the title (*Cobler*, *Sum*). Those short-titles are used for all references in the text. Cross-indexes of checklist numbers, short-titles, and *STC* numbers are given at the beginning of Appendix II.

Works cited only once are usually described in relatively full form in the footnotes, while those cited more than once are footnoted by the author's surname and an abbreviated title. A few works have been given abbreviated titles when cited only once *within* a footnote, in order to avoid too lengthy a parenthesis in mid-sentence. On a few occasions a surname has been omitted when two or more works by the

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same author have been repeatedly cited in a sequence which prevents the use of 'ibid.' All works cited in abbreviated form are more fully described in the Bibliography, except those standard works listed below. In Appendixes II and III I have temporarily adopted a series of abbreviated references even shorter than those used in footnotes which cite the same works. A list of each group of special abbreviations is given in the Appendix concerned, and those works are also listed in the Bibliography.

The following standard abbreviations have been used:

- Arber Edward Arber (editor), *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London: 1554-1640 A.D.*, 5 vols., London and Birmingham, 1875-94
- BEPD W. W. Greg, *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration*, 4 vols., London, 1939-59
- Briquet C. M. Briquet, *Les Filigranes*, Paris, 1907. Reprinted with supplementary material edited by Allan Stevenson, 4 vols., Amsterdam, 1968
- CSPD *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series*
- CUP Cambridge University Press
- Guildhall Guildhall Library, London
- Heawood Edward Heawood, *Watermarks, Mainly of the 17th and 18th Centuries*, Monumentæ Chartæ Papyraceæ Historiam Illustrantia, 1, Hilversum, 1950. Reprinted 1969
- HMC Historical Manuscripts Commission
- OED *Oxford English Dictionary*
- PBSA *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*
- PRO Public Record Office
- SB *Studies in Bibliography*
- STC A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave, *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640*, London, 1926. Second edition, revised by W. A. Jackson, F. S. Ferguson, and Katharine F. Pantzer, Volume 2 (I-Z), London, 1976
- TCC Trinity College, Cambridge
- ULC University Library, Cambridge
- Wing Donald Wing, *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America, and of English Books Printed in Other Countries, 1641-1700*, 3 vols., New York, 1945-51. Second edition, revised and enlarged, Volume 1 (A-England), New York, 1972

Abbreviated reference to works of (or attributed to) Shakespeare is made as follows:

*Ado* *Much Ado About Nothing*

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<i>Ham.</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>
1H4	<i>The First Part of King Henry the Fourth</i>
2H4	<i>The Second Part of King Henry the Fourth</i>
H5	<i>King Henry the Fifth</i>
2H6	<i>The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth</i>
3H6	<i>The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth</i>
LLL	<i>Love's Labours Lost</i>
<i>Lear</i>	<i>King Lear</i>
<i>Luc.</i>	<i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>
MM	<i>Measure for Measure</i>
MND	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>
MV	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>
<i>Per.</i>	<i>Pericles</i>
PbT	<i>The Phoenix and Turtle</i>
PP	<i>The Passionate Pilgrim</i>
R2	<i>King Richard the Second</i>
R3	<i>King Richard the Third</i>
<i>Rom.</i>	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
<i>Son.</i>	<i>The Sonnets</i>
<i>Tit.</i>	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>
<i>Tro.</i>	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>
<i>Ven.</i>	<i>Venus and Adonis</i>
<i>Wiv.</i>	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>

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**ERRATA.** Certain readings should have been altered  
by hand at the final stage of typesetting:

- Page 20 line 32: *for* Indent ' *read* Indent<sup>9</sup>'  
 Page 43 line 26: *for* ( $\pi A^4$  <sup>2</sup>) *read* ( $\pi A^4$  ¶<sup>2</sup>)  
 Page 49 note 1 line 5: *for* four *read* five  
 Page 83 line 13: *for* knight *read* ~~k~~night  
 Page 221 line 18: *for* I left *read* I ~~l~~eft  
 Page 223 line 3 of list: *for* cal ing *read* cal'ing  
 Page 229 line 10: *for* l berty *read* l'berty  
 Page 253 note 2 line 5: *for* ' ' *read* '¶'  
 Page 282 line 41: *for* gen all ship *read* gen<sup>9</sup> all ship  
 Page 297 line 2: *for* my best *read* my ~~best~~  
 Page 306 line 24: *for* they h *read* they ~~h~~  
 Page 307 line 4: *for* life wherein *read* life ~~wherein~~  
 Page 307 line 10: *for* ther said *read* ~~ther~~ said  
 Page 307 line 11: *for* Printer *read* ~~Printer~~  
 Page 308 line 23: *for* such all *read* ~~such~~ all  
 Page 310 line 14: *for* Course such *read* Course ~~such~~  
 Page 310 line 15: *for* like dismissed *read* ~~like~~ dismissed  
 Page 310 line 19: *for* dto *read* ~~d~~to

Marginal corrections in Fig. 21 (*d* and *f*)  
referred to on p. 229, and two small marks  
in Fig. 34*a* mentioned in the text and fn. 1  
on p. 257, have failed to reproduce.