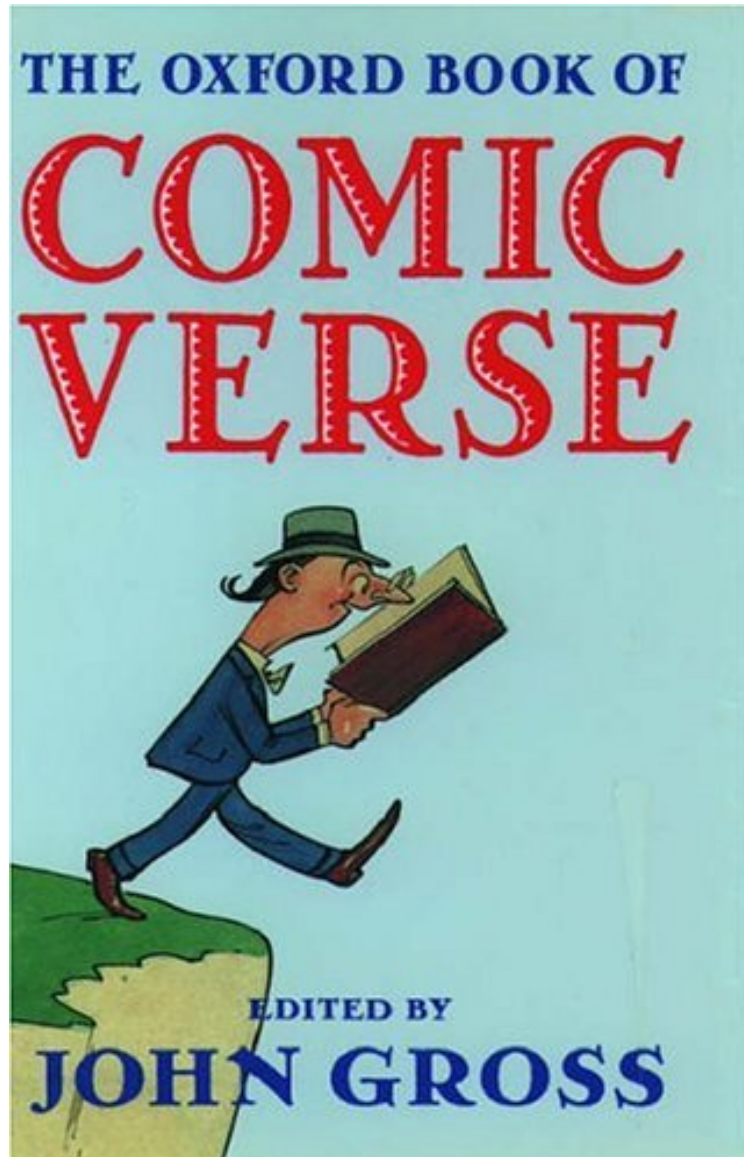


(Online library) The Oxford Book of Comic Verse (Oxford Books of Verse)

The Oxford Book of Comic Verse (Oxford Books of Verse)

From Oxford University Press

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From Oxford University Press : The Oxford Book of Comic Verse (Oxford Books of Verse) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Oxford Book of Comic Verse (Oxford Books of Verse):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great anthology of humorous verse By M. J. Sweet This is the finest anthology of British and American humorous verse that I know of. A bedside book par excellence, so full of funny gems that it's impossible to list them here. There is every form of humor, from satire and parody to just plain silly,

from every period, famous authors and totally obscure ones. It'll make you laugh. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Comic verse for the English reader
By Arnold Seiken
This might be a book that appeals to the English reader, perhaps not so much to an American. The selections are, so to speak, too prim and proper, too clean and literary. Some exceptions of course but not too many. No Little Willy rhymes, no Burma Shave ditties, no "Maid from Nantucket" type verses. Very few double dactyls and the included limericks are really not very amusing. Nothing vaguely resembling:
When grandmama fell off the boat.
And couldn't swim and wouldn't float,
Matilda just stood by and smiled.
I very nearly slapped the child.
A great poem, wouldn't you agree?
What I did learn from buying this book on line is not to buy a book on line. Moral: When interested in buying a book, go to your nearest bookstore and sample the contents. Don't buy sight unseen.
1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. For those who enjoy a wicked smile and a good laugh - and who doesn't?
By Monica B. Morris
Dip into the The Oxford Book of Comic Verse at any time - when you're feeling merry or when you're feeling blue. My absolute favorite in the whole volume (I AM a writer, remember!) goes "The book of my enemy has been remaindered.....And I am glad!" It's deliciously wicked! There are tons of other marvelous poems (it's a big book) dating back hundreds of years and dating forward to the present. I was introduced to this book by my brother when I was in England recently, promoting a book of my own (Goodnight Children, Everywhere, The History Press Ltd.) He read some of the poems to me and I was so enchanted that I ordered the book as soon as I got home.
Monica B. Morris

"Comic verse," writes editor John Gross, "is verse that is designed to amuse--and perhaps that is as far as any attempt at a definition ought to go." In *The Oxford Book of Comic Verse*, Gross has combed the annals of literature in English from the middle ages to the present, gathering poems that provoke laughter, smiles, and even reflections on the human condition--but always poems that amuse. From limericks to social satire, *The Oxford Book of Comic Verse* offers a remarkable collection of outstanding light poetry. Gross has brought together the finest writers in the history of the English language--from Chaucer and Skelton to Shakespeare and Swift, Lord Byron to Robert Browning, Emily Dickinson to John Updike--offering delightful examples of their comic verse. Many of these lines dance with whimsy, such as John Skelton's *Colin Clout* ("For though my rhyme be ragged,/ Tattered and jagged,/ Rudely rain-beaten,/ Rusty and moth-eaten,/ If ye take well therewith,/ It hath in it some pith"); others float heavier thoughts on light rhymes--as in Matthew Prior's succinct *Human Life* ("What trifling coil do we poor mortals keep;/ Wake, eat, and drink, evacuate and sleep."). The range of writers who have composed comic verse is astonishing, as is the delight of the poems themselves. Here we read T.S. Eliot mocking himself ("How unpleasant to meet Mr. Eliot!/ With his features of clerical cut"); poet and Soviet historian Robert Conquest, mingling his two professions in a limerick ("There was a great Marxist called Lenin/ Who did two or three million men in/ --That's a lot to have done in/ --But where he did one in/ That grand Marxist Stalin did ten in"); and Wendy Cope commenting on her disillusionment with poets ("I used to think all poets were Byronic./ They're mostly wicked as ginless tonic/ And wild as pension plans"). And along the way, we are treated to witty song lyrics as well, from First World War soldiers' tunes, to Irving Berlin, to Cole Porter, to Lorenz Hart ("When love congeals/It soon reveals/ the faint aroma of performing seals/The double-crossing of a pair of heels/I wish I were in love again!"). Whether it comes from anonymous popular culture or the icons of the literary canon, comic verse has been a source of pleasure and diversion through the ages--a combination of wit, verbal artistry, and even serious contemplation. This collection, compiled by one of our finest critics and anthologists, brings this tradition into the hands of today's readers, offering hours of delight.

From *Publishers Weekly*
In his introduction, Gross, also the editor of *The Oxford Book of Essays*, defines comic verse as primarily meant to amuse. From this bland definition he derives his principles of inclusion: funny poems that do not exceed the boundaries of good taste. No bawdy lyrics, no skewering satire here. Within these limits, he surveys the field from Chaucer to Glyn Maxwell (1962-), comforting readers with such old chestnuts as Tom Brown's "Dr. Fell," the anonymous "Elinor Glyn" and Gellert Burgess's "The Purple Cow," and delighting them with new surprises like Burgess's sequel, "Cinq Ans Apres," Richard Wilbur's "Prisoner of Zenda," C.S. Calverley's "Flight," Virginia Graham's "Ein Complaint" and a host of others. Arguments could be made over the relative lack of American and, especially, female voices--where, for example, are Gertrude Stein, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Marianne Moore?--and over the inclusion of popular song lyrics, poems in French, or Burma shave ads. But this is, overall, an entertaining collection that updates and complements W.H. Auden's *Oxford Book of Light Verse* (1939, reprinted 1979) without in the least challenging Auden's more serious purposes. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.
From *Booklist*
Even hardened poetry loathers enjoy comic verse now and then. Unfortunately, if said grumblers go only for filthy limericks, they'll hate this book, too; editor Gross acknowledges the appeal of the risibly risqu{ , }e but excludes it. Yet if those verse haters still enjoy nonfilthy limericks or Burma-Shave signs, maybe they'll at least read the examples of both herein and then let their eyes stray and discover plenty to raise a smile and brighten a day. It'll help during the first third of the book, which presents the pleasantries of bards from Chaucer through Tennyson, if they're literarily or historically informed, but thereafter nearly any good reader should find lots to enjoy: patter songs by W. S. Gilbert, parodies of serious poems and parodies of the loopy English language (see "The Harbour of Fowey" by Sir

Arthur Quiller-Couch), music hall recitations and Tin Pan Alley lyrics, the inimitable reflections on mundane madness of Ogden Nash, silly alphabets (including one from Barry Humphries' altered ego, Dame Edna Everage), and much by poets whose reputations are for heavier stuff. Ray Olson "Gross sets forth his principles in an introduction so carefully worded that it is hard to quarrel with him."--Parnassus "A delightful collection of poetry written to amuse."--The Houston Post