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From 1899 to digital
The Arden Shakespeare,
Shakespearean critical scholarship and the evolution of English as a discipline

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Shakespeare: Metamorphosis
Senate House, University of London, 25 August 2016
Outline

1 Some **starting points**: Of scholars and publishers

2 The Arden Shakespeare: Overview

3 The Arden story so far: three series and four digital Ardens

4 In **Conclusion**: Speculations and provocations
Whither critical editions of Shakespeare?

- Whither **Humanities** scholarship?

  *(Whither **universities**?)*

- Whither **publishing** (and its **editors**)?

  Or: *A Tale of Three Hamlets…*
The Arden Shakespeare: overview

• Why Arden?
  ▪ **Authoritative edition** of Shakespeare; global status
  ▪ **Publishing values:** consistent since 1899
  ▪ Only **three series** since 1899, **fourth** now being commissioned
  ▪ Dramatic **ownership shifts** between 1980s and 2008: ‘ownership’ of the series?

• **Sources:** texts/digital products, documents, interviews, sales analysis, Arden sources*

*eg Driscoll and Scott, 1998; Scott, 2010; Proudfoot, 2001; Thompson and McMullan, 2002
Of these delated articles allow.

Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor., Vol. In that and all things will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.

[Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?

You told us of some suit; what is't, Laertes?

You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,

And lose your voice: what wouldst thou bequeat,

Laertes, That shall not be my offer, not thy asking.

The head is not more native to the heart,

The hand more instrumental to the mouth,

Than the throne of Denmark to thy father.

What would'st thou have, Laertes?

Laer. | Breathe my lord, I pray you leave to return to France,

Your leave and favour to return to France,

From whence thou敌ly willingly came to Denmark,

To show my duty in your coronation,

Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,

My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France.


40. delated] Perhaps a different spelling of the F. "elated," meaning expressed as "heave.

41. delated] But it may mean "set," as in Cece. Arden. Cogtnate: "the time wherein some is delated... the delation of light is an instant."

47. native] cognate, connected by nature or birth, as in All's Well, I. 3. 285: "To join like kin, not kin like native things."


50. Dread my lord, J. My dread Q. 55. towards] Q. towards F.
Arden 1: 1899–1924

Algernon Methuen

Edward Dowden


The publisher: Algernon Methuen

- **Founded Methuen in 1889:**
  - Hardback publishing for the ‘gentle reader’/fiction/children’s…

- **Previous popular Shakespeare series’ success:**
  - Eg Macmillan Globe edition, 1860s–1911: 250,000 copies
  - ‘Shilling’ Dicks edition, launched 1864: over 700,000 copies

- **Plus new readerships:**
  - 1870 Education Act
  - Extension / Workers’ Education and ‘Day Colleges’ (teacher training) + Libraries movement + women’s education
The first editor: Edward Dowden

- **One of first Professors of Literature:**
  - ‘… very light duties and a very light salary’\(^1\)
  - Relied on his writing for income:
    - ‘Cassell offers me another £25 for 16 pages on “As You Like it.” (I like it!)’\(^2\)
  - Before Arden: ‘**Shakespeare mania**’\(^3\) + editions of Shelley, Southey, 17thC writers…

- **A ‘corresponding’ community:**
  - Craig, Dr Murray, his fellow literary editors and his publishers
  - A **conversation among equals**, evolving knowledge

- **Late 19\(^{th}\) century:** Culture of **scientific** analysis; analytical, ‘scientific’ approach to language (cf OED)

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\(^1\) Dowden and Dowden, 1914, p.196 / \(^2\) 1914, p.225 / \(^3\) 1914, p.194
Arden 1: 1890s to 1920s

- **Texts** from 1864 Cambridge edition, revised 1891–93
- **Innovative:** the first *play-per-volume* series
- **Market:** for readers
  1. ‘who **care only to enjoy the play** without the retardation or the disturbance of notes’
  2. who ‘recognise the fact that many **difficulties** exist in what Shakespeare has written’
  3. ‘**scholarly readers**, who have a legitimate desire themselves to check or control the work of the editor in the formation of his text’ (Methuen & Co, undated)
From Dowden’s Introduction to *Hamlet*:

‘I have made what I suppose to be new – perhaps erroneous – suggestions as to “Take this from this” (II.ii.156) and “tender me a fool” (I.iii.109).

If ingenuities are anywhere pardonable, it is in conjecturing the meaning of Hamlet’s riddling speeches; it was not his cue ever to talk sheer nonsense; accordingly

I have ventured to throw out, perhaps doubtfully, suggestions….

When what is worthless has been sifted away, a little that is a real addition to our knowledge of Shakespeare may remain.’

(Dowden, 1919, pp.x–xi, *section breaks and emphasis added*)
From Dowden’s *Hamlet* notes:

- ‘264. *Bad dreams*] Malone – perhaps by a printer’s error – read “had dreams,” a “noble emendation,” as Johnson might have called it, attained probably by accident.’

- ‘56. *To be, or not to be:*] Explained by Johnson as a future life, or non-existence after death; by Malone, to lie, or to commit suicide. G. Macdonald regards the words as the close of a preceding train of thought, not to be connected with what follows.’

- ‘125. *country matters*] rustic proceedings… I suspect that there is some indelicate suggestion in *country*…’

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1 Dowden, 1919, p.75 / 2 1919, pp.98–9 / 3 1919, p.114
Initially low sales: Methuen to Dowden:

‘I am very sorry that the report of the sales of HAMLET is disconcerting. You must not base your calculations entirely on the preliminary sales of such a book.

I think it is obvious that a scholarly edition of HAMLET cannot have an immediately large sale, and I see no reason why it should not go on selling for a long time,

and you must remember that each volume of the series that appears will give a fillip to the preceding volumes; the greater the merit, the greater the fillip.

Everyone has spoken so well of your work and of the plan and appearance of the books, that I feel sure the edition will fill a void, as they say.’

1 Methuen, 1900, quoted in Murphy, 2003, pp.206–7 (section breaks and emphasis added)
But Edward Dowden withdrew as General Editor:

‘I think you have made *Hamlet* a beautiful book, & I suppose copies will be bought by a few persons from time to time.

But I am convinced that the sales will not be such as to justify my asking any other person to do what I am unwilling to do myself.’ (Dowden, 1900, quoted in Murphy, 2003, pp.206–7; *section breaks and emphasis added*)

- Dowden produced **two further** Arden 1 play **editions**: *Romeo and Juliet* (1900) and *Cymbeline* (1903)
• **General Editors:** Dowden succeeded by W.J. Craig then R.H. Case

• **Play editors:** Included ‘amateurs’, at least two librarians and one clergyman

• **Scholarly assumptions:** Craig, *King Lear*: ‘the ground has been too exhaustively reworked by preceding editors to admit of any new discoveries of importance’ (1901, p.xv)

• **Later editions** increasingly reflected **New Bibliography**

• **Only one woman:** Grace Trenery, 1924 *Much Ado About Nothing*, the final Arden 1

• **1899–1924:** The fastest Arden series completion to date
The Ideal Library Edition: Now Complete

THE ARDEN
SHAKESPEARE

GENERAL EDITORS

W. J. CRAIG, 1899-1906
R. H. CASE, from 1909

An Edition of Shakespeare in Single Plays, each with a full Introduction, Textual Notes, and a Commentary at the foot of the page. Demy 8vo, 6s. net

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Coriolanus
Cymbeline
Hamlet
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King Henry IV, Part II
King Henry V
King Henry VI, Part I
King Henry VI, Part II
King Henry VI, Part III
King Henry VIII
King John
King Lear
King Richard the Second
King Richard the Third
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Macbeth
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Pericles
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Sonnets and A Lover’s Complaint
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Troilus and Cressida
Twelfth Night, or What You Will
Two Gentlemen of Verona
Venus and Adonis; Lucrece; The Passionate Pilgrim; Sonnets to Sundry Notes of Music; The Phoenix and the Turtle
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MORTON LUCE
R. WARWICK BOND
R. WARWICK BOND
H. BELLIVE BAELDON
K. DEIGHTON
K. DEIGHTON

SOME OPINIONS OF THE PRESS

"We congratulate the editors and the publishers: they have deserved well of the republic of letters, for the Arden Shakespeare is the best of our working editions of Shakespeare. . . . We rank the Arden Shakespeare with the great Oxford Dictionary as the most powerful aid we possess to a full comprehension of Shakespeare."

—Times Literary Supplement.

"A critical edition of Shakespeare in a thoroughly readable form. The publishers are to be congratulated on an unobtrusively tasteful and skilful achievement in the art of book manufacture. No less are they to be congratulated on their choice of an editor. Take it all in all, his work is a model of ripe and sane scholarship."—Daily Chronicle.

"In get up the edition is essentially one which will appeal to the genuine book-lover. The type is large, and there are ample margins. The paper used is exceedingly light in weight, and the binding is chaste but substantial. Altogether, we have nothing but praise for this new edition."—Westminster Gazette.

"This volume is a worthy addition to a charming issue of Shakespeare's works. . . . Leaves little to be desired as a model of arrangement and printing: it is light and handy, and eminently readable."—Athenaeum.

"The admirable Arden Shakespeare—a work which began to appear in 1899 and, in spite of the drums and tramplings of war, has pursued the majestic tenor of its way."—Spectator.

"There is nothing that approaches the Arden Shakespeare in excellence of type, lightness of form, and competent editing, combined with cheapness."—Sphere.

"A very welcome addition to the Shakespeare shelf, for its wealth of notes and parallel passages are admirably arranged. No praise can be too high."—Daily Graphic.

"It will be almost impossible to beat this edition of Shakespeare."—Pall Mall Gazette.

"The most scholarly and charming of the many editions of Shakespeare."—Birmingham Post.

"A sound and excellent achievement of English publishing."—New Statesman.

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"The admirable Arden Shakespeare."—Glasgow Herald.

". . . einer so ausgezeichneten Ausgabe wie der Arden Shakespeare."—Literarischer Zentralblatt.

METHUEN & CO. LTD., 36 ESSEX ST., LONDON, W.C. 2
Arden 2

The Arden story so far: Arden 2
Arden 2: 1947 to 1982

- **Post-war**: Shakespeare = British identity (Olivier *Henry V* 1944)
- **General Editor**: Una Ellis-Fermor; *Macbeth* and *King Lear*, 1951; play editors made responsible for the play texts
- **Hardback** only / **typographic** complexities
- **Fees**: like Arden 1, editors paid a fee only; ‘gentleman’s agreement’ with General Editors
- **Long periods** to edit plays (25+ years, Jenkins’ *Hamlet*; *Sonnets* unfinished)

*The Arden story so far: Arden 2*
Arden 2

• 1960– : University Paperback Ardens; dramatic UK HE expansion

• Global reputation of series:
  o Professional impact of appointment as play editor
  o Arden ‘Lite’ resisted = ‘Arden is scholarship’
  o Series = ‘lustre’ / ‘crown jewels’ for Methuen: Ruralist jackets in 1980s

• Complexity of global production
Increasing competition:

- **Oxford Shakespeare**: launched 1982, 27 titles by 2001
- **Cambridge Shakespeare**: launched 1984, 33 titles by 2001
- **Arden Shakespeare brand**, 1990s/2000s
- The last of the **Arden 2s** only now being replaced/updated
Scholarly context: ‘The New Bibliography’ to Critical scholarship

‘… the primary aim of an edition, as Dowden stated it in the first sentence of the first Arden edition, must be to give “a trustworthy text”.

The difficulty, with a play which lacks the author’s imprimatur and is extant in more than one form, is to know what “a trustworthy text” is…. the eighties have seen a swing away from what is now stigmatized as the bibliographical approach…’

(Jenkins, 1992, p.2)
From Harold Jenkins’ *Hamlet*, 1982

- ‘there is only one man in the world who is fit to take on *Hamlet*: Harold Jenkins’ (Brooks quoted in Honigmann, 2001, p.561)
- Immense scholarship: four books + some articles; General Editor of Arden
- ‘The *Hamlet* years (1954–82)’ (Honigmann, 2001, p.561)
- His role? the ‘definitive’ edition of *Hamlet*:
  ‘… all those theories which view Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* as progressing to its final shape via one or more rewritings… are quite without evidence or plausibility.’
  ‘Dover Wilson attempted a different solution… I think we must pronounce it indubitably wrong.’

(Jenkins, 1982, pp.19 and 566)
From Harold Jenkins’ *Hamlet*, 1982

From his Notes (and 150pp of Longer Notes…):

- ‘256. *bad dreams*] Another symptom of the melancholic (Bright, p.124).’
- ‘56. *to be*] to have being, to exist. See ll. 56–88 LN.’*
- ‘115. *country matters*] physical lovemaking (with a popular pun on the first syllable). Cf. Donne, ….’

(Jenkins, 1982, pp. 250, 277 and 295)

*pp.484–90: ‘This *celebrated speech* is, I suppose, the most discussed in Shakespeare, and *the most misinterpreted*.’
‘I can say of editing as we have practised it that it affords the finest discipline there is for a scholar and critic, exercising him in almost all the tools he will need in other work.

The experience of editing to Arden standards (for Ardenesse oblige) is the first of the benefits reaped by Arden editors and general editors. Then from having published Ardens or been known to be deeply engaged in them, many of us have profited greatly in our professorial advancement. I could recite a list of those, past and present, whom I like to think of as Arden Professors….’ (Brooks, 1982, p.3)
'But my great reward has been in **Friendships**. Arden **editors** – and Peter Wait, Janice Price, and Jane Armstrong [the publishers] – are **exceptionally appreciative and likeable people**.

‘I should be wrong to pretend that the course of the Arden has always run with perfect smoothness. There has been fretting on occasion over the **time some of the volumes were taking**…

There was a time on **Hamlet** when I had to supply Janice Price with ammunition to repel the impatient, even to the extent of declaring that if conditions were imposed upon Harold Jenkins which I foresaw would lead to his resignation, **I should resign too, and make public the reason why**…’

(Brooks, 1982, p.3, *section breaks added*)
The Arden story so far: Arden 3

Arden 3

Introduction

accompanying vivid illustrations by John White conveyed a similar message.

Neither the deeply pejorative nor the completely laudable descriptions of American natives could have been the sole model for Caliban’s complex form and character. More likely — if Shakespeare indeed had American ‘savages’ in mind — was what Sidney Lee, the prolific English biographer and ambivalent admirer of American Indians, would describe three centuries later as an imaginative composite of various geographical and cultural types that formed ‘a full length portrait of the aboriginal inhabitant of the New World’ (Lee, ‘Caliban’, 341). But like Caliban’s name, his physical and social prototype remains unproven and endlessly arguable. And Caliban aside, The Tempest unquestionably has American overtones. It may not be Shakespeare’s American play, as some have proposed, but it nevertheless reflects to an indefinable extent the issues and events that had captured European imaginations since the late fifteenth century and had recently acquired new significance for England.

Africa and Ireland

Two other geopolitical contexts and their abundant literary reflections may also have influenced Shakespeare’s writing of The Tempest. Encroachments in Africa by various European nations, including England, in the second half of the sixteenth century and the early years of the seventeenth, and, simultaneously, a resurgence of English efforts to subdue and govern Ireland, made the history of both places highly topical and wholly compatible with themes of colonization, appropriation, and resistance. Africa appears explicitly several times in the play; Ireland is never mentioned but may have been implied in

8 The tomb (1569) in Burford, Oxfordshire (25 miles from Stratford) of Edward Harman, a former barber to Henry VIII and local official, featuring four Brazilian Indians. Harman’s connection to the New World is unclear, but the Indians may suggest his participation in overseas mercantile adventures.

Barlow’s narrative of 1584, for example, describes the natives of Roanoke Island and vicinity as ‘most gentle, loving, and faithful, void of all guile and treason, and such as live after the manner of the Golden age’ (Hakluyt, 1598–1600, 8.305); a few years later, Thomas Harriot’s account of Roanoke Island and its inhabitants included a description of a shipwrecked Englishman (ibid., 5.191) that suggested ‘a full length portrait of the aboriginal inhabitant of the New World’ (Lee, ‘Caliban’, 341). But like Caliban’s name, his physical and social prototype remains unproven and endlessly arguable. And Caliban aside, The Tempest unquestionably has American overtones. It may not be Shakespeare’s American play, as some have proposed, but it nevertheless reflects to an indefinable extent the issues and events that had captured European imaginations since the late fifteenth century and had recently acquired new significance for England.

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Arden 3: 1990s to 2016/7

‘While building upon a the rich history of scholarly activity that has long shaped our understanding of Shakespeare’s works, this third series of the Arden Shakespeare is enlivened by a new generation’s encounter with Shakespeare.’

(General Editors’ Preface, Thompson and Taylor, 2016, p.xiv)
• **Competition:** OUP and CUP; Penguin; Norton; Palgrave Macmillan/RSC
• **Content/layout:** Redesign; performance notes; note additions, e.g. on religion and obscenity
• **Scholarship:** Production of texts, performance history, critical and feminist theory
• **General Editors:** recruited both a female (Ann Thompson) and a US (David Kasten) General Editor
• **Arden imprint** extended to Early Modern Plays (Cengage) and monographs (Bloomsbury)
Arden 3

- **Market shifts**: levels of study/global
- **New titles/designs**: + ‘apocrypha’
- **Production**: high values; digital production
- **Lifespan**: ‘In print for 20 years’
- **Payment**: Royalties in all contracts: ‘You don’t edit an Arden for the money’ (Thompson, 2014)
- **Editors**: Women/US scholars; one Indian editor; US Black female scholar revised *Othello*
1987: Associated Book Publishing bought by Thomson Corporation; Methuen name sold; Routledge launched, including Arden

1996: Thomson sold Routledge, retained Arden; moved to Thomas Nelson (Schools Arden)

2000: Thomson sold Thomas Nelson; retained Arden – Arden Schools initiated; moved to ITPS, part of Thomson Learning

2007: Thomson sold Thomson Learning to private equity firm, renamed Cengage Learning

2009: Arden purchased from Cengage by Bloomsbury Publishing, part of Methuen Drama/Bloomsbury Academic
The Arden 3 *Hamlet*

- **Two volumes, not a conflated text:** Q2, in the ‘Arden tradition’, plus appendices from F for performance; + second volume with Q1 and F
- **New treatment for a new generation:**
  ‘Our immediate predecessor, Harold Jenkins, did his job so well that we felt there was no need to do it again in the same way – one of the many reasons why we are offering a totally different approach to the play’ (Thompson and Taylor, 2016, p.xix)
- **Performance history balanced with textual criticism**
- **Recognition of the cumulative nature of editing *Hamlet***:
  ‘We are well aware that we stand (if at all) on the shoulders of giants…’ (Thompson and Taylor, 2016, p.9)
Arden 4: 2014 onwards

- USPs? meet needs of different users in print + digital?
- Arden Shakespeare as brand: expansion of imprint with Bloomsbury’s academic acquisitions (eg Continuum, 2011)
- Global appeal / scholars / notes?
- Increasingly aim for subscription products
- Performance media: partnerships, film/other media?
Whither critical editions of Shakespeare?

- Whither **Humanities** scholarship?
  
  *(Whither **universities**?)*

- Whither **publishing** (and its **editors**)?
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From 1899 to digital
The Arden Shakespeare,
Shakespearean critical scholarship and the evolution of English as a discipline

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Shakespeare: Metamorphosis
Senate House, University of London, 25 August 2016