

**SELECT POEMS OF
THOMAS GRAY.
REVISED EDITION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649760312

Select Poems of Thomas Gray. Revised Edition by Thomas Gray & William J. Rolfe

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

THOMAS GRAY & WILLIAM J. ROLFE

**SELECT POEMS OF
THOMAS GRAY.
REVISED EDITION**



your humble Serv^t F. Gray

SELECT POEMS
OF
THOMAS GRAY.

EDITED, WITH NOTES,

BY

WILLIAM J. ROLFE, LITT. D.,

FORMERLY HEAD MASTER OF THE HIGH SCHOOL, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

WITH ENGRAVINGS.

REVISED EDITION.

REVISED EDITION.



NEW YORK ··· CINCINNATI ··· CHICAGO
AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY

EXTRACTS FROM PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

MANY editions of Gray have been published in the last fifty years, some of them very elegant, and some showing considerable editorial labor, but not one, so far as I am aware, critically exact either in text or in notes. No editor since Mathias (A.D. 1814) has given the 2d line of the *Elegy* as Gray wrote and printed it; while Mathias's mispunctuation of the 123d line has been copied by his successors, almost without exception. Other variations from the early editions are mentioned in the notes.

It is a curious fact that the most accurate edition of Gray's collected poems is the *editio princeps* of 1768, printed under his own supervision. The first edition of the two Pindaric odes, *The Progress of Poesy* and *The Bard* (Strawberry-Hill, 1757), was printed with equal care, and the proofs were probably read by the poet. The text of the present edition has been collated, line by line, with that of these early editions, and in no instance have I adopted a later reading. All the MS. variations, and the various readings I have noted in the modern editions, are given in the notes.

Pickering's edition of 1835, edited by Mitford, has been followed blindly in nearly all the more recent editions, and its many errors (see pp. 84 and 105, foot-notes) have been faithfully reproduced. Even its blunders in the "indenting" of the lines in the corresponding stanzas of the two Pindaric odes, which any careful proof-reader ought to have corrected, have been copied again and again—as in the Boston (1853) reprint of Pickering, the pretty little edition of Bickers & Son (London, n. d.), the fac-simile of the latter printed at our University Press, Cambridge (1866), etc.

Of former editions of Gray, the only one very fully annotated is Mitford's (Pickering, 1835), already mentioned. I have drawn freely from that, correcting many errors, and also from Wakefield's and Mason's editions, and from Hales's notes (*Longer English Poems*, London, 1872) on the *Elegy* and the Pindaric odes. To all this material many original notes and illustrations have been added.

I have retained most of the "parallel passages" from the poets given by the editors, and have added others, without regard to the critics who

have sneered at this kind of annotations. Whether Gray borrowed from the others, or the others from him, matters little; very likely, in most instances, neither party was consciously the borrower. Gray, in his own notes, has acknowledged certain debts to other poets, and probably these were all that he was aware of. Some of these he contracted unwittingly (see what he says of one of them in a letter to Walpole, quoted in the note on the *Ode on the Spring*, 31), and the same may have been true of some apparently similar cases pointed out by modern editors. To me, however, the chief interest of these coincidences and resemblances of thought or expression is as studies in the "comparative anatomy" of poetry. The teacher will find them useful as pegs to hang questions upon, or texts for oral instruction. The pupil, or the young reader, who finds out who all these poets were, when they lived, what they wrote, etc., will have learned no small amount of English literary history. If he studies the quotations merely as illustrations of style and expression, or as examples of the poetic diction of various periods, he will have learned some lessons in the history and the use of his mother-tongue.

The wood-cuts on pp. 9, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 34, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 50, and 61 are from Birket Foster's designs; those on pp. 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, and 38 are from the graceful drawings of "E. V. B." (the Hon. Mrs. Boyle); the rest are from various sources.

NOTE TO REVISED EDITION.

When I edited this book, ten years ago, I had to depend on others for the collation of the MSS. of the *Elegy*, except the Pembroke MS., of which I had Mathias's engraved fac-simile. The Egerton MS. was not so much as mentioned by any of the editors or critics up to that date; and now that I am able to consult the photograph and the owner's reprint of the Fraser MS. (see page 78, foot-note), I find that all former collations of *that* (not excepting Mr. Gosse's) are incomplete and inaccurate. I may safely claim that in the present volume the readings of both the Fraser and the Egerton MSS. are for the first time given fully and correctly.

The notes on the other poems have also been carefully revised; and here I have been indebted to Mr. Gosse for a few additional *varia lectiones*.

For the correction of errors in Howitt's transcript of the inscriptions on Gray's monument (pages 18 and 19), I have to thank Mr. J. Willis Westlake, of the State Normal School, Millersville, Pa.

Cambridge, Jan. 21, 1886.

CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| THE LIFE OF THOMAS GRAY, BY ROBERT CAPRUTHERS.. | 9 |
| STOKE-POGIS, BY WILLIAM HOWITT..... | 16 |
| ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.... | 23 |
| MISCELLANEOUS POEMS..... | 43 |
| ON THE SPRING..... | 45 |
| ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT..... | 48 |
| ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE..... | 50 |
| THE PROGRESS OF POESY..... | 55 |
| THE BARD..... | 61 |
| HYMN TO ADVERSITY..... | 68 |
| NOTES..... | 71 |
| APPENDIX TO NOTES..... | 138 |
| INDEX..... | 145 |



STOKE-POGIS CHURCH.

THE LIFE OF THOMAS GRAY.

BY ROBERT CARRUTHERS.

THOMAS GRAY, the author of the celebrated *Elegy written in a Country Churchyard*, was born in Cornhill, London, December 26, 1716. His father, Philip Gray, an exchange broker and scrivener, was a wealthy and nominally respectable citizen, but he treated his family with brutal severity and neglect, and the poet was altogether indebted for the advantages of a learned education to the affectionate care and industry of his mother, whose maiden name was Antrobus, and who, in conjunction with a maiden sister, kept a millinery shop. A brother of Mrs. Gray was assistant to the Master of Eton, and was also a fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge. Under his protection the poet was educated at Eton, and from thence went to Peterhouse, attending college from 1734 to Septem-

ber, 1738. At Eton he had as contemporaries Richard West, son of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and Horace Walpole, son of the triumphant Whig minister, Sir Robert Walpole. West died early in his 26th year, but his genius and virtues and his sorrows will forever live in the correspondence of his friend. In the spring of 1739, Gray was invited by Horace Walpole to accompany him as travelling companion in a tour through France and Italy. They made the usual route, and Gray wrote remarks on all he saw in Florence, Rome, Naples, etc. His observations on arts and antiquities, and his sketches of foreign manners, evince his admirable taste, learning, and discrimination. Since Milton, no such accomplished English traveller had visited those classic shores. In their journey through Dauphiny, Gray's attention was strongly arrested by the wild and picturesque site of the Grande Chartreuse, surrounded by its dense forest of beech and fir, its enormous precipices, cliffs, and cascades. He visited it a second time on his return, and in the album of the mountain convent he wrote his famous Alcaic Ode. At Reggio the travellers quarrelled and parted. Walpole took the whole blame on himself. He was fond of pleasure and amusements, "intoxicated by vanity, indulgence, and the insolence of his situation as a prime minister's son"—his own confession—while Gray was studious, of a serious disposition, and independent spirit. The immediate cause of the rupture is said to have been Walpole's clandestinely opening, reading, and resealing a letter addressed to Gray, in which he expected to find a confirmation of his suspicions that Gray had been writing unfavourably of him to some friends in England. A partial reconciliation was effected about three years afterwards by the intervention of a lady, and Walpole redeemed his youthful error by a life-long sincere admiration and respect for his friend. From Reggio Gray proceeded to Venice, and thence travelled homewards, attended by a *laquais de voyage*. He arrived in England in September, 1741, having