

## A Postscript on Thomas Gardner's Printing

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Shortly after submitting my two essays on Thomas Gardner's business, ornaments and printing,<sup>1</sup> I recognised one of Gardner's ornaments in a play by William Shakespeare.<sup>2</sup> Subsequent research has revealed thirteen plays printed for Jacob Tonson Jr. and Sr.,<sup>3</sup> collected under the general title *The Works of Shakespeare*, 8 vols. (London: J. Tonson, and the rest of the proprietors, 1735), ESTC t54702. Although I was able, in my essay on Gardner's business,<sup>4</sup> to allude to some of the new information outlined here, it was not possible to include all of the present information in either of those earlier essays.

The plays printed by Gardner are, in order of appearance in *The Works of Shakespeare*:

- A Midsummer-Night's Dream* (ESTC t54718; Ford, no. 205)<sup>5</sup>
- All's Well That Ends Well. A Comedy* (ESTC t21273; Ford, no. 1)
- Coriolanus. A Tragedy* (ESTC t34179; Ford, no. 34)
- Julius Caesar. A Tragedy* (ESTC t54705; Ford, no. 75)
- The Comedy of Errors* (ESTC t98; Ford, no. 30)
- The Life and Death of King John. A Tragedy* (ESTC t54729; Ford, no. 125)
- The Life and Death of Richard III* (ESTC t54704; Ford, no. 147)
- The Life and Death of Thomas Lord Cromwell* (ESTC t54738; Ford, no. 279)
- The London Prodigal. A Comedy* (ESTC t41173; Ford, no. 158)
- The Merry Wives of Windsor. A Comedy* (ESTC t54717; Ford, no. 199)
- Othello, The Moor of Venice. A Tragedy* (ESTC t54719; Ford, no. 221)
- The Second Part of Henry Sixth.... A Tragedy* (ESTC t54722; Ford, no. 110)
- The Tempest* (ESTC t54703; Ford, no. 277)
- Twelfth-Night: Or, What You Will* (ESTC t54735; Ford, no. 310)

These plays appear to have been first published individually in the fourth quarter of 1734. All but one of the Gardner-printed plays is dated 1734 (it is possible that the exception, Gardner's *Tempest*, may be misdated, with MDCCXXVI

<sup>1</sup>“Thomas, Lucy and Henry Lasher Gardner, Opposite St. Clement's Church in the Strand, 1739–1805,” *Script & Print* 39:1 (2015): 21–58; “A New Model for Ornament Stock Research: Thomas Gardner's Ornaments and a Checklist, 1739–1805,” *Script & Print* 39:2 (2015): 69–111.

<sup>2</sup>The ornaments are those I identify as: T01, T03, T05, T13; F02, F04.

<sup>3</sup>Jacob Tonson Jr. (d. 25 November 1735) was succeeded, first, by Jacob Tonson Sr. (d. 17 March 1736), then Jacob Tonson III (d. 31 March 1767).

<sup>4</sup>“Thomas, Lucy and Henry Lasher Gardner,” 26 n. 31.

<sup>5</sup>See H. L. Ford, *Shakespeare, 1700–1740; A Collation of the Editions and Separate Plays, with Some Account of T. Johnson and R. Walker* (Oxford: At the University Press, 1935).

a misprint for MDCCXXIV). More precise dating of individual plays is difficult due to the lack of newspaper advertisements. Tonson repeatedly vowed “That any Play of Shakespear’s that now is, or hereafter shall be out of Print, will be Reprinted without delay.” It appears that Tonson was true to his word and even published some of Shakespeare’s plays multiple times.<sup>6</sup> Seven of the plays printed by Gardner are reprints (Ford, nos. 75, 125, 147, 199, 221, 277, 279) and, as such, clearly post-date Tonson’s first publication of each play in this series. But, since the sequence in which titles were originally issued is unclear, it is uncertain exactly when each Gardner-printed play was released. Tonson complained about the first of Robert Walker’s rival editions in an advertisement dated 6 September 1734. Giles E. Dawson states that all of Tonson’s reprints “appeared before the end of 1734,” noting that “Tonson’s plays are all dated 1734” and suggesting “This ought to mean, and probably does mean, that the last one was printed before December 31, 1734.”<sup>7</sup>

If Dawson is correct, it is likely that the plays printed by Gardner for Tonson pre-date the earliest works previously identified by me as having been printed by Gardner. As I note in various places in my two essays, Thomas Gardner obtained his freedom on 5 February 1734, his old master died on 31 August 1734, he took on his first apprentice on 3 December 1734, by 26 April 1735 was taking in subscriptions for (and was involved in printing) Edward Cave’s edition of Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, *A Description of the Empire of China*, two more works containing some of his ornaments appeared in May 1735 and by 28 October 1735 he had “Printed and Sold” Tipping Silvester’s *A Critical Dissertation on Titus iii. 10, 11*.<sup>8</sup> If, as seems likely, Gardner began printing for Tonson in late 1734, then he may have taken on his first apprentice to assist in this work in December 1734.

There is a considerable literature on the Tonson’s 1734–1735 edition of Shakespeare’s plays, which were sold cheaply, in large numbers, and at a considerable loss, in an attempt to stop Robert Walker publishing his own, cheap edition of Shakespeare’s works.<sup>9</sup> The Walker–Tonson price war made

<sup>6</sup> For an example of Tonson’s advertisement, see *Twelfth-Night: Or, What You Will*, [71] (Ford, no. 310).

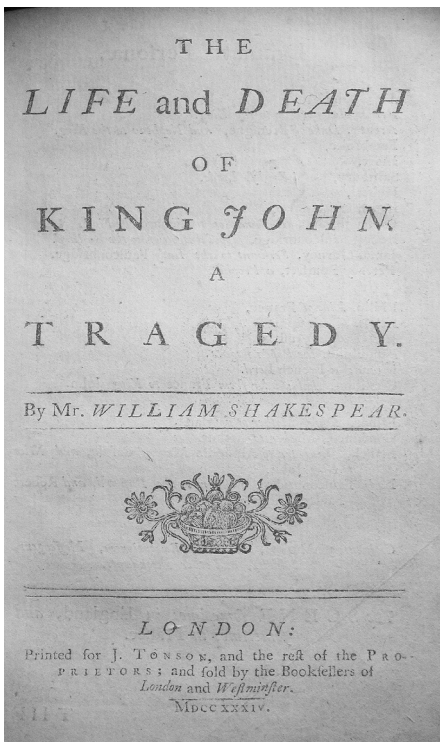
<sup>7</sup> Giles E. Dawson, “Robert Walker’s Editions of Shakespeare” in *Studies in the English Renaissance Drama*, ed. Josephine W. Bennett, Oscar Cargill and Vernon Hall Jr. (London: Peter Owen, 1959), 62, 66, 67 n. 6.

<sup>8</sup> “Thomas, Lucy and Henry Lasher Gardner,” 26; “A New Model for Ornament Stock Research,” 1735.1, 17.5.2, X1735.1, X1735.2, X1735.8.

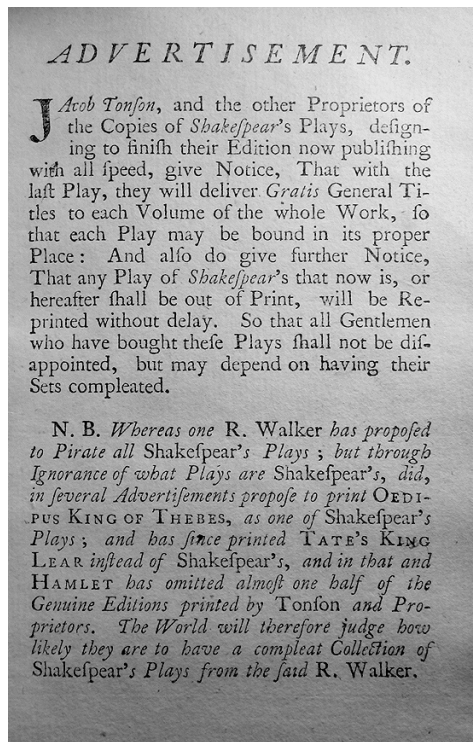
<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Giles E. Dawson, *Four Centuries of Shakespeare Publication* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Libraries, 1964); Colin Franklin, *Shakespeare Domesticated: The Eighteenth-Century Editions* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1991); Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print: A History and Chronology of Shakespeare Publishing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Don-Jon Dugas, *Marketing the Bard: Shakespeare in Performance and Print, 1660–1740* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006); Fiona Ritchie, Peter Sabor, eds., *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Shakespeare's works more accessible and popular than they had been and, within two years, this enhanced popularity had a noticeable impact on repertory.<sup>10</sup> The fact that the newly-freed Gardner was employed by Tonson in this enterprise, which has not previously been noted, is of considerable interest for the light it shines on Gardner (such as his early business activity and connections with leading publishers) and on Tonson's tactics in his battle with Walker. While it is beyond the scope of this postscript to explore further the insights to be gained by the discovery of Gardner's role in printing for Tonson during his battle with Walker, the discovery itself indicates the value of ornament study for our understanding of significant cultural events.

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Title-page of 1734 Tonson edition of Shakespeare's *King John* (ESTC T54729), featuring Gardner tailpiece T13



Advertisement form 1734 Tonson edition of Shakespeare's *King John* (ESTC T54729). (Photographs from author's personal copy.)

<sup>10</sup> Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, 230, 232.