



## Complete Works of John for (Collected Works of John Ford)

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Volumes II and III of the Collected Works of John Ford contain the six plays that Ford wrote at the beginning of his theatrical career in collaboration with other dramatists: *The Laws of Candy* (1619-20) with Massinger, *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621) with Dekker and Rowley, *The Welsh Ambassador* (1623) with Dekker, *The Spanish Gypsy* (1623) with Dekker, Rowley, and Middleton, *The Sun's Darling* (1624) with Dekker, and *The Fair Maid of the Inn* (1626) with Massinger and Webster. This is the first time that Ford's co-authored works have been collected. In Volume II the General Editor, Sir Brian Vickers, contributes two Introductions, 'Co-authorship in Jacobean and Caroline Drama', and 'Identifying Co-Authors'. In the first he reviews collaborative authorship (practiced by every dramatist of this period), in terms of theatrical conditions, the competing companies, the need for new repertoire, the process of assigning individual contributions and assembling the whole play. In the second he discusses the methods that have been applied over the last two centuries to identify co-authors. He then provides separate discussions of the authorship problem in each play, evaluating previous attributions and bringing new evidence to bear. A special feature of this volume is the introduction of a new methodology, based on computer software programs that identify student plagiarism. Used in combination with high-speed search engines and a large electronic database of contemporary plays, this method permits for the first time accurate identification of each co-author's contribution. Volume III contains the text of the plays, edited by a team composed of established and younger scholars. Five of the plays - *The Laws of Candy*, *The Witch of Edmonton*, *The Spanish Gypsy*, *The Sun's Darling* and *The Fair Maid of the Inn* - have been freshly edited from the original editions, surviving copies of which have been collated to identify press corrections. The sixth, *The Welsh Ambassador*, has been edited from the sole extant manuscript. For each work the editors provide an introduction that discusses the play's date and theatrical genesis, its sources, dramaturgy and other features. A full commentary is provided for all texts, giving historical explanations of the vocabulary, parallel passages in other works by Ford, and theatrical annotation, where relevant. This volume provides a unique opportunity for everyone interested in the career of a major playwright to appreciate how he learned his trade by collaborating with more experienced dramatists, a process in which his own distinctive voice was formed.

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