

**ENGLISH
REPRINTS. POEMS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649675166

English Reprints. Poems by Thomas Watson & Edward Arber

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THOMAS WATSON & EDWARD ARBER

**ENGLISH
REPRINTS. POEMS**

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THOMAS WATSON.

POEMS.

VIZ. :—

*The Ἐκατομπεαία or Passionate Centurie
of Love.*
[1582.]

Melibœus, sive Ecloga Inobitum, &c.
1590.

*An Eglogue upon the death of Right
Honorable Sir Francis Walsingham.*
1590.

The Teares of Fancy or Love disdained.
Posthumously published in 1593.
From the unique copy in the collection of S. Christie-Miller, Esq.

CAREFULLY EDITED BY

EDWARD ARBER,

Associate, King's College, London, F.R.G.S., &c.

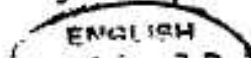


5 QUEEN SQUARE, BLOOMSBURY, W.C.

Ent. Stat. Hall.]

15 Mar. 1870.

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SOME ACCOUNT of the WRITINGS of
THOMAS WATSON.

LIKE a diver returning from the deep, we here gladly present four lost Pearls of English Literature. The oblivion which has hitherto covered the name and works of Thomas Watson has been wholly unmerited. Adequately acknowledged in his own time, he gradually became lost amidst the host of competitors for the Attention of the Nation: until he himself has become unknown even to writers of Guides or Handbooks to English Literature; and his works have become among the scarcest of the scarce in our language. Not but what there have been a succession of Scholar-Critics from Steevens to Collier, who have understood and quoted him; and have commenced a reaction in his favour. Nevertheless, it has come to pass, that Watson—singular and sweet Poet though he was—the author too of ten separately printed works, besides others which never came to the press: that this remarkable Poet has disappeared from the ordinary Literary History of England.

Among assignable reasons for this: is the timidity or incapacity of most men for original discrimination and appreciation; and for the bold avowal of an unaccredited Poet. This liability not to understand, to inflict unintentionally the injury of neglect, is not uncommon. A teacher or interpreter seems ever to attend on the works of the highest literary creators; not so much from flaws in genius and creative power; as from the multiplicity of books, or from our want of judgment, or from our hesitation to venture an adequate recognition in the teeth of ignorance. It needed Addison to point out the superlative majesty of *Paradise Lost*; and Pope had to teach the English Nation the greatness of Shakespeare. Comparing greater with smaller things; there is need for some one to call attention to Watson. Let us join together in ascertaining his true position in the Story of English Mind. Let us restore—after nearly three centuries of obliteration—his name, in golden letters, to the great Bead-Roll of the acknowledged Poets of Great Britain.

The forgetfulness of Watson is strikingly shown by the way in which his printed works have perished. No Public Library can pretend to a complete set of them. To reproduce—as far as they can now be reproduced—the four works here reprinted; recourse has been obligatory to two of the most celebrated private collections of English works in this country, those at Britwell and Stand Rectory; while I have been quite unable to meet with the Author's *Amyntas*, his translation of Coluthus, or his *Compendium Memoriae localis*.

Further, in the *Ἐκλογαῖα* as will be seen below, there are references to works by Watson, which apparently never came to the press at all. These or any of them, if still in existence, have yet to be made known. It would be well if search should henceforward be made after these and other unprinted compositions that were possibly written by Watson, during the concluding ten years of his life.

Under all these circumstances; it is a matter for great congratulation that we can here present all admirers of true Poesy with four of Watson's works, one Latin, and three English, all complete; with the exception of two leaves in *The Yeares of Fancy*, unfortunately wanting, but which, it is to be hoped, with a higher estimation of the Poet in future stimulating the search, will not be lost to us for ever.

What we now desire, is to give—more by way of temporary preface than any exhaustive enquiry, satisfying all reasonable interest—a short sketch of Watson's ascertained writings: leaving the Texts here presented, to the study, appreciation, and delight of every Reader.

To Anthony-a-Wood's account of his Life, we can add but little.

THOMAS WATSON, a Londoner born, did spend some time in this university, not in logic and philosophy, as he ought to have done; but in the smooth and pleasant studies of poetry and romance, whereby he obtained an honourable name among the students in those faculties. Afterward retiring to the metropolis, studied at common law at riper years. [*Melibæus* and *Amynta Gaudia* are then referred to.] He hath written other things of that nature or strain, and something pertaining to pastoral, which I have not yet seen, and was highly valued among ingenious men, in the latter end of Q. Elizabeth. *Ath. Oxon.* i. 602. *Ed.* by Bliss. 1813.

As our Poet was but young on the publication of his *Antigone* in 1581, we may guess him to have been born about the time of Queen Elizabeth's accession in 1557, and consequently dying in 1592, to have finished his career in the prime of life, probably between forty and fifty years of age. His publications tells us, in one way or another, that he was of gentle blood; born in London; educated at Oxford; a student at law, probably a member of one of the Inns of Court; and that before 1581 he sojourned some while at Paris, probably associating there with the Walsingham family. In his Latin-English Elegue *Melibœus*, he puts these lines into the mouth of Thomas Walsingham (Tityrus)—Thy tunes have often pleas'd mine care of yore,

when milk-white swans did flocke to heare the sing,

Where *Seine* in Paris makes a double shore.

See p. 157.

He appears to have returned to England, and to have employed some part if not all the remaining twelve years of his life, in the study of poetry and polite literature: publishing in that period five Latin and three English works, and leaving, without all doubt, behind him, considerable unpublished pieces in both these languages. One in Latin, *Aminia Gaudia*, was published in 1592, immediately after his death: and *The Teares of Fancy* in 1593: others, we know from the *Εκλογαίαια*, to have been far proceeded with: while some few, as will be presently seen, did actually escape to light in Poetical Miscellanies subsequently published.

Though Watson apparently took no degree at Oxford, he must have been a prodigious Student in those branches of knowledge to which he addicted himself. As regards languages, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, with his own mother tongue, were at his command. He made himself at home with the entire body of Greek and Latin poets, and consequently with the whole ancient Pagan mythology. He early occupied himself with translating Petrarch's Sonnets from the Italian into Latin; and seems to have delighted in many of the minor Italian poets of that school. WILLIAM BIRD and he first published Madrigals in English. With the works of PIERRE DE RONSARD, ESTIENNE FURCADEL, and other like French poets, he seems also to have been familiar. CHAUCER is referred to at p. 43, and SPENSER magnified in the beautiful Elegy at p. 173. So varied was his reading, so catholic his appreciation.

He wrote at first and chiefly in Latin, then the speech of European culture; afterwards and possibly to a less degree in English. In connection with this, we should recollect his date. Contemporary with Spenser and Sidney, and rather before Shakespeare. His works tell us of his aristocratic acquaintance, PHILIP HOWARD, Earl of ARUNDL, EDWARD VERR, Earl of OXFORD, SIR PHILIP and LADY MARY SIDNEY, the WALSINGHAM family, and the like; and also of his literary friends, such as W. CAMDEN, J. LYLLY, M. ROYDON, T. ACHELRY, G. PRICKLE, who complimented him in verse; as well as SPENSER, WHYSTONE and OCKLANDS to whom he rendered like tribute.

We now come to Watson's position among the *English* poets of his time. If English Imaginative Poesy were classified, it might group under three classes. The earliest in time—the ALLEGORICAL—represented by Chaucer, Gower, Stephen Hawes, Spenser, Giles Fletcher, and others. The next in our history—the AMATORY—brought into England by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt, as will be seen in our approaching Reprint of Tottel's *Miscellany*. The DRAMATIC—represented by Shakespeare and a host of others.

Of these Watson belongs to the second group of Writers. He is, in the History of our Poesy, a lineal successor of Surrey and Wyatt. Among all English poems published during his lifetime, his English poetical works—if an opinion might be ventured—should rank next to Spenser. That is, he should be placed before Sidney as a Poet. Richard Barnfield in his *Affectionate Shepherds*, 1596, in upbraiding Love, thus refers to them all three.

By thee great Collin lost his libertie,

By thee sweet Astrophel forwent his ioy;

By thee Amyntas wept incessantly.

They are all equally original; each writing after a different manner, yet in power of gifts, genius, and learning, we would put Spenser first; Watson, second; and Sidney, third. Though the Amatory group of Poets imitated foreign authors more largely than those of the other two classes, yet it was not servilely done. Their close contact with some of the best foreign Poets did but bring out the good that was in themselves; and the reader of this Reprint will recognize in it some very choice English poetry.

We have now to chronicle year by year, such scattered notices of our Poet as we have been able to collect, merely expressing a hope that subsequent gleaners will be able to add much more to our knowledge of him and his works. We shall distinguish by (a) (b) (c) &c. such additional poems by Watson as are not included in the four texts here reprinted.

And here first, we must notice several works which are referred to in *The Βκατομυαθια*.

(a) "And where he mentioneth that once hee scorned loue, he alludeth to a peece of worke, whiche he wrote long since, *De Remedio Amoris*, which he hath lately perfected, to the good likinge of many that haue scene and perused it, though not fully to his owne fancy, which causeth him as yet to keepe it backe from the print."—See I., p. 37.

(b) "The Authour borroweth from certaine Latine verses of his owne, made long agoe vpon the loue abuses of *Iuppiter* in a certaine peece of worke written in the commendation of women kinde: which he hath not yet wholly perfected to the print."—See LXXV., at p. 117.

(c) The annotation to VI., at p. 60, begins thus. "This passion is a translation into latine of the selfe same sonnet of *Petrarch* which you red lastly alleaged, and commeth somewhat neerer vnto the Italian phrase then the English doth. The Author when he translated it, was not then minded euer to haue imboldned him selfe so farre, as to thrust in foote amongst our english Poets. But beinge busied in translating *Petrarch*'s his sonnets into latin new clothed this amongst many others, which one day may perchance come to light."

(d) The Latin verses *Quid Amor*, at p. 134, "which because they may well importe a passion of the writer, and aptly befitteth the present title of his ouerpassed *Loue*, he setteth them downe in this next page following, but not as accomplishable for one of the hundreth passions of this booke."—See XCVIII. p. 134.

These, and possibly other like completed poems in Latin, soon circulated in MS. Stephen Broelsmann, a German Jurist and Poet, of Cologne, wrote to Watson while he was at Paris, the following verses (reprinted before the *Antigone*), urging him to print his works.

Si nostræ tecum præculæ Watsonæ, valerent,
 Non tua tot chartis scrinia plena forent;
 Sub prælo tua Musa foret, lucemque viderent
 Iudice quæ Phæbo candido metra facis.
 Atque ego si quicquam sapio, nouique Hælicona,
 Carminis ille tua est ex Hælicone liquor.
 Classica siuè canis, teneros seu dicis amores,
 Mars tumido, tenui carmine gestit amor.
 Thuscanus Petrarca tuo stat carmine diues;
 Mundo vtiâam fieret nocior ille labor.
 Plebs ignara licet Phæbeæ frondis honores
 Negligat, et quicquid clarius este potest:
 Tu tamèn a doctis doctus dicere Poëta,
 Inque suo precio nobile carmen erit.
 Præsertim Antigonen vel Zoilus ipse probabit,
 Ad prælam duci si paciatis opus.
 Ergò tuum celebris portet super æthera nomen
 Fama, nec in tenebris ampliùs esse sinat.
 Nam licet es iuuenis, tamen haud iuuenilia pangis,
 Et vena polles, ingenioque bono.
 Ah pudet vterius iuuenum laudare senili
 Carmine, quòd nostro carmine maior eas.
 Eia age; percolito dulces ante omnia Musas:
 Vult ille labor, dulcis et ille labor.
 Sed Venus irata est, dum celas carmen amoris:
 Phæbus et ipse dolet, dum sua dona tegis.
 Si semper Danaën tenuisset hæneæ turris,
 Aurea non essent pondera nota Iouis.

1581. I. We now come to Watson's first publication: a translation into Latin of Sophocles' *Antigone*: thus entered by the clerk of the Stationers' Company.

"31 July 1581. John Wolfe. Lycenced vnto him, &c. Aphoclis Antigone, Thoma Watsono interprete. vj4."

J. P. COLLIER. *Ext. from Regs. of Stat. Co. ii. 149. Ed. 1849.*

Of this work, there is a copy in the British Museum. [Press mark, 1090. m. 31.] The title runs thus: "Soph. oclis Antigone. *Interprete* Thoma Watsono *J. V. studioso*. Huic adduntur pompæ quædam, ex singulis Tragediæ actis derivatæ; et post eas, totidem themata sententijs referussima; eodem THOMA WATSONO Autore. LONDINI. Excudebat Iohannes Wolffius. 1582."

As his earliest known published poem, and his own account of his early studies, we here give his entire Dedicatory Epistle.

(8) Nobilissimo proceri, claroque multis nominibus, PHILIPPO HOWARDO Comiti Arundellæ, THOMAS WATSONVS solidam felicitatem precatur.

Nobilibus prædies auis, virtutibus aucte,
 Dotibus Aonijs nobilitate Comes
 Accipe tantilli iuuenilia carmina vatis,
 Et multi modicum volue laboris opus.
 Nec mea Callimachi, neque Cui Musa Philætor est:
 Quodque ferat, vulpes nil nisi tegmen habet.
 Sed curant hominum mentes, non munera Diui:
 Ergo age, cœlibus par, imitare Deos.
 Quid si mendosus fuerit meus iste libellus?
 Quid si neglecto carmine culpa subest?
 Candida et atra suo perlustrat Cynthia vultu:
 Phoebus adit radijs candida et atra suis.
 Vestraque consueto capiet clementia vultu,
 Quæ sunt in versu candida et atra meo.
 Marsia, Arachne, Iri, Smyntheus, Tritonia, Croesus,
 Cantus, fila, stipem, postulat, optat, amat:
 Cantus, fila, stipem, Smyntheus, Tritonia, Croesus,
 Nec dedignatur, muscus, alma, potens.
 Tuque munera meis (recinit si vera propellus)
 Carmina carminibus muneris instar habes.
 Atque ego non tanti primæuos duco Poetas,
 Vt nihil in nostris laudibus esse velim.
 Forsitan et Phœbo, fecique volente Minerva,
 Vnde meo partus Marte triumphus eat.
 Tu bene si censes, ego te censore beatus
 Apponam stimulos viribus ipse meis.
 Et faciam lotus quod multi scorpè rogauerunt,
 Plura vt sub præli pondere scripta crepent.
 Ipse licet Momus vano submurmuret ore,
 Inuidus et piceo Zoilus vngue premat:
 Iudicij censura tui superabit vtramque,
 Et capiti ponet laureæserta meo.
 Iædo satis fœlix, dicar tuus esse Poeta,
 Et famulus fieri cum Ganymæde Iouis.
 Scilicet hoc olim ceppi sperare lucellum,
 Dum studijs totus tempora prima dedi:
 Dumque procul patria lustrum mediumque perëgi,
 Discere diuersis œdere verba sonis.
 Tum satis Italice linguas moresque notabam;
 Et linguam, et mores Gallia docta tuos.
 Vt potui, colui Musas, quæcunque ferebar:
 Charus et imprimis Iustinianus erat.
 Scorpè sed inuitam turbauit Pallada Mauort,
 Scorpè meo studio bella fuere moris.
 Castra tamen fœgi, nisi quæ Phœbeia castra
 Cum Musis Charites continuere pia.
 Bartole magnus eras, neque circumferre licebat,
 Nec legum nodos Balde diserte tuos:
 Arripui Sophoclem, docui mitescere Musas:
 E Græcis prepigi metra Latina modis.
 Talitèr absumens turbatus vtilis horas,
 Antigonem docui verba Latina loqui.
 Momenti res magna, meis quoque viribus impar,
 Nt daret ipsa mihi sedula Pallas opem.

Tandem opus exactum volui lacerare, vel igni
 Tradere, quòd Latio Græcio maior erat.
 Plurima sed vetuit prudentiſſima turba virorum :
 Me ſimul Eulogijs concelebrare ſuis.
 Indè rudes iterum coepi limare camœnas,
 Et magis intenta consolidare mana.
 Tùm quorendus erat, mihi qui Patronus addeſſet,
 Et mea qui tegetet numine ſcripta ſuo :
 Qui Phœbo charus, Muſis qui charus alumnus.
 Eſſet, et Aonijs fontis amaret aquas ;
 Qui claris ortus proavis, pietatis amicus
 Eſſet, et ipſius candida cura Iouis ;
 Tu quia talis eris, et maſculagloria regni
 Supplice Mœcoenas voce vocandus eras.
 Ergò tantilli non aſpernare clientiſ,
 Quod tua iam virtus ſola propoſcit, opus.
 Fabula trita, olim murem feciſſe, Leoni
 Quod ſatis acceptum, quodque ſalubre fuit.
 Quàmvis indignus, quàmvis ignotus addeſſet,
 Sumpſit ab infirmo paupere Pyrrhus aquam.
 Sic mihi ſit facilis cultura potentis amici,
 Sim licèt ignotus, nec meruiſſe queam.
 Velle meum pro poſſe datur, pro munere carmen,
 Et cupit Antigone charior eſſe tibi.
 Charior eſſe tibi ſperat, quàm chara Creonti,
 Quàm fuerit patrio vel peramata ſolo.
 Iamque reuiuſcens, et Muſis ducta Latinis
 Hùc venit, et Thæbis ampliùs eſſe timet.
 Mira tibi referet, ſi via miracula noſſe :
 Atque piùm faceret, nì pius antè fores.
 Illicitam legem timidis mordebit lambis ;
 Faſcibus impauſido, proferet ore Deos ;
 Tum quid ſit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid vtile, quid non,
 Dicet : et imperij quàm ſit amarus amor ;
 Quàm noceat veri monitus contemnere vatis :
 Quàm vertat celerem Sors malearum rotam ;
 Principis et placitum quàm pendula turba ſequatur,
 Et quanti faciant cœtera membra caput.
 Hæc, et plura tuis planè præfiget ocellis
 Antigone, ſtudio docta docere meo.
 Viue, vale Generoſe Comes : quot ſœcula ceruus
 Viuit, tot fœlix ſœcula viue : vale.

Vestri honoris obſervantiſſimus, Thomas Watsonus Londonienſis.

(f) The *Pompæ* are four groups of impersonations ſuch as *IUSTITIA, cum ſceptro*. *IMPUNITAS, vir cum mucrone*, &c., in ſhort poems too numerous to quote here ; and are preceded by this ſecond dedication to Lord Howard of Arundell.

Hæc mea ſi quicquam placuit translatio, Cômes
 Inclyte ; materies aut bona ſi qua ſubeſt :
 Hæc mea pompa ſimul poſitque legenti,
 Quam totam Antigones fabula triftis habet.
 Inſuper appoſui pompis, quæ digna notatu,
 Themata ; quæque probes vtilitate ſua.
 Tu dignare igitur vultu luſtrare benigno,
 Quod dedit ignoti Muſa benigna viri.

Vestri honoris ſtudioſiſſimus Tho. Watsonus.

(g) The four *Themata* " diducted out of the bowelles of *Antigone* in *Sophocles* (which he lately translated into Latine and published in print."—See p. 115) are apparently exerciſes in different kinds of Latin verſe. They are ſeverally as follows :—

(1) *Cœcum philantian multarum calamitatum, cauſam eſſe, ex Creontis exemplo diſcimus*, written in Iambics.

(2) *Quam ſit malum publico Magiſtratus edicto non parere, Antigone exemplum docet*, written in Anapaſtic Dimeters.