

THE DATES OF CYRIL BAILEY'S OXFORD CLASSICAL TEXTS OF LUCRETIUS

Neither the first nor the second edition of Cyril Bailey's text of Lucretius in the series *Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis* carries a date of publication. Reprints of the second edition give the respective dates as 1900 and 1922, but Bailey himself always gives them as 1898 and 1921. The result of this disagreement has been confusion. Some have accepted the dates given by the Clarendon Press; others have adopted those given by Bailey; others again have made their own mixture: the Teubner editor Josef Martin chooses 1898 and 1922,¹ but Lucretius' bibliographer Cosmo Gordon gives 1900 and 1921.² The purpose of this note is to set the record straight and prevent the muddle that has persisted throughout the twentieth century from continuing in the twenty-first and beyond.

One would normally expect an author to recall accurately the publication-dates of his own books; one would certainly expect him to know the publication-date of his first book, which the first edition of his Lucretius was for Bailey. In the preface to his translation, *Lucretius on the Nature of Things* (Oxford, 1910), 4, he writes: 'I have translated from my own text published in the Bibliotheca Oxoniensis in 1898'; he gives the same publication-date for the first edition and 1921 for the second in his three-volume edition of *De rerum natura*³ and in his article on Lucretius in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (1949¹).⁴ However, as we shall now demonstrate, his dating of both editions is wrong.

The preface to the first edition is dated 'mense Novembr. A.S. MDCCCXCVIII', which in itself would make publication in that year most unlikely; and the Oxford University Press's own records show that it did not take place.⁵ The Press archivist, Martin Maw, reports that printing was somewhat delayed 'while terms for the series were discussed and Methuen refused some of Oxford's proposals', but that the Secretary to the Delegates ordered the book to press on 22 September 1899.⁶ The surviving records do not reveal the exact date of publication, but a notice in *The Times* for 1 January 1900,⁷ p. 8, col. 4, under the heading 'Publications Today', runs as follows:

The first four volumes of the new series of Oxford Classical Texts (*Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis*) will be issued immediately from the Clarendon Press. They are: Thucydides, edited by Mr. H. S. Jones, Plato, edited by Mr. J. Burnet, Lucretius, edited by Mr. C. Bailey, and Tacitus, edited by Mr. H. Furneaux. The series will comprise 26 authors in all.

All four of the reviews listed by S. Lambrino, *Bibliographie de l'antiquité classique 1896-1914* (Paris, 1951), 367 were published either in late 1900 or in 1901,⁸ and appeared in issues in which most of the other reviews are of books published in 1900.

¹ J. Martin, *T. Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex* (Leipzig, 1963⁵), xix.

² C. A. Gordon, *A Bibliography of Lucretius* (London, 1962¹; Winchester, 1985²), 67-8.

³ *Titi Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex* (Oxford, 1947), i.50, iii.1782.

⁴ These dates remain in the revision of his article by G. W. Williams (1970²); in 1996³ it was replaced with an article by P. G. and D. P. Fowler, who cite only the second edition and date it 1922.

⁵ Since 1978 the Clarendon Press has been simply an imprint of the OUP, not a separate business within it.

⁶ We thank Mr Maw for this information and his assistant Jenny McMorris for finding the publication-date of the second edition.

⁷ In England, till long after the Second World War, both law and custom made 1 January a normal working day.

⁸ A. Brieger, *BPhW* 20 (1900), cols. 1576-8, in issue no. 51 of 22 December; A. E. Housman, *CR* 14 (1900), 367-8, in the October number; P. Thomas, *Revue de l'instruction publique en*

Although there was firmer understanding in 1900 than in 2000 that the new century would not begin until the following year, nevertheless the matter was debated in the correspondence-columns of *The Times*; either for that reason or for the relief of Mafeking and the Khaki Election, the year might therefore have seemed not unmemorable, especially to an author whose first book had appeared in it, but it is clear that Bailey confused the year in which his Lucretius was published with that in which he had completed the work.

He made the same mistake with the second edition too. Its preface, which begins with the words 'In his tribus et viginti annis, ex quo primum carmen Lucretianum edidi', is dated 'MCMXXI'. Twenty-three years did indeed separate the completion of the first edition and that of the second, but the Press's records show that the latter was published not in 1921 but on 8 June 1922. It is listed among 'Books Received' in *Classical Review* 36 (1922), 143, the August–September issue; the three reviews noted by Jules Marouzeau, *Dix années de bibliographie classique: bibliographie critique et analytique de l'antiquité gréco-latine pour la période 1914–1924* (Paris, 1927), did not appear until 1923.⁹

Surprising though Bailey's misdating of his editions may seem, it was made the easier by the publisher's decision not to print publication-dates in the Oxford Classical Texts. This aroused criticism at the time: Paul Thomas, reviewing Bailey's first edition together with Henry Furneaux's *Opera minora* of Tacitus, asked 'pourquoi les volumes ne sont-ils ni datés ni paginés?';¹⁰ J. D. Duff made the same complaint in his review of the second edition,¹¹ observing that the date of the preface 'does not fix the year of publication', and therefore did not establish whether Bailey had taken account of Alfred Ernout's Budé edition, which is dated 1920. It is now clear that Bailey had the opportunity to peruse it at least while his own book was in press; however, he makes no reference to it, either because he had not seen it or because its text, like his own, was conservative.

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Belgique 43 (1900), 191–2; L. Valmagg, *Bollettino di filologia classica* 7 (1900–1), 271, in issue no. 12 of June 1901. Lambrino himself gives 1899 as the publication-date of Bailey's text; so far as we know, he is alone in doing so. Gordon (n. 2), 68 gives January 1900.

⁹ J. D. Duff, *CR* 37 (1923), 118; A. Ernout, *Revue critique d'histoire et de littérature* 57 (1923), 63; W. A. Merrill, *CPh* 18 (1928), 184. Marouzeau and Ernout give the publication-year as 1921, presumably from the editor's preface; Merrill gives 1922, Duff no date at all.

¹⁰ Rev. cit. (n. 8), 192.

¹¹ Rev. cit. (n. 9).

A HUMOROUS *RECUSATIO*: ON PROPERTIUS 3.5

The contrast between the fourth and fifth elegies of Propertius Book Three has often been observed. A number of common elements, especially in their closures, signal a relationship and the fifth sets itself in opposition to the fourth, as the opening movement signals. We might say that the two elegies constitute a sort of diptych, a diptych in which the later poem functions as the logical and thematic complement to the former.¹

¹ See the excellent commentary of P. Fedeli (*Propertius. Il Libro Terzo delle Elegie* [Bari, 1985]), especially 174–5, but also the notes on lines 1 and 47–8.