

## **An early quarto edition of Shakespeare's *Love's Labours Lost***

William Shakespeare, *Love's Labours Lost*. London: John Smethwicke, 1631. 7 1/8 inches x 4 7/8 inches (181 mm x 124 mm), [76] pages, A–I4 K2.

Loues Labours lost. | A wittie and | pleasant | comedie, | As it was Acted by his Maiesties Seruants at | *the Blacke-Friers and the Globe*. | *Written* | By **William Shakespeare**. | [Smethwicke's device] | *London*, | Printed by *W. S.* for *John Smethwicke*, and are to be | sold at his Shop in Saint *Dunstones* Church- | yard vnder the Diall. | 1631.

Shakespeare's quartos, so named because of their format (a single sheet folded twice, creating four leaves or eight pages), are the first printed representations of his plays and, as none of the plays survives in manuscript, of great importance to Shakespeare scholarship. Only twenty-one of Shakespeare's plays were published in quarto before the closure of the theaters and outbreak of civil war in 1642. These quartos were printed from either Shakespeare's "foul papers" (a draft with notations and changes that was given in sections to actors for their respective roles); from "fair copies" created from foul papers that presented the entire action of the play; from promptbooks, essentially fair copies annotated and expanded by the author and acting company to clarify stage directions, sound effects, etc.; or from a previously published quarto edition. The quartos were inexpensive to produce and were published for various reasons, including to secure the acting company's rights to the material and to bring in money during the plague years in London when the theaters were closed.

At the opening of the play, Ferdinand, the king of Navarre, and three noble friends take an oath to devote themselves to scholarship and avoid women for a period of three years. He decrees that no woman will come near his court. Soon after the princess of France arrives, along with three ladies from her retinue, to discuss whether France owes money to the kingdom of Navarre. The French delegation is granted an audience with Ferdinand, who immediately becomes smitten with the princess. Each of his attendants, as well, have been captivated by different ladies accompanying the princess. One by one, the men let slip their love for the women; they agree to break their vow and pursue their respective love interests. The men visit the princess and her attendants in disguise but are recognized by the women who tease them. The men return out of costume and declare their love. After a lavish pageant, word arrives at the court that the king of France is dead; the princess declares she will not consider Ferdinand's suit before a year of mourning has elapsed. Her attendants do likewise with their suitors and they return to France.

This second quarto of *Love's Labor's Lost* is bound nineteenth-century red morocco by with gilt tooling. A stamp in the top left corner of the front pastedown ("BOUND BY HAYDAY") identifies this as the work of the important nineteenth-century London bookbinder James Hayday (1804–1876). "SHAKESPEARE. LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST. 1631" is lettered in gold up the spine.

William Holgate's bookplate is on the front pastedown, and he sold this copy in June 1846 to W. Windus, who sold it to James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps (1820–1889) in March 1868. Halliwell-Phillipps was an English

Shakespeare collector and scholar whose *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare* (1848) was published in several editions. Beginning in the 1870s, he devoted his time completely to the research of Shakespeare's life. Halliwell-Phillipps was instrumental in the acquisition of New Place, the site of Shakespeare's last home, and in the creation of the Museum at Stratford-upon-Avon (now Nash's House and New Place). He gave this quarto to Edinburgh University Library in 1872.

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