The Biographies of William Shakespeare
Dispelling the Myths
By
Lochithea ©2010

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For convenience, the author has followed writing the surname "Shakespeare" for the author of Shakespearean literature, and "Shaksper" in reference to the actor of Stratford-upon-Avon. However, spelling of the surname in legal documents remains as given that upholds the universal rule of quoting documents as found.

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"Of no man has so much that is unreliable been written as about William Shakespeare. He has been painted as a flawless divinity devoid of those traits we attribute to common humanity, and he has been depicted as a slothful drunkard with Falstaffian proclivities."
—Alfred C. Calmour (1894) [2]

"As the great dramatist excelled all in imagination, his biographers have exceeded all other biographers in the facility with which they have regarded him in all imaginable and imaginary positions."
—J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps (1847) [3]

"Probability is the Guide of Life."
—Bishop Butler

This article shall not strive to prove who the author of those Shakespearean works was; whoever he was, he is our heart that pumps the honey through the Rivers of Literature. No one can or may dethrone Shakespeare. Instead, we will strive to prove how the Stratfordian actor, which they call by many surnames, cannot be the Immortal Bard.

It is in everyone's interest to know the man behind Shakespeare because he gave so much to us. It is the purpose of this work to present a brief history of how William Shakespeare has been falsely presented by others and to distinguish the facts from the extraordinary myths about him. In the process of doing this research, we now establish a distinction between Shakespeare the author, and Shaksper the actor.

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[1] Archive Copyright Agent {www.archive.org}
[2] Alfred C. Calmour. *Fact and Fiction about Shakespeare.* London: George Boyden, 1894.
[3] J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps. *A Life of William Shakespeare.* Preface. P. vi. London: John Russell Smith, 1847.

Part One
Introduction to Nicholas Rowe's *Life*

Figure 1: Nicholas Rowe
(*b*.1674–*d*.1718)

Nicholas Rowe, Under-Secretary of State and Secretary of State for Scotland in the Reign of George I., reached the object of his ambition and became Poet Laureate. He is chiefly known as the very first editor of the Bard's works, published in 1709, entitled *Shakespeare's Plays*; due to success, it ran into a second publication in 1714, a third edition in 1725, and a fourth edition in 1728. In Rowe's first edition was contributed a sketch allegedly being of the Bard, engraved by Pierre Fourdrinièr. (Figure 9) This is a copy that was given to George Vertue (engraver) to insert into Alexander Pope's [4] edition of works published in 1725.

In the already mentioned editions, Mr. Rowe modernized the spelling, punctuated and corrected the grammar, made out lists of the dramatis personae, arranged the verse, and made a number of emendations in difficult places. Further, exits and entrances were added, which in earlier prints had only been inserted occasionally. Last, Rowe completed the division of the plays into acts and scenes by following the Third and Fourth Folios in reprinting the spurious plays. The poems were not included, though published separately by Rowe in 1715 from the 1640 Shakespeare edition. [5]

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[4] (*b*.1688–*d*.1744)
[5] W. H. Durham. *An Introduction to Shakespeare*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1910.

Attached to the second edition (1714) was a short biography of the author of those plays, that Rowe himself expressed obligation to an actor called Thomas Betterton, [6] from whom the greater part of the incidents were obtained to create the biography:

> For the memory of Shakespeare, having engaged him [Betterton] to make a journey into Warwickshire, on purpose to gather up what remains he could, of a name for which he had so great a veneration.
>
> *Shakespeare's Plays* (1714)

Though the biographer appears to have "engaged" Betterton to take a trip to Warwickshire (definitely before the latter died in 1710) there can be some doubt if Betterton had taken such a journey; furthermore, speculation exists if Betterton was reporting from personal research, or from pure hearsay: the typical "traditional" stories biographers cling to, even to this day.

Mr. J. T. Foard, author of the *English Shakespeareana* reprinted from the *Manchester Quarterly* of January 1898, states Betterton never took any such "journey into Warwickshire" as Rowe was telling us. "Bowman, the actor, who lived with Betterton, having married his daughter, Miss Watson, denied that Betterton ever visited Stratford; or in the precise words of the antiquarian Oldys, a truthful man, 'he (Bowman) was unwilling to allow that his lifelong associate and friend (Betterton) had ever undertaken such a journey.' It is disputed on the best authority available at the time that Betterton never went to Warwickshire."

Bowman the actor (mentioned above) died in 1739, near the age of eighty; was married to the daughter of Sir Francis Watson, the gentleman with whom Betterton joined in an adventure to the East Indies, whose name the writer of Betterton's *Life*, in the *Biographia Britannica*, has so diligently concealed. By that unfortunate scheme, Betterton lost above £2.000 and his father-in-law (Sir Francis Watson) lost his entire fortune. On Sir Watson's death, soon after the year 1692, Betterton took Sir Watson's daughter under his protection, educated her then became her husband. It was from this period onwards, that Bowman began a friendly correspondence with Betterton, and obviously knew whether the latter went to Warwickshire or not.

Even so, the "best authority available," that Mr. Foard was speaking of (William Oldys) was a zealous inquirer on many subjects, a meritorious contributor to biography and bibliography, and an active note writer in books of status. His notes have been known to have been written "on slips of paper, which he afterwards classified and put in small bags suspended about his room." [7] Oldys was also a librarian to the Earl of Oxford, and in 1755, he was appointed Norroy King-at-Arms. He died in 1761.

It was Edmond Malone, the Shakespearean author who possessed some knowledge of paleography, a science essentially necessary in the investigation of contracted records of the sixteenth century (especially of those written in Latin) who differed much on the "authority" of Oldys. "This assertion of Mr. Oldys appears to me altogether unworthy of credit, not that I believe he meant to deceive, but he certainly must have misapprehended Bowman. Why any

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[6] (*b.*1635–*d.*1710)
[7] James Yeowell. *Memoir of William Oldys*. London. P. 37. 1862.

doubt should be insinuated, or entertained, concerning Betterton's having visited Stratford, after Rowe's positive assertion that he did so, it is not easy to conceive. Mr. Rowe did not go there himself; and how could he have collected the few circumstances relative to Shakespeare and his family, which he has told, if he had not obtained information from some friend, who examined the register of the parish of Stratford, and made personal inquiries on the subject?" Malone strongly suggested Bowman was "unwilling to believe that the actor Betterton ever went to Warwickshire." [8]

We also hear from the author Charles Knight, [9] who published in 1869 a biography on Shakespeare, how Betterton retired from the stage in the 1700's and died in 1710; in continuation, Mr. Knight tells us, "looking at his [Betterton's] busy life, it is probable that he did not make this journey into Warwickshire until after his retirement from the theatre. Had he set about these enquiries earlier, there can be little doubt that the *Life* by Rowe would have contained more precise and satisfactory information, if not fewer idle tales." [10]

Whereas another biographer Richard G. White was of the belief Betterton definitely traveled to Warwickshire after 1670: "Betterton was born in 1635, and went upon the stage in 1656 or 1657. The veneration for Shakespeare with which he was imbued by the study of his plays was the motive of his pilgrimage to Stratford. We may be quite sure that the journey was undertaken after 1670, for in that year Shakespeare's granddaughter, who must have known much that Betterton did not discover, died in Shakespeare's house; and it could hardly have been after 1675, for at that time the great actor was grievously afflicted with a disease (the gout) which compelled him to retire from the stage, and from which he suffered until it caused his death, in 1710." [11] It is uncertain why Mr. White mentions Shakespeare's granddaughter to emphasize his point.

On a brief pedigree of Thomas Betterton, we know of his father, Matthew, who was generally described as having been one of the under-cooks of King Charles I., although, as Colonel Chester points out in his work on Westminster Abbey, he described himself in his last Will & Testament as "gentleman," and bequeathed, among other valuables, his "grandfather's Seal Ring." Young Thomas Betterton, coming of age, was sent as an apprentice to a bookseller, though we have no record to which, only his saying to Alexander Pope that he was apprenticed to John Holden; if true, this would surmise a positive continuation in the employment of the publisher Mr. Gondibert, where Betterton's acquaintance began with an extraordinary exaggerator of tales: Sir William D'Avenant. [12]

At the head of the Rhodes' Company was Betterton, who seems at once to have taken his position as leading actor, and, like his successor David Garrick, to have developed immediately into a fully accomplished artist. "It has been asserted," says Mr. Robert Lowe (Betterton's biographer) "that Betterton played in Sir William D'Avenant's spectacular and operatic production during the last years of the Commonwealth, but this is highly improbable. Certainly

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[8] *Plays & Poems of William Shakespeare*. Vol. II., P. 120. London. 1821.
[9] (*b.*1791)
[10] *William Shakespeare: A Biography*. P. 280. London: Virtue & Co, 1869.
[11] *Memoirs*. Boston: Little Brown & Co, 1865.
[12] (*b.*1605–*d.*1668)

he took no part of any importance, and his real connection with the stage began in 1660, when Rhodes, under a license from Gen. Monk, reopened the Cockpit in Drury Lane as a theatre." [13] Mr. Lowe makes no mention that Betterton went to Warwickshire; nor does the biographer of *The Life & Times of Thomas Betterton* published in 1888 offer any reference to such a journey.

It is a matter of who to believe, if Thomas Betterton ever set to Warwickshire or not. Two biographers are silent on the matter; many Shakespearean biographers are in favour of the journey. For the sake of argument, if we lean toward the nays, then a question would be: If Betterton did not travel to Warwickshire, where did he get his information to feed Nicholas Rowe's biography? One source would definitely be John Aubrey the "industrious antiquarian" who flourished between 1626 and 1697; he corresponded with Betterton though we do not know if Aubrey himself ever went to Warwickshire either. Joseph William Gray, in 1905, had his doubts:

> There is no authentic record of the visits of Aubrey and Betterton to Stratford-upon-Avon. The date at which Aubrey's visit was made is supposed by Halliwell-Phillipps to have been about the year 1662. In a letter to Anthony à Wood, [14] dated June 15, 1680, Aubrey says: 'I have according to your desire put in writing these Minutes of Lives. 'Tis a task that I never thought to have undertaken till you imposed it upon me, saying that I was fit for it.' Aubrey became acquainted with Wood in 1667.
>
> *Shakespeare's Marriage* (1905) [15]

In the bulk correspondence of Sir William Dugdale [16] that esteemed antiquarian, many letters can be found to have been written back and forth between himself, Anthony à Wood (the historian), and John Aubrey. As an example, we give an extract of a letter dated November 25, 1679, between Dugdale and Wood:

> My copy of those Annals of King James, [17] written by William Camden, is bound up with some other things, which I cannot part with. Your friend Aubrey may easily, I presume, gain a copy from the original in Trinity College Library in Cambridge.
>
> Bodleian Library, Ballard's MSS. Vol. XIV.

We also find an extract from Aubrey's correspondence with Dugdale on the same subject:

> Sir William Dugdale tells me that he hath Minutes of King James' life to a month and a day, written by Mr. Wm Camden, as also his own life, according to years and days, which is very brief, but two sheets; Mr. Camden's own handwriting. Sir William Dugdale had it from Hacket, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, who did filch it from Mr. Camden, as he lay a dying. Quære Mr. Ashmole to retrieve and look out for Mr.

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[13] *Thomas Betterton*. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1891.
[14] English antiquarian born in 1632 and died in 1695.
[15] *Shakespeare's Marriage*. London: Chapman & Hall, 1905.
[16] (*b.*1605–*d.*1686)
[17] King James VI., of Scotland and I., of England. Born in 1566 and died in 1625.

> Camden's Minutes (memorandums) of King James I., from his entrance into England, which Dr Thorndyke filched from him as he lay a dying. 'Tis not above six or eight sheets of paper, as I remember. Dr Thorndyke told Sir William Dugdale so, who told me of it. Those memories were continued within a fortnight of his death.
>
> Bodleian Library. Vol. II. Part I.

Aubrey's Lives was printed in 1680. The work was put together by Aubrey himself. In his biography of Shakespeare, he tells how the author was born in Stratford, and was the son of a butcher, was naturally inclined to poetry and acting, "and did act exceedingly well; he began early to make essays at dramatic poetry, which at that time was very low, and his plays took well." Aubrey certainly does not bear a high reputation for accuracy or of being trustworthy, for in his biography of Ben Jonson, he says that Rare Ben killed the poet, Kit Marlowe. In commenting upon *Aubrey's Lives* the Rev. Dr. Andrew Clark says: "Their value lies not in the statement of bibliographical or other facts, but in their remarkably vivid personal touches, in what Aubrey had seen himself and what his friends had told him."

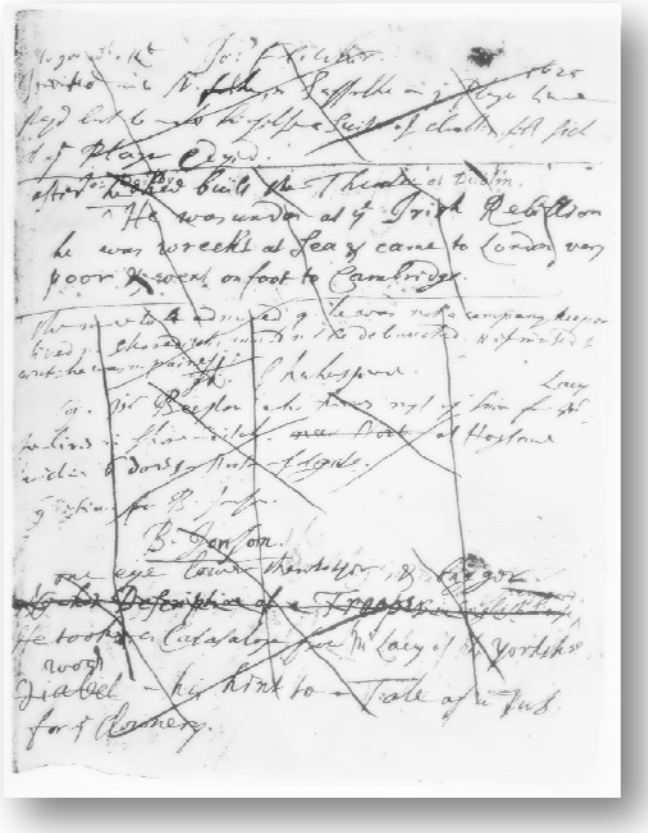

Figure 2: Additional passage about Shakespeare by John Aubrey

Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, the Shakespearean scholar, who had "devoted a month at Stratford to the most minute collation of the important papers there," [18] before writing his biography on Shakespeare, calls Aubrey "one of those foolish and detestable gossips who record everything that they hear or misinterpret. He must have been in the habit of compiling from imperfect notes of conversations, or, no doubt in many instances, from his own recollections of them. It would, therefore, be hazardous as a rule to depend upon his statements in the absence of corroborative evidence, but we may at the same time in a great measure rely upon the accuracy of main facts in those cases in which there is too much elaboration for his memory to have been entirely at fault." [19] Elsewhere: "The only safe plan of dealing with a writer of this mischievous class is to read, be amused, then examine his inconsistencies, and believe nothing. Aubrey's narrative must be considered as exhibiting very indistinctly and imperfectly the floating Shakespearian traditions of his time, and little more." [20]

Dr. Gifford recalls the comments of Anthony à Wood on how "Aubrey was a roving maggoty-pated man. He thought little, believed much, and confused everything." Thomas Hearne in 1772 wrote the biography of Wood, and offers an insight on Aubrey, and how "he was a shiftless person, roving and maggoty headed and sometimes little better than erased. And being exceedingly credulous, would stuff his many letters sent to A.W. [Anthony Wood] with fooleries, and misinformation, which sometimes would guide him into the paths of error." [21]

Malone differs on Mr. Hearne's comments above, for in his *Life of William Shakespeare* printed in 1821, he says, "whatever Wood (in a peevish humour may have thought or said of Mr. Aubrey) by whose labours he highly profited, or however fantastical Aubrey may have been on the subject of chemistry and ghosts, his character for veracity has never been impeached; and as a very diligent antiquarian, his testimony is worthy of attention." [22]

We hear from another Shakespearean scholar, Sir Sidney Lee, that Aubrey "in his gossiping *Lives*, based his ampler information on reports communicated by an aged actor, William Beeston, [23] whom Dryden [24] called 'the chronicle of the stage,' and who was doubtless in the main a trustworthy witness. Beeston's father, Christopher, was a member of Shakespeare's Company of actors, and he for a long period was himself connected with the stage. Beeston's friend, John Lacy, an actor of the Restoration, also supplied Aubrey with further information."

As a last reference to Aubrey's so-called "authority," we find in a tabloid of December 1793 written in *The European Magazine*, how "Aubrey, in short, was a dupe to every wag who chose to practice on his credulity; and would most certainly have believed the person who should have told him Shakespeare himself was a natural son of Queen Elizabeth." [25]

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[18] *Curiosities of Modern Shakespearian Criticism*. P. 7. London: John Russell Smith, 1853.
[19] *Outlines*. Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co., 1884.
[20] *A Life of William Shakespeare*. London: John Russell Smith, 1847.
[21] *The Life of Anthony Wood*, written by himself, and published by Mr. Thomas Hearne in 1772. PP. 208-9.
[22] *Life of William Shakespeare*. Vol. II., PP. 71, 72, 694, 697. 1821.
[23] (*d.*1682)
[24] (*b.*1631–*d.*1700)
[25] Queen Elizabeth was born in 1533; her Reign began in 1558 to 1603 when she died.

Up to this point, it seems that Thomas Betterton's tales were being "communicated" to him by John Aubrey whose reporter was William Beeston, whose reporter was John Lacy. These tales were then passed on to Nicholas Rowe. This chain of misinformation could not end here. We are told elsewhere that other sources of Betterton's material came through John Lowin [26] and Joseph Taylor. [27] Both these actors became leaders of the King's Men after the deaths of Henry Condell and John Heminge (editors of the First Folio). And of course, many other tales reached Rowe through Sir William D'Avenant who knew Aubrey, as Sir Frederick Madden (Keeper of the Manuscripts at the British Museum) in 1916 tells us: "Rowe received his stories from Betterton, who had it directly from Sir William D'Avenant." [28] D'Avenant's parents owned a tavern in Oxford, in the high road between London and Stratford, the route passing through Islip where some tales have the Stratfordian actor frequently travelling to. This tavern sprouted a tale originated from Anthony à Wood's pen down to the present day, to which we will come to soon enough.

Other unsporting stories show us that D'Avenant's leading actor, Thomas Betterton, was reputedly aided by his familiarity with the performances of Lowin and Taylor, mentioned above, who received their instructions, they tell us, "directly from Shakespeare fifty years earlier;" a conjecture put forward by Downes, who was prompter at one of the theatres about the year 1662, and for some time afterwards.

Sir Sidney Lee, in his *National Biography* says Sir Fulke Greville's "position in Warwickshire was very powerful, and among the smaller offices he is said to have held there was that of recorder of Stratford. His name frequently appears in the town records." Also, the same author states how Greville "befriended William D'Avenant, and had him as a page" in his service being also his patron. [29] If D'Avenant was also receiving his information (for his tales) from Sir Fulke Greville, that would later also be fed to Rowe's biography of Shakespeare (through Betterton) is not known; yet the hypothesis of this concept is not more improbable, than having William Shakespeare stealing "rabbits and venison" or married with Anne Hathaway (*alias* Gardner) [30] one day, then the next married to Anne Whateley, or was given £1.000 by the Earl of Southampton.

Classes of society in the time of Elizabeth, and especially the vast gulf between the nobles and the despised actor class, one would have thought that if there was one thing more than another, calculated to put a breaking-strain on the faith of the faithful, it would be that item of the creed that affirmed the friendship between Shaksper (the actor) and the Earl of Southampton [31] as our Shakespearean biographers tell us. No doubts could be formed if a histrionic author as William Shakespeare knew Southampton; it is the acquaintance of an actor with that nobleman that is hard to swallow.

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[26] (*b.*1576–*d.*1659)
[27] (*d.*1652)
[28] *Shakespeare & his Fellows*. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1916.
[29] Leslie Stephen & Sidney Lee. *Dictionary of National Biography*. London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1890.
[30] Richard Savage & Edgar I. Fripp. *Minutes & Accounts of the Corporation of Stratford-Upon-Avon & other Records (1577–1586)*. Vol III., P. xlix. Oxford: Dugdale Society, 1926.
[31] (*b.*1573–*d.*1624)

Dedication to *Venus and Adonis* (1593)
To the Right Honourable Henry Wriothesly,
Earl of Southampton, and Baron of Titchfield.

Right Honourable,
I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your Lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burden, only if your Honour seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you with some graver labour. But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather; and never after ear [here] so barren a land, for fear it yield me still so bad a harvest, I leave it to your honourable survey, and your Honour to your heart's content; which I wish may always answer your own wish, and the world's hopeful expectation.
Your Honour's in all duty,
William Shakespeare

The Bard's dedication to Southampton was the second recorded to that nobleman; the first being in 1561 from John Clapham, one of Lord Burghley's [32] secretaries. The dedication was attached to a Latin poem called *Narcissus*. The printer of *Venus and Adonis*, Richard Field, had connections with Burghley and to whom he dedicated George Puttenham's [33] *Arte of English Poesie* in 1589. The third dedication to Southampton came from Thomas Nashe in 1594 with *The Unfortunate Traveler*. Then came Shakespeare's following dedication of that same year:

Dedication of *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594)
To the Right Honourable Henry Wriothesly,
Earl of Southampton.

The love I dedicate to your Lordship is without end: whereof this Pamphlet without beginning is but a superfluous Moiety. The warrant I have of your Honourable disposition, not the worth of my untutored lines, makes it assured of acceptance. What I have done is yours, what I have to do is yours, being part in all I have, devoted yours. Were my worth greater, my duty would show greater, meantime, as it is, it is bound to your Lordship; to whom I wish long life still lengthened with all happiness.
Your Lordship's in all duty,
William Shakespeare

That the Earl gave the Stratford actor £1.000 is highly improbable for the simple reason that Southampton's estate was only coming to £3.000 on an annual basis; plus, Burghley interposed a debt of £5.000 on the nobleman in 1594 when the latter refused to marry Elizabeth Vere. The young Earl did not inherit wealth in 1594; he had no money as the Oxford editor Colin Burrow explains. (Oxford Classics *Complete Sonnets and Poems* 2002: general editor Stanley Wells). The editors also relate how there are no indications that Shakespeare (we include also Shaksper) and Southampton had any contact with each other in 1594.

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[32] (*b.*1520–*d.*1598)
[33] (*b.*1529–*d.*1590)

The dedications of *Venus & Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* tell us that Southampton had not seen the poems that are dedicated to him. There is nothing left but the possibility that he had seen some of the sonnets, believed to have been handed about in manuscripts before publication, as Francis Meres [34] tells us, which is little to build upon a friendship of the nobleman with the actor. "But it is distinctly proved that Shakspere knew at least Southampton, just in the way the dedications suggest." Says Mrs. Stopes. [35] The dedications were from an author called Shakespeare, and if there is any other instance of an actor, in those days, sending a copy of verses, with his love to an Earl, as they wish us to believe, then those dedications are still wanting.

Stopes, in her *Life of Southampton*, published in 1922 confesses she did not start her work "for his [Southampton's] sake, but in the hope that" she "might find more about Shakespeare, which hope has not been satisfied." [36] No surprise that nothing turned up, or of a connection to be found between Shakespeare or Shaksper and Southampton from Stopes' research. Any papers, diaries, letters, or legal documents Southampton may have had, were censured and destroyed when he was captured with the Earl of Essex [37] in 1601. Yet this fact did not demure Stopes, for she tells us, though her "work strives to be accurate, above all things," she had to use her "imagination to fill up gaps;" a well-known strategy of the Stratfordians. At least Mrs. Stopes is honest about this and therefore this filling "up the gaps" of a genealogy to costume a life, should not be held against her, if it was not a lucrative means to justify the ends.

Sir Sidney Lee's assertion that Shaksper had "other courtly friends beside Southampton," so far as we are aware, is with the nobleman with whom there is evidence of the actor having come into personal contact was with the Earl of Rutland as will be seen below.

Mr. Stevenson discovered the Steward's Book of the household expenses incurred at Belvoir, by the Earl of Rutland, from August 1612 to August 1613. When this discovery was made, Sir Sidney Lee wrote in *The Times*, is a claim of proof of the esteem in which Shakespeare was held by the aristocracy of the day. However, to other biographers, the discovery was a matter of surprise and disappointment, especially to the scholarly Stopes that her "Mr. Shakspeare" is discovered in a situation inconsistent with the activities of a poet, "who instead of writing sublimest songs and immortal plays" was engaged with Richard Burbage working at the Earl of Rutland's new device (*impresa*) for a sum of 44s. "It did not quite fit into the known facts of the poet's career," she said. George Hookham gives the year of this employment to 1605; [38] however, the entry (below) is for 1613:

> 1613: *Item* 31 Mortii, [March,] to Mr. Shakspeare in gold about my Lord's *impreso* XLIII JS; [44s.] to Richard Burbage for painting and making it, in gold, XLIII JS-LIVII JS. [£4.8.]
>
> Account of Thomas Scriven, the Earl of Rutland's Clerk.

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[34] (*b.*1565–*d.*1646)
[35] *The Bacon-Shakespeare Question.* P. 114. London: T. G. Johnson, 1888.
[36] *The Life of Henry, Third Earl of Southampton, Shakespeare's Patron.* Preface. Cambridge: University Press, 1922.
[37] (*b.*1566–*d.*1601)
[38] *Will O' The Wisp.* P. 4. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1922.

Stopes, in her article entitled "Mr. Shakspeare about my Lorde's Impresa," published in *The Athenæum* on May 16, 1908, records this "Mr. Shakspeare" was portraying another than the Stratford actor, "who was in the habit of preparing decorations for tournaments;" and that it was a "Mr. John Shakespeare, the Prince's, afterwards the King's, bitmaker. If, as I suppose, this John was Shakespeare's cousin of Snitterfield, there need be no surprise at his being associated with Richard Burbage in related work." [39] Another entry shows Richard Burbage at similar work, for March 25, 1616:

> 25 Martii, 1616. Given to Richard Burbidge for my Lord's shield, and for the embleance, iiiili. xviiis.
>
> Account of Thomas Scriven, the Earl of Rutland's Clerk.

An *impresa* was a private and personal device, as distinguished from the family Coat-of-Arms, and was especially used in tournaments and masques when there was some attempt at concealing one's identity. A Coat-of-Arms told a man's name as clearly as written or spoken words did, and when used for the first time, would be known only to the intimate personal friends of the wearer. The Belvoir *impresa* of 1613 was about to be used for the first time, since Roger, Earl of Rutland, who, in company with the Earl of Southampton in 1599, "went not to the Court, but only to see plays every day," [40] had died, and had been succeeded by his brother Francis, who was now preparing for a Court tournament.

Regarding any friendship as represented to exist between Shaksper and Southampton is a thing incredible and can be overthrown, as Stopes and others have shown. Elizabethans were restricted to their own social classes, and even if Shaksper had the opportunity to act in an Elizabethan Court, how could he even have presumed to be allowed to dedicate his love to an Earl? It is unheard of, even today, for a commoner to send his love to a nobleman; unless some rumour of scandal be involved, which many have circulated, circulate, and will circulate.

To conclude, Sir William Dugdale, Anthony à Wood, Sir William D'Avenant, Sir Fulke Greville, (a possible candidate) John Aubrey, William Beeston, Thomas Betterton, John Lacy, John Lowin, Joseph Taylor, all contributed to Nicholas Rowe's creation of his biography on Shakespeare; a biography, as we know it today, presumably belonging to the Immortal Bard. It remains a highly circumstantial fact, if either of these gentlemen ever researched in depth their communications between each other that ended under Rowe's pen. The attempt to track a legend to its source is a wild-goose chase, if anything, and Charles F. Green, in his *Shakespeare's Crab-Tree* (undated publication) had somewhat criticized Rowe's manner of investigation: "It is to be regretted that this writer preferred relying on his fertile invention to the trouble of investigating sources of information to which at that time he had access, and which would have enabled him to write a reliable history of Shakespeare's life."

"Very few additional facts," says Beverley Warner in his *Famous Introductions to Shakespeare's Plays* in 1906, "have been discovered by later students. Documents have been unearthed, leases, wills, and stationers' registers have been exploited, but within those few

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[39] *Burbage & Shakespeare's Stage*. P. 109. London: Alexander Moring Ltd., 1913.
[40] Winwood's *Memorials*.

octavo pages of Rowe's are included all of the essential story that will ever be known of the career of William Shakespeare." [41] How true Mr. Warner's words were as we continue to Mr. Rowe's short *Life* on Shakespeare.

Part Two
The First Life of Shakespeare
By
Nicholas Rowe
1714

"Nobody can write the life of a man, but one who has eat and drunk, and lived in social intercourse with him."
—Dr. Samuel Johnson [42]

Nicholas Rowe's second edition was published in 1714, entitled: *Shakespeare's Plays*; it came to a bulk of seven volumes and sold for £36.10s. The first volume opens with a brief *Life* on William Shakespeare.

Nicholas Rowe's Account:

> He was the son of Mr. John Shakespeare, and was born at Stratford, in Warwickshire, in April 1564.

We will not go into depth on the discrepancies of this birth date as it would put more into this article than the reader can absorb, but we can mention, that at the time what Rowe stated, that Shakespeare was born "in April 1564," was not from fact, and the editions of Alexander Pope coming into print in 1725, of Lewis Theobald [43] in 1726, of Sir Thomas Hanmer [44] in 1744 and of Mr. Warburton [45] in 1747, was not productive of any additional or substantiated information. We offer a brief description of these editions before continuing.

Alexander Pope's edition (1725)
Malone gives the year 1723 of Alexander Pope's famous edition of Shakespeare in six volumes quarto, sold for £217.12s. At Jacob Tonson's sale, in the year 1767, a sale of 140 copies of Pope's edition, in six volumes quarto (for which the subscribers paid six guineas), were disposed of among the booksellers at sixteen shillings per set. 750 copies of this edition were printed.

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[41] *Famous Introductions to Shakespeare's Plays*. P. XVI. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1906.
[42] English lexicographer born in 1709, and died in 1784.
[43] (*b.*1688–*d.*1744)
[44] (*b.*1677–*d.*1746)
[45] (*b.*1698–*d.*1779)

Pope possessed many old quartos and the first two Folios, but his edition was "somewhat careless" critics tell us, though the subdivided scenes are more minutely done than Rowe after the fashion of the French stage division, where a new scene begins with every new character instead of after the stage has been cleared. Pope's explanations of the words which appeared difficult in Shakespeare's text were often "laughably far from the truth." He also rearranged the lines in order to give them the studied smoothness characteristic of the eighteenth century.

However casual Pope's edition was he confesses that "in what I have done, I have rather given a proof of my willingness and desire, than of my ability, to do him [Shakespeare] justice. I have discharged the dull duty of an editor, to my best judgment, with more labour than I expect thanks, with a religious abhorrence of all innovation, and without any indulgence to my private sense or conjecture. The method taken in this edition will show itself." [46] In 1728 Pope issued a second edition, and his text was reprinted after his death at Glasgow in 1766, and in Birmingham in 1768. He died at Twickenham.

In the Preface of Pope's work, is prefixed an alleged sketch of the Bard, which Oldys tells us was created from "a juvenile portrait of James I." There is no reference given by Oldys upon his assumption. The same sketch is engraved in Mrs. Griffith's work, appearing as a noble ornament; many claim it is an engraving of George Vertue's.

Lewis Theobald's edition (1726)

In this little pamphlet most of the material was devoted to *Hamlet*. Lewis Theobald published his work entitled *Shakespeare Restored*, with many corrections of Pope's errors that were not taken lightly by Pope; and the latter tried to annihilate Theobald's reputation by writing satires against him and by injuring him in every possible way in print. Theobald, with many faults, was a critic, and his re-edition of the plays in seven volumes published in 1733 took the place of Pope's among students, as the latter had superseded Nicholas Rowe's.

In the Preface of these works is a sketch prefixed to the large 8vo edition, by the engraver Arlaud. There is some little resemblance of this portrait to Marshall's print in the 1640 Shakespeare poems.

Sir Thomas Hanmer edition (1744)

Under the auspices of Oxford University, Sir Thomas Hanmer brought out a printed edition of Shakespeare's works in six volumes, quarto. Hanmer's critical powers were not conspicuous, although some of his readings were of value enough to be adopted by later editors. The Oxford edition was an elegant and ornamental piece of book-making, containing many engravings, a worthy shrine for the great poet's literary remains. The sketch (of the alleged Shakespeare) appears in the edition of the Vignette which is designed by Mr. Wale, and engraved by Woodfield; it contains the figures of Apollo and Minerva and bears some resemblance to that at Wentworth House. These editions were first sold for three guineas, then at the price of ten, before it was reprinted.

[46] Prefix to his quarto edition of works (six volumes) 1728.

Mr. Warburton's edition (1747)
Mr. Warburton was a critic "of the slashing order," and added little of value to the fast accumulating commentaries. He quarreled fiercely with Lewis Theobald, accusing him of both ignorance and lack of critical ability, on grounds to the latter's corrections to Pope's work. As Warburton tells us, his edition was to "first sort in restoring the poet's genuine text;" then to "an explanation of the author's meaning." His final effort was to "a critical explanation of the author's beauties and defects; but chiefly of his beauties, whether in style, thought, sentiment, character, or composition." [47]

At Jacob Tonson's sale, in the year 1767, the remainder of Dr. Warburton's edition, in eight volumes 8vo printed in 1747 (of which the original price was two pounds eight shillings, and the number printed 1.000) was sold off, where 178 copies were sold at eighteen shillings each.

Dr. Samuel Johnson's edition (1765)
Dr. Samuel Johnson's long-delayed edition, in eight volumes, aside from a few commonsense explanations, was not of much merit.

Mr. Tyrwhitt and Mr. George Steevens' edition
In 1766 an edition was followed by Mr. Tyrwhitt, a reprint of twenty of the early quartos by Mr. George Steevens in the same year. Steevens was led by some sentiment for humour; he would play mischievous practical jokes with a literary twist, and used both the forged letter and the anonymous libel to further his ends. His vitriolic jests led him even to make obscene notes to common passages in the plays, and by some peculiarity attribute these comments to two clergymen, whose names he mentioned. However, Mr. Beverley Warner had said of Steevens' edition: "The student of Shakespeare owes him an enormous debt;" [48] a comment no doubt in tribute to Steevens' contribution to the quartos instead of the Folio copies. In collaboration with Dr. Johnson, and assisted in a very moderate degree by Malone, Mr. Steevens issued a ten volume edition in 1773 which was revised in 1778 and became the basis for Isaac Reed's [49] edition of 1793. A facsimile of Marshall's sketch from the 1640 Shakespeare poems edition was also added.

Edward Capell edition (1768)
The edition of Edward Capell, [50] the greatest scholarly work since Lewis Theobald's, was the first rigorous comparison between the readings of the Folios and the quartos. Capell's quartos, now in the British Museum, are of the greatest value to Shakespeare scholars. With his edition begins the tendency to get back to the earliest form of the text and not to try to improve Shakespeare to the ideal of what the editor thinks Shakespeare should have said.

Edmund Malone edition (1790)
Edmund Malone published his famous edition in ten volumes. "No Shakespearean scholar ranks higher than his in reputation," said Mr. Durham.

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[47] Edmond Malone. *Prolegomena*. Vol. I., London: John Cawthorn, 1804.
[48] *Famous Introductions to Shakespeare's Plays*. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1906.
[49] (*b.*1742–*d.*1807)
[50] (*b.*1713–*d.*1781)

Various other editions

Numerous editions followed up to 1865, of which the most important was James Boswell's so-called *Third Variorum* (twenty-one volumes). In 1855, republished in 1861 was Halliwell-Phillipps' edition (fifteen volumes), which contains enormous masses of antiquarian material. In 1854 and 1861 appeared the edition in Germany of Mr. N. Delius whose text was used in the *Leopold Shakespeare* published in 1876. In 1857 and 1865 appeared the first American edition of Mr. R. G. White, which contained many original suggestions and between 1863 and 1866 appeared the edition of Messer. Clark & Wright, known as the Cambridge edition. Mr. W. Aldis Wright, "the dean of living Shakespearean scholars" is chiefly responsible for this text; reprinted with a few changes into "The Globe" edition, and is still the chief popular text. Prof. W. A. Neilson's single volume in the Cambridge series of 1906 was the scholarly edition in America, which follows in most cases the positions taken by Clark & Wright.

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> His family, as appears by the register and public writings relating to that town, were of good figure and fashion there, and are mentioned as gentlemen.

Malone, in his biography of Shakespeare, says that Rowe's statement of the Shaksper family "is extremely inaccurate and erroneous. From such a representation, it might naturally be supposed, that a long series of ancestors, all denominated gentlemen, might be found in the archives of Stratford." [51] We sympathize with Mr. Malone's doubts, for on May 11, 1599, from the Acts of the Privy Council, this entry appears:

> Warrant to pay to Elizabeth and Mary Arden, daughters of Edward Arden, late convicted of High Treason, 40 marks a year each for life, out of revenue assured for life to their mother Mary Arden in lieu of dowry, and come by reason of her offence into her Majesty's hands. This warrant was directed to the Late Lord Treasurer, Eliz., and is now to pass the Privy Seal, directed to the Exchequer, as there is no warrant there to continue the annuities.
>
> Acts of the Privy Council (May 11, 1599)

The Arden family, from Shaksper's mother's side, was not, as has been supposed, in very flourishing fortunes. The date of this warrant is at the time John Shaksper, father of the Stratfordian actor, applied for a grant to impale his wife's Coat-of-Arms in his own new Coat. An actual account of espionage has been traced back to the Arden family from the town's records. [52]

On October 25, 1583, John Somerville, son-in-law to Edward and Mary Arden, left his house which was located six miles north of Stratford-upon-Avon, for London. He left with the intention of shooting the Queen. He was arrested the next day and taken to Oxford to await hearing at Westminster and was then sent to the Tower.

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[51] *Plays & Poems of William Shakespeare.* Vol. II., P. 18. London. 1821.
[52] Richard Savage. *Minutes and Accounts.* Vol. X., Dugdale Society, 1924.

On November 2, 1583, the Clerk of the Privy Council, Mr. Thomas Wilkes, arrived at Charlecote to "search in the matter" and to act with Sir Thomas Lucy for the "apprehension" of those implicated in the treasonable act. The next day, Mr. Wilkes and Sir Thomas Lucy together with Mr. Edward Aglionby and Mr. Rafe Griffin (who was master of the Leicester Hospital in Warwick), raided Park Hall that was only twenty miles from Charlecote, and took both the Ardens prisoners. Four days later, Mr. Wilkes wrote from Charlecote to Sir Francis Walsingham, the Elizabethan spymaster:

> Unless you can make Somerville, Arden, Hall (the priest), Somerville's wife and his sister, to speak directly to those things which you desire to have discovered, it will not be possible for us here to find out more.
>
> State Papers Dom. Eliz. clxiii. 54 f.

John Somerville, Edward and Mary Arden, together with Hugh Hall (family priest) were indicted at Warwick on December 2, 1583, only two months after Somerville stepped out of his house with the intention to shoot the Queen. All perpetrators were tried in London on December 16, and found guilty. Mary Arden (Shaksper's mother's kinswoman and namesake) was pardoned, but her husband Edward was executed at Smithfield on December 20, and the previous evening John Somerville was found hanged in Newgate. Their heads were set up on London Bridge. There is a "secret advertisement from Exeter [that] suggests Somerville was hanged by the Catholics to avoid greater evil," as recorded in the State Papers. [53]

> Indictment found at Warwick against the said John Somerville, Margaret Somerville, and the said Edward Arden, late of Park Hall, aforesaid, gentleman, and Mary, his wife, Francis Arden, and the said Hugh Hall for that on the 22nd October, 25 Eliz., at Edreston, they conspired to compass the death of the Queen, and change the pure religion established in the Kingdom, as well as to subvert the Commonwealth, and in order to carry such their treasons into effect, the said Margaret Somerville, Edward Arden, Mary Arden, Francis Arden, and Hugh Hall at Edreston, the 24th Oct., 25 Elizabeth, by divers ways and means incited John Somerville to kill the Queen and thereupon the said John Somerville traiterously said 'I will go up to the Court and shoot the Queen through with a pistol,' and on the following day he took a pistol, gunpowder, and bullets, and journeyed therewith from Edreston towards London, the Queen then being in her house called St. James, in the County of Middlesex, near the same city, in order to carry his treasons into effect.
>
> Baga de Secretis, Pouch xlv., mems. 9 and 10

Mr. Henry Rogers (town clerk of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1577) was now operating as an Agent to Sir Thomas Lucy; he assisted the latter and Mr. Wilkes (Clerk of the Privy Council) in the search for "books and writings of an incriminating nature." For his services, Mr. Rogers received sixty shillings at St. James' on November 20, 1583.

Richard Savage, who was Secretary and Librarian of Shakespeare's Birthplace and Trust, and also Deputy Keeper of the Records of the Corporation of Stratford-upon-Avon, had collected a

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[53] Dom. Ser, Eliz., 168, 24.

mass bulk of town records. In these records, regarding the espionage venture, he says: "If Shaksper was in his [Henry Rogers'] employment he may have had a hand in this." [54] Mr. Savage meant the search for "books and writings of an incriminating nature." It would be a peculiarity why young Shaksper, in 1583, at the age of nineteen, only a year after his alleged marriage to Anne Hathaway, would be in the employment of the Town Clerk, who was also an Agent to Sir Thomas Lucy. This point of view was also held by Mr. Simpson who had supposed that young Shaksper at the time, had served Edward Arden, his mother's cousin, in the capacity first of a page, and then in that of an Agent, under the assumed name of "William Thacker." In an article in *The Edinburgh Reviewer*, it had been shown that "William Thacker" was a real personage being then a servant to the Somervilles "at his own request, that he had served him about three years," according to his examination on December 6, 1583. [55]

The family priest, Hugh Hall, is generally known to have turned informer, and "sacrificed the rest," reports Froude in his *History*. [56]

The Record of the Sessions held at Guildhall on December 16 (before the justices appointed to try the prisoners) record how:

> John Somerville, Edward Arden, Mary Arden, and Hugh Hall, being brought to the Bar by the Lieutenant of the Tower, are severally arraigned. John Somerville pleads guilty, Edward Arden, Mary Arden, and Hugh Hall plead not guilty. Venire from the county of Warwick awarded instanter. Verdict guilty. Judgment against the male prisoners and the female prisoner as is usual in cases of high treason. Execution on the 20th.

A letter on April 1, 1593, written by the Privy Council to a Mr. Thomas Bigge, Mr. John Harryson, and Mr. Henry Dingley, relates thanking them for…

> …searching the house of Thomas Throgmorton in Coughton Park, where Mistress Arden, wife of the traitor Arden that was executed doth dwell at this present. Because it should seem by your letter to Mr. Topcliffe [Elizabethan torturer] [57] there was resistance offered at such time as you did search the house, and that they of the household then did not carry themselves with that dutiful course and obedience they ought to do, and that divers superstitious things and furniture for mass was there found, and it was confessed that a seminary priest was harboured there, who was conveyed out of the way, or lieth hid in some secret place. We have thought good to require you to commit to prison as well the said Mistress Arden as the rest of her servants to be proceeded withal, according to the qualities of their offences, which we refer to your discretion.
>
> State Papers, Dom. Ser. Eliz., clxxi., 35.

Mrs. Stopes' *Shakespeare's Family* offers an account of this treason case that involved Edward Arden.

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[54] *Minutes and Accounts*. Vol. X., Dugdale Society, 1924.
[55] State Papers, Dom. Ser. Eliz., clxiii., 72, 21 Nov.
[56] Vol. VI., P. 609.
[57] (*b.*1532–*d.*1604)

> Edward Arden was a temperate follower of the old faith; but his son-in-law, John Somerville, an excitable youth, seemed to chase under the increasing oppression of the Catholic Church and its adherents. The evil reports concerning the Queen and Leicester increased the friction. Shut out from travel or active exercise, as all Catholics then were by law, he studied and pondered, and his mind seemed to have given way in his sleepless attempts to reconcile faith and practice. He started off suddenly one morning before anyone was awake, attended only by one boy, who soon left him, terrified; and when he reached a little Inn on the lonely road by Aynho on the Hill, he spoke frantically to all who chose to hear that he was going to London to kill the Queen. [58] Then followed [the] arrest; examination before Justice D'Oyley; a march to London with twelve guards; examination in the Gatehouse and finally imprisonment in the Tower. Thereafter went forth the mandate to arrest Edward Arden, his wife, Francis Arden, of Pedmore, his brother, Somerville's wife and sister, and the priest, Hugh Hall. Sir John Conway, his wife's grand-uncle, was also commanded up to London, and seems to have been confined for a time.
>
> Examinations, probably under torture, followed fast on each other. John Somerville, Edward Arden, his wife and brother, and the priest, Hugh Hall, were tried, found guilty, and condemned to the traitor's death. Hugh Hall is said to have turned Queen's evidence. Somerville and Arden were carried forth from the Tower on December 19, 1583, to Newgate, in preparation for their execution; Somerville was found two hours afterwards strangled in his cell; Edward Arden suffered the full penalty of the law on December 20, 1583. Mrs. Arden and Francis [Edward's brother] seem to have suffered a term of imprisonment, and then to have been released.
>
> *Shakespeare's Family* (1901) [59]

One of John Somerville's servants, John Purton, was imprisoned in the Marshalsea Prison for having told William Somerville that one of the clerks of the Privy Council was searching his brother's house. "He petitioned Walsingham for release, as he did this in ignorance; and after confession of all he knew, he was pardoned." [60] Mrs. Stopes continues on an interesting fact. After the above act of treason, "the family kept quiet during the Reign of Elizabeth; but William [Somerville] was Knighted on July 23, 1603. He was appointed Sheriff of the county in 8 James I." [61] William Somerville died in 1616.

That a family member of such a treasonous act, in the Reign of Elizabeth, was Knighted upon the enthronement of King James, has many inferences to be considered, especially for the year 1605, when the Gunpowder Plot had emerged and all those who could be mustered to assist the Privy Council to capture the perpetrators. A possible royal favour of Knighthood, in return for a treachery against fellowmen and fellow believers, in the Catholic faith was at hand here. We will never surely know.

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[58] State Papers, Dom. Series, Elizabeth, clxiii., 21 et seq.
[59] London: Elliot Stock, 1901.
[60] C. C. Stopes. *Shakespeare's Warwickshire Contemporaries*. Shakespeare Head Press, 1907.
[61] State Papers, Dom. Series, Elizabeth, clxiii., 21-23.

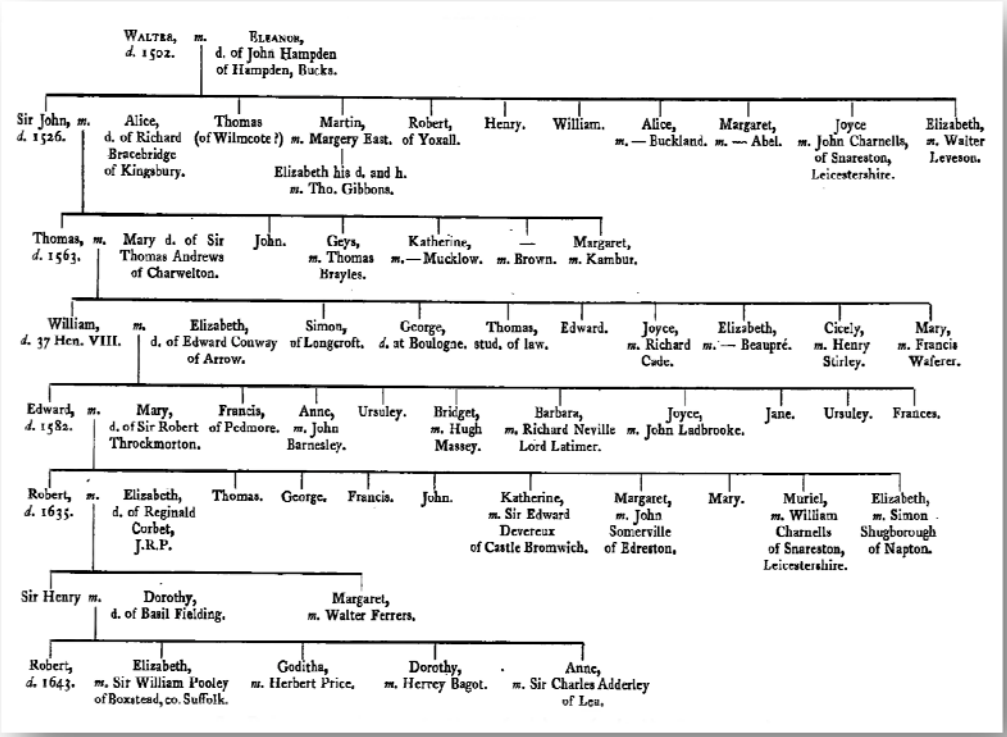

Figure 3: The Arden Connections

Dr. Nares, in his *Memoirs of Burghley*, enters in the table of contents: "Case of Arden and his family," [62] but there is no allusion to the Ardens in the text, "as if it had been cut out," Stopes complains. The *Letters and Memorials of Burghley*, which were edited by Murdin, are silent on the treason act of the Ardens; and the *Memorials of the Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth*, a sort of political diary by Burghley, printed at the end of the volume, omit from the annals of this year all reference to this case, though much more trivial incidents are recorded. "Altogether," Stopes says, "the whole affair is so discreditable to all Edward Arden's judges and the methods of justice of his times that it is almost preferable that they should somehow or other have come to feel ashamed of their action, and try to hide it, probably after the Earl of Leicester's death. [1588.] Every trait in the character of Edward Arden becomes doubly interesting to those who believe in the transmission of family characteristics, and who see in Edward Arden, the so-called traitor, the relative of William Shakespeare." [63]

[62] Vol. III., Chapter X. P. 183.
[63] *Shakespeare's Warwickshire Contemporaries*. Shakespeare Head Press, 1907.

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> His father, who was a considerable dealer in wool, [64] had so large a family, ten children in all, that though he was his eldest son, he could give him no better education than his own employment.

This rumour of John Shaksper's occupation, no doubt came down from Thomas Betterton who we met earlier. The account was taken as correct by Sir Sidney Lee since he mentions the father "set up at Stratford as a trader in all manner of agricultural product; corn, wool, malt, meat, skins, and leather were among the commodities in which he dealt. Documents of a somewhat later date often describe him as a glover." [65]

Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps (*Outlines* of 1884) tells us that the so-called "tradition" being rumours then described more neatly, was reported by a Parish Clerk in 1693, is all we have of Shaksper having been an apprentice, and "if the clerk's story be rejected, we must then rely on the account furnished by Betterton, who informs us, through Nicholas Rowe, that John Shaksper was a considerable dealer in wool, and that the great dramatist, after leaving school, was brought up to follow the same occupation, continuing in the business until his departure from Warwickshire."

As to Nicholas Rowe's statement that John Shaksper had "ten children in all" is another humungous tale, which Malone offers to correct: "The truth, however, is, that our poet's mother [Mary] never appears to have borne to her husband more than eight children, five of whom only, namely, four sons and one daughter, attained to years of maturity; William, Gilbert, Richard, Edmond, Joan, Margaret, Anne, and an elder Joan, having died in their infancy. Instead, therefore, of being charged with the maintenance of so numerous a family as ten children, the father of our poet had only half that number for any considerable period to support." [66]

No doubt the ten children were first concocted by Oldys: "Our poet was the son of Mr. John Shakespeare, woolstapler. Was the eldest of ten children, born April 23, 1563." The baptisms of the children, as given by Halliwell-Phillipps, are:

1. September 15, 1558: Joan Shakspere, daughter to John Shakspere.
2. December 2, 1562: Margareta filia Johannes Shakspere.
3. April 26, 1564: Gulielmus filius Johannes Shakspere.
4. October 13, 1566: Gilbertus filius Johannis Shakspere.
5. April 15, 1569: Joan the daughter of John Shakspere.
6. September 28, 1571: Anna filia Magistri Shakspere.
7. March 11, 1573: Richard son to Mr. John Shakspeer.
8. May 3, 1580: Edmund son to Mr. John Shakspere.

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[64] I. S. Leadam. *Domesday of Inclosures 1517–1518*. Vol. I., P. 225. London: Longmans Green & Co., 1897: "In 1454 as Warwickshire wool and lower than the wool of Berks and Oxon [was priced] at 93s. 4d."
[65] *Illustrated Life*. P. 3.
[66] *Plays & Poems of William Shakespeare*. Vol. II., P. 51. London. 1821.

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> He had bred him, it is true, for some time at a Free-School, where it is probable he acquired that little Latin he was master of: but the narrowness of his circumstances, and the want of his assistance at home, forced his father to withdraw him from thence, and unhappily prevented his further proficiency in that language.

We have no direct evidence of Shaksper having attended a "Free-school" in any borough of Warwickshire. Assumption takes centre stage on this subject as we see from the following references.

Mr. Arthur Acheson, in his *Shakespeare's Lost Years in London* published in 1920: "We know that a free Grammar school of good standard existed in Stratford during his boyhood, and later. It is usually *assumed* that it was here he got the elements of his education." [67] It is peculiar how Charles Knight's statement on the actor's education reads: "We *assume*, without any hesitation, that Shaksper did receive in every just sense of the word the education of a scholar; and as such education was to be had at his own door, we also *assume* that he was brought up at the Free Grammar school of his own town." [68]

Halliwell-Phillipps relates to the hypothesis of the actor's father and his position that may lead us to assume: "Shakespere was certainly educated at the free-school at Stratford; for, even had we no direct evidence to that effect, when we consider his father's position in the corporation during his youth, we should most undoubtedly make the same assertion. Stratford had had the advantage of a free-school from a very early period, and Edward VI., in 1553 granted a Charter, in which it was ordered from thence forth to be called 'The Kings New School of Stratford upon Avon.'" This Charter gave reference to a grammar school founded upon older foundations by Edward VI., in 1547; Charter 28 Jun. 7 Edw. VI., also noted by John Strype [69] in his *Historical & Biographical Works* (1828). [70]

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> Upon his leaving school, he seems to have given entirely into that way of living which his father proposed to him; and in order to settle in the world after a family manner, he thought fit to marry while he was yet very young. His wife was the daughter of one Hathaway, said to have been a substantial Yeoman in the neighbourhood of Stratford.

Mr. Rowe's statement that Shaksper's wife was the daughter of "one Hathaway" was accepted without question until attention was called to the entry in Bishop Whitgift's register, where she is described as a woman called "Anne Whateley." We shall not go into this subject, and will insert it into another research, in the future.

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[67] London: Brentano. 1920.
[68] *Shakspeare*. London: Virtue & Co, 1869.
[69] (*b.*1643–*d.*1737)
[70] Vol. I., Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> In this kind of settlement he continued for some time, until an extravagance that he was guilty of, forced him both out of his country and that way of living which he had taken up; and though it seemed at first to be a blemish upon his good manners, and a misfortune to him, yet it afterwards happily proved the occasion of exerting one of the greatest geniuses that ever was known in dramatic poetry. He had, by a misfortune common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company; and amongst them, some that made a frequent practice of deer-stealing, engaged him with them more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, near Stratford. For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely; and in order to revenge that ill usage, he made a ballad [71] upon him. And though this, probably the first Essay of his poetry, be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter, that it redoubled the prosecution against him to that degree, that he was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire, for some time, and shelter himself in London.

Halliwell-Phillipps had commented on Rowe's statement regarding the deer-stealing tale: "If we accept this narrative, which is the most reliable account of the incident that has been preserved, the date of the poet's departure from his native town may be assigned to a period shortly after the births of his youngest children, the twins Hamnet and Judith, who were baptized at Stratford on February 2, 1585." It may be questioned why Rowe's narrative was accepted "as the most reliable account" by Halliwell-Phillipps, since no recorded evidence exists of this deer-stealing tale which first commences upon loosely put down facts, and continues to exceedingly inaccurate details. Elsewhere, the same biographer tells us: "In pursuing our inquiries into the history of Shakespeare's life, which must necessarily to some extent be founded on conjecture, it is now necessary to inform the reader that the theft of deer and rabbits was an amusement indulged in by the youths of Shakespeare's time, and although legally punishable, was regarded by the public as a venial offence, not detrimental to the characters of the persons who committed the depredation." [72]

Mention is made of a lost ballad satirizing Sir Thomas Lucy which is evidently made up from the allusions in the first scene of the Shakespearean play, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, to which Malone observed: "Certainly affords ground for believing that our author, on some account or other, had not the most profound respect for Sir Thomas Lucy."

Even so, we have Sir Thomas Lucy's involvement in the Arden treason account given earlier; if any author of the time knew of this treason act, it can be said that the author showed "not the most profound respect" for Sir Lucy's character, by his then actions to the Arden family, as opposed to some deer-stealing story.

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[71] Beverley Warner. *Famous Introductions to Shakespeare's Plays*. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1906: "This alleged ballad," Mr. Warner states, "is very doubtful. But an allusion to Sir Thomas Lucy is evident in the Coat-of-Arms assigned to Justice Shallow in the opening scene of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*."

[72] *A Life of William Shakespeare*. London: John Russell Smith, 1847.

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

It is without controversy, that he had no knowledge of the writings of the ancient poets, not only from this reason, but from his works themselves, where we find no traces of anything that looks like an imitation of them; the delicacy of his taste, and the natural bent of his own great genius, equal, if not superior to some of the best of theirs, would certainly have led him to read and study them with so much pleasure, that some of their fine images would naturally have insinuated themselves into, and been mixed with his own writings; so that his not copying at least something from them, may be an argument of his never having read them.

Whether his ignorance of the ancients were a disadvantage to him or no, may admit of a dispute: for though the knowledge of them might have made him more correct, yet it is not improbable but that the regularity and deference for them, which would have attended that correctness, might have restrained some of that fire, impetuosity, and even beautiful extravagance which we admire in Shakespeare: and I believe we are better pleased with those thoughts, altogether new and uncommon, which his own imagination supplied him so abundantly with, than if he had given us the most beautiful passages out of the Greek and Latin poets, and that in the most agreeable manner that it was possible for a master of the English language to deliver them.

Some Latin without question he did know, and one may see up and down in his plays how far his reading that way went: In *Love's Labour Lost*, the pedant comes out with a verse of *Mantuan*; and in *Titus Andronicus*, one of the Gothic Princes, upon reading:

Integer vitæ scelerisque purus
Non eget Mauri jaculis nec arcu-

says, 'Tis a Verse in Horace, but he remembers it out of his Grammar' which, I suppose, was the author's case. Whatever Latin he had, it is certain he understood French, as may be observed from many words and sentences scattered up and down his Plays in that language; and especially from one scene in *Henry V.*, written wholly in it.

It is at this time, and upon this accident, that he is said to have made his first acquaintance in the play-house. He was received into the Company then in being, at first in a very mean rank; but his admirable wit, and the natural turn of it to the stage, soon distinguished him, if not as an extraordinary actor, yet as an excellent writer. His name is printed, as the custom was in those times, amongst those of the other players, before some old plays, but without any particular account of what sort of parts he used to play; and though I have inquired, I could never meet with any further account of him this way, than that the top of his performance was the ghost in his own *Hamlet.* [73] I should have been much more pleased, to have learned from some certain authority, which was the first play he wrote; it would be without doubt a pleasure to any man,

[73] According to Mr. Oldys, Shaksper's younger brother Gilbert remembered his performance of the character of Adam in *As You Like It.*

> curious in things of this kind, to see and know what was the first Essay of a fancy like Shakespeare's. Perhaps we are not to look for his beginnings, like those of other authors, among their least perfect writings; art had so little, and nature so large a share in what he did, that, for ought I know, the performances of his youth, as they were the most vigorous, and had the most fire and strength of imagination in them, were the best.
>
> I would not be thought by this to mean, that his fancy was so loose and extravagant, as to be independent on the rule and government of judgment; but that what he thought, was commonly so great, so justly and rightly conceived in itself, that it wanted little or no correction, and was immediately approved by an impartial judgment at the first sight. Mr. Dryden seems to think that *Pericles* is one of his first plays; but there is no judgment to be formed on that, since there is good reason to believe that the greatest part of that play was not written by him; though it is owned, some part of it certainly was, particularly the last act. But though the order of time in which the several pieces were written be generally uncertain, yet there are passages in some few of them which seem to fix their dates. So the chorus in the beginning of the fifth act of *Henry V*., by a compliment very handsomely turned to the Earl of Essex, shows the play to have been written when that Lord was General for the Queen in Ireland: and his Eulogy upon Queen Elizabeth, and her successor King James, in the latter end of his *Henry VIII*., is a proof of that play's being written after the accession of the latter of those two Princes to the Crown of England. [74]

The disputed Shakespearean plays, that Nicholas Rowe would have had some interest in, can be tracked down to six:

Thomas Lord Cromwell & Sir John Oldcastle: Mr. Tieck, the German critic, classes together as biographical dramas, and models of their kind, these two plays; the first in the nature of its subject linked to *Henry VIII.*, and the second to *Henry V*. He has also no hesitation in assigning these plays to the author of *Hamlet*. On the other hand, Halliwell-Phillipps, realizing the danger of questioning the authenticity of the Canon, rejects, in accord with the prevailing policy, the play of *Oldcastle*, suggesting an old play of that name, while Mr. Ulrici, another German critic, ascribes it to an imitator "who tried to model himself upon Shakespeare's style."

The play (*Lyfe of Sir John Ouldcasstell*) political in its nature appeared in 1602, shortly after the Essex Rebellion. It was first published anonymously, and continued to be played by the Company of actors to which the Stratfordian actor was nominally attached. Mr. Farmer ascribes its authorship to Thomas Heywood, and others to Wentworth Smith, but there is nothing whatever, not even its style, to give colour to such a statement. That the play was regarded as a genuine work of the author of plays in the Canon is evidenced by its endorsement by Nicholas Rowe, Alexander Pope, and Mr. Walker, who published it as "A Tragedy By Shakespear," as late as 1734 together with an acceptance by the German critics, Ulrici, Tieck, and Schlegel.

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[74] It is generally admitted that Thomas Fletcher had a large share in the authorship of *Henry VIII*.

The tragedy was entered for license in 1594, and printed in quarto in 1595 under the initials "W.S.," and also entered in Henslowe's *Diary*: "This 6th of October '99, received by me Thomas Downton of Phillipp Henchlow, to pay Mr. Munday, Mr. Drayton and Mr. Wilson, and Hathway for the first parts of the *Lyfe of Sir John Ouldcasstell*, and in earnest of the second parts, for the use of the company ten pound. Thomas Lord Cromwell."

Mr. Steevens accredits the authorship of the play to Kit Marlowe, who died a year before (1593), though the play enters the Register in 1594. Mr. Knight says that the initials ("W.S.") might, without any attempt to convey the notion that *Locrine* was written by Shakespeare, have fairly stood for "William Smith" and in the same way the "W.S.," of Thomas Lord Cromwell might have represented "Wentworth Smith" who was a well-known dramatic author at the date of the publication of those plays. If we refer to Mr. Fleay, we find that "Wentworth Smith" was "a hack writer, not one scrap of whose work was ever thought worth publishing." The critic Schlegel says of *Oldcastle*, *Cromwell*, and *Locrine*, that they "are not only unquestionably Shakespeare's, but deserve to be classed among his best and mature works;" and Mr. Tieck pronounces *Locrine* to be "the earliest of Shakespeare's dramas." [75]

The Puritan Widow: No play among those admitted to the two later Folios has been discredited so generally as this one. Mr. Winstanley ascribed it to Shakespeare, and likewise did the critic Schlegel, who advances the theory that for some reason of his own, Shakespeare wished to adopt the style of Ben Jonson. Mr. Knight dismisses this theory; Mr. Fleay ascribes the authorship to the poet Middleton. The play was first published in 1607, and contains an allusion to *Richard III*., and *Macbeth*. "It can hardly be thought worthy of the great dramatist;" critics tell us. "Unless it is regarded as a very youthful work which it shows evidence of being."

A Yorkshire Tragedy: The play was founded upon a tragedy which occurred in 1604, and was published in 1608 with "W. Shakespeare" on the title-page. Mr. Knight pronounces it a "play of sterling merit in its limited range," [76] and is inclined to ascribe it to Thomas Heywood [77] as does Mr. Hazlitt. Mr. Fleay, however, admits that "the authorship of this play has not yet been ascertained." [78] Malone would give no decided opinion upon it, nor did Halliwell-Phillipps venture to guess at its author, though he condemns it, and accounts for the author's remaining silence about the use of his name by assuming that he was probably attending to some of his many lawsuits. Dr. Farmer asserts that "most certainly it was not written by our poet at all."

The London Prodigal: First published in 1605 and the title-page bore the name "William Shakespeare." Mr. Tieck ascribes its authorship to Shakespeare; Mr. Knight rejects it while Mr. Fleay believes the "play is certainly by the same hand as the *Cromwell*. [79]

Areden of Feversham: Entered in the Stationers' Registers on April 3, 1592: "Edw. White. The Tragedie of Areden of Feversham and Black Will." How long before this date it was written,

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[75] Fleay. *A Chronicle History of the English Stage*. P. 299
[76] *The Works of Shakspere*, supplemental volume, P. 254.
[77] (*d.*1650)
[78] Charles Knight. *The Works of Shakspere*, supplemental volume, P. 158.
[79] *A Chronicle History*. P. 300.

we have no means of knowing; but there can be no doubt that it was the work of a young writer. Like the *Yorkshire Tragedy*, it is founded upon a local homicide, and like that event greatly excited the public. Its first publication was in Raphael Holinshed's [80] *Chronicle* of 1577, to which the dedicatory epistle is given below. Tieck thought well enough of the drama to translate it into German, declaring it beyond question, "Shakespearean."

Historiæ Placeant Nostrates Ac Peregrinæ
To the Right Honourable & his Singular Good Lord
Sir William Cecil
Baron of Burghley, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter [81]
Lord High Treasurer of England, Master of the Courts of Wards & Liveries
And one of the Queen's Majesties Privy Council

Considering with myself, right Honourable and my singular good Lord, how ready (no doubt) many will be to accuse me of vain presumption, for enterprising to deal in this so weighty a work, and so far above my reach to accomplish: I have thought good to advertise your Honour, by what occasion I was first induced to undertake the same, although the cause that moved me thereto hath (in part) yet this been signified unto your good Lordship.

Whereas therefore, that worthy citizen Reginald Wolfe late printer to the Queen's Majesty, a man well known and beholden to your Honour, meant in his life time to publish an universal cosmography of the whole world, and therewith also certain particular histories of every known nation, amongst other whom he purposed to use for performance of his intent in that behalf, he procured me to take in hand the collection of those histories, and having proceeded so far in the same, as little wanted to the accomplishment of that long promised work, it pleased God to call him to his mercy, after five and twenty years travel spent therein; so that by his untimely decease, no hope remained to see that performed, which we had so long travelled about.

Nevertheless those whom he put in trust to dispose his things after his departure hence, wishing to the benefit of others, that some fruit might follow of that whereabouts he had employed so long time, willed me to continue mine endeavour for their furtherance in the same. Which although I was ready to do, so far as mine ability would reach, and the rather to answer that trust which the deceased reposed in me, to see it brought to some perfection: yet when the volume grew so great as they that were to defray the charges for the impression, were not willing to go through the whole, they resolved first to publish the histories of England, Scotland, and Ireland, with their descriptions; which descriptions, because they were not in such readiness, as those of foreign countries, they were enforced to use the help of other better able to do it than myself.

Moreover, the charts, wherein Master Wolfe spent a great part of his time, were not found so complete as we wished: and again, understanding of the great charges and notable enterprise of that worthy Gentleman master Thomas Sackford, in procuring the charts of the several

[80] (*b.*1515–*d.*1580)
[81] Membership of this order of chivalry was restricted to the Monarch and 25 Knights and some foreign potentates. Places in the order were in practice controlled by the Monarch though Henry VIII., tried to raise its status.

provinces of this realm to be set forth, we are in hope that in time he will delineate this whole land so perfectly, as shall be comparable or beyond any delineation heretofore made of any other region; and therefore leave that to his well deserved praise. If any well willer will imitate him in so praiseworthy a work for the two other regions, we will be glad to further his endeavour with all the helps we may.

The histories I have gathered according to my skill, and conferred the greatest part with Master Wolfe in his life time, to his liking, who procured me so many helps to the furtherance thereof, that I was both to omit anything that might increase the readers' knowledge, which causeth the book to grow so great. But receiving them by parts, and at several times (as I might get them) it may be, that having had more regard to the matter than the apt penning, I have not so orderly disposed them, as otherwise I ought; choosing rather to want order, than to defraud the reader of that which for his further understanding might seem to satisfy his expectation.

I therefore most humbly beseech your Honour to accept these Chronicles of England under your protection, and according to your wisdom and accustomed benignities to bear with my faults; the rather, because you were ever so especial good Lord to Master Wolfe, to whom I was singularly beholden; and in whose name I humbly present this rude work unto you; beseeching God, that as he hath made you an instrument to advance his truth, so it may please him to increase his good gifts in you, to his glory, the furtherance of the Queen's Majesty's service, and the comfort of all her faithful and loving subjects.
Your Honour's most humble to be commanded.
Raphael Holinshed

Edward III: Printed in quarto in 1596 anonymously, as the early Shakespeare quartos were, and was regarded as being the work of the same author by Mr. Collier. Mr. Capell in 1760 republished it as "a play thought to be writ by Shakespeare" and that when it appeared "there was no known writer equal to such a play." Mr. Ulrici accounts for its neglect and its omission from the First Folio, by the fact that it contains reflections upon the Scots, which made it popular in Elizabeth's time but would have given offense to King James, and therefore its paternity was not recognized by its author in that Monarch's Reign. Ulrici concludes that it is "a complete and beautiful composition, which is throughout worthy of the great poet," having already given his opinion "that the piece probably belongs to Shakespeare's earlier labours." Collier declared it to be "undoubtedly Shakespeare's." [82]

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> Whatever the particular times of his writing were, the people of his age, who began to grow wonderfully fond of diversions of this kind, could not but be highly pleased to see a genius arise amongst them of so pleasurable, so rich a vein, and so plentifully capable of furnishing their favourite entertainments. Besides the advantages of his wit, he was in himself a good-natured man, of great sweetness in his manners, and a most agreeable companion; so that it is no wonder if with so many good qualities he made himself acquainted with the best conversations of those times.

[82] *History of English Dramatic Poetry*. Vol. II., P. 311.

It has been said, "in order to know who the man is behind the pen, you must read his works." This has been true for many historians and biographers, as it evidently served its purpose for Nicholas Rowe in assuming some qualities of Shakespeare's character. And Dr. Andrew Clark assures us how it "was a merry cheeked old man who said 'Will was a good honest fellow; but he darest have crak't a jest with him at any time.'" [83] Beyond that, there is no evidence to show if Shakespeare was "a good-natured man, of great sweetness in his manners, and a most agreeable companion," or "good honest fellow." We tend to differ, only slightly, on these traits, if they are talking of the Stratfordian actor in conjunction with the Shakespearean author.

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> Queen Elizabeth had several of his plays acted before her, and without doubt gave him many gracious marks of her favour: it is that maiden Princess plainly, whom he intends by *A fair Vestal, Throned by the West*. And that whole passage is a compliment very properly brought in, and very handsomely applied to her. She was so well pleased with that admirable character of Falstaff, in the two parts of *Henry IV*., that she commanded him to continue it for one play more, and to show him in love. This is said to be the occasion of his writing *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. [84] How well she was obeyed, the play itself is an admirable proof. Upon this occasion it may not be improper to observe, that this part of Falstaff is said to have been written originally under the name of Oldcastle; some of that family being then remaining, the Queen was pleased to command him to alter it; upon which he made use of Falstaff. The present offence was indeed avoided; but I don't know whether the author may not have been somewhat to blame in his second choice, since it is certain that Sir John Falstaff, [Fastolf] who was a Knight of the Garter, and a Lieutenant-General, was a name of distinguished merit in the wars in France in Henry V's and Henry VI's times. What Grace so ever the Queen conferred upon him, it was not to her only he owed the fortune which the reputation of his wit made.

The name of the tavern in Southwark, which belonged to the historical Sir John Fastolf, was "The Boar's Head." The name was selected in 1733 by Mr. Theobald, the first commentator who assigns it as the resort of Falstaff, for though Shakespeare does not actually give it a name, though he may be supposed to allude to it, when Prince Hal questions Bardolph about the Knight's proceedings. [85] The locality of the tavern is well chosen for Prince Hal's revelries, as it was close to the mansion which Henry IV., in 1410, gave to his son, called "Cold Harbour," in Upper Thames Street, an ancient possession of the De Bohuns family. [86]

In Elizabethan times, the tavern was located in Eastcheap, but was destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666; rebuilt two years after, to be finally taken down in 1831. The sign of "The Boar's Head," carved in stone, having the initials of the landlord, "I. T." and the date 1668, is preserved in the Museum of the Corporation of London.

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[83] Plume MS. at Maldon.
[84] Anecdote dates from 1702 but is not considered authentic.
[85] 2 *King Henry IV*., Act II., Scene 2.
[86] G. R. French. *Shakspeareana Genealogica*. Part I. Cambridge University Press, 1869.

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> He had the honour to meet with many great and uncommon marks of favour and friendship from the Earl of Southampton, famous in the histories of that time for his friendship to the unfortunate Earl of Essex. It was to that noble Lord that he dedicated his *Venus and Adonis*, the only piece of his poetry which he ever published himself, though many of his plays were surreptitiously and lamely printed in his life-time. There is one instance so singular in the magnificence of this patron of Shakespeare's that if I had not been assured that the story was handed down by Sir William D'Avenant, who was probably very well acquainted with his affairs, I should not have ventured to have inserted, that my Lord Southampton, at one time, gave him £1.000 to enable him to go through with a purchase which he heard he had a mind to. A bounty very great, and very rare at any time, and almost equal to that profuse generosity the present age has shown to French dancers and Italian Eunuchs.

This tale of "Lord Southampton, at one time, gave him £1.000" came from Sir William D'Avenant, as Rowe also affirms. D'Avenant succeeded Ben Jonson [87] as Poet Laureate in 1637, and Knighted by Charles I., in 1643. He set the Southampton assumption in motion long after Shaksper's death. The amount mentioned, in the time of Elizabeth, was worth as much as £100.000 in today's currency and no proof exists to support the conjecture. No evidence exists that the Earl of Southampton ever knew Shaksper. No letter of Southampton's can be found showing even an acquaintance with the actor, and if the Earl had ever given him any money or article of value, some evidence of it would long ago have been produced.

However, to satisfy beliefs and to fill the Stratfordian genealogy of the actor Shaksper, William-Henry Ireland's forgeries of a Southampton collection of letters were created. This collection was investigated after a five year period on another project, in 2007, and a brief account will be given.

After researching the British Museum archives (long transferred to the British Library) no catalogued item of a Southampton collection was found, yet there is found in a small pamphlet, written by Franklin H. Head entitled *Shakespeare's Insomnia, & the Causes Thereof* published in 1887, alleged letters written to William Shakespeare by various authors. In the section where the letters are given, Mr. Head states, without doubt, that he was procured absoluteness in their authenticity by the British Museum officials of the time, and that the letters were enclosed in a bundle of manuscripts entitled *The Southampton Shakespeare Collection of 1609*. "They came from the possessions of the Earl of Southampton," Mr. Head states, "whereupon his death, the manuscripts were discovered in the dungeon of the castle." An extract of the letter Mr. Head received from the Director of the British Museum is given below.

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[87] (*b.*1573–*d.*1637)

British Museum, Office of Chief Curator
Department of Manuscripts
London, February 14, 1886.

Sir: I am further instructed by the Curator to inform you that compliance with your request that this institution reciprocate your kindness by loaning to you all papers from the recently discovered Southampton Shakespeare Collection, bearing date in the years 1593, 1602, and 1609, is contrary to the regulations of this institution. If you cannot visit London to examine these interesting manuscripts, copies will be made and transmitted you for three halfpence per folio, payment by our rules invariably in advance.

I note that you are evidently in error upon one point. The collection contains no letters or manuscripts of Shakespeare. It is composed principally of letters written to Shakespeare by various people, and which, after his death, in some way came into the possession of the Earl of Southampton. His death, so soon after that of Shakespeare, doubtless caused these letters to be lost sight of, and they were but last year discovered in the donjon [dungeon] of the castle. I have examined the letters for the years you name, and find that copies of the same can be made for £3. 3s., exclusive of postage.
Very respectfully yours.
John Barnacle,
10th Ass't Sub-Secretary

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Should the above letter be authentic, as inserted in Mr. Head's book, then grave error must be laid upon the officer Mr. John Barnacle, who was, as stated, Chief Curator of the British Museum in 1886. The Senior Assistant-Keeper in 1886 was a Mr. G. W. Porter, and the Keeper of the Department of Printed Books was a Mr. George Bullen. The Superintendant of the Reading Rooms was a Mr. G. K. Fortescue.

Regardless, Mr. Head received his documents and inserts into his work the first of the letters, dated Inner Temple, London, February 15, 1593, from a firm of lawyers, Messrs. Shallow & Slender. The second letter is from the same parties, and bears date four days later than the first, being from the Inner Temple, February 19, 1593. The next letter is dated the following month, and is from Henry Howard, an apparent pawnbroker in Queen Street, London, dated March 10, 1593. The next letter and last of this period, is from Mordecai Shylock living in Fleet Street, near the Sign of "The Hog in Armor," dated November 22, 1593.

The letters in the second period (1602) are nine years later than those mentioned. The first is from the same Mordecai Shylock, from Threadneedle Street, London, and dated April 17, 1602. The next letter is from the same writer, and is dated nine days later on April 26, 1602, and another on May 12, 1602. A letter next is from one William Kempe that is written from "The Globe Playhouse Employment Bureau," on May 25, 1602. Another is from the Rev. Walter Blaise, "clergyman at Stratford-upon-Avon, written from that town on February 23,

1609." Then a letter from Sir Walter Raleigh, [88] written from "The Mermaid" on March 20, 1609. Finally, a letter written again from Rev. Walter Blaise on April 3, 1609; doubtless a forgery, it is not without interest that we add it below:

Stratford, April 3, 1609.
Rev. Walter Blaise
To
William Shakespeare

Sir Thomas Lucy, who is in her Majesty's commission as a Justice of the Peace in this bailiwick, yesterday did inform me that he had been questioned from London if you were a married man, and if yes, when and to whom you were wedded. As the parish-records are in my keeping, I could but bestow the information sought, although with great sinking of heart, as a well-wisher to you, who, though given overmuch to worldly frivolities and revels, yet are a worthy citizen, and a charitable and a just.

Greatly did I fear this knowledge was sought to thy injury. Hast thou led a blameless life, the gates of hell shall not prevail against thee; but the wicked stand on slippery ways. Anne, thy wife, to whom I did unbosom my fears, is in much tribulation lest thou art unfaithful to thy marriage vows, and again beseeches me to urge thee to come forth from wicked Babylon and dwell in thy pleasant home in Stratford.

Thou art become a man of substance, and hast moneys at usury. I have read of thy verses and plays, which, albeit somewhat given to lewdness, and addressed to gain the favour of the baser sort, yet reveal thee to be a man of understanding. I cannot, as it is rumoured do some of thy town associates, award thee the title of Poet, which title is reserved for the shining ones; but thou hast parts.

There are many parish clerks, and even some curates in this Realm, scarcely more liberally endowed in mind than thou. But greatly do I fear that thou art little better than one of the wicked. How hast thou put to use this talent entrusted thee by the Master of the vineyard? In the maintenance of the things which profit not; in seeking the applause of the unworthy; in the writing of vain plays, which, if of the follies of youth, may be forgiven and remembered not against thee provided in riper years you put behind you these frivolities, and atone for the mischief thou hast wrought by rendering acceptable service to the Master; by coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

Gladly would I take thy training in charge, and guide thy tottering feet along the flowery paths of Homiletics. Who knoweth into what vessels the All-seeing One may elect to pour his spirit? Perchance in mercy I may be spared to behold thee a faithful though humble preacher of the word.

Anne, thy wife, often hath likened me to a great light upon a high hill-top, shining in the darkness far away. I would not magnify my powers, but not to all is it given to be mighty

[88] (*b.*1552–*d.*1618)

captains of a host. Yet, according to thy gifts might thy work be, and a little candle shining in a darkened valley hath its place.

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> What particular habitude or friendship he contracted with private men, I have not been able to learn, more than that everyone who had a true taste of merit, and could distinguish men, had generally a just value and esteem for him. His exceeding candour and good nature must certainly have inclined all the gentler part of the world to love him, as the power of his wit obliged the men of the most delicate knowledge and polite learning to admire him. Amongst these was the incomparable Mr. Edmond Spencer, who speaks of him in his *Tears of the Muses*, not only with the praises due to a good poet, but even lamenting his absence with the tenderness of a friend. The passage is in *Thalia's Complaint* for the decay of dramatic poetry, and the contempt the stage then lay under, amongst his miscellaneous works.
>
> I know some people have been of the opinion that Shakespeare is not meant by "Willy" in the first Stanza of these verses, because Spencer's death happened twenty years before Shakespeare's. But, besides that the character is not applicable to any man of that time but himself, it is plain by the last Stanza that Mr. Spencer does not mean that he was then really dead, but only that he had withdrawn himself from the public, or at least withheld his hand from writing, out of a disgust he had taken at the then ill taste of the town, and the mean condition of the stage. Mr. Dryden was always of opinion these verses were meant of Shakespeare; and it is highly probable they were so, since he was three and thirty years old at Spencer's death; and his reputation in poetry must have been great enough before that time to have deserved what is here said of him.

That "Mr. Spencer does not mean that he was then really dead, but only that he had withdrawn himself from the public," was an entrance for Oxfordians to step through; they support Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, [89] as being the author of the Shakespearean literature even though Edward de Vere died in 1604.

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> His acquaintance with Ben Jonson began with a remarkable piece of humanity and good nature; Mr. Jonson, who was at that time altogether unknown to the world, had offered one of his plays to the players, in order to have it acted; and the persons into whose hands it was put, after having turned it carelessly and superciliously over, were just upon returning it to him with an ill-natured answer, that it would be of no service to their Company, when Shakespeare luckily cast his eye upon it, and found something so well in it as to engage him first to read it through, and afterwards to recommend Mr. Jonson and his writings to the public. After this they were professed friends; though I don't know whether the other ever made him an equal return of gentleness and sincerity.

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[89] (*b.*1550–*d.*1604)

According to Rowe, a mirage meeting between Shakespeare and Ben Jonson took place in 1598. From literary studies, we know that Jonson was not "altogether unknown to the world" in 1598 as the biographer tells us. At the time, Ben Jonson had created his play *Every Man in His Humour*, and was already under the employment of Philip Henslowe [90] at The Rose theatre; it was only after Jonson's duel with another actor called Gabriel Spenser (in 1598) that he left from that theatrical Company.

The Middlesex Sessions Roll records some Coroner's inquest taken at Holywell Street on December 10, 1596, where the body of James Feake was "slain and viewed." The inquest names a "Gabriel Spenser, late of London, yeoman and James Feake had been in the dwelling-house of Richard East, barber, the said parish, on December 3, between the fifth and sixth hour of the afternoon, and insulting words passed between them." Feake was beaten and stabbed "six inches deep and two inches wide on the face, between the pupil of the right eye called the ball of the eye and the eyebrows, penetrating to the brain, of which the aforesaid James Feake languished and lived in languor at Hallowell Street from the 3rd day of December until the 6th day, when he died." Another *reckoning* in a small room, like Kit Marlowe's, if you will. Feake was buried at St. Leonard's Church, December 7, 1596.

Gabriel Spenser was last mentioned in Henslowe's *Diary* on May 19, 1598; the year he was engaged in a duel with Ben Jonson on September 22, as is recorded in the Middlesex Sessions where a Bill is found against…

> Benjamin Johnson, late of London, yeoman, for killing Gabriel Spenser in the Fields [Hoggesdon or Hoxton Fields, in parish of St. Leonard] on the said day. [91] The said Ben Jonson with a certain sword of iron and steel called a 'Rapiour' of the price of 3s., gave Gabriel Spenser on his right side a mortal wound of the depth of 6 inches and breadth of one inch, of which he then and there died.
>
> G.D.R., 40 Eliz.

Ben Jonson then "confesses the indictment, asks for the Book, reads like a Clark, marked with the letter 'T' and is delivered according to Statute 18 Eliz. c. 7."

In Jonson's *Conversations* with Drummond [92] he says, "being appealed to the field he had killed his adversary who had hurt him in the arm, and whose sword was 10 inches longer than his, for the which he was imprisoned and almost at the gallows." This was a year when the Earl of Southampton had lost favour with the Queen, for secretly marrying her maid of honour (Elizabeth Vernon) and the Earl of Essex was not in the same favour as he used to be.

<u>Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:</u>

> Ben was naturally proud and insolent, and in the days of his reputation did so far take upon him the supremacy in wit, that he could not but look with an evil eye upon anyone that seemed to stand in competition with him. And if at times he has affected to

[90] (*d.*1616)
[91] Cordy Jeaffreson's book, P. 38.
[92] Shakespeare Society's Transactions, P. 8. (1842).

> commend him, it has always been with some reserve, insinuating his incorrectness, a careless manner of writing, and want of judgment; the praise of seldom altering or blotting out what he writ, which was given him by the players who were the first publishers of his works after his death, was what Jonson could not bear; he thought it impossible, perhaps, for another man to strike out the greatest thoughts in the finest expression, and to reach those excellencies of poetry with the ease of a first imagination, which himself with infinite labour and study could but hardly attain to. Jonson was certainly a very good scholar, and in that had the advantage of Shakespeare; though at the same time I believe it must be allowed, that what nature gave the latter, was more than a balance for what books had given the former; and judgment of a great man upon this occasion was, I think, very just and proper.

We have no secure source telling us if Shaksper ever addressed a letter or a poem to Ben Jonson or vice versa, even though Jonson is considered the anchor of traditional belief to have known the actor. It is to the Jonsonian utterances that the apostles of the Stratfordian faith always make their appeal, as Mr. Robertson said: "The testimony of Jonson is monumental and irrefragable." [93] There are two utterances of Ben Jonson's to which the Stratfordians appeal as conclusive evidence: first are the lines bearing his signature prefixed to the First Folio, and second are the much-quoted passages in the following extract:

> I remember the players have often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare, that in his writing, whatsoever he penned, he never blotted out a line. My answer hath been, 'Would he had blotted a thousand,' which they thought a malevolent speech.
> I had not told posterity this but for their ignorance, who chose that circumstance to commend their friend by wherein he most faulted; and to justify mine own candour, for I loved the man, and do honour his memory on this side idolatry as much as any. He was, indeed, honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent fancy, brave notions, and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with that facility that sometime it was necessary he should be stopped. *Sufflaminandus crat*, [to check or repress in speaking,] as Augustus said of Haterius.
>
> His wit was in his own power; would the rule of it had been so too. Many times he fell into those things, could not escape laughter, as when he said in the person of Caesar, one speaking to him: 'Caesar, thou dost me wrong.' He replied: 'Caesar did never wrong but with just cause;' and such like, which were ridiculous. But he redeemed his vices with his virtues. There was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned.
>
> *Discoveries: De Shakespeare nostrati* [94] (1641)

Had Ben Jonson not wrote the poetical allusion "Sweet Swan of Avon" in the First Folio, who would have believed that an actor from Stratford-upon-Avon wrote the plays? Yet, an allusion to this "Swan of Avon" should not safely direct us to Stratford-upon-Avon. More on this subject will be seen in Part Three: Sir Sidney Lee's Biography of Shakespeare.

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[93] *The Observer.* March 2, 1919.
[94] *De Shakespeare nostrati* meaning: Our English Shakespeare.

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> In a conversation between Sir John Suckling, Sir William D'Avenant, Endymion Porter, Mr. Hales of Eaton, and Ben Jonson; Sir John Suckling, who was a professed admirer of Shakespeare had undertaken his defence against Ben Jonson with some warmth; Mr. Hales, who had sat still for some time, hearing Ben frequently reproaching him with the want of learning, and ignorance of the ancients, told him at last, 'that if Mr. Shakespeare had not read the ancients, he had likewise not stolen anything from them;' (a fault the other made no conscience of) 'and that if he would produce any one topic finely treated by any of them, he would undertake to show something upon the same subject at least as well written by Shakespeare.' Jonson did indeed take a large liberty, even to the transcribing and translating of whole scenes together; and sometimes, with all deference to so great a name as his, not altogether for the advantage of the authors of whom he borrowed. And if Augustus and Virgil were really what he has made them in a scene of his *Poetaster*, they are as odd an Emperor and a poet as ever met. Shakespeare, on the other hand, was beholding to nobody farther than the foundation of the tale, the incidents were often his own, and the writing entirely so, there is one play of his, indeed, *The Comedy of Errors*, in a great measure taken from the *Menæchmi* of Plautus. How that happened, I cannot easily divine, since, as I hinted before, I do not take him to have been master of Latin enough to read it in the original, and I know of no translation of Plautus so old as his time.

The play *Comedy of Errors*, which Rowe talks of, was based upon the *Menæchmi* of Plautus, a comic poet, who wrote about 200 B.C. The first translation of the Latin work into English was made in 1595, subsequently to the appearance of the Shakespeare play, and without any resemblance to it "in any peculiarity of language, of names, or of any other matter, however slight," Mr. Verplanck had said.

Nicholas Rowe's Account Cont'd:

> As I have not proposed to myself to enter into a large and complete criticism upon Mr. Shakespeare's works, so I suppose it will neither be expected that I should take notice of the severe remarks that have been formerly made upon him by Mr. Rhymer. I must confess, I can't very well see what could be the reason of his animadverting with so much sharpness, upon the faults of a man excellent on most occasions, and whom all the world ever was and will be inclined to have an esteem and veneration for. If it was to show his own knowledge in the art of poetry, besides that there is a vanity in making that only his design, I question if there be not many imperfections as well in those schemes and precepts he has given for the direction of others, as well as in that sample of tragedy which he has written to show the excellency of his own genius. If he had a pique against the man, and wrote on purpose to ruin a reputation so well established, he has had the mortification to fail altogether in his attempt, and to see the world at least as fond of Shakespeare as of his critique. But I won't believe a gentleman, and a good natured man, capable of the last intention.

> Whatever may have been his meaning, finding fault is certainly the easiest task of knowledge, and commonly those men of good judgment, who are likewise of good and gentle dispositions, abandon this ungrateful province to the tyranny of pedants. If one would enter into the beauties of Shakespeare, there is a much larger, as well as a more delightful field; but as I won't prescribe to the tastes of other people, so I will only take the liberty, with all due submissions to the judgment of others, to observe some of those things I have been pleased with in looking him over.

It is not hard to conclude, when one reads Nicholas Rowe's *Life* of Shakespeare, how all could have been contrived from hearsay. As previously mentioned, Rowe never took the time to investigate on what he was writing. His blind faith in Thomas Betterton and others has left a sad if not doubtful reputation on the manner of this kind of writing. Such an approach, to any biography, shows how authors prefer transcription to research, and of the readiness with which a novel assertion obtains acceptance in the world of letters when introduced by a man of note.

Part Three
Sir Sidney Lee's
Biography of Shakespeare

"No person deserves a biography unless he be, in the literal sense, distinguished. The subject of a biography must be associated with a personality and with works which are distinguished, in the sense that they are not met with in the every-day range of human experience."
—Sir Sidney Lee (1918) [95]

Figure 4: Sir Sidney Lee
(*b*.1859–*d*.1926)

[95] *The Perspective of Biography*. P. 8. London: English Association, 1918.

Sir Sidney Lee, in collaboration with Sir Leslie Stephen, was the editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Other famous works of his include his 1903 publication of *Alleged Vandalism at Stratford-on-Avon*, printed by Archibald Constable & Co., Ltd; the 1910 publication of *Shakespeare's Birthplace Relics*, printed by the Trustees and Guardians; the 1916 publication of *A Life of William Shakespeare*, printed in London by John Lane, the Bodley Head, and his 1922 publication *A Life of William Shakespeare*, also printed in London by John Murray.

Lee was a follower of false information from Nicholas Rowe's accounts, even though he is known for his love and admiration of Stratford and its prodigal son, Shaksper. Much attention had been put into Lee's biography of Shakespeare; however, the thread began with Rowe, and gave no prominence of further reliable information. But, according to the reviewers of the times, this particular biography was thought to have been "masterly work; is an honour to English scholarship, an almost perfect model of its kind, and it is matter for great national rejoicing that the standard life of Shakespeare has at last been 'made in England.' Rarely have we seen a book so wholly satisfying, so admirably planned, so skillfully executed. It is an absolutely indispensable handbook for every intelligent reader of the plays." [96] Yet it was a simple reviewer of the eighteenth century that catches one's attention; he wrote an article in *The Times* stating Lee's biography of Shakespeare "had been twisted by a master artificer into the cunning resemblance of a biography."

In the Preface of this biography, Lee delves into Shakespearean literature, so far as it is known to him, how it "still lacks a book that shall supply within a brief compass an exhaustive and well-arranged statement of the facts of Shakespeare's career, achievement and reputation; that shall reduce conjecture to the smallest dimensions consistent with coherence, and shall give verifiable references to all the original sources of information." This was a fair statement, since such a book was then sorely needed, and still is; yet Lee did not supply that want.

Halliwell-Phillipps was born and lived many years before Lee and made his literary debut, yet his *Outlines* contained more reliable information than Lee's "complete and trustworthy guide-book" where he promised to "reduce conjecture to the smallest dimensions." To gather if he managed to "reduce conjecture" we add in italics just a few samples from his biography of Shakespeare:

1. There is every *probability* that his ancestors
2. *Probably* his birthplace
3. Some doubt is justifiable as to the ordinarily accepted scene of his birth
4. His summons to act at Court was *possibly* due
5. One of them doubtless the *alleged* birthplace
6. There is no inherent *improbability* in the tale
7. William *probably* entered the school
8. There seems good ground for regarding
9. *Probably* in 1577 he was enlisted by his father
10. It is *possible* that John's ill-luck

[96] *Blackwood's Magazine*. February 1899.

11. Shakespeare's friends *may* have called the attention of the strolling players to the homeless lad
12. The wedding *probably* took place
13. The circumstances made it highly *improbable*
14. Renders it *improbable*
15. If, as is *possible*, it be by Shakespeare
16. It seems *possible*
17. *Probably* his ignorance of affairs
18. From such incidents *doubtless* sprang
19. He was *doubtless* another
20. His intellectual capacity and the amiability were *probably* soon recognized

The above twenty guesses are sufficient to call attention to the style of how Lee wrote his biography of Shakespeare in 1916. If he managed to "reduce conjecture to the smallest dimensions" we leave it to the opinion of the readers. All that Lee had to give in the shape of "personal history" of the man of Stratford could have been compressed into a short paragraph, as George Steevens had done: "All that is known with any degree of certainty concerning Shakespere, is that he was born at Stratford, married and had children there, went to London, where he commenced actor, wrote poems and plays; returned to Stratford, made his will, died, and was buried. I must confess my readiness to combat every unfounded supposition respecting the particular occurrences of his life."

Other men of habits of mind as scholarly as Sir Sidney Lee's have been engaged in the Shakespeare mystery all their lives, and have found difficulties in reconciling the life of the actor with the works of the dramatist; yet Lee goes to the extremes and pulls himself from all the difficulties of a biographer with the aid of "possibly," "probably," "doubtless," and other qualifying adverbs. Guesses and fictions he substitutes for what he calls "facts." We might be able to excuse this biographer together with any irregularities, since he himself thought of a biography in an entirely different manner than how we think a biography should be written. Let us read what he said about the writing of biographies, when he was President of the English Association, in 1918:

> It is the biographer's first duty to sift and to interpret his sweepings. Only when that process is accomplished can he hope to give his findings essential form. Unity of spirit, cohesion of tone, perspective, these are the things which a due measure of the creative faculty will alone guarantee. Otherwise, the delineation will lack the semblance of life and reality. Unlike the dramatist or the novelist, the biographer cannot invent incident to bring into relief his conceptions of the truth about the piece of humanity which he is studying. His purpose is discovery, not invention. Fundamentally his work is a compilation, an industriously elaborated composition, a mosaic. But a touch of the creative faculty is needed to give animation to the dead bones; to evoke the illusion that the veins 'verily bear blood.'
>
> *The Perspective of Biography* (1918) [97]

[97] P. 9. London: English Association, 1918.

However, we cannot excuse Sir Sidney Lee for his inconsideration to literature. More specifically, to Ben Jonson's allusion in the First Folio (1623):

Sweet swan of Avon! What a sight it were
To see thee in our waters yet appear,
And make those flights upon the banks of Thames,
That so did take Eliza, and our James!

Allusions are often used to summarize broad, complex ideas or emotions in one quick, powerful image. They serve an important function in writing in that they allow the reader to understand a difficult concept by relating to an already familiar story; [98] the familiar story being of the "Swan."

Since "the truth," said Cyrus Shahrad, "as always, is gathering dust in the unlikeliest of places," [99] and however literary allusions to Shakespeare in the sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries have been collected (*Shakespeare's Century of Praise*, revised and reedited by J. Munro as *The Shakespeare Allusion Books* 1909, first published by Mr. Ingleby in 1879) the intent to prove that the identification of the Stratford actor with the poet Shakespeare, in poetical and/or literary allusion, is an unsupported fact for anyone to rely on. It is the same as informing the public that Shakespeare was "often whipped and sometimes imprisoned" for the act of stealing rabbits.

In Ingleby's edition (*Shakespeare's Century of Praise*) he states: "The prose works published in the latter part of the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth centuries contain abundant notices of every poet of distinction save Shakespeare, whose name and works are only slightly mentioned. It is plain that the Bard of our admiration was unknown to the men of that age." Furthermore, when we come to consider the writings of Shakespeare, and compare them with the recorded life of an actor called Shaksper, our difficulties begin.

The Shakespearean scholar, White, tells us: "Shaksper was the son of a Warwickshire peasant, or very inferior yeoman, by the daughter of a well to do farmer. Both his father and mother were so ignorant that they signed with a mark, instead of writing their names. Few of their friends could write theirs, Shaksper probably had a little instruction in Latin in the Stratford Grammar school. When at twenty-two years of age, he fled from Stratford to London, we may be sure that he had never seen half a dozen books, other than his horn- book, his Latin accidence, and a bible. Probably there were not half a dozen others in all Stratford." [100]

A Horn-book was also known as the "A.B.C.-book." It contains, in black-letter, the alphabet (in small and capital letters), the sign for "and," the vowels (alone and combined with *b*, *c*, and *d* syllables), the *In-nomine* which meant "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen," and the *Pater-noster* in English. There are altogether twenty rows of letters, syllables, and words, and before the first is set a cross. The first row of syllables runs:

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[98] Stacey A. Singletary. *A Handbook to Literature*, *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama.* University of North Carolina at Pembroke.
[99] *Secrets of the Vatican*. 2007.
[100] From the *Atlantic Magazine* and quoted in Reed's *Bacon versus Shakespeare.*

ab eb ib ob ub | ba be bi bo bu

It was also Sir Sidney Lee who tells how "Shaksper's father's financial difficulties grew steadily, and they caused his removal from school at an unusually early age. Probably in 1577, when he was thirteen, he was enlisted by his father in an effort to restore his decaying fortunes. 'I have been told heretofore,' wrote Aubrey, 'by some of the neighbours, that when he [Shaksper] was a boy, he exercised his father's trade,' which, according to the writer, was that of a butcher. An early Stratford tradition describes him as 'a butcher's apprentice.' The independent testimony of Archdeacon Davies, who was Vicar of Saperton in Gloucester, late in the seventeenth century, is to the effect that Shaksper 'was much given to all unluckiness in stealing venison and rabbits, particularly from Sir Thomas Lucy, who had him often whipped and sometimes imprisoned, and at last made him fly his native country to his great advancement.'" [101]

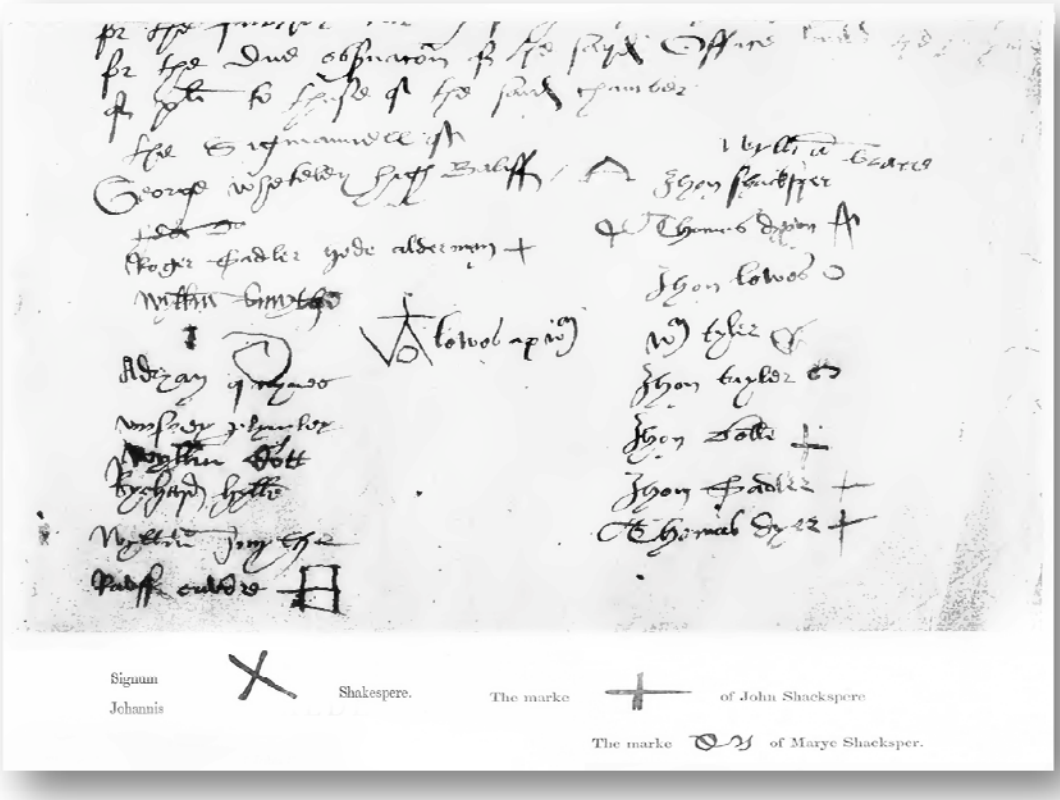

Figure 5: Samples of John Shaksper's mark

Mrs. Stopes in her *Shakespeare's Industry* (1916) notices how the Archdeacon Davies, "unsuspected even by Aubrey, that Shakespeare caricatured Sir Thomas Lucy as Justice Clodpate. The inaccuracy of this writer, in referring to Justice Shallow under another name, given to another character, in another play, by another writer, has not been sufficient to prevent successive critics from accepting both his facts and his conclusions; I believe the whole story

[101] *Life of Shakespeare*. P. 10.

arose from early misreading of Shakespeare's plays, misrepresentation of his character, and misunderstanding of his art." [102] Logical conclusion of the author.

Halliwell-Phillipps in his *Life of Shakespeare* printed in 1847: "It is sufficiently evident the poet's father was not a butcher; but it is a singular circumstance that the parish clerk of Stratford in 1693, then more than eighty years old, asserted that Shakespeare was bound apprentice to that trade. This we have on unimpeachable authority, and it shows whence the first part of Aubrey's account was originally obtained. It shows more than this; for, however it may shock our fancy, it cannot be denied but that the best authority for the nature of the profession that Shakespeare was first engaged in exhibits him occupied under no poetic circumstances, unless killing a calf 'in a high style' can be so interpreted. This authority was a native of Stratford, in a position that argues him likely to have been well informed, whose memory could most probably date back with accuracy from a time when the history of the case was well known. On April 10, 1693, a person of the name of Dowdall addressed a small treatise [103] in the form of a letter to Mr. Edward Southwell, endorsed by the latter 'description of several places in Warwickshire,' in which he gives an account of Shakespeare, including information nowhere else to be met with." [104] Within Dowdall's account is the mention that John Shaksper was a butcher by trade, where Aubrey picked it up and gave it to Rowe.

Mr. W. H. Durham, in his *An Introduction to Shakespeare* published in 1910, came to the conclusion that, "we have more than one reference by his [Shaksper's] contemporaries, identifying the actor with the poet, some so strong that the Baconians themselves can explain them away only by assuming that the writer is speaking in irony or that he willfully deceives the public. By assumptions like that, anyone could prove anything." However, after giving in previous areas the tales that were coming from various unreliable sources to Rowe for his biography, it is not difficult to realize why not only Baconians disbelieve the Stratford actor to be the Bard, but it could be said of any person with some commonsense to finally realize this; and as Mr. L. A. Sherman well said: "Anyone acquainted with the Elizabethan prose-writers is well aware that their sentences are prevailingly either crabbed or heavy, and it is often necessary to re-read, sometimes to ponder, before a probable meaning reveals itself," [105]

Keeping Mr. Sherman's statement in mind, the poetical word "swan" originated from the Sanskrit language meaning "sound" because the ancients believed the eggs of the swan were hatched by thunder and lightning. In Iceland there is a folklore describing how the swan's tone stimulates a thawing in icebergs, which is consequently respected as one of the animal's great charms. Etymologists entitle it, "but beautiful nonsense."

The first "swan song" can be traced back to the days of Socrates; specifically, Plato's *Phaedo,* fourth century B.C.; condemned to death on charges of immorality and heresy, Socrates welcomed his approaching doom because he believed it would draw him closer to a meeting with the god Apollo. The swan was one of Apollo's favoured creatures, and men had observed how the swan would cry loudly and long. Socrates believed swans "having sung all their life

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[102] *Shakespeare's Industry*. P. 127. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1916.
[103] Thorpe's Catalogue of MSS. for 1836, P. 395.
[104] *A Life of William Shakespeare*. London: John Russell Smith, 1847.
[105] *Analytics of Literature*. Boston: Ginn & Company, 1893.

long, do then sing more, and more sweetly than ever, rejoicing in the thought that they are about to go away to Apollo, whose ministers they are."

Euripedes, Aristotle, Seneca, and Cicero also believed as Plato did, that the swan would bring one closer to the gods. Others argued against the myth; Pliny refused to believe it. Some sources attribute the legend to the sixth century fabler Aesop, whilst Chaucer, around 1374, alludes to the tale twice in his literary work. Mr. Douce's *Illustrations*, a work which holds so distinguished and standard a place in Shakespearian literature, also has reference to it: "That a swan utters musical sounds at the approach of death, is credited among the ancients by Plato, Chrysippus, Aristotle, Euripides, Philostratus, Cicero, Seneca, and Martial; moderns treat this as a vulgar error." In the Elizabethan era, the "swan story" of Ariosto was very much believed in, as Francis Bacon tells us:

> Ariosto feigns that at the end of the thread of every man's life there hangs a little medal or collar on which his name is stamped; and that time waits upon the shears of Atropos, and as soon as the thread is cut, snatches the medals, carries them off, and presently throws them into the river Lethe; and about the river there are many birds flying up and down, who catch the medals, and after carrying them round and round in their beak a little while, let them fall into the river, only there are some swans which, if they get a medal with a name, immediately carry it off to a temple consecrated to immortality.
>
> *De Augmentis* [106]

The Shakespearean scholar, Sir Sidney Lee, in 1918, also gave reference to Ariosto's swan:

> The Italian poet Ariosto imagined, with some allegorical vagueness that at the end of every man's thread of life there hung a medal stamped with his name, and that, as Death severed Life's thread with its fatal shears, Time seized the medal and dropped it into the river of Lethe. Nevertheless a few, a very few, of the stamped medals were caught as they fell towards the waters of oblivion by swans, who carried off the medals and deposited them in a temple or museum of immortality. Ariosto's swans are biographers, whose function it is to rescue a few medals of distinguishable personality from the flood of forgetfulness into which the indistinguishable mass is inevitably destined to sink.
>
> *The Perspective of Biography* (1918) [107]

Coming to the word "Avon" it can be found in the Celtic dialect to mean "river." British survives today in a few English place names and river names. However, some of these are pre-Celtic. The best example is perhaps that of the Rivers Avon, which comes from the British abona meaning "river" compared with the Welsh *afon*; Cornish *avon*; Cumbric *avon*; Irish *abhainn*; Manx *awin*; Breton *aven* and the Latin cognate being *amnis*.

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[106] James Spedding. *Works*; *De Augmentis*. Vol. VIII., P. 428; Vol. IV., P. 307.
[107] *The Perspective of Biography*. P. 8. London: English Association, 1918.

The British abona "river" (Gloucestershire and adjacent settlement) is widely accepted as a Latin term of the name for the River Avon which is to the south of the Roman settlement of the same name at Sea Mills in Bristol. It shows that the Romans would use the letter "b" as the nearest Latin equivalent for a "v." It is generally claimed that "Avon" is a Celtic word on this evidence. However it is virtually unknown in Cornish place-names, [108] though it occurs in Welsh as *afon* to mean "river" and Middle Breton means "Aven" which was another of the deities of the Phoenician Canaanites, where temples to this god were called "Beth-Aven," or "house of Aven."

The "human" history of the River Avon can be traced to the Roman era, where they built around the spa waters at Bath but also created settlements at Sea Mills, Newton St Loe and Keynsham. We do not specifically know about who came next, but by the eleventh century, the settlement that became Bristol was established. The re-routing of the River Frome took place in the late thirteenth century to create a new harbour area which still exists and is known today as St Augustine's Parade. We know of other Rivers Avon in Britain, of which three pass through Gloucestershire:

1. River Avon in Devon, also known as the "River Aune;" a gem of a river which is no more than a big stream in parts.
2. River Avon in Warwickshire, also known as the Upper Avon, Warwickshire Avon, or Shakespeare's Avon, due to its fame.
3. River Avon in Hampshire, known as the Salisbury Avon or the Hampshire Avon.
4. River Avon in Bristol, also known as the Lower Avon or Bristol Avon; one of the great historic rivers of the world. It was from here that Cabot sailed in 1497 in the "Matthew" to land in the Newfoundland.
5. River Avon Anker, which used to run into the Thames River.

Ben Jonson's other allusion to Celtic folklore, is of Queen Mab; in English folklore she was a fairy. She is memorably described in a famous comedic speech by Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*, in which she is a miniature creature who drives her chariot across the faces of sleeping people and compels them to dream dreams of wish-fulfilment. She appears in works of seventeenth century poetry, notably Ben Jonson's *The Entertainment at Althorp* an early Jacobean era literary work, also known by the alternative title *The Satyr*. The work marked a major development in his career, as the first of many entertainments and masques that he would write for the Stuart Court.

With these explanations before us on the poetic allusion of the "swan" and the Rivers Avon throughout Britain, one can analyze Ben Jonson's allusion in a more understandable way. His verse begins with "Sweet swan of Avon!" Here, the Poet Laureate alludes to the swan that carries "off the medals" that has "a name" and immediately carries "it off to a temple consecrated to immortality and deposited them in a temple or museum of immortality." We know that Ben Jonson was using the Celtic dialect "Avon" to mean "river."

[108] Padel. P. 14. 1985.

The verse continues with “What a sight it were / To see thee in our waters yet appear.” Here, Ben Jonson alludes to the mythical swan again that appeared for all to see, on the banks of the River Thames which had taken Elizabeth and James on many travels; he alludes to this in his final lines: “And make those flights upon the banks of Thames / That so did take Eliza, and our James!”

Ben Jonson has the “Sweet Swan” carry off the medal with Shakespeare’s name. “Ariosto’s swans are biographers,” Sir Sidney Lee said, “whose function it is to rescue a few medals of distinguishable personality from the flood of forgetfulness into which the indistinguishable mass is inevitably destined to sink.” Ben Jonson was not about to leave the name Shakespeare “destined to sink” into “forgetfulness,” and the only manner he had to accomplish this, was to allude to the swan that was known to provide immortality in a temple or in a museum. This temple or museum could be seen as the First Folio of 1623.

We may also see the “Swan of Avon” allusion in another verse, when credited to be speaking in memory of the poet Samuel Daniel:

Epitaph to Samuel Daniel
By
George Daniel
1646

The sweetest Swan of Avon to the fair
And cruel Delia passionately sings:
Other men’s weaknesses and follies are
Humour and wit in him; each accent brings
A sprig to crown him poet, and contrive
A monument in his own works to live.

Within the known four Rivers of Avon in Britain, the above verse (by George Daniel) is alluding to the Avon which flows by Bath, a beautiful stream, though less renowned in song. The writer of the verse was a poet, who, although bearing the same surname, does not appear to have been a relation of the Somersetshire poet, being one of the sons of Sir Ingleby Daniel, of Beswick, in the East Riding of Yorkshire. This George Daniel left a large folio volume filled with his compositions in verse in the library of Mr. Caldecott and afterwards of Lord Kingsborough. The author was a Royalist living in retirement at Beswick, in 1646, when the volume was being written and decorated with some valuable miniatures.

Another poem alludes to the swan, that of Aston Cokaine, written in 1658; a Funeral Elegy to Michael Drayton, the poet.

You Swans of Avon, change your fates and all
Sing and then die at Drayton’s funeral;
Sure shortly there will not a drop be seen
And the smooth pebbled bottom be turned green
When the nymphs (that inhabit in it) have

(As they did Shakespeare) wept thee to thy grave.

Michael Drayton was not born in Stratford, so the allusion to the "Swans of Avon" in the above Elegy, is to the River Avon Anker, which used to run into the Thames River.

It is not difficult to understand how past poets alluded to the "Swan" and the Rivers Avon, for we even have allusion to Elizabethan swans from many manuscript plays (in Latin) that were performed at Trinity College in the Reign of Elizabeth. [109] The manuscripts connect with some games of swans that were of much interest in those days; an "upping of Swans" that was some diversion followed. In an interesting volume entitled, *Mr. A. J. Kempe's Loseley Manuscripts*, which contains so many curious and valuable documents connected with public and private affairs in the Reigns from Henry VIII., to James I., are some documents, which amusingly illustrate the subject: they are not however of so early a date as the subsequent warrant for appointing Commissioners in Buckinghamshire, which was directed to Sir Nicholas Bacon, then Lord Keeper. The object of this warrant was to authorize the persons mentioned, to inquire into offences against the laws for the preservation of the Queen's Swans. [110]

Mr. Ingleby came to the conclusion that Ben Jonson was not writing about the author of those plays, when he wrote his "Swan" verse, but was writing of the actor. [111] What Mr. Ingleby is alluding to, is that possibly there was an author of the plays, as well as an actor of plays; the author being still alive, and the actor being already dead. However, arguments put forward by Stratfordians are strongly against this.

The sadness of these allusions, lead to whoever first instigated that Shakespeare was dead and buried in Stratford-upon-Avon, due to Ben Jonson's allusion above explained. Whoever the instigator, Ben Jonson's "Sweet Swan" was connected to Leonard Digges' Eulogy, which we will now consider.

The poet and translator, Leonard Digges, was born in London in 1588. [112] He was allowed to reside at Oxford University where he died on April 7, 1635. His body was buried, Anthony à Wood records, "in that little old Chapel of University College, sometime standing about the middle of the present quadrangle, which was pulled down in 1668." [113]

Digges, according to James Boaden, [114] an English biographer, dramatist, and journalist, "was about this time [1623 when the First Folio was published] returned from his travels, and a resident in University College, but writing for the booksellers. His verse to Shakespeare might have been composed at the request of the publishers; it is, however, possible, that the verse proceeded from his genuine admiration, and that he might have gone from Oxford to Stratford, and there have actually seen the monument to which he alludes." [115] Such an assumption, that

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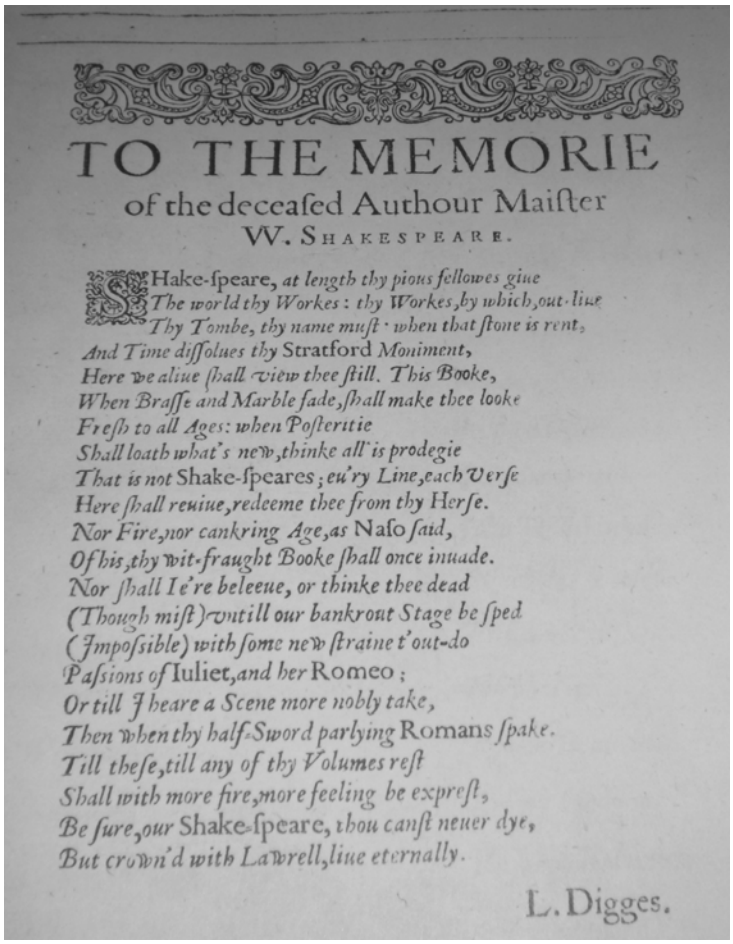
[109] Henry Ellis. *English History*. 1825.
[110] J. P. Collier. *The Egerton Papers*. 1840.
[111] Mansfield C. Ingleby C. *Shakspere Controversy*. Cambridge Press, 1861.
[112] Leslie Stephen & Sidney Lee. *Dictionary of National Biography*. London: Smith, Elder & Co. Vol. V., P. 976. 1908.
[113] *Athenæ Oxonieness*. Vol. I., PP. 636-639; Vol. II., PP. 592, 593. 1821.
[114] (*b.*1762–*d.*1839)
[115] *Inquiry to the Portraits of Shakespeare*. P. 485. London: Robert Triphook, Old Bond Street, 1824.

Digges "might have gone from Oxford to Stratford" at an earlier time than the publication of the Folio in 1623 was necessary to be added by Mr. Boaden, because no record exists to when the monument was constructed.



TO THE MEMORIE
of the deceaſed Authour Maiſter
W. SHAKESPEARE.

SHake-ſpeare, *at length thy pious fellowes giue*
The world thy Workes: thy Workes, by which, out-liue
Thy Tombe, thy name muſt: when that ſtone is rent,
And Time diſſolues thy Stratford *Moniment,*
Here we aliue ſhall view thee ſtill. This Booke,
When Braſſe and Marble fade, ſhall make thee looke
Freſh to all Ages: when Poſteritie
Shall loath what's new, thinke all is prodegie
That is not Shake-ſpeares; *eu'ry Line, each Verſe*
Here ſhall reuiue, redeeme thee from thy Herſe.
Nor Fire, nor cankring Age, as Naſo *ſaid,*
Of his, thy wit-fraught Booke ſhall once inuade.
Nor ſhall I e're beleeue, or thinke thee dead
(Though miſt) vntill our bankrout Stage be ſped
(Impoſsible) with ſome new ſtraine t'out-do
Paſsions of Iuliet, *and her* Romeo;
Or till I heare a Scene more nobly take,
Then when thy half-Sword parlying Romans *ſpake.*
Till theſe, till any of thy Volumes reſt
Shall with more fire, more feeling be expreſt,
Be ſure, our Shake-ſpeare, *thou canſt neuer dye,*
But crown'd with Lawrell, liue eternally.

L. Digges.

Figure 6: Leonard Digges' Eulogy from the First Folio (1623)

Leonard Digges "wrote for the booksellers" Boaden tells us; this would mean he would be paid to write his eulogies or verses, and whatever he wrote would not necessarily be based on actual fact, as long as poetical allusion took centre stage. We can also add Martin Droeshout, the engraver of the image on the Folio's frontispiece, into the same category of hired artists, since he was also hired by booksellers. [116]

Digges' also wrote another memorable verse on Shakespeare, which exists on a fly-leaf inscription in a 1613 edition of Lope da Vega's *Rimas* where he refers to "this Book of Sonnets, which with Spaniards here is accounted of their Lope da Vega as in England we should of our Will Shakespeare." We have no absolute record of when this inscription was inserted, even though the edition mentioned is from 1613, and it does not state that "our Will Shakespeare" was then either living or was born in Stratford-upon-Avon.

[116] George Williamson. *Brian's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers*. Vol. III. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1904.

Digges' Eulogy (Figure 6) mentions the Bard's "Stratford Moniment." There are no specifics as to which Stratford town this was, and more details would have been forthcoming, since other towns of the same name existed in England at the time, as did other Rivers Avon, which was explained earlier. However, Digges wrote for booksellers, and what he wrote did not need verification.

In tracing the parish-register of Stratford-upon-Avon, nothing comes to light regarding the early construction of this "Stratford Moniment." The lack of evidence is not surprising. Richard Savage, in 1924, had accumulated all town records, bringing them into a bulk of ten volumes. He stated all records for "the years 1644/45/46, 1653, 1674/75/76 and 1690 were void." [117]

Without substantial evidence of this monument's construction, the *Catalogue of the Shakespeare Exhibition* printed by Oxford Press in 1916, tells us that "the Bust in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford, carved before 1625 by Garret Johnson, the younger." The editors do not offer reference of their claim, and many more assumptions like this surfaced, which were coming from Sir William Dugdale's 1656 edition of *Warwickshire* that we will investigate soon.

Another particular theory is dated from 1928 and given by Edgar I. Fripp, who was the Trustee of Shakespeare's Birthplace. He notes how "in 1621/2," the Trinity Church "walls were mended and painted and the windows glazed, and the building was presentable, for the first time since the poet's interment, when his old friends and fellow actors of the King's Company paid their one and only visit to Stratford, *presumably* to see his monument, in the summer of 1622." [118] Throughout Mr. Fripp's statement, he has a reasonable excuse on how the monument was not created after the actor's death in 1616, and then, in closing, he needs to hypothesize that a commemorative monument *could have been* placed "in the summer of 1622." Presumption substitutes corroboration. On tracking down Mr. Fripp's alleged mending and painting of the Trinity Church, our investigation brought the following facts.

On March 17, 1619, the *Vestry Minute-Book* [119] gives entry of "the decays of the parish church of Stratford-upon-Avon" that was viewed by "Wm. Combe," who was employed by the Earl of Warwick to collect the rents of the manor of Stratford. Other churchwardens were also involved in this project, who gathered their survey on the restoration of various areas in the Trinity Church, including graves and monuments. We found no mention of Shaksper or Shakespeare's tombstone, monument, or effigy entered as an area for repair in the year 1621/2 as Fripp tells us.

Furthermore, there appears no entry of any mending done in the church, for the year 1621/2. The only close enough entry is for "27 day of April, 1623, *Item* they have paid this year in repair of the Church as appears by their Accompts." And, for a "repair of the church and glazing of the windows" (as Mr. Fripp mentions) is to be found for the date October 13, 1646.

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[117] *Minutes and Accounts*. Vol. V., Dugdale Society, 1924.
[118] *Shakespeare's Stratford* (1928)
[119] George Arbuthnot. *Vestry Minute-Book Parish of Stratford-on-Avon from 1617 to 1699*. London: The Bedford Press.

Other repairs of the Parish Church appear for: July 1626; October 1626; February 25, 1627; June 26, 1630; December 21, 1631; August 17, 1632; July 13, 1633, and July 6, 1636.

No mention in the dates given neither of any repairs done nor of any creation given to such a structure as the "Stratford Moniment" that Leonard Digges was mentioning. In the Wheler manuscripts, there is a further entry of restoration of the church that occurred in March 1691: "The chancel was repaired, the contributors being chiefly the descendants of those who had monuments of their ancestors there. The names of most of these are given, but there is no record of any descendants or friends of Shakespeare then, so that it may be supposed the tomb was left in a worse state of repair than the others." [120]

From Digges' Eulogy to Sir William Dugdale's sketch of the effigy in July 4, 1634, and Lieutenant Hammond's diary entry of September 9, 1634, to which we will soon investigate, there are no recorded entries of repair to Shaksper or Shakespeare's effigy. However, Robert Frazer tells us that "in 1605, the year of the Gunpowder Plot, Shaksper paid £440 for an unexpired lease of tithes in Stratford. This purchase conferred the right of sepulture within the chancel of the church, and to it we probably owe the preservation of the Shakespeare monument." [121]

Various mentions of Shakespeare have been traced from the early 1500's in references of literature text (and non literature text); yet, in order to gather sufficient evidence if the Stratfordian actor's monument existed prior to the Folio of 1623, and what Digges' was alluding to, we need to track down some further references than already given.

Mrs. Stopes, in her work *Shakespeare's Family* (1901) tells us that William Camden, the historian, mentioned Shakespeare in the following manner: "In the chancel lies William Shakespeare, a native of this place, who has given ample proof of his genius and great abilities in the forty-eight plays he has left behind him." Stopes gives us a reference: "William Camden had finished his *Britannia* by 1617 (commenced in 1597), printed in 1625." We may gather this reference (Camden's 1625 edition) most probably, that was supposed to have been where Camden wrote about Shakespeare. A search in Camden's *Britannia* was in vain; there was no reference on Shakespeare under the sections of Warwickshire, or Stratforshire.

Another similar reference was found in the *Beginner's Guide to the Shakespeare Authorship Problem*, on the Oxfordian web page: "William Camden in his book *Remaines* had praised the author Shakespeare, but in his *Annales* for the year 1616, Camden omits mention of the Stratford man's death. Also, in the list of Stratford Worthies of 1605 Camden omits the Stratford man's name, even though Camden had previously passed on Shakespeare's application for a family Coat-of-Arms." John P. Yeatman corroborates this: "His [Shaksper's] name is not to be found with those of his fellow actors (most of whom were Catholics) for receiving communion, according to law, in the parish of St. Saviour's. Amongst them was the worthy man Ben Jonson, who after killing Gabriel Spenser the actor in a duel, in 1593, and who found himself in the Marshalsea, under sentence of death, became a convert to Romanism,

[120] Wheler Misc., Vol. IV., P. 99.
[121] *The Silent Shakespeare*. P. 54. Philadelphia: William J. Campbell, 1915.

owing doubtless to the Company of several priests who were in the same plight for the more serious offence of practicing their religion, and this excellent time-server, to show his great respect for the new religion, took the cup at the so-called sacrament and brutally emptied it of its contents." [122]

Tracking down Camden's *Annales*, the work covered just the Reign of Queen Elizabeth; the first three volumes (published in 1615) had covered the years 1558 to 1588, and the fourth volume (published posthumously in 1627) covered the years 1589 to 1603. Since the Stratfordian actor, we are told, died in 1616, it seems illogical any mention of him would be inserted in Camden's *Annales* of those editions mentioned. Perhaps the web authors confused John Stowe's [123] *Annales* for Camden's; we do not know, but do know that Stowe first published his *Annales* around 1580 which had the history of England up to that year; later editions were published in 1592, 1600 and 1605 when Stowe died. After his death, in 1615, Edmund Howes published an updated edition which carried the history through to 1614 where Mr. Howes listed many poets, including "M. Willi. Shakespeare gentleman;" he did not give reference to any monument of Shaksper or Shakespeare's, since the history only went up to the year 1614.

There remained some doubt if what Mrs. Stopes' was stating could be ascertained. Oxfordians have cited the same reference of William Camden's, only this time, an Oxfordian author, Mr. Ogburn gives a somewhat different reference, being Camden's *Britannia* of 1607. [124] This edition was from an English translation by Philemon Holland that appeared in 1610, with a second edition in 1637. But no mention of Shakespeare was found there either.

The investigation turned to Camden's *Remaines of a greater work concerning Britain*, a first edition published in 1605 and intended as a supplement to his *Britannia* work. It was reprinted in 1674 by Charles Harper. Under the Chapter *Poems* (page 344), as a last entry, Camden mentions the following poets:

> These may suffice for some Poetical descriptions of our ancient Poets; if I would come to our time, what a world could I present to you out of Sir Philip Sidney, Ed. Spencer, John Owen, Samuel Daniel, Hugh Holland, Ben Jonson, Thomas Champion, Michael Drayton, George Chapman, John Marston, William Shakespeare, and other most pregnant wits of these our times, whom succeeding ages may justly admire.
>
> *Remains Concerning Britain* (1674) [125]

We finally find Camden mentioning William Shakespeare (last in line) in his *Remaines* that was republished in 1674. However, there is no mention to any monument or effigy. No mention of Shakespeare in Camden's *Britannia* as Mrs. Stopes and Mr. Ogburn tell us. If they had found some other edition, we do not know of, then so be it, and give here William Hall Chapman's words that will allow us to continue our investigation slightly beyond the *folie à*

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[122] *Is William Shakespeare's Will Holographic?* The Saturday Review, 1906.
[123] (*b.*1525–*d.*1605)
[124] *Mysterious William Shakespeare: the Myth & the Reality.* McLean, VA: EPM Publications, 1992.
[125] London: Charles Harper, 1674.

plusieurs (madness of many): "The critics and commentators read into "Shakespeare" their guesses: fantastic tricks of the imagination." [126]

Prior to 1674 of Camden's mention on Shakespeare (above), we go to the year 1630, where an anonymous writer wrote a jest, numbered 259, and inserted it in a work entitled, *Banquet of Jests or Change of Cheer*:

> One travelling through Stratford-upon-Avon, a town most remarkable for the birth of famous William Shakespeare, and walking in the Church to do his devotion, espied a thing there worthy observation, which was a tombstone laid more than three hundred years ago, on which was engraved an Epitaph to this purpose: 'I Thomas such a one, and Elizabeth my wife here under lie buried, and know Reader I. R. C. and I. Chrystoph. Q. are alive at this hour to witness it.'
>
> *Shakspere Allusion-Book* (1910) [127]

The only information given from this anonymous author is that the town was known for the "birth of famous William Shakespeare;" no mention is given of any effigy, "moniment," or tombstone.

The next reference we have is from the year 1631, written by John Weever and can be found in his *Ancient Funeral Monuments*, a volume that recorded inscriptions from various monuments around England. The "Stratford Moniment" is not directly mentioned; however, Weever offers the inscription from the gravestone. [128] There could be a possibility, that John Weever forgot to mention the monument or did not notice it, and only wrote of the gravestone inscription. We say this, since there is a tendency for people to look down rather than up, and the monument is resting, at least in present days, a little above the horizon on the north wall. Coming down to 1632, we have Milton's memorable epitaph:

What needs my Shakspere for his honoured bones,
The labour of an age in piled stones?
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid
Under a star pointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy fame?
Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
Hast built thyself a live-long monument.

Milton's epitaph does not offer any conclusive evidence, that the "Stratford moniment" was already created in 1632, according to Russell French in his *Shakspeareana Genealogica* that the "bust was executed only seven years after his [Shaksper's] death by a good sculptor, Gerard Johnson." [129] French was following the announcement from Sir William Dugdale,

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[126] *Shakespeare: The Personal Phase*. 1920.
[127] *Banquet of Jests or Change of Cheer* (1630) in C. M. Ingleby's *Shakspere Allusion-Book*. Vol. I., P. 347. 1910.
[128] John Weever had honoured Shakespeare with a poem in his 1598 *Epigrammes*, entitled *Ad Gulielmum Shakespear* where *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, are praised.
[129] Part I. Cambridge University Press, 1869.

and/or Lieutenant Hammond's diary entry, since no parish-records exist beyond Dugdale and Hammond's, either of when the monument was created or by whom. Halliwell-Phillipps knows no better but to follow the lead: "The monument was erected before 1623, for it is mentioned by Leonard Digges in some verses prefixed to the First Folio; and it was executed by Gerard Johnson, an eminent sculptor of that period." [130] We come to Dugdale and Hammond's accounts; the most crucial for evidence to support Digges' Eulogy. Or are they?

Two references from the year 1634: the first is from an entry found in a diary of a Lieutenant Hammond. The diary entry is dated September 9, 1634:

> In that days' travel we came by Stratford-upon-Avon, where in the church in that town there are some monuments which church was built by Archbishop Stratford; those worth observing and of which we took notice were these: A neat monument of that famous English poet, Mr. William Shakespeere, who was born here. And one of an old gentleman, a batchelor, Mr. Combe, upon whose name, the said poet, did merrily fan up some witty and facetious verses, which time would not give us leave to sack up.
>
> *A Relation of a Short Survey of the Western Counties* (1635) [131]

This diary entry is the first definite allusion to the "neat monument" already constructed and viewed by the public, only eleven years after the publication of the First Folio (1623). The entry is found in E. K. Chambers' *William Shakespeare* published in 1930, [132] which leads to the original entry written by Leopold G. W. Legg [133] historian, in his book entitled, "A relation of a short survey of the western counties, made by a Lieutenant of the military company in Norwich in 1635." According to Mr. Legg, he retrieved the diary entry from the Lansdowne MS., 213 ff. 351-384, that contemplated the "relation of a short survey of the Western counties, observed in a seven week journey, that began at Norwich and then into the West, on Thursday, August 4, 1635. Entries were written by the Lieutenant, the Captain and Ancient of the Military Company in Norwich who made that journey into the North the year before. The entries are short surveys of the western countries in which is briefly described the cities, corporations, castles, and some other remarkables [*sic*] in them observed in a seven weeks' journey."

We have no reason not to take for granted Lieutenant Hammond's diary entry, that he saw the "neat monument" of Shaksper on September 9, 1634. There is no motive for this military person to state an exaggeration at the time he wrote this. If we also keep under consideration John Weever's entry of 1631, when he writes about the inscription from the gravestone, we may not be far wrong to conclude, that the "Stratford Moniment" Leonard Digges was alluding to, was already erected by 1634. But when exactly the effigy was constructed, there is no definite proof to offer. Neither can we conjecture that the monument was constructed prior to 1634 as Mr. Fripp does (mentioned earlier) just to coincide with Leonard Digges' Eulogy of

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[130] *A Life of William Shakespeare*. P. 288. London: John Russell Smith, 1847.
[131] Leopold G. W. Legg. *A Relation of a Short Survey of the Western Counties, made by a Lieutenant of the Military Company in Norwich in 1635*. Camden Society: Camden Miscellany 16; 3rd Series, 1936.
[132] Vol. II., P. 242.
[133] (*b.*1877–*d.*1962)

1623 in the First Folio. However, the year 1634 is a year that we see such a structure was already created, and for the sake of argument, this would justify Digges' Eulogy to the Second Folio printed in 1632, but not the First Folio. Possibly, critics and lovers of Shakespeare were demanding in those days to see their Bard's monument as Digges was alluding to, and an effigy was constructed by 1634. Sly mannerisms, if this were done. But, to strengthen our conclusion that the monument was up and viewed by 1634, to coincide with the Second Folio, and did not exist when Digges wrote his Eulogy in the First Folio, is from our next reference, not in words but sketch.

Sir William Dugdale, the esteemed antiquarian, upon his visit to Warwickshire in July 4, 1634, created a simple sketch of the "Stratford Moniment" that was later improved by the engraver, Wenceslas Hollar, and inserted into Dugdale's *Antiquities* (1656) [134] a mere twenty year delay, due to the civil wars. This sketch (Figure 7) prevailed as the only published depiction of the effigy for over half a century. If the sketch was correct or had errors, there were no records to ascertain this, and the sketch remained unmovable till Rowe's edition in 1709.

Before continuing, it should be noticed that no witness accounts previously given, mention if the effigy was coloured or not; yet, Halliwell-Phillipps ascertains that "it was originally coloured, the eyes being represented as light hazel, the hair and beard auburn, the dress a scarlet doublet, over which was a loose black gown without sleeves." [135] Surely the biographer was referring to some sketch he had seen that had passed down to him from Pope's edition, or even later, because Dugdale publishes his sketch in black and white and he does not mention if the effigy was coloured.

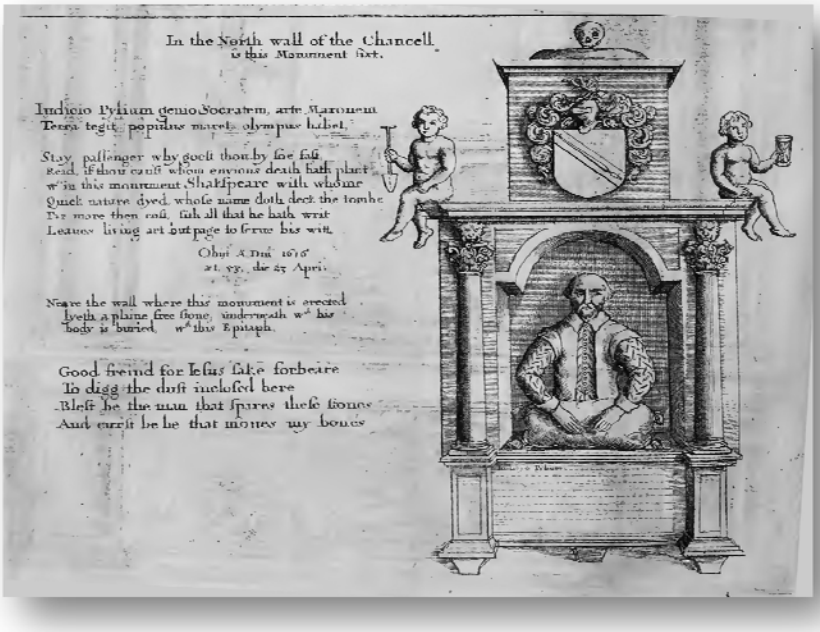

Figure 7: Wenceslas Hollar's sketch from Sir William Dugdale's *Warwickshire Antiquities* (1656)

[134] First Edition. London: Thomas Warren, 1656.
[135] *A Life of William Shakespeare*. P. 288. London: John Russell Smith, 1847.

The following letter is written from a writer living in Stratford, on May 30, 1759, which was published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for June of the same year. "A doubt of a new kind, and not unworthy of notice, has arisen among some, whether the old monumental bust of Shakespeare, in the collegiate church of Stratford, Warwickshire, had any resemblance of the Bard; but I find not this doubt to have taken date before the public regard shown to his memory, by erecting for him the curious cenotaph in Westminster Abbey: the statue in that honorary monument is really in a noble attitude, and excites an awful admiration in the beholder; the face is venerable, and well expresses that intenseness of serious thought, which the poet must be supposed to have sometimes had. The face on the Stratford monument bears very little, if any resemblance, to that at Westminster the air of it is indeed somewhat thoughtful, but then it seems to arise from a cheerfulness of thought, which, I hope it will be allowed Shakespeare was no stranger to. However this be, as the faces on the two monuments are unlike each other, the admirers of that at Westminster only, will have it, that the country figure differs as much from the likeness of the original, as it does from the face in the Abbey, and so far endeavour to deprive it of its merit." There is no record if this writer saw the monument at Trinity Church in 1759 or glanced at it from a sketch that could be found in various editions of the time.

Dugdale's *Antiquities* compiled antiquaries with illustrations taken from records, ledger books, manuscripts, and charters with depictions of tombs and Coats-of-Arms of Warwickshire. Under the subtitle *Stratford-super-Avon* he adds his statement:

> One thing more, in reference to this ancient Town is observable, that it gave birth and sepulture to our late famous Poet Will. Shakespeare, who's Monument I have inserted in my discourse of the Church.
>
> *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656)

In the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, [136] Dugdale is indexed as an English antiquary, who was born near Coleshill in Warwickshire, from an old Lancashire family. In 1641, Sir Christopher Hatton, foreseeing the war and dreading the ruin and spoliation of the Church, commissioned the antiquary to make exact drafts of all the monuments in Westminster Abbey and the principal churches in England. However, from Dugdale's personal correspondence, it seems he conceived the idea of this work around 1636, which was five years prior to Sir Hatton's commission, and two years after his first sketch of the effigy. By the year 1638, Dugdale had already obtained and collected much information, as we read from an entry in his diary: "I have extracted all that concern Warwickshire out of Sir Christopher Hatton's books, which are the epitome of all Patent Roles of the Tower, and most of Charter Roles there." [137] This diary was written from 1642 to 1686, but his correspondence begins much earlier in 1635, and his Almanacs for the years 1634 and 1654, when he was in Stratford-upon-Avon doing his research, are wanting.

[136] Eleventh Edition (1910–1911).
[137] William Hamper. *Life of Sir William Dugdale*. London: Thomas Pavison, 1826.

Figure 8: Sir William Dugdale
(*b*.1605–*d*.1686) [138]

> I cannot but congratulate the happiness of this county, in having Master William Dugdale, now Norroy, my worthy friend, a native thereof, whose illustrations are so great a work, no young man could be so bold to begin, or old man hope to finish it, whilst one of middle age fitted the performance. A well-chosen county for such a subject, because lying in the center of the land, whose luster diffuses the light, and darts beams to the circumference of the Kingdoms. It were a wild wish, that all the Shires in England were described to an equal degree of perfection, as which will be accomplished when each star is as big and bright as the sun. However, one may desire them done *quoad specimen*, though not *quoad gradum*, in imitation of Warwickshire.
>
> Thomas Fuller. *Worthies of England* (1662) [139]

The price of Dugdale's volume, according to its editor, when published, appears to have been "£1.5 and in 1669, several instances occur of its selling for £1.10." The destructive fire of London (1666) having increased its scarcity had Dugdale in 1670 giving £1.15 for a copy to accommodate a friend. [140] A second edition came out (two volumes) in 1730: "The whole revised, augmented, and continued down to this present time by William Thomas sometime Rector of Exhall, in the same County." In the 1656 edition, under the subtitle *Stratford-super-Avon*, prior to offering the sketch of the Shaksper monument begins a monumental description:

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[138] In Dugdale's biography, it is said he died from a fever "in his chair" at Blythe Hall.
[139] Vol. II., P. 425. Ed. 2nd. 1662.
[140] William Hamper. *Life of Sir William Dugdale*. London: Thomas Pavison, 1826.

- John Combe (*d*.1614)
- A monument 'curiously carved'
- Thomas Clopton (*d*.1643)
- Anne wife of William Shakespeare (*d*.1623)
- Thomas Nashe (*d*.1647)
- Dr. John Hall (*d*.1635)
- Susanna wife of John Hall (*d*.1649)
- Thomas Staffordus (*d*.1629)

One may ask if Dugdale incorrectly sketched his early drawing of the effigy; being he was human, we should say yes, he could have, and of some errors he was accused of, which have also been recorded in Malone's *Play and Poems of William Shakespeare* of 1821, where Malone corrects the author Lewis Theobald when he states Shaksper's first child, Susanna, had a monument in memorial for her death in 1649: "Mr. Theobald was mistaken in supposing that a monument was erected to her in the church of Stratford. There is no memorial there in honour of either our poet's wife or daughter, except flat tombstones, by which, however, the time of their respective deaths is ascertained. His daughter, Susanna, died, not on July 2, but July 11, 1649. Theobald was led into this error by Dugdale." [141]

Mrs. Stopes also recorded an error of Dugdale's: "Now Dugdale, with all his perfections, occasionally makes mistakes. He either mistook Asteley for Shakespeare, or another Shakespeare prioress intervened between the two that he mentions. The *Guild of Knowle Records* give unimpeachable testimony as to the existence and date of the Prioress, Isabella Shakespeare." [142]

Dr. William Thomas edited the second edition of Dugdale's *Warwickshire* in 1730, and complained that he found to his "great surprise (when his own work was finished) that the account which Sir William Dugdale had given of certain parishes was very imperfect." A register was confused, another wholly omitted, others reversed, also epitaphs and Coats-of-Arms in churches passed over; but the editor excuses Dugdale by saying that they were done by persons he hired "who took them down as they pleased themselves to spare their own pains." In the same year (1730) a vitriolic book was published by Charles Hornby attacking Dugdale's numerous mistakes in a work (*Baronage of England*) that was published in 1675.

If Dugdale "mistook Asteley for Shakespeare" could he have drawn a monument of Asteley for Shakespeare's? If Dugdale hired others to sketch "to spare their own pains," could these others have sketched wrongly Shaksper's effigy? We shall never know.

The engraver Wenceslas Hollar, who improved Dugdale's initial sketch of 1634, was born at Prague in 1607. He was of an ancient family, well educated by his parents, with the intention of bringing him up to the profession of law; but not liking that profession, and the civil commotions of his country breaking out, by which his family was plundered of everything at the taking of Prague in 1619, he had a choice for drawing, and having taken refuge in

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[141] Volume I. London: Rivington, 1821.
[142] *Shakespeare's Family*. London: Elliot Stock, 1901.

Frankfort, he became a pupil of Matthäus Merian. Hollar died in London in 1677, reduced to such a state of poverty, that when in his last illness the bailiffs entered his room to take possession, the bed upon which he lay was the only piece of furniture remaining. His prints are stated to amount to a quantity of 2.733. [143]

To sum up the facts till now, we can say that after the death of the Stratfordian actor in 1616 and not later than Leonard Digges' written Eulogy in the Second Folio of 1632, and not the first Folio of 1623, the "Stratford Moniment" was created. We have no written record of the monument's creation; we have the diary entry of a Lieutenant Hammond that it was seen on September 9, 1634, and we also have a rough sketch of its existence, supposedly created by Sir William Dugdale, from the same year, on July 4. We also have the gravestone inscription in John Weever's entry of 1631. All facts, all witness accounts, point to the "Stratford Moniment" being created with the publication of William Shakespeare's Second Folio in 1632. Did Leonard Digges exaggerate in his Eulogy of the First Folio in 1623?

One may ask for additional proof than of the facts already given, and this could be done if any written records existed for 1616 (Shaksper's year of death) up to 1622/3 (Digges' Eulogy). We know of various fires that occurred in Stratford-upon-Avon: 1594, 1596, and 1598; also, "in 1614, the greater part of the town was consumed by fire." [144] These fires however could not have been the cause of destruction of those records; they do not include the years we are interested in; neither does the year of 1588 when a great flood consumed the town. [145] Probably the fire in 1896 was the cause, yet according to a biographer, this fire just destroyed shops and a "little garden on the east side of the birthplace." [146]

On the contrary, we have ample written records of repairs done to the effigy, and the first record comes from John Ward's Company of Actors who gave a performance of the *Othello* play on September 9, 1746, which was termed as the first Jubilee in Stratford-upon-Avon. The receipts of this performance were handed over to the churchwardens to help on the repairs; yet the repairs were not done till two years later, for on November 1748, we find Rev. Joseph Greene, [147] the headmaster of the Grammar school, writing to John Ward, the Company manager, apologizing for the delay, asking for his advice in the matter. The Company manager replied on December 3, 1748, saying he intends paying a visit to the town "next summer" and hopes to have the pleasure of seeing the monument of the "Immortal Bard" completely finished. Still, the repairs were not completed till a year after this correspondence, and a total of three years finally elapsed till repairs were fully completed.

Mr. Spielmann, in 1924, wrote: "John Hall, a painter, was employed for the renovation; but when we look into the history of that renovation, naively put forward by the main supporters of the new theory, and accepted by the blind followers of it, we find that the amount raised from the *Othello* performance was no more than £12. 10s., and that the repairs which were effected

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[143] George Williamson. *Brian's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers.* Vol. III. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1904.
[144] Theobald's Preface to Boswell's *Plays & Poems of William Shakespeare*. London. Vol. I. 1821.
[145] Sir Sidney Lee. *Stratford-on-Avon*. London: P. 166. Seeley & Co., Lt., 1904.
[146] Sir Sidney Lee. *Alleged Vandalism at Stratford-on-Avon*. 1903.
[147] His brother was Richard Greene (*b.*1716–*d.*1793) who was a surgeon and apothecary of Lichfield.

after two years of wrangling, are supposed to have resulted in this fine marble monument and carved stone bust for that paltry sum." [148]

Our next record for repairs comes a year later in 1749 for the preservations and "careful repair" of the original colours of the effigy. [149] This was to be done by Mr. John Hall, a limner of the town, mentioned above by Mr. Spielmann. Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps states that John Hall was only to restore the thumb and a forefinger "of Shakespeare's writing hand," and if that is to be accepted as a fact, then it is pretty clear that the bust in 1749, that was to be worked on by Mr. Hall, was not the same bust as it was represented in Dugdale's engraving by Hollar, who upgraded the sketch for Dugdale's *Antiquities* (1656). [150] We say this, because Halliwell-Phillipps talks of "Shakespeare's writing hand" and the only sketch that shows the figure using a "writing hand" is that of George Vertue's sketch in Pope's 1725 edition.

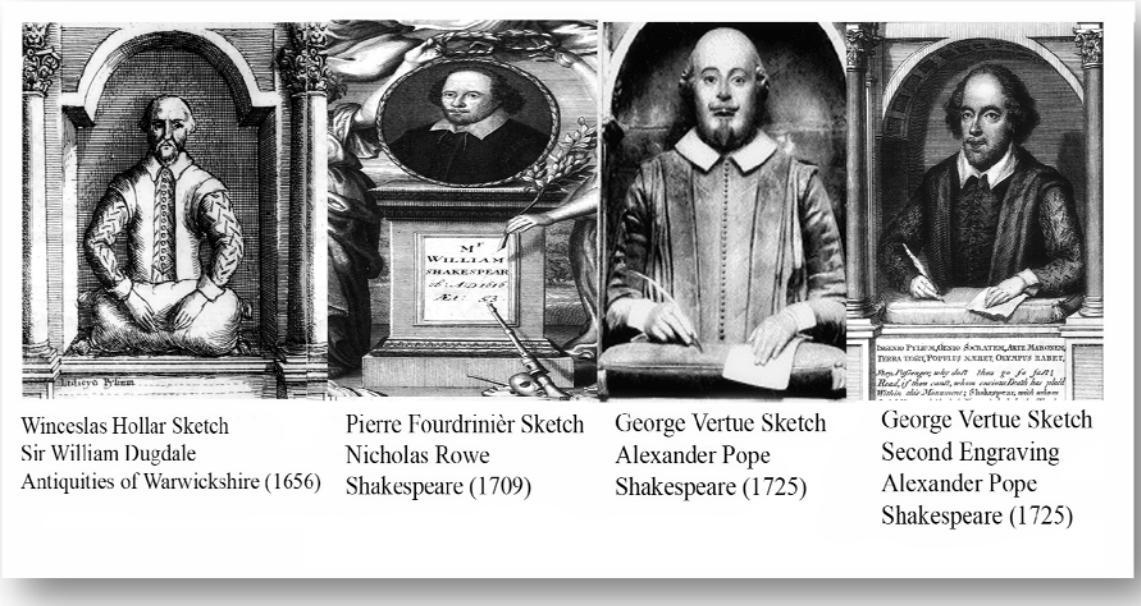

Figure 9: Various sketches of the "Stratford Moniment"

Somewhere from Dugdale's first sketch (1634) to the improved sketch of Hollar's (1656) down to Vertue's sketches (1725), changes were made. There is no record of these changes; we have a repair-gap from 1634 to 1725, from an old friend with a new face, one could say, which was a jesting term in Malone's time regarding the Chandos portrait, since it was touched up so many different ways to represent the likeness of the Bard. Mr. Fairholt declared that "the hand

[148] *A Comparative Study of the Droeshout Portrait and the Stratford Monument*. London: Humphrey Milford; Oxford University Press, 1924.
[149] Britton, in his *Remarks on his* (Shakspeare's) *Monumental Bust,* published in 1816.
[150] Fairholt, in his *Home of Shakspere* (1877) investigated the portraits surfacing in the eighteenth century due to the absolute Shakespearean forgers. He tells us that he read from Dugdale's correspondence, that the sculptor of the monument was a Gheerart Janssen or the Anglicised form of his name, Gerard Johnson.

of the poet holds a pen, which was long absent from the monument." [151] Fairholt must have been referring to Vertue's sketch (1725) as opposed to Dugdale's that shows no pen (1656).

Halliwell-Phillipps, of course, gives no authority, nor cites any document in support of his statement that we read above. He may have been misled by the fact that the finger and thumb of the bust were, as we are told, restored in 1790 by a William Roberts of Oxford, though three years later, in 1793, the bust, together with the effigies, were painted white at the request of Malone. The bust was restored to its last coat of colour, by Mr. Collins, of New Bond Street, who prepared for it "a bath of some detergent which entirely took off the whitewash." [152]

Twenty-one years later, in 1814, George Bullock had the bust taken down for the purpose of making a mould for a very limited number of casts. The mould was afterwards destroyed, and the casts soon became scarce. Halliwell-Phillipps said, in his fourth edition of 1886, "that the 1793 painting was injudicious, but did not altogether obliterate the resemblance of an intellectual human being, which is more than can be said of the miserable travesty which now distresses the eye of the pilgrim."

Biographers assume the effigy was ordered by the actor's son-in-law, Dr. John Hall, and "under the supervision of Shakespeare's widow and daughters, amidst his friends and kinsfolk, who knew him as a man, not as an actor, and they had it coloured, so that the likeness, if at all good, should have been much more striking than the work of the engraver," says Stopes. [153] We have no record of this conjecture.

Richard G. White, [154] the Shakespearean scholar, stated it well, when he said: "We hunger for Shakespeare's life, and we receive these husks; we open our mouths for food, and we break our teeth against these stones." [155] Indeed, we also have found husks, yet refuse to crunch.

The word "moniment" (used by Leonard Digges in his Eulogy) has a definition being something to preserve memory; a reminder; a monument; hence, a mark; an image; a superscription; a record. [156] Robert Bell Wheler stated, that "the exact time of the erection of this monument is now unknown; but it was probably done by his [Shaksper's] executor, Dr. John Hall, or relation, at a time when his features were perfectly fresh in everyone's memory, or perhaps with the assistance of an original picture, if any such one ever existed. It is evident however from some verses made by Leonard Digges, a contemporary of our poet, that it was erected before the year 1623." [157] Mr. Wheler's statement holds some point of interest, but then it is questionable why we have no written records, except those references previously given, that the monument was constructed after the Second Folio in 1632, and if Dugdale's sketch is tracked down from the very first time it was seen by the public (1656) to the very next

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[151] *Home of Shakspere*. 1877.
[152] H. James Friswell. *Life Portraits of Shakespeare*. London: Sampson Low, Son & Marston, 1864.
[153] *Shakespeare's Environment*. P. 107. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1918.
[154] (*b*.1821–*d*.1885)
[155] *Memoirs*. Boston: Little Brown & Co, 1865.
[156] Webster. *Revised Unabridged Dictionary*. C. & G. Merriam Co. 1913.
[157] *History and Antiquities of Stratford-on-Avon*. Stratford-upon-Avon Press: J. Ward, 1806.

instance, which would be in Alexander Pope's edition (1725), we may notice extreme differences. (Figure 9)

Alexander Pope's first and second edition engravings by George Vertue, [158] the engraver, varies of the monument that was sketched in Dugdale's time. (Figure 7) The change is great. Vertue evidently added the Chandos head upon the body of this effigy, when he sketched his second variation. We may ask why he would do that; why even conceive to change the sketch that came down from Dugdale in 1634 and in 1656, unless Vertue had seen the effigy himself, and noticed it was not as Dugdale had depicted it to be.

We learn from Mrs. Stopes in her article published in *The Monthly Review* of 1904 that "in Pope's edition of 1725 we find a remarkable variation. Vertue did not go to Stratford but to Nicholas Rowe for his copy. Finding it so very inartistic, he improved the monument, making the little angels light-bearers rather than bearers of spade and hour-glass, and instead of the bust he gives a composition from the Chandos portrait, altering the arms and hands and adding a cloak, pen, paper, and desk. It retains, however, the drooping moustache and slashed sleeves." It is a shame this researcher did not give reference of where Rowe acquired a copy to give to Vertue. Nevertheless, we tracked it down.

If what Mrs. Stopes says is true, where did Nicholas Rowe get his copy from? He published his first *Life* on Shakespeare in 1709, which would have made Vertue at the age of twenty-five; Rowe's second edition came out in 1714 (four years before his death); the engraver would now have been at the age of thirty. Vertue inserted his updated sketch in Pope's work in 1725, so the engraver must have acquired his "copy" from 1708 to 1714; we state 1708, as the possible beginning of Vertue's hunt for a "copy" for two reasons: (1) it was about this time we have first notice of alleged portraits coming in that are assumed to be the Bard's face, and (2) it was one year prior Rowe's first edition that contained a biography on Shakespeare.

Mr. George Greenwood asks: "Are we not, then, driven to this conclusion, that either the bust has been materially altered since the date of Dugdale's drawing, or the great antiquary must deliberately (but for no reason that can be suggested) have presented his readers with a false picture of it? Is it possible to absolve Sir William Dugdale of such gross inaccuracy as almost amounts to fraud? Is it possible that the central figure was in his time as he drew it, and as he had it engraved? *C'est lá la question.*" [159]

Again we may ask where Nicholas Rowe got his copy from to give to the artist Vertue, as Stopes tells us. There is a reference telling us where Rowe got his copy from; it comes from an anonymous author who wrote in his *Imperfect Hints towards a New Edition of Shakespeare* published in 1782, that "the first prints ever published from the page of Shakespeare, were the miserable designs of Fourdrinièr, for the edition by Rowe, in 1709. To these succeeded the duodecimo edition of Pope and Sewell, in 1728, with cuts by Fourdrinièr; I have not seen this edition; but I have reason to believe the cuts are nothing more than facsimiles of those in Rowe's edition (with some trifling alterations in some of them) and with the substitution of

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[158] (*b.*1684–*d.*1756)

[159] *The Stratford Bust & The Droeshout Engraving.* London: Cecil Palmer. 1925.

some plates by Du Guernier." [160] So, it seems that Rowe got a copy of his representation of the Bard from the artist, Pierre Fourdrinièr and not from Dugdale's authentic sketch of the monument. Rowe definitely did not go to Stratford-upon-Avon to witness or draw the effigy himself; if remembered, his informers for writing the *Life* of Shakespeare, was from a bunch of people, who assumedly had visited Warwickshire.

To a short biography of Fourdrinièr, we learn that he was a French engraver, who flourished for upwards of thirty years in London after being a pupil of Bernard Picart at Amsterdam for six years, then coming to England in 1720. Other authorities mention a Paul Fourdrinièr as engraver of some various works, and he has been identified with a Paul Fourdrinièr who was of the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, who died in January or February 1758. [161] There probably were two engravers of the same name and from which, Mr. Rowe got his copy from, is uncertain.

Let us see the pedigree of the Chandos portrait, supposed to have been depicted on the sketches of Vertue for Pope's edition in 1725. The portrait came to public attention in the seventeenth century; was generally considered as the most authentic portrait of the Bard, even though by 1793 forgeries on portraits of the Bard was at its peak, as we see from the *European Magazine*, of December 1793: "The reader may observe that contrary to former usage, no head of Shakespeare is prefixed to the present edition (1793) of his plays. The undisguised fact is this: the only portrait of him that even pretends to authenticity, by means of injudicious cleaning, or some other accident, has become little better, than the shadow of a shade."

By this time (1793) Vertue's portraits were over-praised on account of their "reliability;" and six different heads of Shakespeare were engraved by him. Mr. Granger, in his *Biographical History*, states: "It has been said, there never was an original portrait of Shakespeare, but that Sir Thomas Clarges, after his death, caused a portrait to be drawn for him, from a person who nearly resembled him; hence the Chandos portrait." [162] Before granting this statement any correctness, we learn that Mr. Granger was an entertaining writer and great collector of anecdotes, but not always very scrupulous in inquiring into the authenticity of the information which he gave. An anonymous writer in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, for August 1759, says, though Granger had boldly affirmed the Chandos portrait was genuine as an absolute fact "being afterwards publicly called upon to produce his authority never produced any. There is the strongest reason to presume the Chandos portrait a forgery."

The Chandos portrait was believed to be the work of Richard Burbage, the play-actor, and a friend to Shaksper. However, Vertue gave a pedigree of the portrait saying that it was painted by "one Taylor a player, contemporary with Shaksper and his intimate friend." Without substantial evidence who the painter was, it is hard to believe that this would have been a good enough excuse for the engraver to completely change Dugdale's sketch of 1634 and the Hollar sketch in 1656; possibly either sketch could be termed false. It is a matter of who one wishes to

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[160] P. viii. London: The Logographic Press, 1782.
[161] (a) George Williamson. *Brian's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers*. Vol. II. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1919; (b) Leslie Stephen & Sidney Lee. *Dictionary of National Biography*. Vol. XX. London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1890.
[162] *Biographical History*. Vol. I., P. 259.

support. The pedigree of the Chandos portrait (as coming from Vertue) was so believed at the time, that in the National Portrait Gallery catalogue it was so stated:

> The Chandos Shakespeare was the property of John Taylor the player by whom or by Richard Burbage it was painted. The picture was left by the former in his Will, to Sir William D'Avenant. After his death it was bought by Betterton the actor, upon whose decease Mr. Keck, of the Temple, purchased it for forty guineas, from whom it was inherited by Mr. Nicholls, of Michenden House, Southgate in Middlesex, whose only daughter married James, Marquis of Caernarvon, afterwards Duke of Chandos, father to Anna Eliza, Duchess of Buckingham.

From the Gallery Catalogue, we see familiar names coming down from Rowe's time; the same people who were feeding their stories to create a biography of Shakespeare as we proved in previous sections. The plot of Shakespeare's monument, if it could be termed such, remains on the shoulders of these instigators.

Regardless, there seems to be some problem with the Chandos portrait pedigree that the Gallery Catalogue was giving, which was given to them by George Vertue. It states that the "Chandos Shakespeare was the property of John Taylor the player." Of course we know there was no actor by the name of John Taylor; the actor was called Joseph Taylor who was one of the sources of Thomas Betterton's material that was being given to Rowe to create his biography. There was however a painter called John Taylor, and in the Picture Gallery at Oxford are two portraits of his, one is of the Water-poet, with the words: "John Taylor pinx 1655."

We may ask if Vertue, and the officials of the National Portrait Gallery, made such a grave error in their conclusions of the Chandos portrait pedigree. Possibly there being a misconception, as we know Mr. Jennens was led to a misconception: This gentleman was from Gopsal Leicestershire, and for many years congratulated himself as owner of an alleged portrait of Shakespeare; it was supposedly painted by Cornelius Jansen. However, the proud owner never forgave the writer for disposing the fact, that the portrait he owned, even though it was dated from 1610, could not have been the work of an artist such as Cornelius Jansen, since the painter was never in England at the time of the actor's death in 1616; Cornelius Jansen was in England in 1618 two years after the portrait was painted. [163] Probably Cornelius Jansen possessed telepathic artistic skills and mentally painted the portrait from afar. Stranger things have been known to happen.

Then we have the celebrated Stowe sale that commenced in 1848, where the Earl of Ellesmere purchased the Chandos portrait for three hundred and fifty-five guineas, and in 1856 presented it to the nation as an authentic portrait of Shakespeare. To this day, the Chandos portrait is believed to depict the features of the Bard, and for sure, it was so believed by George Vertue and the National Portrait Gallery. There is such a gap in evidence, that the validity of many portraits cannot be unfairly questioned especially when one remembers another species of

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[163] Edmond Malone. *Play and Poems of William Shakespeare*. Vol. I. London: Rivington, 1821.

fraudulence recorded in Foote's work called *Taste*: "Clap Lord Dupe's arms on that half-length of Erasmus; I have sold it him as his great grandfather's third brother, for fifty guineas."

George Vertue was born in the parish of St. Martin's in the Fields in 1684. At the age of thirteen (1697) he was placed with a Frenchman who engraved Coats-of-Arms on plate, and had the chief business of London, though later returned to his own country, after young Vertue had served with him about three or four years up to 1701. Returned to his parents, Vertue gave himself entirely to the study of drawing for two years till 1703, and then entered into an engagement with Michiel Van Der Gucht for three more years till 1706, engraving copper-plates. The University of Oxford employed Vertue for many years to engrave the headings to their Almanacs, and in 1730, his work appeared with twelve heads of poets. He died, as he had lived, in the Roman Catholic faith, on July 24, 1756, and was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey. [164]

Returning to the "Stratford Moniment," according to Dugdale, it was constructed by Garratt Janssen or Gerard Johnson, the Anglo-Flemish sculptor of Southwark, whose father had been resident in London since 1567. This attribution is only given by Dugdale himself, and no other evidence can be found of Gerard Johnson's authorship:

> 1653. *At the beginning of the book.* Shakespeare and John Combe's Monument, at Stratford-super-Avon, made by one Gerard Johnson.
>
> *Life of Sir William Dugdale* (1826) [165]

In regards to Dugdale's updated sketch of 1656, Halliwell-Phillipps contributes it to Hollar as an authenticated reference from Dugdale himself. However, Spielmann tells us that in his opinion this particular engraving is not by Hollar but by his assistant, Haywood, [166] and Dr. Whitaker states, though Dugdale's "scrupulous accuracy, united with stubborn integrity cannot be wrong, his reputation has elevated his *Antiquities of Warwickshire* to the rank of legal evidence." We can only remember James Spedding's saying, at this point, and how his advice should be welcomed in such situations: "When a thing is asserted as a fact, always ask who first reported it, and what means he had of knowing the truth." [167]

Mrs. Stopes argued the bust was materially altered in the year 1748, when the sculptor employed to repair and improve the monument, and had probably reconstructed the face altogether. [168] Her reference comes from discovering a collection of manuscripts entitled *The Wheller Collection*, being papers that belonged to the Rev. Joseph Greene, written in September 1746. Mr. Greenwood's letter is of interest on the subject:

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[164] George Williamson. *Brian's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers.* Vol. V. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1919.
[165] William Hamper. *Life of Sir William Dugdale.* P. 99. London: Thomas Pavison, 1826.
[166] *A Comparative Study of the Droeshout Portrait and the Stratford Monument.* London: Humphrey Milford; Oxford University Press, 1924.
[167] (*b.*1808–*d.*1881) English author, chiefly known as the editor of the *Works* of Francis Bacon.
[168] *The Monthly Review* of 1904.

Written from Serjeant's Inn
Fleet St., E.C.
6th July, 1912.
The Mystery of Shakespeare's Monument

Dear Sir: In yesterday's *Morning Post* Mr. Andrew Lang has an article under the above title in which I notice your name is mentioned. In case you may think of sending a reply I would suggest as an important point for your consideration that Mr. Lang omitted to deal with perhaps the most important feature of the revelations unearthed by Mrs. Stopes from *The Wheller Collection* at Stratford. This is that the Rev. Mr. Kenwrick, the then vicar and who may be regarded as perfectly disinterested, contended for two years with the Rev. Joseph Greene, the Master of the Free school, the former insisting upon the extremely important and significant point that John Hall, limner, the person entrusted with the so-called 'restoration' in 1748/9, should be tied down by express instructions in writing signed by him, upon due compliance with which his pay was to depend, 'that the monument shall become as like as possible to what it was when first erected.'

Greene strenuously opposed the honest vicar and ultimately unfortunately carried his point, so that no such writing was signed by Hall, and he and Greene were in consequence left to do as they pleased with the monument. It is quite impossible to believe that Kenwrick would have quarrelled for two years with an important person in his congregation over such a question as the mere restoration of a broken finger; and moreover the effect of the work done was to totally destroy the evident allegorical meaning of the original design as given by Dugdale, which was doubtless what Greene desired.

It is extremely likely that the famous [John] Jordan [forger] was a pupil of Greene's at the Free-school, and he may even have drawn his ideas with regard to forgery from this transaction, and followed the example set by his master. At all events if we may rely upon Dugdale the present monument may be regarded as the first Shakespearian forgery.

Yours faithfully,
W. Lansdon Goldsworthy.
G. G. Greenwood, Esq., M.P.

P.S. It is a curious and sinister fact that Dugdale and The Wheller Collection should have been successfully boycotted by all Shakespearians prior to Mrs. Stopes.

Mr. Chapman was mind boggled when he wrote, how "the practice of substituting 'poet' for the name Shaksper of Stratford by the Stratfordians in their writings when referring to the Stratford miscellaneous documents, Greene's diary, the Wheller papers, contained in the Stratford archives, is as reprehensible as was the amplifications of Jordan and the fabrications of Steevens in a vain attempt to prove a Stratfordian authorship. No Stratford record contemporaneous with him contains a reference to Shaksper as a poet or writer." [169]

[169] *Shakespeare: The Personal Phase.* 1920.

William-Henry Ireland [170] (forger) in his *Confessions* of 1805, states that he had been down taking drawings from various tombs in Stratford-upon-Avon, and "greatly reprehended the folly of having coloured the face and dress of the bust of Shakespeare, which was intended to beautify it, whereas it would have been much more preferable to have left the stone of the proper colour." He applied for permission to "take a plaster-cast from the bust as Malone had done," but the necessary delay in petitioning the Corporation for permission made him give up the idea. In Ireland's sketch of the bust, Shaksper is presented as an eighteenth century man, moustache turned up, a pen in one hand, paper in the other, and the cushion like a desk. [171]

Whatever the case may be, the effigy, as represented by Dugdale in 1656, never mind his original sketch of it in 1634, is so definitely different from that which we see through various sketches that have come down to us, that unless the monument had been materially altered and reconstructed since his time, to which we have no recorded evidence, then this antiquary must be held responsible for what is really no better than a fraud upon the public of his day, and upon all readers of his book who put trust and confidence in him. Andrew Land had said, "Sir William Dugdale's engraving is not a correct copy of any genuine Jacobean work of art. The gloomy hypochondriac or lunatic, clasping a cushion to his abdomen, cannot, by any possibility, represent the original bust of Shakespeare."

If much blame can be put upon Dugdale's shoulders, so much can also be put upon the shoulders of those artists that came after, and continue to come, with their parades of portraits depicting Shakespeare. On April 23, 1835, the Shakespearean Committee Room announced that "the Shakespearean Club of Stratford-upon-Avon have long beheld with regret, the disfigurement of the Bust and Monument of Shakespeare, and the neglected condition of the interior of the Chancel which contains that monument and his grave." Soon enough, a new Society formed for the renovation and restoration of the monument, bust, and chancel. Mr. John Britton was Honorary Secretary at the time where he sent out a prospectus stating: "A small and comparatively trifling tomb was raised to the memory of Shakespeare, immediately after his death; but it failed to attract anything like critical or literary notice until the time of Malone."

Chronology of the hypothesized pedigree to the "Stratford Moniment"

1616: Alleged death of Shakespeare
1623: Leonard Digges' mention of the "Stratford Moniment"
1631: John Weever's account in his *Ancient Funeral Monuments*
1634: Diary entry of Lieutenant Hammond stating he had seen the effigy
1634: Sir William Dugdale sketches a man leaning upon a woolsack as the effigy
1656: Sketch from Hollar in Dugdale's *Antiquities* (Figure 7)
1694: William Hall writes he saw the cursed tombstone
1725: George Vertue sketches for Pope's publications (Figure 9)
1746: Contributions collected from the *Othello* play for repairs to the effigy
1748: Mrs. Stopes' conjecture that the face of the effigy was reconstructed

[170] (*b.*1777–*d.*1835)
[171] C. C. Stopes. *Shakespeare's Environment*. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1914.

1749: Repairs finally completed from contributions collected from the *Othello* play
1749: Colours preserved by John Hall, a limner of the town
1790: William Roberts of Oxford repairs the finger and thumb
1793: Effigy painted white at the request of Edmond Malone
1814: George Bullock creates casts

Concluding this investigation, it becomes apparent how anyone could have connected Leonard Digges' "Stratford Moniment" to Ben Jonson's "Sweet Swan of Avon" and come up with the irregular conclusion that Stratford-upon-Avon was the town where William Shakespeare was buried. If so, it was a serious suicide attempt toward literature, because all witness accounts show the monument did not exist when the First Folio was published in 1623, but was created afterward, with the publication of the Second Folio in 1632.

"People liked to be fooled."
—P. T. Barnum