

SHAKESPEARE'S 'LADY EDITORS'

The basic history of the Shakespearean editorial tradition is familiar and well-established. For nearly three centuries, men – most of them white and financially privileged – ensconced themselves in private and hard-to-access libraries, hammering out 'their' versions of Shakespeare's text. They produced enormous, learned tomes, monuments to their author's greatness and their own reputations.

What if this is not the whole story?

A bold, revisionist, and alternative version of Shakespearean editorial history, this book recovers the lives and labours of almost seventy women editors. It challenges the received wisdom that, when it came to Shakespeare, the editorial profession was entirely male-dominated until the late twentieth century. In doing so, it demonstrates that taking these women's work seriously can transform our understanding of the history of editing, of the nature of editing as an enterprise, and of how we read Shakespeare in history.

MOLLY G. YARN completed her PhD at the University of Cambridge in 2019. She is a co-editor of the Royal Shakespeare Company's revised edition of Shakespeare's *Complete Works*, as well as an active theatre practitioner.

SHAKESPEARE'S
'LADY EDITORS'

A New History of the Shakespearean Text

MOLLY G. YARN



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*For Lisa and Douglas Yarn,
insightful critics and editors,
and even better parents.*

No story is the same to us after a lapse of time – or, rather we who
read it are no longer the same interpreters.
–George Eliot

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A Note on Citations

In order to emphasise the editor's role as author of the paratextual materials and mediator of the text, all editions are cited in a format that names both William Shakespeare and the editor as authors.

Abbreviations

- Arden1 Arden Shakespeare, First Series (1899–1924)
 Arden2 Arden Shakespeare, Second Series (1951–1982)
 Arden3 Arden Shakespeare, Third Series (1995–2020)
 BL British Library
 CUL Cambridge University Library
 DNB *Dictionary of National Biography* (1885–1920)
 EETS Early English Text Society
 NSS New Shakespeare Society
 ODNB *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (since 2004).
 A distinction is drawn between the old *DNB* and the modern
ODNB because although the original process of producing the
Dictionary of National Biography and its initial supplements is
 discussed within the text, all references come from the revised
 version and its updates, from 2004 onwards.
- OED *Oxford English Dictionary*