

Samuel Richardson

Introduction to Pamela



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Minden jog fenntartva!

INTRODUCTION

Since most publishers of *Pamela* have preferred to print Richardson's table of contents from the sixth edition, his complete introduction (his preface, together with letters to the editor and comments) is missing even from some of our best collections. Occasionally one finds the preface and the first two letters, but only four publishers since Richardson have attempted to reprint the full introduction. Harrison (London, 1785) -- who omits the first letter -- and Cooke (London, 1802-3) both follow Richardson's eighth edition; Ballantyne (Edinburgh, 1824) uses the fourth; the Shakespeare Head (Oxford, 1929), the third. And even these printings leave one dissatisfied. The Shakespeare Head gives the fullest text, but naturally omits Richardson's revisions; Cooke gives the introduction in its final form, but one misses the full text which accompanied the book in its heyday; and rarely are both Cooke and Shakespeare Head to be found in the same library.

Richardson's complete introduction gains importance when we note that he retained and revised it through seven of his eight editions of *Pamela*. To see the text and follow Richardson's changes is to get an unusually intimate view of his attitude toward his book, of his concessions and tenacities, of Richardson the anonymous "editor" who could not keep the author's laurels completely under his hat.

This present reprint, therefore, intends to give the fullest text of Richardson's introduction, and to indicate his changes. The text is that of the second edition, reproduced with permission of the Huntington Library. Brackets, added to this lithoprint, show Richardson's principal corrections: ?4th? means that the bracketed lines were deleted in the fourth and all subsequent editions; ?4th, change 6? means that in the fourth and subsequent editions the bracketed lines were changed to the reading listed here as number six. Several changes within deleted passages are discussed but not marked on the text.

Richardson's own editions of *Pamela* appeared as follows: (1) November 6, 1740, (2) February 14, 1741, (3) March 12, 1741, (4) May 5, 1741, (5) September 22, 1741, (6) May 10, 1742, (7) 1754, (8) October 28, 1761 (three months after Richardson's death). The first edition prints Richardson's preface and two complimentary letters. To these the "Introduction to this Second Edition" adds twenty-four pages of letters and comment and the third edition makes no changes in the introduction whatsoever, even retaining "this Second Edition,"² The fourth makes some changes, and the fifth, considerably more. The sixth, a handsome quarto in a row of duodecimos, abandons the introductory letters; the seventh follows the fifth, and the eighth makes some major cuts.

Notwithstanding Richardson's freedom in editing these letters -- and Fielding's insinuation in *Shamela* that they were Richardson's own copy -- he wrote none of them. Jean Baptiste de Freval, a Frenchman living in London, for whom Richardson was printing a book,³ wrote the first. The second probably came from William Webster, clergyman and editor of *The Weekly Miscellany*, wherein the letter had appeared as an advertisement, the first public reference to *Pamela*, on October 11, 1740.⁴ Webster owed (an obligation eventually forgiven) "a debt of 140 l. to my most worthy Friend, Mr. Richardson, the Printer,"⁵ and Richardson reprints the letter using Webster's phrase: "To my worthy Friend, the Editor of *Pamela*." These first two letters, de Freval's and Webster's, respond to an author's request for criticism. The rest, new with the second edition, are unsolicited.

All of these are the work of Aaron Hill, excepting only the anonymous letter which Richardson summarizes, beginning on page xxi⁶ -- sent to Richardson in care of Charles Rivington, co-publisher of *Pamela*, on November 15, 1740, the first gratuitous response to Richardson's book. To advertisements in *The Daily Gazeteer* (November 20) and *The London Evening-Post* (December 11-13), Richardson added a note:

An anonymous Letter relating to this Piece is come to the Editor's Hand, who takes this Opportunity (having no better) most heartily to thank the Gentleman for his candid and judicious Observations; and to beg Favour of a further Correspondence with him, under what Restrictions he pleases. Instruction, and not Curiosity, being sincerely the Motive for this request.⁷ If the gentleman had answered, the introduction to *Pamela* would perhaps have been shorter. Some of Hill's acerbity may have been absorbed from Richardson, hurt by the writer's silence.

The double-entendres mentioned on page xxii are given in the gentleman's unpublished letter in the Forster collection, in the Victoria and Albert Museum:

Jokes are often more Severe, and do more Mischief, than more Solid Objects -- to obviate some, why not omit P 175 -- *betwixt Fear and Delight* -- and P 181 -- *I made shift to eat a bit of etc. but I had no Appetite to any thing else*.⁸ In the light of this letter, the second edition of *Pamela* attests a curious fact: while Hill pontificates in the introduction about ignoring such vulgarity of mind, Richardson has tiptoed back to Volume Two and changed the questioned passages. From the second edition forward, Pamela trembles during her wedding not "betwixt Fear and Delight" but "betwixt Fear and Joy"; and although Richardson leaves Pamela her shift on page 181, he changes her remark about appetite: "I made shift to get down a bit of Apple-pie, and a little Custard; but that was all.? By omitting the specific objections from his summary, Richardson managed at one stroke to save his righteousness in the introduction and his face in the text.

Hill's authorship of the introductory letters is easily established. Anna Laetitia Barbauld includes Hill's signature with a reduced version of the one which here begins on page xvi (December 17, 1740).⁹ Thereafter, Richardson's italicized remarks, two of them added in later editions, provide the links: "*Abstract of a second Letter from the same Gentleman,*" etc.

With wonderful indirection, Richardson had sent a copy of *Pamela* to Hill's daughters, along with some other books, and, as Hill writes Mallet, "without the smallest *hint*, that it was *his*, and with a grave apology, as for a *trifle*, of too light a species."¹⁰ Hill thanked Richardson in the letter of December 17, 1740. Hill asks who on earth the author might be, hinting, the while, by returning Richardson's own phrase, that he understands that it is Richardson himself: "this *Trifle* (for such, I dare answer for the *Author*, His Modesty misguides him to think it)." Though Hill tells Mallet that Richardson was "very loth ... a long time, to confess it," Richardson did not dally long. By December 29, 1740, he has confirmed Hill's guess. On that date Hill writes:

Acquainted with the amiable goodness of your heart, I can foresee the pleasure it will give you, to have given another pleasure: and you heap it on me in the noblest manner, by the joy you make me feel, at finding *Pamela's* incomparable author is the person I not only hop'd to hear was so, but whom I should have been quite griev'd, disturb'd, and mortified, not to have really found so. Yet, I confess, till I began to read, I had not the least notion of it. But I presently took notice, that whatever *Pamela* thought, said, or did, was all transfusion of your own fine spirit. And as I know not if there lives another writer, who could furnish her with such a rapid sweetness as she fills the table with, I could not therefor chuse but name *you* to my hope, as moulder of this maiden model.¹¹ Mrs. Barbauld omits this letter but prints another from Hill to Richardson, not to be found now in the Forster collection, bearing the same date -- December 29, 1740 (I, 56ff.). This letter furnishes the "*delightful Story, so admirably related*" beginning on page xxxi. From the second paragraph on ("We have a lively little Boy in the Family"), the *Pamela* text is substantially the same as Barbauld's. But the first paragraph Richardson has contrived to suit his editorial fiction.

The delightful story so gratified Mr. Richardson that he sent lively little Harry Campbell ("the dear amiable boy") two books, an event almost enough to finish him:

Out burst a hundred *O Lords!* in a torrent of voice rendered hoarse and half choaked by his passions. He clasped his trembling fingers together; and his hands were strained hard, and held writhing. His elbows were extended to the height of his shoulders, and his eyes, all inflamed with delight, turned incessantly round from one side, and one friend, to the other, scattering his triumphant ideas among us. His fairy-face (ears and all) was flushed as red as his lips; and his flying feet told his joy to the floor, in a wild and stamping impatience of gratitude.¹² The only other part of the introduction to *Pamela* elsewhere in print is the concluding poem. This, too, is Hill's, printed in *The Weekly Miscellany*, February 28, 1741, along with his December 17 letter, and collected with Hill's *Works* (III, 348-350). This is the poem, it would seem, of which Hill boasts that he has given "Pamela" a short "e" as Richardson intended, asserting that "Mr. Pope has taught half the women in England to pronounce it wrong."¹³ Pope in his *Epistle to Miss Blount* (line 49), had made the "e" long:

The gods, to curse Pamela with her prayers,

Gave the gilt coach and dappled Flanders mares,

The shining robes, rich jewels, beds of state,

And, to complete her bliss, a fool for mate.