

THE DRAMATIC WORKS OF THOMAS DEKKER



THE DRAMATIC WORKS OF THOMAS DEKKER

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VOLUME I

SIR THOMAS MORE: DEKKER'S ADDITION
THE SHOEMAKERS' HOLIDAY
OLD FORTUNATUS
PATIENT GRISSIL
SATIROMASTIX
SIR THOMAS WYATT



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FOREWORD

THESE volumes offer the text and its apparatus for Thomas Dekker's dramatic works. The plays are arranged in the presumed order of composition as nearly as it can be determined. The problem of Dekker's canon is not an easy one, for at some time or another many anonymous Elizabethan plays have been attributed to him in whole or in part, and his collaboration has been conjectured in various plays ordinarily assigned to other authors. However, the listing made by E. K. Chambers (*Elizabethan Stage*, III, 289–305) has stood the test of time remarkably well. His canon has been adopted, therefore. In the final volume, under doubtful works, I propose to add several plays where sufficient internal or external evidence exists seemingly to justify inclusion in the present edition.

There remains the pleasant duty of acknowledging the numerous forms of assistance which it has been my good fortune to receive over the many years of interrupted work on this edition. Early in the investigation the Princeton University Library generously assisted in the purchase of microfilm and of positive prints. Later the expenses were borne by the Research Committee of the University of Virginia, the Research Council of the Richmond Area University Center, and the Cambridge University Press. The helpful suggestions I have received from my friends are too numerous to specify, but I wish to acknowledge particularly the advice of Mr John Crow of King's College, London, and for assistance with the problems raised by the foreign-language text the kindness of Miss Florence Waterman of Windsor School (retired), Professor Frederick Wood and Professor Linwood Lehman of the University of Virginia, Professor E. M. Wilson and Mr R. O. Jones of King's College, London, and Mr T. J. Evans.

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FOREWORD

My especial thanks go to the compositors and proof-readers of the University Press for work of superlative fidelity to copy. Mistakes in judgement in this edition will obviously be my own; but I cannot take a leaf from Elizabethan writers and conveniently blame all other errors on the printer. These will be my own, too.

F.B.

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

June, 1952



THE TEXT OF THIS EDITION

THIS edition presents a critical, old-spelling text of the plays of Thomas Dekker. Since the method of a critical edition differs from that adopted by the editor of a reprint, whether in modified type-facsimile or in diplomatic form, the principles on which this present text has been constructed require brief explanation.

1. THE COPY-TEXT AND ITS TREATMENT

In all cases the first editions—the only ones set from manuscript—provide my copy-text. Later editions have no authority except for two plays, The Magnificent Entertainment and The Honest Whore, part one, which show revisions and corrections deriving from the author. For these two plays I use the methods of recent textual theorists. I retain the 'accidentals'—the general texture of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization—of the first edition, the only one which has a direct relationship to the 'accidentals' in the manuscript that served as printer's copy. Into this texture I introduce those revisions (chiefly 'substantive') for which, in my opinion, neither the compositor nor the printing-house editor but the author was responsible. For these two plays the critical text thus comes as nearly as possible to reproducing the copy of the first edition marked by the author for the printer of the second edition.

In connexion with those few plays which ran into more than one edition, all seventeenth-century editions have been collated, but only their substantive and semi-substantive variants have been recorded. Although modern editions have also been collated, their readings have, ordinarily, been listed only when I acknowledge in footnotes the source of an emendation accepted into the text, or when, in the explanatory textual notes, I discuss the acceptance of an emendation or the rejection of one which has some reason to

¹ Sir Walter Greg, 'The Rationale of Copy-Text', Studies in Bibliography, III (1950), 19–36, which refines upon the proposals of R. B. McKerrow in Prolegomena for the Oxford Shakespeare (1939); see also my 'Current Theories of Copy-Text, with an Illustration from Dryden', Modern Philology, XLVIII (1950), 12–20.



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deserve consideration. The slovenly Pearson reprint can scarcely qualify as an edited text, and in all collations and notes it has been consistently ignored.¹

Collation of the early editions of Dekker's plays has been undertaken on two levels. For the edition chosen as copy-text, and for any later authoritative, or 'substantive', edition, I have compared multiple copies with a control text, letter by letter and point by point. I have tried to collate all copies in the great libraries of Great Britain and the United States as listed in Greg and the Bishop supplement to the Short-Title Catalogue in America with a view to ascertaining the variants in a substantial number of the recorded extant copies. For unauthoritative, or 'derived', editions, I have selected only one or two copies each in order to construct and check the historical collation of variants. As a result, although I have made every effort to identify press-variants and resolve doubtful readings in authoritative editions, I have not worried about the possible variants in simple reprints: if they exist they can have no primary textual significance, and their evidence has not proved necessary to assist in establishing the genetic relationship of these late editions.

Every variant resulting from proof-correction has been considered on its own merits; hence there has been no automatic and uncritical incorporation in my edited text either of all the readings in corrected formes or all in uncorrected formes. The press-variants themselves indicate that Dekker, almost certainly, except in a few doubtful cases, saw none of these plays through the press. The normal, routine corrections of the printing-house reader, therefore, lack authority unless there is some reason to conjecture that he

^{&#}x27;Since few of Dekker's plays have been edited with present-day disciplines, there seems no point in wasting paper and ink on recording in the collation-lists the rejected minor variants produced by the different editorial methods and modernized texts, or in recording the slips and modernizations of those who have attempted texts somewhat closer to the originals. The major contributions of editors have not, however, been neglected. In this matter of editorial apparatus I agree with the writer of Spectator no. 470: 'Indeed, when a different Reading gives us a different Sense, or a new Elegance in an Author, the Editor does very well in taking Notice of it; but when he only entertains us with the several ways of Spelling the same Word, and gathers together the various Blunders and Mistakes of twenty or thirty different Transcribers, they only take up the Time of the learned Reader, and puzzle the Minds of the Ignorant.'



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consulted the manuscript on specific occasions. Consequently, as a general procedure I have felt free to prefer the original, uncorrected readings when there was little to choose between variants or when the original setting seemed to reproduce distinctive characteristics of Dekker's 'accidentals', which one should wish to preserve. The readings of the corrected formes have been chosen, of course, when they alter evident misprints or represent necessary repairs of compositorial or manuscript lapses; but I have not felt compelled to accept the usual printing-house sophistication of text and its presentation when the opportunity was given to identify such sophistication through press-variants.

I have tried to avoid finicky emendation, but when, in my opinion, the copy-text was corrupt, I have not hesitated to emend, with due regard to bibliographical and palaeographical probabilities. Substantive alterations incorporated in the copy-text are either revisions and corrections from early printed texts, or independent editorial emendations. I have given the facts concerning them in the footnotes: no substantive alteration has been made silently.

The old-spelling 'accidentals' are those of the copy-text. For each play a special list is provided detailing the facts of editorial alteration except for the few classes of silent alterations specified below. However, the copy-text for any individual play has been followed with considerable fidelity. This practice necessarily involves the reproduction of various internal inconsistencies as well as of inconsistencies between the several plays. I have accepted the principle of such irregularity in order to avoid excessive normalization of texts printed at widely separated dates and from manuscripts of diverse origin.

The punctuation has been altered as little as possible. With due regard for Elizabethan practice, I have straightened out the obvious compositorial errors of anticipation, reversal, and oversight; but in general I have interfered only when I thought that a modern reader accustomed to seventeenth-century usage would be more than momentarily misled, or when the pointing, by its own standards in

¹ Abnormal internal inconsistency may result from the employment of more than one compositor within an edition, and for some plays the variable characteristics of a manuscript of a collaborated play are very likely a contributing factor.



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the copy-text in question, seemed indubitably wrong. One cannot, of course, be wholly successful in maintaining consistent standards in such a process; however, I have tried to be neither obvious nor intrusive. In especial, exclamation and query marks have been inserted only when their omission might cause serious misunderstanding. The Elizabethan use of queries for exclamatory sentences has not been tampered with: the reader should be able easily to understand the variable early practice. When the originals have used commas which, from either the rhetorical or the syntactical point of view, might well be altered to heavier marks, I have let them stand if the modification and sense would be sufficiently clear to a reader familiar with Elizabethan usage.

Eccentricities of spelling have ordinarily been retained. I have not changed the common 'to' and the rarer 'the' to the modern 'too' and 'thee'. If there seems to be any difficulty as to which modern word is meant in an ambiguous Elizabethan spelling, a footnote provides the modern sense.

I have attempted to correct positive mislineation in the text, and these corrections are always recorded. When, on the other hand, there is doubt whether a prose-speaking character is actually completing lines left short by a verse-speaking character, and, especially, when regularization would entail the relineation of an otherwise satisfactory verse passage, I have declined to enforce a metrical regularity not clearly intended by the author.

2. SILENT ALTERATIONS

A critical edition is neither a diplomatic nor a facsimile reprint addressed principally to those who need to make a close study of the most minute formal characteristics of a text, and hence some degree of silent alteration is advisable. A distinction is here made between matters of textual concern, where alterations are usually recorded, and matters purely typographical or concerned with the paraphernalia (the formal presentation of the text such as speech-headings and stage-directions) in which silent alterations may be made.

Roman type is used for all parts of the text proper, with no further regard to whether the original was set in roman, italic, or black letter



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than a general statement in the introduction to a black-letter text. Italic words may represent either roman or italic setting inside black letter; no other distinction is attempted. The old long f is modernized throughout except in the listing of press-variants.

No attempt is made to reproduce display capitals, ornamental initials, factorums, or ornaments, or to note the fact of their existence; their disappearance is accompanied by the silent reduction to lower-case of the capital which customarily follows display or ornamental letters. Lower-case letters at the start of a sentence following a full stop, or heading a line of verse or the name of a person or place, are silently capitalized. The spacing of lines, sections, words, and elisions is consistently normalized. The usual practice in carefully printed dramatic texts of the time has been followed, silently, in certain formal matters such as the italicizing of names and places.2 On the other hand, copy-text inconsistency has been followed in the italicizing or not italicizing of words which at the time were felt to have a technical or foreign connotation. Dramatis personae lists are made uniform in typography and pointing. All wrong-fount type is corrected. The fount of type chosen for punctuation, roman or italic, is normalized without relation to the variable original. Faulty punctuation at the end of a complete speech is silently emended.3

In order to simplify numerical reference to verse-lines I adopt the convention, traditional for dramatic texts since Capell, of indenting a part-line which continues or completes a full line of verse. I follow my copy-text in the indenting of prose lines which begin a change of address, but I do not emend when no such indentation is present in the original.

¹ An exception, often only apparent, is the retention of a lower-case letter, beginning a clause after a query or exclamation mark.

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³ In accordance with early custom, only the names for countries and cities are silently italicized as well as church names. The names of areas within a city or town are printed in roman. Whenever italic names have been changed to roman, the fact is noted in the list of alterations to the accidentals.

³ By 'faulty punctuation', I here mean only the omission of a full point, or the substitution therefor of a comma, semicolon, or colon, when a suspension is clearly not intended. When the incompleteness of a speech is clearly intended or required, I invariably insert a long dash and record in the appendix list of 'accidental' alterations the pointing of the copy-text.



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The paraphernalia, or formal presentation of a text, may consist of the act- and scene-headings, the stage-directions, and the speech-headings. Missing act- or scene-headings are supplied in square brackets, as are missing necessary words in stage-directions. The few complete directions which I have felt were necessary to clarify the action, and have thus inserted without authority of my copytext, are also bracketed. Only simple additions, however, are treated in this manner: when, instead, I substitute something for an original reading, or excise any part of the original, the facts are recorded in a footnote. The stage-directions are silently made consistent in typography, names being set in roman but the rest of the direction in italic. Final punctuation is silently supplied if wanting or if it is other than a full stop. In general the entrances of all but attendant characters are silently centred, and 'exits', unless they are extensively described, are set in the right-hand margins.

Abbreviated names and titles are expanded without comment. Since the full stop or colon after an abbreviation in the copy-text commonly takes the place of other necessary punctuation, such as commas, the required pointing is silently added when it is consequent upon the expansion and needs no special comment for sense. Other forms of abbreviation, such as the *tilde* for a nasal, or the use of 'y' for 'your', 'y' for 'the', and so on, are silently expanded.

Speech-headings have been made consistent in form and typography throughout each play. Footnotes show emendations to the assignment of speeches or to different names or words used for identification in the copy-text, as when the copy-text is irregular or when a person is in disguise;³ but faulty punctuation, variable

- ¹ Undivided plays are separated into acts and scenes according to conventional principles. If a play, or any part of it, is divided in the copy-text, I do not ordinarily alter the wording of the headings even though they differ from the conventional form adopted when editorially supplied. Any alteration of the copy-text other than typographical for these headings is recorded.
- ² I have been very sparing in the addition of stage-directions, for the normal action is usually apparent from the text in a sufficiently clear manner. Some few indications of address have been inserted when the context did not immediately clarify any possible ambiguity. Indications of place and of setting have not been foisted on the old texts.
- ³ In my text a disguised character retains his true name in the speech-headings without regard for the variable practice of the copy-text. A footnote in each scene on the first speech-heading for such a character details the facts.



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spelling, and purely typographical misprints are not recorded in the process of normalization.

Line-numbers for the text, but not for the act- and scene-headings or the stage-directions, have been added, the scene being taken as the unit.

3. APPARATUS

The textual apparatus for each play consists of (1) a brief textual introduction, (2) footnotes to the text, (3) explanatory notes on the more important emendations or examples of refusals to emend, (4) details of the press-variant formes in authoritative editions, (5) a list of the readings in the accidentals altered from the copy-text except for those described above as silently normalized, (6) an historical collation of the substantive and semi-substantive variants in editions other than the copy-text before 1700.

The general intent of the textual introduction is to make available in condensed form the pertinent information on the sources for the text of the present edition, their authority and relationship, and the method by which the critical text has been derived from them.

The essential feature of the textual footnotes is that they have been held to a minimum in order to avoid constantly distracting the reader by inviting his attention to material not directly concerned with editorial treatment of the wording, or substantives, of the copytext. Thus I have maintained a strict division between the function of the footnotes and the function of the list of altered 'accidentals' and, on occasion, the historical collation provided in the appendix. The footnotes have only one purpose: to list all substantive departures in the present edition from that early edition chosen as copytext. These notes bear on the editorial treatment of the copy-text only in respect of substantive emendation. They are not designed to offer an historical account of variants in early or late editions, when

² I have adopted a pragmatic rather than a linguistic definition of what constitutes a 'substantive'; thus some semi-substantives are footnoted, as when an editorial change in the punctuation so vitally affects the sense or modification as to warrant calling the reader's attention to the alteration instead of requiring him to sift through the list of altered accidentals to detect editorial intervention in a matter which may be as important as the emendation of substantives.



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the present text has not been altered in favour of such variants. Finally, they are not intended to inform him of every minor alteration not affecting meaning which I have made in the 'accidentals'. This information is available in a separate list.

The basic footnote provides a lemma drawn from the precise form of the emended reading in the text. If no siglum is present following the square bracket, the emendation is my own. Otherwise I print the siglum of the earliest immediate source from which the alteration was drawn. The rejected reading of the copy-text concludes the note. Thus if the faulty reading 'wist' in the only early quarto were editorially altered to 'wit' for the first time in the present edition, the footnote would read simply

but if the fourth of seven editions had been the first to make the required change, the footnote would read

Since the footnote is designed only to identify the earliest source of a substantive emendation, the readings of editions later than the earliest source may be ascertained in the historical collation. If press-variants in corrected (c) and uncorrected (u) formes are rejected in an emendation, the footnote might read

An asterisk prefixed to a footnote line-number indicates that the reading is discussed in the appendix, whether or not the occasion is an actual emendation of the copy-text.¹

Whatever the choice made in the text from among known pressvariants, the full facts of press-correction, arranged by formes, are listed separately in the appendix. Ordinarily I footnote the facts concerning my choice of substantive press-variants; for the reader's

*98 Cornwall] stet QI

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¹ When I have found cause to retain the copy-text reading although plausible emendation requiring discussion has been offered, I may call the attention of the reader to the fact that the crux is discussed in an explanatory note. Such a footnote would read



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convenience, moreover, I note in the list of altered accidentals all those accidental readings from corrected formes which I have rejected in my text.

The explanatory notes in these volumes are not intended as elucidations of the text but only as discussions of specific emendation, or of refusal to emend.

The listing of my alterations of accidentals in the copy-text is removed to a separate appendix. I have separated this list from the footnotes to avoid obscuring in the footnotes the main matter of importance, which is the recording of substantive departure from the copy-text. Since basic meaning is seldom affected by my ordinary accidental alterations, only a close student of the text is concerned with them and he can reconstruct the copy-text as necessary from the separate list. As I have already stated, when an alteration in the accidentals of the copy-text achieves a semi-substantive basis as really affecting meaning, I have footnoted it among the substantives.

The historical collation of early editions of a play is keyed to the present edited text and not to the precise form or readings of the copy-text. This collation contains, therefore, all rejected copy-text substantive readings as listed in the footnotes, all rejected substantive variants in other editions before 1700 (but not in modern texts), and also from these editions an historical listing of selected variants which may be thought of as in some sense semi-substantive. In addition to the class listed in the footnotes, these are specifically confined to variations in emphasis as indicated by the use of query and exclamation marks, and such rare variation in the accidentals as directly affects meaning in a substantive manner. I have also added variants in elision, but only in verse passages since the interest of these would be purely metrical.

The shorthand symbols advocated by R. B. McKerrow, such as the wavy dash, the plus sign, and the inferior caret, are freely employed. The wavy dash ~ in the listing of punctuation variants takes the place of the repeated word associated with the pointing. The plus sign indicates the concurrence in the readings in question of all normally recorded editions later than that noted by the siglum.

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See Prolegomena for the Oxford Shakespeare (1939), especially pp. 73-89.



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A combination plus and minus sign shows general concurrence, though not exact, and is therefore useful for such a collation as

Here Q2 substitutes a colon for the query of Q1, and is followed by Q3 to Q6 to the extent that the Q1 query does not appear. This is the central fact worth recording. For the purposes of my historical collation it is of no significance that the derived Q3 to Q6 editions may perhaps in turn substitute a semicolon, comma, or full stop for the Q2 colon.¹

The inferior caret calls attention to the absence of pointing either in the copy-text or in the early editions being collated:

bright
$$_{\Lambda}$$
] \sim ? Q₂
bright?] \sim $_{\Lambda}$ Q₂; \sim ! Q₃-6

In general, the minutiae of the apparatus follow McKerrow's recommendations and therefore require no detailed explanation. Any departures from his procedures are slight and should not prove ambiguous.

4. FOREIGN LANGUAGES

In general I attempt to emend only what seem to be compositorial errors, and I have not proposed to correct or to modernize the very strange forms, doubtless manuscript, which foreign words may take. However, the Latin has been put right by Renaissance standards. The Welsh in *Patient Grissil* I have treated more freely than foreign language elsewhere. In *Grissil*, I have been informed, there is strong evidence that someone dictated to the author the Welsh words as a translation of his English dialogue; hence there has seemed some reason to repair the obvious errors of mishearing even though the printed corruption may well have reproduced the manuscript.

F.B.

¹ If of six collated editions the last two, Q5 and Q6, restored the query, the listing would read