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Warburton, Hanmer, and the 1745 Edition of Shakespeare

GILES E. DAWSON

THE NEGLECT BY MODERN EDITORS OF A 1745 edition of Shakespeare has led them into errors and false assumptions regarding eighteenth-century emendations of the text. This edition is in six octavo volumes with the following general title in the first volume:

THE | WORKS | OF | SHAKESPEAR. | IN | SIX
VOLUMES. | [rule] | Carefully REVISED and CORRECTED |
by the former EDITIONS. | [rule] | — *Nil ortum tale.* —
HOR. | [rule] | [ornament: a basket of flowers and foliage
with 2 birds, 56 x 22 mm.] | [double rule] | LONDON: |
Printed for J. and P. Knapton, S. Birt, T. Longman, |
H. Lintot, C. Hitch, J. Brindley, J. and R. Tonson and |
S. Draper, R. and B. Wellington, E. New, and B. Dod. |
[short rule] | M DCC XLV.

The editor is not named, either on this title or elsewhere, but the text is substantially that of the 1744 edition of Sir Thomas Hanmer printed at the Oxford University press, and the 'Advertisement from the Booksellers' (in vol. i) opens with the statement that 'This Edition is exactly copied from that lately printed in *Quarto* at *Oxford*'.

In order to understand the nature of this 1745 edition, and the reasons for its importance, we must go back some fifteen

or twenty years and examine the early connections of Sir Thomas Hanmer and the Rev. William Warburton with Shakespeare. Indeed the story actually begins with Lewis Theobald, who published in 1726 his *Shakespeare Restored*, an attack on Pope's editorial methods in his Shakespeare of 1725. At some time near the beginning of 1728 Theobald began what turned out to be a long and voluminous correspondence with Warburton in which the two men exchanged detailed critical and explanatory notes on the Shakespeare text. Theobald intended to publish critical remarks upon all the plays, similar to those on *Hamlet* of which *Shakespeare Restored* was chiefly composed. But by 1730 he wrote to Warburton that he had enlarged his plan and had now determined upon an edition of Shakespeare. Thereafter Warburton appears to have understood completely that the many notes which he continued to communicate to the editor were in fact contributions to this edition. Theobald accepted them, printed a large number of them as footnotes, nearly always assigning due credit for each, and devoted a paragraph of his preface to a grateful acknowledgment of Warburton's assistance. He did not use all of the contributions, however, and it was Warburton's hurt pride at the discovery of this, soon after the appearance of the edition in 1733, that led ultimately, about 1736, to a complete breach in the friendship of the two men. On 17 May 1734 Warburton wrote:

I have transcrib'd ab^t. 50 Emend. & remarks wth: I have at several times sent you, omitted in y^e. Edition of Shakespeare wth. I am sure are better than any of mine publish'd there. These I shall convey to you soon & desire you to publish them (as omitted by being mislaid) in y^e. Edition of the Poem[s], wth. I hope you will soon make ready for the Press.

A few days later he sent these emendations and notes (fifty-six of them) to Theobald.¹ But Theobald never published the edi-

1. Warburton had evidently kept copies of all the emendations and notes which he had through their long correspondence sent to

Theobald. These, together with the letters in which they had probably been embodied, are not known to have survived. But Theobald's

tion of the Poems which he appears to have been considering, and Warburton's strange request came to nothing. Theobald adopted the very reasonable position that it was implicit in any such voluntary contribution of material that the editor should have a free hand to select or discard as he might see fit. Actually, if Theobald erred at all in the selection of Warburton's notes, it was by including too many, for Warburton was inferior to Theobald as a scholar and in his knowledge of Shakespeare and Elizabethan literature. Throughout the later relations of the two men, Warburton is revealed as a thoroughly petty and vainglorious man.²

The next new edition of Shakespeare is that of Hanmer, which made its appearance in 1744, and in this, too, Warburton was involved. At what date Hanmer decided upon the preparation of an edition he nowhere tells us. In May 1737 Warburton spent a week at Mildenhall, Sir Thomas's seat, and at that time the baronet, though interested in constructing a 'correct text in Shakespeare,' had 'no thoughts at all of making it public.'³ It is not known what motive led Warburton to seek Hanmer out—if indeed he did so. It is not unlikely that he had in the back of his mind even then an edition of his own. His quarrel with Theobald was still fairly fresh, and he may have been thinking of some means of doing himself the justice which he felt he had been denied by Theobald. In October 1737, five months after the meeting with Hanmer, he wrote to Thomas Birch:

letters to Warburton, from 1729 to 1733, were preserved by the latter and are now in the Folger Library, bound in two large volumes (cs 873). With them in the second volume are transcripts, by an amanuensis but with interlined corrections in Warburton's hand, of half a dozen letters from Warburton to Theobald written in 1734. With these latter is a transcript of the 56 emendations and notes, together with several more additional notes sent later. The whole contents of these two MS volumes are printed (almost certainly from the

Folger MS) by John Nichols in *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, II (1817), 189-648.

2. For a full account of the relations between Theobald and Warburton see R. F. Jones, *Lewis Theobald, his Contribution to English Scholarship with some Unpublished Letters* (New York, 1919), chapters 5 and 6.

3. Letter of Hanmer to Dr. Joseph Smith, Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, 28 Oct. 1742.

You are pleased to enquire about Shakespeare. I believe (to tell it as a secret) I shall . . . *give an Edition of it to the World*. Sir Thomas Hanmer has a true critical genius, and has done great things in this Author; so you may expect to see a very extraordinary edition of its kind.⁴

This sounds as if some sort of cooperation between the two men was contemplated, but since in later accounts of their negotiations they contradict each other it is difficult to decide just what sort. In the letter to Joseph Smith quoted above Hanmer wrote:

I am satisfied there is no edition coming or likely to come from Warburton, but it is a report raised to serve some little purpose or other, of which I see there are many on foot. I have reason to know that gentleman is very angry with me, for a cause of which I think I have no reason to be ashamed, or he to be proud. My acquaintance with him began upon an application from himself, and at his request the present Bp of Salisbury introduced him to me for this purpose only, as was then declared, that as he had many observations upon Shakespeare then lying by him, over and above those printed in Theobald's book, he much desired to communicate them to me, that I might judge whether any of them were worthy to be added to those emendations, which he understood I had long been making upon that author. I received his offer with all the civility I could: upon which a long correspondence began by letters, in which he explained his sense upon many passages, which sometimes I thought just, but mostly wild and out of the way. Afterwards he made a journey hither on purpose to see my books; he staid about a week with me, and had the inspection of them: and all this while I had no suspicion of any other design, in all the pains he took, but to perfect a correct text in Shakespeare, of which he seemed very fond. But not long after, the views of interest began to shew themselves, several hints were dropt of the advantage he might receive from publishing the work thus corrected; but as I had no thoughts at all of making it public, so I was more averse to yield to it in such a manner as was likely to produce a paltry edition, by making it the means only of getting a greater sum of money by it. Upon this he flew into a great rage, and there is an end of the story . . .

This letter was printed in *Biographia Britannica* (*sub* Smith) but, through the intervention of Warburton, then Bishop of Gloucester, was cancelled. Philip Nichols, one of the proprie-

4. This letter is printed in Nichols, *Illustrations*, II, 71-77.

tors of *Biographia Britannica*, through whose efforts the letter had originally been obtained, attempted to prevent the cancellation, but was overruled. He thereupon issued, anonymously, a pamphlet entitled *The Castrated Letter of Sir Thomas Hanmer, In the Sixth Volume of Biographia Britannica* (1763), in which he printed (pp. 26-27) the letter to Smith.⁵ This he followed by a reply from Warburton (originally contributed, Nichols says, to the *St. James Chronicle* of 1 November 1762, when the Bishop was still expecting the Hanmer letter to appear in *Biographia Britannica*). This reply begins:

Sir Thomas Hanmer's letter from Mildenhall to Oxford, Oct. 28, 1742, is one continued falsehood from beginning to end.

It is false that my acquaintance with him began upon an application from me to him. It began upon an application of the present Bishop of London [formerly of Salisbury] to me, in behalf of Sir Thomas Hanmer, and, as I understood, at Sir Thomas Hanmer's desire. The thing speaks itself. It was publicly known that I had written notes on Shakespeare, because part of them were printed; few people knew that Sir Thomas Hanmer had: I certainly did not know; nor indeed, whether he was living or dead.

The falsehood is still viler because it sculks only under an insinuation that I made a journey to him to Mildenhall, without an invitation, whereas it was at his earnest and repeated request, as appears by his letters, which I have still by me.

5. He asserts (p. 17) that he 'found the offensive sheet had been withdrawn, and a new one put into its place, printed so much wider as was necessary to fill the same space, without Sir Thomas's letter.' In the three copies which I have seen (Folger and Huntington) the letter is present (leaf 41Q2, pp. 3743-44) and there is no sign of cancellation. But there is good evidence that the cancellation (of the whole sheet) was carried out and that the Folger and Huntington copies are not three which escaped with the cancellandum in place. Instead I am convinced that in these copies—and probably in all others—the sheet as it now stands is a second cancellans, substituted for the first one (from which the letter was omitted). On p. 3780 (*sub Spelman*) is a note quoting from Warburton's Shakespeare Preface a statement relating to his quarrel with Hanmer.

This statement, the editors say, came to their attention 'since the letter at the end of Dr Joseph Smith's Article was printed off.' And they add that if they had seen it in time, it 'should have been inserted as a marginal note to the aforesaid letter of Sir Thomas Hanmer.' But as the letter now stands in the Smith article the statement *has* been inserted as a marginal note, to which is added a reference to the note on p. 3780. It seems probable then that Philip Nichols ultimately prevailed with the editors to restore the Hanmer letter. It is from *Biog. Brit.*, p. 3743, that I quote the letter above. It is also printed by John Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, v (1812), 588-89, and by Sir Henry Bunbury, *The Correspondence of Sir Thomas Hanmer, Bart.* (1838), pp. 85-88.

After relating that Hanmer had first tried to interest a 'bookseller in London, of the best reputation' (Nichols says this was Tonson), Warburton continues:

But the bookseller understanding that he made use of many of my notes, and that I knew nothing of the project, thought fit to send me this account; on which I wrote to Sir Th. Hanmer, upbraiding him with his behaviour . . .

One can scarcely help feeling some little annoyance at the tone of nobility and insistent amateurism which Hanmer assumes throughout the whole affair. Scholarly reputation is nothing to him, and the thought of financial gain abhorrent. He has, he writes in the preface to his edition, 'made it the amusement of his leisure hours for many years past to look over his [Shakespeare's] writings.' Yet his conduct, not only in connection with Shakespeare but in other passages of his life, was that of a guileless and generous man. His fault was simplicity, and there was in him neither rancor nor deceit.

Warburton's behaviour, in contrast, attracts little sympathy or confidence. Self-interest is too apparent in all of his relationships—with Theobald, with Pope, with Hanmer. Yet even his enemies—and he was not without them—did not accuse him of out-and-out lying.

I think then that we can reconcile the opposed statements of Hanmer and Warburton without giving the lie to either of them. Bishop Sherlock, perhaps knowing of their common interest in Shakespeare, may well have brought them together in such a way that each felt himself to be the one complimented. During the 'long correspondence' that followed and the week at Mildenhall, Hanmer and Warburton may have exchanged comments on the text without either one mentioning clearly what was probably yet in the mind of each no more than an ill-defined notion of producing an edition. It is even possible that at that time neither had formed such a notion at all. It is certain that Warburton sent Hanmer many notes, which he thought 'mostly wild and out of the way'. A little later,

thinking—or perhaps only dreaming—that Hanmer was going to help him, Warburton wrote the letter to Birch quoted above and then dropped some hints to Hanmer about advantage to himself. It is likely that in this he clumsily displayed his spirit of self-seeking pettiness which offended the guileless baronet. And so they quarrelled, and each man felt himself aggrieved. Then for some years Warburton, whose main path of promotion lay in the Church, was busy with *The Divine Legation of Moses* and other theological works. Hanmer meanwhile continued to amuse his leisure hours with his favorite author and so was able, a few years later, to make a gift of his edition to Oxford, himself paying for the handsome copper-plates by Hayman and stipulating only that the set should be even more sumptuous than Pope's elegant quartos of 1725 and that the price must not exceed three guineas.

Aside from the impressive appearance of the six volumes when they appeared in 1744, it is difficult to find much good to say about Hanmer's edition. It competes with Warburton's of 1747 for lowest place among eighteenth-century editions. But palpable as they are, Hanmer's faults as an editor are those common to all editors from Rowe to Johnson. His method was theirs—to reprint the latest edition or editions,⁶ accepting their emendations or guesses as the established text and further emending any passage the meaning of which did not strike his fancy.⁷ All the editors made some pretence of examining or even collating first editions, but none were systematic in this, and all, persuaded of the corrupt state of the early texts, exercised varying degrees of license in correcting them. Hanmer was

6. Hanmer printed from the 1725 Pope, but he appears to have intended originally to use the 1733 Theobald edition for this purpose. A set of the latter in the Folger Library has been heavily annotated throughout (except for *Titus*, *Macbeth*, and *Othello*) in his hand as if to prepare it for printer's copy. But he seems to have changed his mind about this and probably transferred these annotations and emendations to a copy of the 1725 Pope.

7. A good example is Hanmer's reading of *Orbello*, I.i.21:

<i>Pope and Theob.</i>	damn'd in a fair wife
<i>Hanmer</i>	damn'd in a fair phyz

But it would be unfair to Hanmer not to offset this by mentioning the fact that a number of his emendations have met with general acceptance by later editors—*M. N. D.*, I.i.187, for instance.

perhaps a little more arbitrary in his emendations and a little less sound in his judgments than most of the others—but not much. In one respect, however, he was clearly more culpable than any other—or at least more consistently culpable. He never, or almost never, gives credit to any of the earlier editors for the many emendations of which he has availed himself, and he supplies no textual notes. Along with his own he prints Pope's or Theobald's or Warburton's readings, quite silently, and occasionally he lifts an explanatory note equally without credit or comment. He merely wished to construct 'a correct text in Shakespeare', not seeking reputation for himself; and in his own generosity he simply embraced his fellow-workers in the field.

Such methods are avoided by modern editors, like the Furnesses and their successors in the *New Variorum*. These want to know who is responsible for each reading and are punctilious in assigning credit for each. But when they come to deal with Hanmer and Warburton they are, without knowing it, too often working in the dark. As a result Hanmer has been given credit—or should I say discredit?—for a great many readings which belong to Warburton. To Theobald too, though much less often, have been assigned emendations which originated with Warburton.

The sole value of the 1745 edition, which is the subject of this paper, lies in the fact that it constitutes, as I believe, a reliable key by which these errors can be corrected.

The 'Advertisement from the Booksellers' informs the reader that the plan followed in this reprint of the 1744 Oxford edition of Hanmer is to mark those passages in the text altered by Hanmer and to 'place the discarded Readings at the bottom of the Page, as also to point out the Emendations made by Mr. *Theobald*, Mr. *Warburton*, and Dr. *Thirlby*,⁸ in Mr. *Theobald's* Edition, which are used by this Editor'—that is by Hanmer.

8. Styan Thirlby, of Jesus College, Cambridge, a friend of Theobald's, contributed a number of notes and emendations to Theobald's edition.

This is an accurate account of the method used, at no inconsiderable cost in labor, throughout the six volumes. Wherever, departing from the text as handed down by Pope, Hanmer prints an emendation of Theobald and his helpers (Thirlby and Warburton), or one of his own, the emended words are marked in the text of 1745 by a pair of small superior slanted lines, and a footnote is supplied. For example, in *Merry Wives*, V.iii.13, where Pope and earlier editions read 'and the *Welch* devil *Herne*?' and Theobald alters '*Herne*' to '*Evans*', Hanmer follows the latter, with '*Evans*'. In the 1745 reprint '*Evans*' is enclosed in the superior slanted lines, and a footnote reads '*Herne? . . . old edit. Theob. emend.*' If the emendation was first proposed by Thirlby or Warburton, the appropriate name is given. If by Hanmer himself, the footnote simply gives the reading and assigns it to the '*old edit.*', without the emendator's name. The number of emendations so marked in the text and footnoted in one way or the other is very large. In six plays chosen at random I find 527 in all; 409 are attributed to no one, which means that they are Hanmer's own; 60 are attributed to Theobald; 52 to Warburton; and 6 to Thirlby.

The question which must now be considered is who could have done this work on the 1744 Hanmer text. It can be demonstrated, I believe, that it was Warburton himself. The 'Advertisement from the Booksellers' continues, after the sentence quoted in the paragraph just above:

The changes in the disposition of the Lines for the Regulation of the Metre are too numerous to be taken particular notice of. As to the other Emendations and Notes of Mr. *Warburton*, which are for the most part marked likewise in this Edition, we are only commission'd to say thus much; "*That he desires the Publick would suspend their Opinion of his Conjectures 'till they see how they can be supported: For he holds it as ridiculous to alter the Text of an Author without Reasons assigned, as it was dishonourable to publish those Alterations without leave obtained. When he asks this Indulgence for himself, if the Publick will give it too to the Honourable Editor, he will not complain; as having no*

9. M. W. W., A. Y. L., *John, Rich. III, A. & C., Hamlet.*

“objection why his too should not occupy the Place they have usurped, until they be shewn to be arbitrary, groundless, mistaken, and violating not only the Sense of the Author, but all the Rules and Canons of true Criticism: Not that the Violation of these Rules ought to be any more objected to the Editor, than the Violation of the Rules of Poetry to his Author, as both professedly wrote without any.”

This curious advertisement clearly constitutes an attack by Warburton upon Hanmer—with special emphasis upon the latter's practice of appropriating other men's emendations 'without leave obtained.' It does not imply that Warburton performed the textual collation which gives the reprint its value. But though it is not improbable that he or Tonson, the publisher, employed some nameless hack for the more tedious part of the task, yet it is difficult to see how it could have been accomplished without Warburton's active collaboration—or indeed to see who else would have had any motive for its accomplishment.

The greater part of the work, it is true, could have been done by anyone—simply by collating Hanmer's text with Theobald's and Pope's. In this way it would be an easy matter to determine where Hanmer departs from the 'old edit.'—from Pope, that is—and where he follows Theobald. Where Theobald has followed a reading suggested to him by Warburton or Thirlby, his footnote almost invariably makes this clear, and thus if Hanmer adopts one of these readings his source is apparent. But frequently one finds in the 1745 edition a note reading '*old edit. Warb. emend.*' when a glance at Theobald's text shows that that editor had not adopted the reading or even mentioned it in a note (as he occasionally did do) as a discarded possibility suggested by Warburton. These readings, then, appear in print for the first time in Hanmer's first edition; yet the textual annotator of 1745 assigns them to Warburton. Something like half of all the emendations claimed for '*Warb.*' in the footnotes of the reprint are of this kind.

In light of what we know about Warburton's relations with Theobald and Hanmer it is not difficult to explain these assign-

ments of emendations to him. We know that Theobald had declined to make use of some which Warburton felt were his very best. We have Hanmer's own statement that Warburton 'had many observations upon Shakespeare then lying by him' when the two men began corresponding, and that some of them Hanmer 'thought just'. The latter nowhere denies having used these, though how many of them he may have used he does not suggest and we have no way of knowing. There is in fact definite proof of his adopting some emendations which he could have got from no other source: for six of the fifty-six that Warburton sent (for the second time) to Theobald in May 1734¹⁰ were adopted by Hanmer and are duly credited to Warburton in the 1745 footnotes. These six emendations follow (with Globe references):

<i>Com. of Errors</i> , IV.iii.28.		
<i>Theob.</i> morris-pike	<i>MS and Han.</i>	Maurice-pike
<i>All's Well</i> , IV.v.42.		
<i>Theob.</i> hotter	<i>MS and Han.</i>	honour'd
<i>John</i> , IV.ii.255.		
<i>Theob.</i> murd'rous	<i>MS and Han.</i>	murd'rer's
<i>Romeo and Jul.</i> , III.v.32.		
<i>Theob.</i> would they had	<i>MS and Han.</i>	wot they have
<i>Othello</i> , IV.i.42.		
<i>Theob.</i> instruction	<i>MS and Han.</i>	induction
<i>Ant. and Cleo.</i> , IV.xv.10.		
<i>Theob.</i> Burn the great Sphere		
<i>MS</i> Turn from th'great, &c.		
<i>Han.</i> Turn from the Sphere		

The treatment of these and other emendations claimed by Warburton in the 1745 footnotes at the hands of New Variorum editors and the old Cambridge editors (1863-66), shows that the 1745 edition ought to be better known than it has been.

10. See note 1 above.

The elder Furness, it is true, appears to have known the fifty-six emendations and notes preserved in MS—probably from Nichols's *Illustrations*—for he properly assigns many of them to Warburton. He so treats the above *Othello* and *Antony and Cleopatra* emendations. But for no discernible reason he assigns the *Romeo and Juliet* reading to Hanmer. It is certain that neither he nor the Cambridge editors used the 1745 edition, and the same can be said of more recent editors of New Variorum volumes. None of these lists that edition among those collated or refers to it in any way. Three additional examples (where the MS is not involved) will make the point clear:

Macbeth, I.ii.14.

Theob. quarry

Han. quarrel

(claimed by Warb.)

Cambridge attributes emendation to Hanmer, Furness to Johnson!

¹ *Henry IV*, III.ii.13.

Theob. attempts

Han. attaints

(claimed by Warb.)

Cambridge and Hemingway attribute emendation to Hanmer.

² *Henry IV*, IV.i.175.

Theob. purposes confin'd

Han. properties confirm'd

(claimed by Warb.)

Cambridge and Shaaber attribute emendation to Hanmer.

In view of Warburton's animosity toward the Oxford editor one might well question his trustworthiness to perform his task in an even reasonably judicious manner. There does not seem to be any way of proving, for example, that he did not appropriate to himself, in the 1745 footnotes, more emendations than he had a right to. But to me it seems unlikely that he did such a thing. Neither Hanmer nor anyone else is known to have made such a charge. Zachary Grey, whose *Word or Two of Advice to William*

Warburton (1746) takes Warburton to task for the 'Advertisement' of 1745, gives no hint of this kind of dishonesty. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary we must, in my opinion, assume that Warburton's assignments of credit for emendations are accurate and reliable. Accordingly we must in the future attribute to Warburton those emendations claimed by him in the 1745 reprint.

A few words remain to be said about the publication of the edition. At the beginning of the century the Shakespeare copyrights were divided between the Tonson firm and the Wellington firm, the former owning the greater part.¹¹ In spite of the Copyright Act of 1710 these firms continued with fair success to claim the exclusive right to publish Shakespeare. All but one of the important editions from Rowe (1709) to Johnson (1765) were in fact published by the Tonsons—usually in association with the Wellingtons and often, as in 1745, with a number of other booksellers. The one exception was the Oxford edition of 1744—Hanmer's first edition—which in the eyes of the Tonsons and Wellingtons constituted a brazen piracy. On 11 April 1745 Jacob Tonson III, having seen proposals of Edward Cave to publish an edition of Shakespeare, wrote in a letter of warning to Cave:

I doubt not I can shew you such a title as will satisfy you . . . and I will then give you my reasons why we rather chuse to proceed with the University by way of reprisal for their scandalous invasion of our right, than by law.¹²

What his reasons were we do not know, but the reprisal almost certainly consisted of the publication of the cheap reprint of 1745—a sort of piracy of a piracy. Not only was it cheap, and thus designed to undersell the stately Oxford edition, but, as we have seen, the 'Advertisement from the Booksellers' contains a vicious attack upon the very book to which it is prefixed.

11. For an account of the Shakespeare copyrights see G. E. Dawson, 'The Copyright of Shakespeare's Dramatic Works' in *Studies in*

Honor of A. H. R. Fairchild (University of Missouri, 1946), pp. 11-35.

12. *Ibid.* and Pegge, *Anonymiana* (1809), p. 34.

When this 'Advertisement' asks the public to 'suspend their Opinion of his [Warburton's] Conjectures 'till they see how they can be supported', it seems clear that Warburton was at work on his own edition. This was published in 1747—by the Tonsons and their associates. We may infer, then, that in 1745 Warburton had already entered into an agreement with his publishers. Though it is not improbable that it was the Tonsons who initiated the reprint—as a protest against the 'piracy', in order that they might not give the appearance of acquiescing in it—it is difficult to see how they could have regarded the careful textual apparatus as a necessary adjunct to it. It is therefore probable that this was added at the suggestion of Warburton as his own personal revenge on 'the Honourable Editor'. He may have wished at the same time to establish his own right to the emendations which he had supplied to Hanmer—most of which he was to use in his own edition of 1747.