



The Works of William Congreve: Volume I

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The late D. F. McKenzie worked on this comprehensive edition of the works of the playwright, poet, librettist, and novelist William Congreve for more than twenty years, until his sudden death in 1999. This was a task he had taken over from Herbert Davis, to whom this edition is dedicated. During that time McKenzie uncovered new verse and letters, collated Congreve's texts, recorded their complicated textual history, constructed appendices that shed light on the dramatic context in which Congreve worked, and examined how his contemporaries received Congreve's work. More importantly, McKenzie has convincingly re-evaluated Congreve's works and life to transform our image of the man and his reputation.

McKenzie here follows the editorial practice suggested in two early editions of the *Works* published by Congreve's friend, the bookseller Jacob Tonson, in 1710 and 1719. These three volumes follow a plan similar to that in the Tonson edition, with *The Old Batchelor*, *The Double-Dealer*, and *Love for Love* collected in the first, a central volume with *The Way of the World*, and a final volume with Congreve's novel *Incognita*, some of his prose works, letters, and later verse. In each case, Congreve's work is left to speak for itself, unencumbered by intrusive notes, textual apparatus, or collations, which are gathered instead near the end of each volume.

This edition will be an invaluable resource for scholars for many years to come. It is a monument to McKenzie's own scholarship as well as to the integrity of William Congreve.

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