

**CLARENDON PRESS
SERIES. SHAKESPEARE.
SELECT PLAYS. HAMLET,
PRINCE OF DENMARK**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649598526

Clarendon Press Series. Shakespeare. Select Plays. Hamlet, Prince of Denmark by William Shakespeare & W. G. Clark & W. A. Wright

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

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE & W. G. CLARK & W. A. WRIGHT

**CLARENDON PRESS
SERIES. SHAKESPEARE.
SELECT PLAYS. HAMLET,
PRINCE OF DENMARK**

Clarendon Press Series

ENGLISH CLASSICS

H A M L E T

PRINCE OF DENMARK

CLARK AND WRIGHT.

Clarendon Press Series

SHAKESPEARE
SELECT PLAYS

HAMLET
PRINCE OF DENMARK

EDITED BY

W. G. CLARK, M.A.

Senior Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge,

AND

W. A. WRIGHT, M.A.

Bursar of Trinity College, Cambridge

SECOND EDITION

Oxford

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

M DCCC LXXIV

[All rights reserved]

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

PREFACE.

THE story of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, is told in the *Historia Danica* of Saxo Grammaticus, a writer who lived about A.D. 1150-1220, and wrote his work about 1180-1208. The earliest edition of it is that of Paris, 1514. The story as it there appears was incorporated in Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*, of which the earlier volumes contained translations from the Italian of Bandello, and amongst them the tragical history of Romeo and Juliet. The fifth volume of these *Histoires*, in which Hamlet first appears, was printed at Paris in 1570, and the story was thence translated into English. The only edition now extant of this translation is that of 1608, which is reprinted in Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, vol. i., from the only perfect copy known, which is among Capell's books in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge. There were in all probability earlier editions, but none of these are known to have been preserved. The title of this book is 'The Hystorie of Hamblet. London: Imprinted by Richard Bradocke, for Thomas Pavier, and are to be sold at his shop in Corne-hill, neere to the Royall Exchange, 1608.'

Between the story of Hamlet as it appears in this 'Hystorie' and the story as it appears in Shakespeare there are very marked differences. Except in the case of Hamlet himself and his mother, who is called 'Geruth' in the 'Hystorie,' there is no resemblance whatever between the names of the characters in the 'Hystorie' and in the play. In the former, Hamlet's father is Horvendile, his uncle is Fengo, corresponding to Horvendillus and Fengo in Saxo Grammaticus. The murder of Hamlet's father by his uncle, and the subsequent marriage of the latter with his brother's widow, the feigned madness of Hamlet, the various devices of the uncle to penetrate his secret, the death of Polonius, Hamlet's re-

monstrance with his mother, his voyage to England, his return and revenge, are all incidents of the original story, which goes on to relate how Hamlet after his uncle's death became King of Denmark, how he went again to England and married two wives, by one of whom he was betrayed on his return to Denmark into the power of another uncle, Wiglerus, his mother's brother, and was finally slain in battle. Long before the story assumed the shape in which it is familiar to us, it had in all probability been modified in adapting it for the stage. There is evidence that as early as 1587 a drama on this subject had been written and performed in England. In the preface by Thomas Nash to Robert Greene's *Menaphon*, the first edition of which, according to Dyce, was printed in 1587, though no copy appears to be known of an earlier date than 1589, occurs a passage which certainly refers to a play of Hamlet, and has been thought to contain an attack on Shakespeare. We quote from the reprint of the edition of 1616 as it is given in Sir Egerton Brydges' *Archaica*, vol. i. 'It is a common practice now-a-days, amongst a sort of shifting companions, that run through every art and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *novitint*, whereto they were born, and busy themselves with the endeavours of art, that could scarcely latinise their neck-verse if they should have need: yet English Seneca read by candle-light yields many good sentences, as "Blood is a beggar," and so forth; and if you intreat him fair in a frosty morning, he will afford you whole Hamlets, I should say, handfulls of tragical speeches.' In Henslowe's Diary, under the date 9 June 1594, is mentioned the performance of a play 'Hamlet' at the Newington Theatre. Lodge, in his *Wits Miserie, and the Worlds Madnesse*, printed in 1596, thus describes the fiend 'Hate-Virtue': 'He walks for the most part in black vnder colour of grauity, and looks as pale as the Visard of y^e ghost which cried so miserally at y^e Theator like an oister wife, *Hamlet, reuenge*.' This last quotation would alone be sufficient to prove that the play in question was not the Hamlet of Shakespeare, and if the date (1587) which has been given to Greene's *Menaphon* be correct, it is difficult to imagine that the reference in Nash's

Address could be to Shakespeare, who was then only in his twenty-third year.

We now come to something which is undoubtedly connected with Shakespeare. In the Registers of the Stationers' Company is an entry, under the date 26 July 1602, made by James Roberts the printer, of 'A booke, The Revege of Hamlett prince of Denmarke, as yt latelie was acted by the Lord Chamberlayn his servantes.' This is evidently the book which was printed in the following year with this title: 'The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke, By William Shakespeare. As it hath beene diverse times acted by his Highnesse servants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Vniversities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where. At London printed for N. L. and Iohn Trundell, 1603.' Coupling the fact of the entry by Roberts with the fact that the quarto of 1604 was 'Printed by I. R. for N. L.' that is, by James Roberts for Nicholas Ling, we may infer that Roberts also printed the quarto of 1603. When James the First came to the throne 'he accepted the Lord Chamberlain's servants as his own' (Chalmers, Farther Account of the Early English Stage, in Boswell's Shakespeare, iii. 463), so that 'the Lord Chamberlayn his servantes' of the Stationers' Register are the same company with 'his Highnesse servants' of the printed book, and to this company Shakespeare belonged. No evidence has yet been discovered of the occasion on which the play was acted at the two universities; but if we might hazard a conjecture, it seems not improbable that it might have been at some entertainment in honour of the king's accession, and it may have been selected as being connected with the native country of his queen.

In the following year, 1604, appeared for the first time in the shape in which it has come down to us, 'The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. By William Shakespeare. Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much-againe as it was, according to the true and perfect coppie.' The statement with regard to the enlargement of the play is substantially true, for whereas the edition of 1603 contained thirty-two leaves, that of 1604 contained fifty, exclusive of the

title. This last mentioned was followed by other editions in quarto in the years 1605, 1611, 1637, and by one without date which was evidently printed from that of 1611. The text of the play, as it is found in the first folio of 1623 and the subsequent folio editions, is from sources independent of the quartos. The quartos contain many passages which are omitted in the folios, probably for the purpose of shortening the play when acted, and on the other hand there are a few passages which are in the folios but not in the quartos. These we have generally indicated in our notes. But notwithstanding these minor differences the play as it appears in the quarto of 1604 and the folio of 1623 is the same play. It remains to enquire what relation it bears to the edition of 1603.

It is clear upon a very slight examination that the latter is printed from a copy which was hastily taken down and perhaps surreptitiously obtained, either from short-hand notes made during the representation, or privately from the actors themselves. These notes when transcribed would form the written copy which the printers had before them, and would account for the existence of errors which are errors of the copyist rather than of the hearer. But granting all this, we have yet to account for differences between the earlier and later forms of the play which cannot be explained by the carelessness of short-hand writer, copyist, or printer. Mr. Knight, with great ingenuity, maintains that the quarto of 1603 represents the original sketch of the play, and that this was an early work of the poet. We differ from him in respect to this last conclusion, because we can see no evidence for Shakespeare's connexion with the play before 1602. First, there is the complete absence of any positive evidence on the point, and next there is the very strong negative evidence that in the enumeration of Shakespeare's works by one who was an ardent admirer of his genius, Francis Meres, in his *Palladis Tamia, or Wit's Treasury*, published in 1598, there is no mention whatever of *Hamlet*. That *Hamlet* should be omitted and *Titus Andronicus* inserted is utterly unintelligible, except upon the supposition that in 1598 the play bearing the former name had not in any