

Contents

Preface 6

General Introduction by Jonathan Bate 8

- Shakespeare our Perennial Contemporary 8
- Shakespeare's Debut: The 'Upstart Crow' 13
- The Back Story: Shakespeare of Stratford 18
- The Playhouses 23
- Plague and Poetry 25
- The Lord Chamberlain's Man 27
- The Ensemble at Work 30
- 'Dangerous Matter': Politics and Religion 35
- The King's Man 38
- The Great Feast of Languages 42
- Cult and Heresy 45
- The First Folio Restored 50

User's Guide 58

Preliminary Pages of the First Folio 60

Foreword by Michael Boyd, Artistic Director, Royal Shakespeare Company 64

PLATES

William Shakespeare: Complete Works

with Introductions and 'Key Facts' by Jonathan Bate

Comedies

- The Tempest 1
- The Two Gentlemen of Verona 52
- The Merry Wives of Windsor 102
- Measure for Measure 155
- The Comedy of Errors 215
- Much Ado about Nothing 255
- Love's Labour's Lost 305
- A Midsummer Night's Dream 365
- The Merchant of Venice 413
- As You Like It 472
- The Taming of the Shrew 526
- All's Well that Ends Well 584
- Twelfth Night, or What You Will 645
- The Winter's Tale 698

Histories

- The Life and Death of King John 768
- The Life and Death of King Richard the Second 829
- The First Part of Henry the Fourth, with the Life and Death of Henry surnamed Hotspur 892
- The Second Part of Henry the Fourth, containing his Death and the Coronation of King Henry the Fifth 963
- The Life of Henry the Fifth 1026
- The First Part of Henry the Sixth 1098

The Second Part of Henry the Sixth, with the Death of the Good Duke Humphrey 1168

The Third Part of Henry the Sixth, with the Death of the Duke of York 1236

The Tragedy of Richard the Third, with the Landing of Earl Richmond and the Battle at Bosworth Field 1299

The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth 1382

Tragedies

- The Tragedy of Troilus and Cressida 1456
- The Tragedy of Coriolanus 1536
- The Lamentable Tragedy of Titus Andronicus 1616
- The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet 1675
- The Life of Timon of Athens 1744
- The Tragedy of Julius Caesar 1801
- The Tragedy of Macbeth 1859
- The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark 1918
- The Tragedy of King Lear 2004
- The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice 2081
- The Tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra 2158
- The Tragedy of Cymbeline 2240

Plays not in the First Folio

- Pericles, Prince of Tyre, by William Shakespeare and George Wilkins 2323
- The Two Noble Kinsmen, by William Shakespeare and John Fletcher 2356

Poems and Sonnets

- Venus and Adonis 2398
- The Rape of Lucrece 2412
- 'To the Queen' 2433
- 'Let the Bird of Loudest Lay' (also known as 'The Phoenix and Turtle') 2433
- Shakespeare's Sonnets 2435

A Scene for Sir Thomas More 2464

(introduction, transcription and modernized text by Eric Rasmussen)

Charts

- Shakespeare's Works: A Conjectural Chronology 2471
- The Houses of Lancaster and York: A Genealogy 2476
- Kings and Queens of England: From the History Plays to Shakespeare's Lifetime 2478
- The History Behind the Histories: A Chronology 2479
- The History Behind the Tragedies: A Chronology 2482

Acknowledgements and Picture Credits 2483–5

Alphabetical Index of Plays and Poems 2486