

**THE PLAYS & POEMS OF ROBERT  
GREENE. VOL. I: GENERAL  
INTRODUCTION. ALPHONSUS. A  
LOOKING CLASSE. ORLANDO FURIOSO.  
APPENDIX TO TO ORLANDO FURIOSO  
(THE ALLEYN MS.) NOTES TO PLAYS**

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Robert Greene & J. Churton Collins

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**ROBERT GREENE & J. CHURTON COLLINS**

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# THE PLAYS & POEMS OF ROBERT GREENE

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTIONS AND NOTES

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VOL. I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION. ALPHONSUS. A LOOKING  
GLASSE. ORLANDO FURIOSO. APPENDIX TO  
ORLANDO FURIOSO (THE ALLEYN MS.)  
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## PREFACE

WHEN the Delegates of the Clarendon Press entrusted me with the preparation of an edition of Greene's Plays and Poems I determined to spare no pains to make it, so far at least as the text was concerned, a final one. And the method adopted was this. Each play was transcribed literally from the oldest Quarto extant: thus the *Looking Glasse* was copied from the Quarto of 1594, *Orlando* and *Frier Bacon and Frier Bongay* from the Quartos of the same year, *Alphonsus* from the Quarto of 1599, *James IV* from that of 1597, and *The Pinner* from that of 1599. And to the text of these Quartos my text scrupulously adheres, except where the reading of some of the later Quartos either makes sense of nonsense or presents a reading which is obviously and strikingly preferable; but rigid conservatism has been my rule. I have very rarely admitted conjectures into the text even where corruption cried for them. Where words necessary for the completion either of the sense or of the metre have been supplied they have been placed within brackets, and the same system has been adopted in supplying the acts and scenes when they are not marked, as is nearly always the case, in the original Quartos.

In an Appendix to *Orlando Furioso* I have given a complete transcript of the very remarkable fragment which is preserved among the Alleyn Manuscripts at Dulwich College, a section of which has been reproduced in colotype. It consists of a large portion of the original part of *Orlando* transcribed by the copyist of the theatre for Alleyn, with certain additions in Alleyn's own handwriting. Dyce's transcript, though fairly accurate, is habitually incorrect in the spelling, and has some, and those

not unimportant, omissions. Grosart follows Dyce closely, and had evidently not made an independent copy. The interest of this MS. is very great. It is not merely the only important manuscript we have belonging to so early a period of the Elizabethan drama, but when we compare it with the text of the Quarto we see either how greatly the stage copies were altered when a play was printed, or how greatly the printed copies must have varied from the stage copies and presumably, therefore, from the author's manuscript. And let me here express my thanks to the authorities of Dulwich College for their kindness in permitting me to have a transcript of it, and for allowing a portion of it to be collotyped. For being enabled to make some important additions to the variants in the text of the *Looking Glasse* I have to thank Mr. Augustine Birrell, who, with Mr. Godfrey Locker Lampson's permission, placed at my disposal the very remarkable Quarto in the collection of the late Mr. Locker Lampson which I have described in the Introduction to that play (vol. i. p. 142). For permission to transcribe another interesting manuscript I am indebted to the authorities of Sion College. This is the prose romance on which the *Pinner of Wakefeld* was founded, the most important part of which I have given in an Appendix to the Introduction to the play. Though it has been published before, first by an editor signing himself N. W. and secondly by Thoms, who followed him, neither transcript is accurate, and in both the spelling has been modernized.

All the miscellaneous poems have been transcribed from the original novels, and where more than one edition of the novel exists the texts have, when possible, been collated. I have arranged them according to the chronological order in which the novels appeared in their first edition. The *Maidens Dreame* has been printed from an independent transcript taken from the original Quarto in Lambeth Library, neither Reardon's transcript, published for the Shakespeare Society, nor Dyce's being quite accurate. I have thought it desirable not only to collate such passages

in the Plays and Poems as appeared in extract in *England's Parnassus* with the extracts there printed, but to give a transcript of them in an Appendix to the Poems, so that the reader can make, if he pleases, the comparison for himself.

I have spared no pains to ascertain whether anything in verse from Greene's pen exists either in print or in manuscript which has not been included in the editions of Dyce and Grosart. But I have discovered nothing, and no trace of anything. And I own I am not sorry, for we have too much of Greene's work already. I have met with several anonymous productions in verse, particularly in threnody and in celebration of public events, which may have been, or may have had assistance from, his pen; but I have left them where I found them. If it could be established that they are Greene's they are not worth printing; as there is nothing to connect them with him, they are not worth discussing.

The Notes have purposely been made as full as possible, for they have been designed to illustrate generally the characteristics, especially as they pertain to diction, allusion, imagery, and sentiment, of the early Elizabethan drama.

My debt to my predecessors is no small one, and I hasten to acknowledge it. Had Dyce, instead of modernizing his text both in spelling and in inflection, adhered faithfully to the original, had he been thorough in collation, had he been less sparing in his elucidatory notes, had he properly investigated the sources of the plots, any other edition of Greene's Plays and Poems would have been a work of supererogation. There is scarcely a page in the present edition, as the critical apparatus sufficiently testifies, in which his hand is not seen. The lists of the *dramatis personae* have been adapted from him: all the obvious and many of the happiest corrections of the text are due to his vigilance and acumen. Much, and very much, which when it came into his hands was unintelligible and desperate, he elucidated with final certainty. As a textual critic he had few equals. His learning was without pedantry, and his