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***OXMYTHS AND STRATMYTHS: SECTION II***

The myths outlined below are arranged chronologically in terms of events in the life of William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon.

***MYTH: The family name of the Shakespeares of Stratford was never spelled 'Shakespeare' prior to William Shakespeare of Stratford's arrival in London.***

The name of William Shakespeare of Stratford's father, John, was spelled 'Shakespeare' in a 1569 bill filed in the Exchequer, TNA E 159/359, Recorda, Hil., m. 215.

References:

(1) Thomas, David L. and Norman E. Evans, 'John Shakespeare in the Exchequer, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 35 (1984), pp. 315-8 at p. 315.

***MYTH: The names Shakspere and Shakespeare were pronounced differently.***

In the copy of Walter Getley's surrender of a copyhold tenure to William Shakespeare of Stratford on 28 September 1602 the surname is spelled 'Shackespere' and 'Shakespere' in the same document, establishing that both spellings were pronounced identically since they refer to the same individual (see SBTRO 28/1 on this website).

As well, both spellings were used by the Stratford family from 1569 on, and therefore must have been pronounced in the same way.

Of particular importance in connection with the spelling of the family surname are the three draft grants made in 1596 and 1599 by the College of Arms in which the surname is spelled 'Shakespeare' four times and 'Shakespere' four times, i.e., in all eight instances the first syllable of the surname is spelled 'Shake' in these draft grants. The surname is also spelled 'Shakespeare' in College of Arms MS Dethick's Grants X, f. 28r, a manuscript which allegedly dates from 10 February 1599 [=1600].

Moreover the coat of arms on the monument in Holy Trinity Church in Stratford Upon Avon features a spear, indicating that the final syllable of the surname must have been pronounced 'spear'.

References:

(1) SBTRO 28/1.

(2) Lewis, Benjamin Roland, *The Shakespeare Documents*, (Stanford University Press, 1940), Vol. I, p. 6.

(3) Lewis, B. Roland, *The Shakespeare Documents*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1941), Vol. II, pp. 347-52.

(4) Thomas, David L. and Norman E. Evans, 'John Shakespeare in the Exchequer', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 35 (1984), pp. 315-8 at p. 315.

(5) For the first draft grant to John Shakespeare dated 20 October 1596 in the hand of William Dethick (formerly MS Vincent 157, no. 23), see:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-1>

(6) For the second draft grant to John Shakespeare dated 20 October 1596 in the hand of William Dethick, see:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-2>

(7) For the 1599 draft grant by William Dethick and William Camden to John Shakespeare (formerly MS R.21, no. 347), see:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/john-shakespeares-draft-exemplification-arms>

(8) College of Arms MS Dethick's Grants X, f. 28r, f. 29r, f. 30r on the Shakespeare Documented website at:

<http://shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/ralph-brookes-compilation-arms-granted-william-dethick-1600-copy-arms>

(9) Kathman, David, 'The Spelling and Pronunciation of Shakespeare's Name', Shakespeare Authorship Page at <http://shakespeareauthorship.com/name1.html>

***MYTH: The first syllable of the name Shakespeare was pronounced like our modern word 'shake'.***

Track 18 of Ben Crystal's CD on Shakespeare's Original Pronunciation gives the Elizabethan pronunciation of Prospero's speech from *The Tempest* which contains the words 'lakes', 'shake' and 'break':

PROSPERO

*Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes and groves,  
 And ye that on the sands with printless foot  
 Do chase the ebbing Neptune and do fly him  
 When he comes back; you demi-puppets that  
 By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make,  
 Whereof the ewe not bites, and you whose pastime  
 Is to make midnight mushrooms, that rejoice  
 To hear the solemn curfew; by whose aid,  
 Weak masters though ye be, I have bedimm'd  
 The noontide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,  
 And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault  
 Set roaring war: to the dread rattling thunder  
 Have I given fire and rifted Jove's stout oak  
 With his own bolt; the strong-bas'd promontory  
 Have I made shake and by the spurs pluck'd up  
 The pine and cedar: graves at my command  
 Have waked their sleepers, oped, and let 'em forth  
 By my so potent art. But this rough magic  
 I here abjure, and, when I have required  
 Some heavenly music, which even now I do,  
 To work mine end upon their senses that  
 This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,  
 Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,  
 And deeper than did ever plummet sound  
 I'll drown my book.*

The Elizabethan pronunciation of 'lakes', 'shake' and 'break' is similar to our modern 'lecks', 'sheck' and 'breck', with the vowel sound drawn out.

(1) See the full description of the CD, which can be ordered from the British Library at [http://shop.bl.uk/mall/productpage.cfm/BritishLibrary/ISBN\\_9780712351195](http://shop.bl.uk/mall/productpage.cfm/BritishLibrary/ISBN_9780712351195).

***MYTH: John Shakespeare, father of William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, was a usurer.***

This has not been established. The relevant documents were discovered in the National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office) by David L. Thomas and Norman E. Evans of the Public Record Office, who wrote:

*The Tudor Parliaments had passed a series of laws designed to regulate the economy, laws dealing with such subjects as foreign trade, manufacturing, agriculture, and money lending. Lacking its own means of enforcing these measures, the government relied upon private individuals bringing information about offenses into the royal courts. The informers were to be rewarded with a half share of the penalties imposed on offenders.*

*Such proceedings became known as “qui tam” actions because of the words applied in the information to the informer “qui tam pro domina regina quam pro seipso” came to court. It was under this procedure that John Shakespeare was prosecuted.*

*In Hilary term 1570, one of the barons of the Exchequer exhibited an information by Anthony Harrison of Evesham, Worcestershire. In the information, dated 21 October 1569, Harrison claimed that John “Shakespeare” of Stratford upon Haven,” glover, had, between 26 October 1568 and the date of the information, at Westminster, given to a certain John Mussum of “Woltun” in Warwickshire the sum of £100. The principal was to be repaid to Shakespeare on or before the feast of All Saints 1569 together with £20 interest. As the loan was a clear breach of a statute of 1552, Harrison demanded that Shakespeare forfeit the capital and interest, and that he be imprisoned and fined.*

Thomas and Evans state that:

*This case is recorded in the Exchequer, King’s Remembrancer, Memoranda Roll, E159/359, Recorda, Hil, m. 215 . . .; the spelling of Shakespeare’s name in the record is in the modern form.*

*Later in the same term, James Langrake of Whittlebury, Northamptonshire, had an information exhibited before the barons. He claimed that John “Shappere alias Shakespere” of “Stratford upon Haven,” glover, had between 25 October 1568 and the date of the information, at Westminster, loaned to John Musshem of Walton D’Eiville, Warwickshire, the sum of £80. The money was to be repaid on or before the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle (30 November 1568), and £20 interest was also to be paid. Langrake, like Harrison, claimed that this action was illegal and demanded that Shakespeare forfeit the money and be imprisoned and fined.*

Thomas and Evans identify the document as E159/359, Recorda, Hil., m. 237, and note that it was drawn to their attention by Wendy Goldsmith of the Public Records Office.

Thomas and Evans continue:

*The outcome of the two cases was different. In the case of Harrison’s information, there is no further record of proceedings after the recital of the accusation. This does not, however, mean that Shakespeare escaped punishment. The records of a high proportion of proceedings on such informations are inconclusive. The general consensus is that the offenders had compounded with the informers out of court. Such a settlement would have had the advantage of saving both Shakespeare and Harrison the costs involved in a trial.*

*The Langrake case was, however, pursued to a conclusion. The barons of the exchequer issued a writ of venire facias to the sheriff of Warwickshire to fetch John Shakespeare to court. The sheriff failed to do so, but on 3 February 1570 Shakespeare came to court himself and asked to hear the information. Having heard it, he denied that he was guilty. The attorney general asked that the matter be sent for trial by jury. Shakespeare then asked that, in order to avoid further expenses, he be allowed to pay a reasonable fine.*

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*The barons, who had authority to compound with offenders in such cases by imposing a fine, accepted his proposal and Shakespeare was fined forty shillings.*

*These cases raise two questions: Was John Shakespeare guilty? Why was he fined in one case and not in the other?*

*The question of guilt cannot be answered with certainty. Informing had a certain nuisance value, and informers may have proceeded against innocent parties in the hope that they would compound rather than face the costs of a journey to London and a long trial. As Professor Beresford noted, "An unpursued information is, of course, an ex parte statement not necessarily true in every particular."*

*The question of why the two cases took different courses cannot be answered with certainty. A reasonable explanation is that Shakespeare allowed the Langrake information to reach the stage of a fine as a measure of self-protection. An offense was barred against further informations only if a fine had been levied or a composition lawfully made. Had Shakespeare merely compounded with Langrake out of court, he would have left himself vulnerable to a further prosecution.*

*To be convicted of usury in the 1570s was to fall victim to an anachronistic law which amounted to a random tax on trade. Trade in the sixteenth century was heavily reliant on credit. Unfortunately, the law, reflecting the attitudes of an earlier age which regarded the charging of interest as wrong in principle, had failed to keep pace with economic necessity.*

*In 1545, an act had been passed allowing money to be loaned at a maximum of 10% interest. In 1552, this act was repealed and usury, "a vice most odious and detestable," was forbidden. Anyone charging interest for a loan was to forfeit both capital and interest and to risk a fine and prison. A year after John Shakespeare was convicted, the law was relaxed; persons lending at 10% or below were to forfeit only the interest.*

*Prosecutions for usury, resulting from enthusiastic activity by informers, were at a high level in this period. There were 93 informations of usury in the Exchequer in the term in which John Shakespeare was prosecuted and a total of 181 such informations in that year. Professor Beresford found that prosecutions for usury reached a peak in 1574.*

*Of the dramatis personae, John Musshem or Mussum of Walton D'Eiville appears to have been a regular business partner of John Shakespeare. In 1573, they were both sued in the Court of Common Pleas by Henry Higford of Solihull, who claimed that they each owed him £30. Higford also attempted to recover debts from them in 1578.*

*Little has been discovered about the informer Anthony Harrison. The other informer, James Langrake, appears to have been a notorious character. In 1570, he was accused of the rape of one of his servants, Emma Panton. He attempted to prevent investigations into the matter by bringing an action against his accusers in the Exchequer, but the Privy Council ordered that a full inquiry be carried out. William Addams, one of the witnesses,*

*revealed how unpopular Langrake had made himself when he told Emma's father "that the aforesaid Langrake trobled a frende of his wth an Informacon in the xchequer that wolde be glad of suche matter against Langrake and wolde be glade to further suche swet against him". Whether Langrake was convicted or punished is not known.*

*In 1574 the Exchequer began to investigate abuses committed by informers – notably their practice of compounding with offenders without informing the court and thus depriving the crown of revenue. On 2 December 1574, Langrake, together with eleven other informers, was committed to the Fleet prison for compounding with offenders without license of the court. The following February he was fined £40 and banned from bringing any further informations for a year.*

For Langrake's committal to the Fleet, and the one-year bar against him bringing further informations, Thomas and Evans cite Davies, M.G., *The Enforcement of English Apprenticeship, 1563-1642*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1956), pp. 67-68, and E 123/6 ff. 64r, 69, 74v.

*John Shakespeare suffered twice more from the attentions of Langrake. In February 1572, Langrake brought an information claiming that John "Shaxspere" of "Stretford super Haven" and John Lockeley of the same place had illegally bought 200 tods (i.e. 5,600 pounds) of wool at a price of fourteens shillings per tod from Walter Newsam and others. The offense was committed in Westminster on or after 26 February 1571.*

*In Michaelmas term of the same year, a further information was produced. This time Langrake claimed that on or after 1 September 1571, at Snitterfield in Warwickshire, John Shakespeare had bought from Edward and Richard "Graunte" and various others, names unknown, 100 tods of wool at a price of fourteens shillings per tod. The records of both informations end inconclusively, indicating that Shakespeare compounded with Langrake.*

Thomas and Evans cite E159/362, Recorda, Hil., m. 68d for the first information, and E159/363, Recorda, Mich., m. 183d for the second. They continue:

*In buying the wool, John Shakespeare had offended against a statute of 1552 which restricted the buying of wool to manufacturers or merchants of the staple. The legislation, introduced because the high price of English wool was reducing the ability of the Staplers to export, was framed in the hope that preventing middlemen from buying wool would reduce competition and cause prices to fall. At the same time, by cutting off small manufacturers from their supplies of raw materials – which they could obtain only from middlemen – the Crown hoped to reverse the spread of industrialization. By disregarding this statute, Shakespeare ran the risk of forfeiting double the value of the wool he had bought.*

*Most of John Shakespeare's partners in these transactions cannot be easily identified. John Lockeley of Stratford-upon-Avon, who was his partner in the purchase made in February 1571, does not appear to have played any very visible role in Elizabethan*

*Stratford, although a John Loxley, glover, was sued for debt by Adrian Quiney and Thomas Barber in 1595. Nor can we identify with certainty the Walter Newsam from whom the wool was purchased; perhaps he was the Walter Newsam of Chadshunt, Warwickshire, who will was proved in 1601.*

*In the case of Edward and Richard Grant, who sold Shakespeare wool at Snitterfield, identification is somewhat easier. Edward Grant was a landowner in Snitterfield who had a manor-house nearby at Northbrook. He was a Catholic, and his house was a center of disaffection. His wife's nephew, John Somerville, plotted against the Queen in 1583, and his grandson John Grant was involved in the Gunpowder plot. The relationship between Edward and Richard Grant remains uncertain.*

The foregoing facts establish that John Shakespeare was never convicted of usury or, for that matter, of the illegal selling of wool, although he may have been guilty of both. However against that conclusion must be weighed the pecuniary advantages which accrued to informers, as well as the charge of rape against Harrison and the conviction of Langrake for illegally compounding with offenders. Moreover, as Thomas and Evans point out, the nature of the statutes in question and their detrimental effect on trade, also need to be taken into consideration.

#### References:

(1) Thomas, David L. and Norman E. Evans, 'John Shakespeare in the Exchequer, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 35 (1984), pp. 315-8.

(2) Facsimile of TNA E 159/359 m 237 in the National Archives Image Library at:

<https://images.nationalarchives.gov.uk/assetbank-nationalarchives/action/search?quickSearch=true&filterCategory=-1&filterCategoryType=-1&filterCategoryName=&cachedCriteria=1&sortAttributeId=0&sortDescending=true&page=1&pageSize=20&filterId=>

(3) Facsimile of TNA 159/359, m. 215 on the Shakespeare Documented website:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/exchequer-informations-and-proceedings-against-john-shakespeare-usury-accused>

(4) Schoenbaum, Samuel, *William Shakespeare: A Compact Documentary Life*, rev. ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977, 1987), pp. 322-3 at:

[http://books.google.ca/books?id=-6VS\\_J9IVIYC&pg=PA322](http://books.google.ca/books?id=-6VS_J9IVIYC&pg=PA322)

(5) Honan, Park, *Shakespeare: A Life*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 259 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=22OPG8qUNkQC&pg=PA259>

(6) Kinney, Arthur F., *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 2 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=EAuvCFM2S34C&pg=PA2>

***MYTH: William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon had a Welsh schoolmaster in Stratford upon Avon, and this is reflected in the scene in Merry Wives of Windsor in which young William is examined on the first lesson in Lyly's Latin Grammar by the Welshman, Parson Evans.***

According to Bradbrook and Schoenbaum, Thomas Jenkins, schoolmaster in Stratford upon Avon from 1575-1579, was not Welsh, and there is thus no relationship between him and Parson Evans in *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

References:

(1) Bradbrook, M. C., *Shakespeare: The Poet in his World*, (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1980), p. 11 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=MSFTAQAAQBAJ&pg=PA11>

(2) Schoenbaum, Samuel, *William Shakespeare: A Compact Documentary Life*, rev. ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 66 at:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=-6VS\\_J9IVIYC&pg=PA66](https://books.google.ca/books?id=-6VS_J9IVIYC&pg=PA66)

***MYTH: It is significant that William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon is not mentioned in the first edition of Camden's Britannia.***

Since Camden's *Britannia*, a topographical survey of England, was first published in 1586, it is not to be expected that William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon would be mentioned in the section on Stratford in the first edition.

***MYTH: The Clayton loan did not involve William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon.***

In Hilary term 1600, 'William Shackspere' sued John Clayton of Willington, Bedfordshire, for debt in the court of King's Bench for a loan of £7 which had been



acknowledged by bond in Cheapside on 22 May 1592. Judgment was rendered in Shakespeare's favour in Easter term 1600.

According to Price, Chiljan and Pointon, *infra*, the 'William Shackspere' of the Clayton loan was William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon.

Hotson discovered that a William Shakespeare, husbandman, lived in Campton, Bedfordshire, eight miles south of Willington, and concluded that he was the William Shakespeare who loaned John Clayton £7. Hotson does not explain, however, why two people who lived eight miles apart in Bedfordshire would have travelled up to London so that one could to lend the other £7. It seems more likely that John Clayton required money while in London on business, and that William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon was then resident in London, and was the source of the loan.

Detobel has pointed out that the lawsuit was initiated as a 'Bill of Middlesex', which involved a fictional complaint that the defendant had committed trespass, as well as fictional pledges, John Doe and Richard Roe. See:

<http://shylocke.org/legalhistory.html>

*By the mid-sixteenth century, the volume of litigation between citizens greatly increased. The common lawyers and their clients wanted another option, preferably one with greater flexibility, less cost, and less delay. The judges on King's Bench took note of the fees that would accrue to the Court of Common Pleas from the handling of lawsuits between citizens, and decided that they might share some of the burden of this upswell in litigation, as well as some of those fees. The Court of Common Pleas originally had no objection because they had more legal business than they could handle.*

*The judges of King's Bench created a more simplified and inexpensive mechanism for initiating a lawsuit: a bill instead of a writ. The Plaintiff did not have to pay the substantial fee that the Clerk's Office charged for issuing a writ. In addition, King's Bench devised a legal fiction whereby they could obtain jurisdiction of complaints between private citizens. This subterfuge was called the Bill of Middlesex, and was based on the notion of trespass, which, being a breach of the King's peace, fell within the jurisdiction of King's Bench.*

*A Plaintiff would file an unsworn complaint (a bill) in King's Bench, alleging that the Defendant had committed a trespass against the Plaintiff in the county of Middlesex, and therefore within the criminal jurisdiction of King's Bench. Because the complaint was unsworn, the Plaintiff did not risk a charge of perjury for this lie. Upon payment of a more reasonable fee, King's Bench would issue a warrant for the arrest of the Defendant, who would then be booked into Marshalsea Prison. The Marshal of this prison was the official jailer of the Court; because he attended the Court, his prisoners were deemed to be always before the monarch, and therefore within the jurisdiction of King's Bench for all purposes.*

*When the Defendant was in custody or out on bail, King's Bench could then entertain any other complaint the Plaintiff may allege, such as an action for Debt. The Plaintiff would drop the trespass charge, continue only with the action for Debt, and the court would refuse to hear any complaint that the Defendant had been thrown in jail on a charge that everyone knew to be a sham.*

See also Wikipedia:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill\\_of\\_Middlesex](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_of_Middlesex)

*As a longer term and more significant development, the Bill of Middlesex was one of several revolutionary developments by the King's Bench met with a conservative reaction from the Common Pleas, fearful of losing its own caseload. The troubles during this period are best illustrated by Slade's Case. Under the medieval common law, claims seeking the repayment of a debt or other matters could only be pursued through a writ of debt in the Common Pleas, a problematic and archaic process. By 1558 the lawyers had succeeded in creating another method, enforced by the Court of King's Bench, through the action of assumpsit, which was technically for deceit. The legal fiction used was that by failing to pay after promising to do so, a defendant had committed deceit, and was liable to the plaintiff. The conservative Common Pleas, through the appellate court the Court of Exchequer Chamber, began to overrule decisions made by the King's Bench on assumpsit, causing friction between the courts. In Slade's Case, the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, John Popham, deliberately provoked the Common Pleas into bringing an assumpsit action to a higher court where the Justices of the King's Bench could vote, allowing them to overrule the Common Pleas and establish assumpsit as the main contractual action.*

The index entry for the lawsuit brought by William Shakespeare against John Clayton specifies that the cause of action originated in London (see TNA IND 1/1354):

*London ir{rotulatur}{(?) nihil dic{it} in deb{it}o int{er} Will{elmu}m Shackspere q{uerentem} & Ioh{ann}em Clayton CCxCiij*

[=London, enrolled(?), nothing said [i.e. the defendant did not defend the case] in debt between William Shackspere, querent, & John Clayton 293]

It appears Hotson did not take into consideration the fact that the cause of action originated in London when he suggested that the plaintiff was William Shakespeare, husbandman, of Campton, Bedfordshire.

Moreover the John Clayton found by Hotson was also a husbandman, whereas the John Clayton of the Clayton loan is described as 'yeoman', a word which had more than one meaning at the time. From the *OED*:

*yeoman*

*a. A servant or attendant in a royal or noble household, usually of a superior grade, ranking between a sergeant (sergeant n. Compounds 1) and a groom (groom n.1 4) or between a squire and a page.*

*b. An attendant or assistant to an official, etc.*

*a. A man holding a small landed estate; a freeholder under the rank of a gentleman; hence vaguely, a commoner or countryman of respectable standing, esp. one who cultivates his own land.*

Hotson appears to have assumed that it was the third definition which applied to the borrower, John Clayton, and to have made the further assumption that ‘husbandman’ and ‘yeoman’ were equivalent. But the *OED* definition suggests that a yeoman was of slightly superior social and economic status as compared to a husbandman. From the *OED*:

*husbandman*

*a. A worker who tills and cultivates the soil; a farmer, typically one who works a smallholding. Also Eng. regional (north.) and Sc.: the holder of a husbandland, a manorial tenant.*

It thus seems that in 'John Clayton, husbandman, of Willington, Bedfordshire', Hotson did not identify a social and economic equivalent of 'John Clayton, yeoman, of Willington, Bedfordshire' in the Clayton loan document. And it may even be that the John Clayton of the Clayton loan document was not ‘a freeholder of the rank of a gentleman’, but rather a groom.

Detobel has argued that the mention of St Mary le Bow in Cheapside as the place where the bond was sealed meant that the debt in question could have belonged to only one class of debt, ‘namely debt wholly contracted and performed abroad’, and that therefore both William Shakespeare and John Clayton were overseas when Shakespeare lent Clayton £7. That argument is clearly contradicted by a case brought by James Burbage’s brother-in-law, John Brayne, against his carpenter, John Reynolds, in the form of a Bill of Middlesex which, like the Clayton loan, states that the bond was sealed in London at St Mary le Bow in Cheapside, TNA KB 27/1229, m. 30. It seems unlikely anyone would contend that Brayne and Reynolds were overseas at the time the bond was sealed, and Detobel has clearly over-reached in claiming that mention in a Bill of Middlesex of St Mary le Bow in Cheapside as the place where a bond was sealed meant that the debt was contracted abroad. For the case, see Wickham, *infra*, pp. 291-4 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=y82YJ1P5gksC&pg=PA291>

Detobel’s argument is also contradicted by two cases involving Christopher Marlowe, also in the form of Bills of Middlesex, which mention St Mary le Bow in Cheapside. See Mateer, *infra*.

Rollet has suggested that Shakespeare's attorney named in the suit can be identified as Thomas Awdley (d.1603), citizen and grocer of London, of the parish of St Magnus, son of Thomas Awdley (d.1553) of Henlow, Bedfordshire. In his will, Awdley appoints as one of his overseers his 'very good friend, Mr Thomas Greene', who may have been the solicitor, Thomas Greene, from Stratford upon Avon. According to Palmer, Thomas Greene, whom Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon described as his 'cousin', entered the Middle Temple in 1595, one of his sureties being the playwright, John Marston. He acted as solicitor for the Corporation of Stratford in 1601, assisting Richard Quiney in supporting the Corporation against Sir Edward Greville (c.1625-1621), lord of the manor of Stratford, and was Town Clerk of Stratford from 1603 to 1617. Quiney died in May 1602 after being 'wounded by a drunken band of Greville's men'.

#### References:

(1) Chambers, Sir Edmund Kerchever, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), Vol. 2, p. 52.

(2) *Shakespeare in the Public Records*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1964), pp. 37-8.

(3) Will of Thomas Awdley, dated 22 July 1603 and proved 12 August 1603, TNA PROB 11/102/58.

(4) TNA KB 27/1361/1, rot. 293 at:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C215934>

(5) Fripp, Edgar I., ed., *Minutes and Accounts of the Corporation of Stratford-Upon-Avon and Other Records 1553-1620 Transcribed by the Late Richard Savage, Vol. IV 1586-1592*, (London: Dugdale Society, 1929), pp. 151-2.

(6) Palmer, Alan and Veronica Palmer, *Who's Who in Shakespeare's England*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1981, reprinted 1999), pp. 96-8, 198-9.

(7) Price, Diana, 'Shakespeare, Shake-scene and the Clayton Loan', *Elizabethan Review* 4 (Spring 1996), pp. 3-13 at:

<http://www.shakespeare-authorship.com/About/Resume.htm>

(8) Price, Diana, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 15, 20-2, 52-3, 96.

(9) Chiljan, Katherine, *Shakespeare Suppressed*, (San Francisco: Faire Editions, 2011), pp. 99-101.

(10) Pointon, A.J., *The Man Who Was Never Shakespeare*, (Tunbridge Wells, Parapress, 2011), p. 45.

(11) Rollett, John, 'William Shackspere vs. John Clayton', *Notes and Queries*, Vol. 257, No. 4 (December 2012), p. 559 at:

<http://nq.oxfordjournals.org/content/59/4/559.extract>

(12) Detobel, Robert, 'Was Shakespeare a Moneylender? Legal Fictions and the Clayton Suit', at:

<http://www.elizabethanauthors.org/research1.htm>

(13) Detobel, Robert, *Shakespeare: The Concealed Poet*, 2010, pp. 116-21 at:

<http://www.elizabethanauthors.org/research1.htm>

(14) Mateer, David, 'New Sightings of Christopher Marlowe in London', *Early Theatre*, 11:2 (2008), pp. 13-38 at:

<http://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/eth/article/view/7418>

(15) Hotson, Leslie, *Shakespeare's Sonnets Dated*, (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1949), pp. 229-30.

(16) Wickham, Glynne, ed., *English Professional Theatre, 1530-1660*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 291-4 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=y82YJ1P5gksC&pg=PA291>

***MYTH: The Countess of Southampton fabricated, and wrote in her own hand, the entry in the accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber which resulted in the issuance of a Privy Council warrant dated 15 March 1595 authorizing payment to William Kempe, William Shakespeare and Richard Burbage for plays performed at court on December 26 and 28, 1594.***

The source of the Oxmyth by Charlton Ogburn on pp. 65-7 of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* is unsubstantiated statements by Charlotte Carmichael Stopes that the Countess of Southampton wrote the relevant entry in her own hand, of which Sir George Greenwood writes in *Ben Jonson and Shakespeare*, (London: Cecil Palmer, 1921), pp. 51-2 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/benjonsonshakesp00greerich#page/50/mode/2up>

*An entry has, however, been discovered in the accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber to the following effect; - "To William Kempe, William Shakespeare, and Richarde Burbage, servants to the Lord Chamberleyne, upon the Councelles warrant dated at Whitehall XV.to Marcij, 1594, for twoe severall comedies or enterludes shewed by them before her Majesties in Christmas tyme laste paste, viz.: upon St. Stephen's daye and Innocentes days . . . in al xx. li." A foolish attempt has been made to make "Stratfordian" capital out of this, because the entry in question is said to have been prepared by the Countess of Southampton, to whose son "Shakespeare" had dedicated his two poems. As a fact, however, the entry referred to occurs in a roll of the Pipe Office "declared accounts," which contains the accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber from September, 1579, to July, 1596. These accounts were engrossed year by year by one of the Clerks in the Pipe Office, and signed by the Accountant in each year, or period of years. Now in 1594 Sir Thomas Heneage was Treasurer of the Queen's Chamber, and in May of that year he married Mary, widow of Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, but he died in October of the following year, and it seems that no "declared accounts" had at that date been rendered since September, 1592. The Queen, therefore, issued her warrant to the Countess as widow and executrix of the late Treasurer, commanding her to render the account, which she duly did from September 29th, 1592, to November 30th, 1595. The entry in question therefore had no doubt, been prepared by one of the clerks in the office of the Treasurer of the Chamber, and was thus sent in to the Pipe Office by the Countess, according to the Queen's command. She was thus only formally connected with the account, and further than this there appears to have been no connexion whatever between her and Shakspere of Stratford. In all probability she never even saw the entry in question.*

The entry found by Stopes and discussed above by Greenwood is in the Pipe Rolls of the Exchequer, and until recently the existence of a second entry containing the same information in the Rolls of the Audit Office was unknown. This latter record was discovered by G.P.V. Akrigg, as described on p. 50 of his life of Southampton:

*P.R.O. AO1/33/386 [sic]. This document contains in identical form the entry concerning payments to Kempe, Shakespeare and Burbage to be found in E.351/542, f. 107b. For a moment when the present writer saw the name 'Shakespeare' in the Audit Office manuscript, he had his heart in his throat and a bemused feeling that he really had struck gold.*

Unfortunately Akigg misprinted the reference number. In the National Archives Catalogue it is AO 1/386/33. See:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C6789973>.

It appears that no facsimile exists of AO 1/386/33. For facsimiles of TNA E 351/542, f. 107b, see *Shakespeare in the Public Records*, Plate 1, and Schoenbaum, p. 136.

Akrigg describes the circumstances which gave rise to the Countess of Southampton's involvement as executrix to her second husband, Sir Thomas Heneage (d. 17 October

1595), Treasurer of the Chamber. According to the *ODNB*, ‘the treasurership of the chamber carried not only a fee and perquisites but also the opportunity to borrow liquid capital: he owed Elizabeth £1300 at his death’. This figure appears to be supported by a draft letter from the Queen to the Countess in the State Papers:

*16 December 1596. The Queen to the Countess of Southampton. At the time of the decease of your late husband, Sir Thomas Heneage, he had £1314 15s 4d in hand as Treasurer of the Chamber. You, as executrix, have paid £401 6s 10d, and £394 9s 11d to the Guard and others. We require immediate payment of the balance, £528 18s 7d to the Treasury of the Chamber, on which you shall receive acquittance for the whole sum. [Draft, damaged].*

However according to Akrigg (pp. 49-50), Heneage died owing the Crown a much larger sum:

*Heneage’s death left Southampton’s mother a major financial problem. This arose from the practice, freely indulged in by various royal treasurers, of drawing in advance funds payable to their office, then using these for their own profit until such time as the money had either to be spent in the payments for which it was intended, or be remitted to the Crown. This way of making an interim private profit often left Elizabethan officials substantially in arrears on their accounts. Such proved the case with Heneage. In 1596 his widow, as executrix of his estate, was presented by the Queen’s auditors with a statement showing that Heneage had died owing the Crown just over £12,000 and that, although she had made two substantial payments, there was still more than £7,800 to be paid.*

For Stopes’ erroneous allegation that the accounts the Countess submitted to the Crown as Heneage’s executrix were physically written by the Countess herself, see Stopes’ *Shakespeare’s Family* and *Shakespeare’s Industry* at the links cited below.

In that connection it is significant that the Privy Council warrant authorizing payment to Kempe, Shakespeare and Burbage was issued on 15 March 1595, and that Heneage did not die until 17 October 1595, which establishes that the Countess could have had nothing to do with the actual payment to Kempe, Shakespeare and Burbage, since payment was authorized by the Privy Council eight months before her husband’s death.

For a problem concerning a date given in the entry, see Greg, W.W., ed., *Gesta Grayorum, 1688*, (Malone Society Reprints, 1914), No. 41, pp. v-vi, 22-3 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/gestgrayorum00grayuoft#page/n9/mode/2up>.

References:

(1) Ogburn, Charlton, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, 2nd ed., (McLean, Virginia: EPM Publications, 1992), pp. 65-7, 810.

(2) Stopes, Charlotte Carmichael, *Shakespeare's Family*, (London: Elliot Stock, 1901), p. 3 at:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/26315/26315-h/26315-h.htm>.

(3) Stopes, Charlotte Carmichael, *Shakespeare's Industry*, (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1916), pp. 221-2 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/shakespearesind00stopgoog#page/n240/mode/2up>.

(4) Stopes, Charlotte Carmichael, *The Life of Henry, Third Earl of Southampton, Shakespeare's Patron*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), p. 92.

(5) Stopes, Charlotte Carmichael, *The Seventeenth Century Accounts of the Masters of the Revels*, (London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1922), pp. 9-10, at:

<https://archive.org/stream/seventeenthcentu00stopuoft#page/8/mode/2up>.

(6) Akrigg, G.P.V., *Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 49-50 and footnote, p. 50.

(7) TNA E 351/542, Chamber, Treasurers of the: Mary, Countess of Southampton (widow and executrix of Sir Thomas Heneage), 29 September 1594 – 30 November 1595), at:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C6765172>.

(8) Transcript of foregoing entry, TNA E 351/542, rot. 207d on this website.

(9) *Shakespeare in the Public Records*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1964), p. 6 and Plate 1.

(10) Schoenbaum, Samuel, *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 136.

(11) Green, Mary Anne Everett, ed., *Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series of the Reign of Elizabeth 1595-1597*, Searchable Text Edition, (Burlington, Ontario, TannerRitchie Publishing, 2005), p. 318.

***MYTH: The Lord Chamberlain's Men performed Shakespeare's A Comedy of Errors at Gray's Inn on 28 December 1594.***

The *Gesta Grayorum* merely records that 'a company of base and common fellows' performed a play:



*The next grand night was intended to be upon Innocents' Day at night, at which time there was a great presence of lords, ladies and worshipful personages that did expect some notable performance at that time, which indeed had been effected if the multitude of beholders had not been so exceeding great that thereby there was no convenient room for those that were actors, by reason whereof very good inventions and conceits could not have opportunity to be applauded, which otherwise would have been great contentation to the beholders. Against which time our friend, the Inner Temple, determined to send their Ambassador to our Prince of State, as sent from Frederick Templarius, their Emperor, who was then busied in his wars against the Turk. The Ambassador came very gallantly appointed, and attended by a great number of brave gentlemen, which arrived at our court about nine of the clock at night. . . .*

*When the Ambassador was placed, as aforesaid, and that there was something to be performed for the delight of the beholders, there arose such a disordered tumult and crowd upon the stage that there was no opportunity to effect that which was intended. There came so great a number of worshipful personages upon the stage that might not be displaced, and gentlewomen, whose sex did privilege them from violence, that when the Prince and his officers had in vain a good while expected and endeavoured a reformation, at length there was no hope of redress for that present. The Lord Ambassador and his train thought that they were not so kindly entertained as was before expected, and thereupon would not stay any longer at that time, but in a sort discontented and displeased. After their departure the throngs and tumults did somewhat cease, although so much of them continued as was able to disorder and confound any good inventions whatsoever. In regard whereof, as also for that the sports intended were especially for the gracing of the Templarians, it was thought good not to offer anything of account saving dancing and revelling with gentlewomen, and after such sports a Comedy of Errors (like to Plautus his Menechmus) was played by the players. So that night was begun and continued to the end in nothing but confusion and errors, whereupon it was ever afterwards called The Night of Errors. . . .*

*The next night upon this occasion we preferred judgments thick and threefold which were read publicly by the Clerk of the Crown, being all against a sorcerer or conjuror that was supposed to be the cause of that confused inconvenience. Therein was contained how he had caused the stage to be built and scaffolds to be reared to the top of the house to increase expectation. Also how he caused divers ladies and gentlewomen and others of good condition to be invited to our sports, also our dearest friend, the State of Templaria, to be disgraced and disappointed of their kind entertainment deserved and intended. Also that he caused throngs and tumults, crowds and outrages to disturb our whole proceedings. And lastly that he had foisted a company of base and common fellows to make up our disorders with a play of errors and confusion, and that that night had gained to us discredit, and itself a nickname of errors. All which were against the crown and dignity of our Sovereign Lord, the Prince of Purpoole.*

Moreover, as Greg notes:

*The account of the Christmas revels at Gray's Inn in 1594-5 did not find its way into print till nearly a century later. At least no edition earlier than that of 1688 is now known.*

According to Wiggins, the play may have been in the repertoire of Pembroke's Men at the time.

References:

(1) Greg, W.W., ed., *Gesta Grayorum 1688*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914 or 1915), pp. v-vi, 20-3 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/gestgrayorum00grayuoft#page/22/mode/2up>

(2) Wiggins, Martin, *British Drama 1533-1642: A Catalogue, Volume III: 1590-1597*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 209 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=-okeAAAAQBAJ&pg=PA209>

(3) Ogburn, Charlton, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (McLean, Virginia: EPM Publications Inc., 1992), p. 65.

(4) Malim, Richard, *The Earl of Oxford and the Making of "Shakespeare"*, (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2012), pp. 181, 254, 293.

***MYTH: The entry in the Pipe Rolls recording a Privy Council warrant of 15 March 1595 authorizing payment of £20 to William Kempe, William Shakespeare and Richard Burbage for performances at court on 26 and 28 December 1595 was in reality a payment to Kempe, Burbage and Oxford (under the name Shakespeare).***

The entry in the Pipe Rolls describes Kempe, Shakespeare and Burbage as 'servants to the Lord Chamberlain' of the Queen's Household, and 'William Shakespeare' thus cannot be a reference to the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. The entry reads:

*To William Kempe, William Shakespeare & Richard Burbage, servants to the Lord Chamberlain, upon the Council's warrant dated at Whitehall xvto Martij 1594 [=15<sup>th</sup> March 1595] for two several comedies or interludes showed by them before her Majesty in Christmas time last past, viz., upon St. Stephen's Day & Innocents' Day, £13 6s 8d, and by way of her Majesty's reward, £6 13s 4d, in all £20.*

(1) Ogburn, Charlton, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (McLean, Virginia: EPM Publications, 1992), pp. 65-7, 810.

(2) Malim, Richard, *The Earl of Oxford and the Making of "Shakespeare"*, (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2012), pp. 181, 254, 293.

(3) TNA E 351/524, Chamber, Treasurers of the: Mary, Countess of Southampton (widow and executrix of Sir Thomas Heneage), 29 September 1594 – 30 November 1595), at:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C6765172>

(4) Transcript of foregoing entry, TNA E 354/542, on this website.

(5) *Shakespeare in the Public Records*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1964), p. 6 and Plate 1.

(6) Schoenbaum, Samuel, *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 136.

***MYTH: The foregoing entry in the Pipe Rolls authorized payment to Kempe and Burbage as actors, and to William Shakespeare as financier, shareholder, business manager, agent, banker or some combination thereof to the Lord Chamberlain's Men, and not as an actor in the Company.***

The entry in the Pipe Rolls describes Kempe, Shakespeare and Burbage as ‘servants to the Lord Chamberlain’, and there is no evidence that the Lord Chamberlain of the Queen’s Household ever employed financiers, shareholders (in the modern sense), business managers, agents, bankers or some combination thereof as his servants. Moreover the wording ‘showed by them’ indicates that all three men, Kempe, Shakespeare and Burbage, personally performed in the two comedies and interludes presented before the Queen, and that all three were thus being paid as actors. The entry reads:

*To William Kempe, William Shakespeare & Richard Burbage, servants to the Lord Chamberlain, upon the Council's warrant dated at Whitehall xvto Martij 1594 [=15<sup>th</sup> March 1595] for two several comedies or interludes showed by them before her Majesty in Christmas time last past, viz., upon St. Stephen's Day & Innocents' Day, £13 6s 8d, and by way of her Majesty's reward, £6 13s 4d, in all £20.*

(1) Price, Diana, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), p. 31.

(2) Malim, Richard, *The Earl of Oxford and the Making of "Shakespeare"*, (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2012), pp. 181, 254, 293.

(3) Chiljan, Katherine, *Shakespeare Suppressed*, (San Francisco: Faire Editions, 2011), pp. 100-101.

(4) Pointon, A.J., *The Man Who Was Never Shakespeare*, (Tunbridge Wells, Parapress, 2011), pp. 45-7.

(5) TNA E 351/524, Chamber, Treasurers of the: Mary, Countess of Southampton (widow and executrix of Sir Thomas Heneage), 29 September 1594 – 30 November 1595), at:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C6765172>

(6) Transcript of foregoing entry, TNA E 354/542, on this website.

(7) *Shakespeare in the Public Records*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1964), p. 6 and Plate 1.

(8) Schoenbaum, Samuel, *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 136.

***MYTH: The arms granted to the Shakespeare family of Stratford upon Avon were Gold on a bend sable, a spear of the first steeled argent.***

Although this is the usual description of the Shakespeare arms given by modern commentators and appears to be taken from a draft grant originally dated 20 October 1597 and ‘corrected’ to 1596, later depictions of the arms by heralds in the College of Arms show the spear all one heraldic colour, sometimes silver (‘argent’), sometimes gold. (‘or’). See, for example, Record MS R. 21, f. 285r, a document presented by the herald Ralph Brooke to Queen Elizabeth c.1602 challenging 23 of coats of arms granted by William Dethick in which the spear on the shield is merely labelled ‘or’:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/file/details/654>

Similarly, see another document by Ralph Brooke, Record MS Dethick's Grants X, f. 28r, allegedly dated c.1599/1600, in which the spear on the shield is merely labelled ‘or’:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/ralph-brookes-compilation-arms-granted-william-dethick-1600-copy-arms>

See also Dethick’s 1602 reply to Brooke’s complaint, Record MS WZ f. 276r:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/shakespeares-arms-defended-college-arms-copy-garter-and-clarenceuxs-reply>

See also Harold Bowditch Collection, Mss 1180, R. Stanton Avery Special Collections, page 66, in which the spear on the shield also appears to be all one colour, although from the image alone it cannot be determined whether the colour is silver or gold:

<http://shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/armorial-william-smith-rouge-dragon-coat-arms-william-shakespeare>

See also Harley MS 5807, f. 82r, which contains two different versions of the arms. On f. 174r the main portion of the spear on the shield is labeled 'or' while the tip is labeled 'argent'. However in the version on f. 82r, the entire spear is merely labelled 'or'. See:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/contemporary-copy-armorial-william-smith-rouge-dragon-including-shakespeare-s>

References:

(1) Second draft grant to John Shakespeare dated 20 October 1596:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-2>

***MYTH: William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon was granted the motto 'Non sanz droict' by the College of Arms in 1596.***

The alleged motto was not invented for William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon until 200 years after his death. It does not appear on the 1599 draft grant of the Shakespeare arms, nor on the Shakespeare monument in Holy Trinity Church, nor on subsequent depictions of the Shakespeare arms in heraldic documents.

As noted below, a drawing with the alleged motto first appeared in print in John Bell's 1788 edition of Shakespeare. See *The Dramatick Writings of Will. Shakspeare, Prolegomena*, Vol. II, (London: John Bell, 1788), following p. 510 at:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=8Xk0AAAAMAAJ&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.ca/books?id=8Xk0AAAAMAAJ&redir_esc=y)

The first person to specifically discuss the French words Non Sanz Droict as Shakespeare's alleged motto was the forger, John Payne Collier. See Collier, John Payne, *The Works of Shakespeare*, (London: Whittaker & Co., 1844), p. lxxvi at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=DpsNAAAAQAAJ&pg=PR76>

References:

As above.

***MYTH: William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon applied to the College of Arms for a coat of arms.***

All three draft grants by the College of Arms were made to John Shakespeare, not William.

References:

(1) For the first draft grant to John Shakespeare dated 20 October 1596 in the hand of William Dethick (formerly MS Vincent 157, no. 23), see:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-1>

(2) For the second draft grant to John Shakespeare dated 20 October 1596 in the hand of William Dethick, see:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-2>

(3) For the 1599 draft grant by William Dethick and William Camden to John Shakespeare (formerly MS R.21, no. 347), see:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/john-shakespeares-draft-exemplification-arms>

(4) Schoenbaum, Samuel, *William Shakespeare; A Documentary Life*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), pp. 166-73.

***MYTH: The two 1596 draft grants of the arms of John Shakespeare and the 1599 draft exemplification of the arms of John Shakespeare are in the hand of a clerk or junior herald.***

Dr Nigel Ramsay, based on a careful comparison of other samples of Dethick's hand, stated in 2014 that the two 1596 draft grants and the 1599 draft grant are in the hand of William Dethick, Garter King of Arms. See:

<http://collation.folger.edu/2014/07/william-dethick-and-the-shakespeare-grants-of-arms/>

*The Shakespeare grants can be seen to be in the hand of the herald William Dethick.*

References: As above, and personal e-mail from Dr Nigel Ramsay dated 3 September 2016.

***MYTH: William Dethick wrote out the two draft grants of arms to John Shakespeare on 20 October 1596.***

William Dethick was not in England on 20 October 1596, the alleged date of the two draft grants. He was in France with the Earl of Shrewsbury, in attendance at the investiture of Henri IV with the Order of the Garter.

See the calendar for 1596:

<http://www.timeanddate.com/calendar/index.html?year=1596&country=2>

The account in Nichols' *Progresses* states that the ceremony took place at Rouen on Sunday, 10 October 1596. See the edition by Elizabeth Goldring, p. 43 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YVecAQAAQBAJ&pg=PA43>

At p. 32 it is stated that Shrewsbury and his party left Dover on Thursday 16 September 1596.

At p. 33 it is stated that Shrewsbury and his party left Dieppe on Monday, 27 September 1596, and entered Rouen on Tuesday, 28 September, and that the King made his entry into Rouen on Wednesday 5 [sic for 6] October.

At p. 43 it is stated that the King was invested with the Order of the Garter on Sunday, 10 October. Dethick is specifically mentioned as being present.

At p. 44 it is stated that Shrewsbury and his party took leave of Henri IV on Friday, 15 October, and left Rouen itself on Saturday 16 October, arriving in Dieppe that evening, where they were forced to wait 10 days for passage. Shrewsbury and his party left Dieppe on 29 October, and arrived at the Downs near Dover on 30 October. Thus, unless Dethick travelled separately, and somehow secured passage to England independently, he was not in England on 20 October 1596, the alleged date of the two 1596 draft grants of arms to John Shakespeare.

Although it has no effect on the dates in the foregoing itinerary, it should be mentioned that the dates in French accounts differ because there was, at the time, a 10-day difference between dating in England and in France after France's adoption of the Gregorian calendar in 1582. This French source says Henri IV entered Rouen on 16 October 1596:

<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k424459r/f3.item.r=Grand>

This would have been 6 October in English dating.

This French source, pp. 79-80, says Henri IV received the Order of the Garter on 18 October 1596 [French dating, but there is also a further discrepancy with the date in the English account], and also says Shrewsbury arrived at Rouen a few days before the King's arrival on 16 October 1596, and stayed in Rouen three weeks:

<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k424459r/f3.item.r=Grand>

The dates '1596' in Arabic numerals on the two draft grants may be later additions. It appears the two draft grants may have been backdated by Dethick, since in the text of both drafts the date 20 October is given in Roman numerals as the 39<sup>th</sup> year of Queen Elizabeth's reign, that is, 20 October 1597, although in one of the two drafts 39<sup>th</sup> is struck out, and 38<sup>th</sup> written above it.

References: As above.

***MYTH: The two 1596 draft grants of the arms of John Shakespeare and the 1599 draft exemplification of the arms of John Shakespeare have always been catalogued together at the College of Arms.***

According to the Shakespeare Documented website, the two 1596 draft grants were separated from the 1599 draft grant for many years.

The provenance of the two 1596 draft grants is as follows:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-1>

*[T]he two drafts were bound into a volume containing other Dethick working papers (Vincent MS 157, vol. 1). This volume and 259 others were owned by the herald Augustine Vincent (d. 1626) and passed down to his son John Vincent (d. 1671), who then willed them to the antiquary Ralph Sheldon of Beoley, who in turn willed them to the College of Arms at his death in 1684.*

During the time that the two draft grants were out of the possession of the College of Arms, anyone who had access to them could have written the French words 'Non sanz droict' on them.

The provenance of the 1599 draft grant is as follows:



<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/john-shakespeares-draft-exemplification-arms>

*John Anstis, Garter King of Arms, first identified the confirmation of arms, and supplied the information to Alexander Pope, who provided a transcription (with silent additions and corrections) in *The Works of Shakespear* (1725). The "no. 347" visible on the grant refers to its prior placement in a volume of similar records, MS Record R21, a volume of "Old Grants." At the time that Anstis shared it with Pope, it had a different shelfmark, MS G13, and according to Pope, was p. 349 of the volume.*

References:

(1) Shakespeare Documented website, as above.

**MYTH: *The College of Herald's initially rejected John Shakespeare's application.***

Price writes (p. 70):

*The College of Herald's initially rejected Shakspere's application, and "Non, sanz droit," comma included, translates literally as "No, without right" – words of rejection. Jonson was probably ridiculing someone who mistook the herald's rejection as his new fine-sounding motto.*

In 1596, Sir William Dethick (1543-1612), who personally wrote out the two 1596 draft grants to John Shakespeare, was Garter King of Arms, the highest ranking official in the College of Arms. No one in the College of Arms was in a position to reject his draft grant. See the Wikipedia entry for Garter Principal King of Arms at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garter\\_Principal\\_King\\_of\\_Arms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garter_Principal_King_of_Arms)

*The Garter Principal King of Arms was placed by King Henry V over all the whole body of heralds.*

*He may be said to have two distinct capacities united in his person, one relative to the Order of the Garter, the other as head of the College of Arms, and on this account he not only takes an oath in a chapter of the Garter, before the Sovereign and Knights, but as king at arms another oath before the Earl Marshal, and therefore he is styled both principal officer of arms of the most noble order of the Garter and principal king of English arms.*

However, as noted above, the two 1596 draft grants were out of the possession of the College of Arms for many years, and during that time anyone who had access to them could have written the French words 'Non sanz droict' on them.

Another possible explanation for the presence of ‘Non sanz droict’ on the two 1596 drafts is that Sir William Dethick drew them up based on an earlier version of Shaksper’s arms granted by Robert Cooke. The 1599 draft exemplification of John Shakespeare’s arms by William Dethick and William Camden (which does not bear the words ‘Non sanz droict’) states that John Shakespeare had produced a copy of the coat of arms granted to him while he was bailiff of Stratford:

*. . . and also produced this his ancient coat of arms heretofore assigned to him whilst he was her majesty's officer and bailiff of that town.*

Stratford records indicate that John Shakespeare was elected bailiff in 1568 and chief alderman in 1571. See:

<https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/exhibition/document/meeting-stratford-upon-avon-corporation-which-john-shakespeare-was-elected>

and:

<https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/exhibition/document/meeting-stratford-upon-avon-corporation-which-officers-following-year-were>

One of the two 1596 draft grants also contains notes at the foot mentioning the pattern for John Shakespeare’s arms drawn up twenty years earlier by Robert Cooke, then Clarenceux King of Arms:

*This John [illegible] a pattern thereof under Clarenceux Cook's hand  
in paper 20 years past  
A justice of peace and was bailiff, officer & chief of the town of Stratford upon Avon 15  
or 16 years past.*

It is possible that, after Sir William Dethick had drawn up the 1596 drafts based on Robert Cooke’s earlier grant, he realized that the Shakespeare arms, which are of a very simple design, too closely resembled the arms of some other person or persons, and memorialized his reservations about them in the form of the words ‘Non sanz droict’. That would still not explain, however, the fact that the words are in French.

For the fact that the Shakespeare arms were considered too close to the arms of other persons, and that therefore Sir William Dethick might have had reservations about them which caused him to add ‘Non sanz droict’ to the two 1596 drafts, see also the Oberon Shakespeare Study Group website for an e-mail dated 28 July 2014 from Garland Scott, Public Relations Officer with the Folger Shakespeare Library, who wrote, with respect to the herald Ralph Brooke’s challenge in 1602 to arms granted by Sir William Dethick and Sir William Camden to 23 ‘mean persons’, including John Shakespeare, that:

<http://oberonshakespearestudygroup.blogspot.com/2014/08/show-me-data.html>

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*The attack . . . happened after the death of John Shakespeare at which point the arms had passed to William Shakespeare as the eldest son. The attack was based not only on the fact that Brooke considered William to be a player, **but also on the fact that John Shakespeare's arms were too similar to other arms** and he was not of a gentle enough background, so that it never should have been granted in the first place. (bold type added)*

References:

(1) Price, Diana, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), p. 70.

***MYTH: There are two draft grants of the arms of John Shakespeare, both dated 20 October 1596.***

The text of one of the draft grants contains the date 20 October 1597, while the text of the other originally contained that date, but was amended.

What the Shakespeare Documented website terms the first draft grant (the one with three different iterations of the French words Non Sanz Droict) is dated (in Roman numerals) the 20th of October in the 39th year [=1597] of Queen Elizabeth's reign. See the image and modern spelling transcript on the Shakespeare Documented website at:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-1>

What the Shakespeare Documented website calls the second draft grant is dated (again in Roman numerals) the 20th of October in the 38th year [=1596] of Queen Elizabeth's reign. With respect to the year, the Roman numerals for 39<sup>th</sup> have been crossed out, and 38<sup>th</sup> written above. See:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-2>

The Shakespeare Documented website takes no notice of this discrepancy in dates, and states that both drafts date from 20 October 1596 (even though the modern spelling transcripts for the two images show otherwise).

References:

(1) Shakespeare Documented website, as above.

***MYTH: The four iterations of the French words ‘Non Sanz Droict’ on the two 1596 draft grants of the arms of John Shakespeare are identical.***

The four iterations all differ from each other. See:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-1>

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-2>

The first iteration on the first 1596 draft grant is over the sketch of the coat of arms, and reads:

~~non, sanz [d]roict:~~

That is, all letters are lower case; there is a comma after ‘non’; there is a colon at the end of the phrase; there is a strangely formed initial letter on ‘droict’ which has been written over; and the entire phrase is crossed out.

The second iteration is written above the crossed-out first iteration, and reads:

Non, Sanz Droict

That is, all three words now begin with upper case letters; the comma remains; there is no colon.

The third iteration is to the right of the first two, over the text rather than the sketch, and reads:

NON SANZ DROICT

That is, there is no comma, and the entire phrase is now in large rather ill-formed upper case letters, and is written prominently across the top as though the phrase now relates to the grant of arms, rather than the sketch.

On the second 1596 draft grant there is yet another iteration, which reads:

non :Sanz droict

That is, all the letters are lower case with the except of the upper-case S, and there is no comma, although there appears to be a colon after ‘non’.

Thus, none of the four iterations in the two 1596 draft grants matches any of the others.

***MYTH: The French words ‘Non Sanz Droict’ are a motto.***

As noted above, there are four iterations of the French words Non Sanz Droict on the two 1596 draft grants of the arms of John Shakespeare.

On what is considered the first of the two drafts, they are:

Over the draft sketch:

~~non, sanz droict~~: (the first letter of ‘droict’ has been written over)

Non, Sanz Droict.

Over the draft text:

NON SANZ DROICT

See:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-1>

On what is considered the second of the two drafts:

non :Sanz droict (the colon is very faint, and the original needs to be examined to determine whether it is actually there)

See:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-2>

It would be exceptional for a motto to contain a comma, particularly since the comma results in the English translation, ‘No, without right’. Moreover the crossed-out iteration on what is considered the first draft (which appears to be the first of the three iterations on that draft) ends with a colon, which would be very exceptional for a motto.

Finally, although three of the four iterations are over the draft sketch of the coat of arms, and appear to relate to the sketch, the fourth iteration, which is in badly-formed upper-case letters, is over the text of the grant, and thus appears to relate to the text itself. It may have been added later by the same hand which wrote ‘Shakespere . 1596’ at the top right-hand of the draft.

It seems clear from these unusual features that ‘Non Sanz Droict’ is not a motto. Further evidence that it is not a motto is the fact that the words do not appear in any form on the 1599 draft. See:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/john-shakespeares-draft-exemplification-arms>

References:

(1) Shakespeare Documented website, as above.

***MYTH: The 1596 draft grants of arms to John Shakespeare by the College of Arms include the motto ‘Non Sanz Droict’.***

Alexander Pope, in *The Works of Shakespear in Six Volumes*, (Jacob Tonson, 1725), was the first to provide a transcript of the 1599 draft grant of arms. However, the words ‘Non Sanz Droict’ appear nowhere in the 1599 grant. For Pope’s transcript, see:

[https://archive.org/stream/worksofshakespea01shak\\_5#page/n53/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/worksofshakespea01shak_5#page/n53/mode/2up)

Pope was unaware of the two 1596 draft grants of arms in which the words ‘Non Sanz Droict’ do appear, in both grants above the sketch and in one grant across the top in upper case letters as well. See:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/john-shakespeares-draft-exemplification-arms>

According to the Shakespeare Documented website, these two draft grants dated 20 October 1596 were first mentioned by George Steevens in 1778:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-1>

*George Steevens first brought modern attention to these drafts in the introduction to his Plays of William Shakespeare (1778).*

In 1821, Malone credits George Steevens in a note with having been the first to mention the 1596 draft grants:

*In the Herald’s Office are the first draughts of John Shakspeare’s grant or confirmation of arms, by William Dethick, Garter, Principal King at Arms, 1596. See Vincent’s Press, vol. 157, No. 23, and 4. STEEVENS.*

The 1778 Steevens edition is available online at the HathiTrust website. Steevens’ note is found at p. 191:

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt/search?q1=draughts;id=hvd.hxgex4;view=1up;seq=208;start=1;sz=10;page=search;orient=0>

Almost 200 years after the two 1596 draft grants, ‘Non Sanz Droict’ appears for the first time as a ‘motto’ on a drawing of the Shakespeare coat of arms in John Bell’s 1788 edition of Shakespeare. However Bell says nothing in the text of the 1788 edition about the two 1596 draft grants or the alleged ‘motto’, and his source for ‘Non Sanz Droict’ in the drawing is unclear. See *The Dramatick Writings of Will. Shakspeare*, Prolegomena, Vol. II, (London: John Bell, 1788), following p. 510:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=8Xk0AAAAMAAJ&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.ca/books?id=8Xk0AAAAMAAJ&redir_esc=y)

The first person to specifically discuss the words ‘Non Sanz Droict’ and to use the word ‘motto’ in connection with them was John Payne Collier. In 1844 Collier wrote that:

*the motto, as given at the head of the confirmation, is*

*NON SANZ DROICT*

Since then the myth that ‘Non Sanz Droict’ is a motto has been widely promulgated by orthodox scholars and Shakespeare authorship sceptics alike.

However according to Fox-Davies, a motto is never mentioned or alluded to in the terms of the patent in a grant of arms in England. The French words ‘Non Sanz Droict’ on the two 1596 draft grants were thus not a motto.

References:

(1) Malone, Edmond, *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare*, (London: F.C. and J. Rivington, 1821), Vol. II, p. 583 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=MeFHAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA583>

(2) Collier, John Payne, *The Works of Shakespeare*, (London: Whittaker & Co., 1844), p. lxxvi at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=DpsNAAAAQAAJ&pg=PR76>

(3) Nichols, John Gough, ed., *The Herald and Genealogist*, (London: John Bowyer Nicholas and Sons, 1863), Vol. 1, p. 512:

<https://archive.org/stream/heraldgenealogis01nich#page/512/mode/2up/>

(4) Fox-Davies, Arthur Charles, *A Complete Guide to Heraldry*, (New York: Gramercy Books, 1978), p. 448 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/completeguidetoh00foxdrich#page/448/mode/2up>

(5) Grant of arms by William Dethick to Stephen Powle, gentleman (an example of a contemporary patent granting arms):

<http://collation.folger.edu/2014/07/william-dethick-and-the-shakespeare-grants-of-arms/>

***MYTH: The 1599 draft exemplification of the arms of John Shakespeare includes the motto ‘Non Sanz Droict’.***

‘Non Sanz Droict’ appears three times in various forms in the first of the 1596 draft grants to John Shakespeare, and once in a second draft grant in the same year. However ‘Non Sanz Droict’ does not appear on the 1599 draft exemplification of John Shakespeare’s arms, nor does it appear with the coat of arms on the monument to William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon in Holy Trinity Church.

The absence of ‘Non Sanz Droict’ on the 1599 draft grant, as well as its absence from the coat of arms on the monument in Holy Trinity Church establishes that it is not a motto, and was never used as such.

References:

(1) For the first draft grant to John Shakespeare dated 20 October 1596 in the hand of William Dethick (formerly MS Vincent 157, no. 23), see:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-1>

(2) For the second draft grant to John Shakespeare dated 20 October 1596 in the hand of William Dethick, see:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-2>

(3) For the 1599 draft grant by William Dethick and William Camden to John Shakespeare (formerly MS R.21, no. 347), see:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/john-shakespeares-draft-exemplification-arms>

***MYTH: ‘Non Sanz Droict’ translates into English as ‘Not Without Right’.***



There is no authority for the claim that ‘Non Sanz Droict’ must be translated into English exclusively as ‘Not without right’. In French the word ‘non’ can mean either ‘no’ or ‘not’, and thus the words ‘Non Sanz Droict’ can be translated in two completely different ways, ‘No, without right’ or ‘Not without right’.

***MYTH: The motto of William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, ‘Not Without Right’, is satirized by Ben Jonson and the Lord Chamberlain’s Men in Every Man Out Of His Humour (1599) in the motto given to Sogliardo, ‘Not Without Mustard’.***

This myth originated with Shakespeare authorship sceptic Sir George Greenwood in his *the Shakespeare Problem Restated* (1908):

*And “in the margin of this draft-grant there is a pen sketch of the arms and crest [a tricking], and above them is written the words, ‘Non sanz Droict.’ “ Thus Jonson appears to have thought that as Shakspeare’s “word” was “Non sans Droit,” Sogliardo’s might appropriately be “Non sans Moutarde”.*

Greenwood erroneously concludes that the two versions of the 1596 draft grant were to William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, whereas both were in fact to his father, John Shakespeare, and that although there are four different iterations of ‘NON SANZ DROICT’ on the two 1596 draft grants to John Shakespeare, the words appear nowhere on the 1599 draft exemplification of arms to John Shakespeare. See the discussions of the draft grants above, and the links to the images of the three drafts on the Shakespeare Documented website in the References section below.

Greenwood also fails to explain how Jonson would have seen Sir William Dethick’s 1596 draft grants at the College of Arms, or how the audience would have understood that Jonson was alluding to the words ‘NON SANZ DROICT’ in the 1596 draft grants, or why Jonson would have focussed on an alleged motto in the earlier 1596 draft grants when the 1599 draft exemplification did not contain the alleged motto ‘NON SANZ DROICT’. Greenwood does refer to an essay in the *Stratford Town Shakespeare* (1907) in which J.J. Jusserand claims that ‘Shakspeare’s negotiation with the heralds had been much talked about, and the subject of much criticism’. In fact this statement is inaccurate, as the herald Ralph Brooke’s charges against Sir William Dethick date from 1602, whereas the play dates from 1599, and the 1599 draft exemplification of John Shakespeare’s arms impaling the Arden arms does not contain the words ‘NON SANZ DROICT’, and thus an alleged motto which was not included in Ralph Brooke’s charges could hardly have been ‘much talked about’. See the images of the three draft grants at the Shakespeare Documented website at the links below, and the Wikipedia entry for Ralph Brooke at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ralph\\_Brooke](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ralph_Brooke)

*[I]n 1602 [Brooke] prepared charges against Sir William Dethick, Garter King of Arms 1586–1606, and Camden for improperly granting arms to 23 "mean" men, including John Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, the father of playwright William Shakespeare.*

Although the myth which originated with Greenwood has been widely promulgated by orthodox scholars and Shakespeare authorship sceptics alike, it appears there is nothing to be gained from doing so by either side.

According to the myth, Jonson and the Lord Chamberlain's Men denigrated William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon in the play in the most insulting and offensive terms. How do Stratfordians then explain the complete turnaround of Jonson and leading members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men in the *First Folio*, and Shakespeare's bequest to Heminges and Condell in his will? The same applies to Oxfordian acceptance of the Sogliardo myth. Again, the myth has Jonson and the Lord Chamberlain's Men denigrating William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon in the most insulting and offensive terms. How do Oxfordians then explain the complete turnaround of Jonson and leading members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men in the *First Folio*, and William Shakespeare's bequests to Heminges and Condell in his will?

Moreover, as established above, William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon had no motto.

Instead, it appears the motto 'Not Without Mustard' given to Sogliardo in *Every Man Out Of His Humour* alludes, not to anything related to the grant of arms to the Shakespeares of Stratford upon Avon, but rather to the phrase 'Not without mustard' in an anecdote in Thomas Nashe's *Pierce Pennilesse* (1592), a popular tract which would have been well known to the audience of *Every Man Out Of His Humour*:

*As a mad ruffian on a time being in danger of shipwreck by a tempest, and seeing all other at their vows and prayers, that, if it would please God of his infinite goodness to deliver them out of that imminent danger, one would abjure this sin whereunto he was addicted, another make satisfaction for that violence he had committed, he, in a desperate jest, began thus to reconcile his soul to heaven.*

*O Lord, if it may seem good to thee to deliver me from this fear of untimely death, I vow, before thy throne and all thy starry host, never to eat haberdine more whilst I live.*

*Well, so it fell out that the sky cleared and the tempest ceased, and this careless wretch, that made such a mockery of prayer, ready to set foot a-land, cried out, Not without mustard, good Lord, not without mustard, as though it had been the greatest torment in the world to have eaten haberdine without mustard.*

Donaldson explains the anecdote at p. 162:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=oa1\\_iU3D1ckC&pg=PT162](https://books.google.ca/books?id=oa1_iU3D1ckC&pg=PT162)

In the play, the allusion to Nashe's anecdote occurs immediately after Sogliardo has described the crest on his new coat of arms as a headless boar, and has described the missing head in the top part of the escutcheon (On a chief argent between two annulets sable a boar's head proper). Carlo then jests that a boar's head proper (i.e. depicted in realistic fashion) between two annulets sable, all on a silver field, resembles a hog's cheek and sausages served on a pewter platter. Puntarvolo then suggests 'Not without mustard' as a motto, implying that mustard would be a suitable accompaniment to such a dish of cooked pork, and Carlo adds that the visual jest would have been complete if the heralds had given Sogliardo a frying pan as a crest. See:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=Y1tdAAAACAAJ&pg=PA42>

*Car. But ha' you Arms, ha' you Arms?*

*Sog. Y'faith, I thank them, I can write my self Gentleman now, here's my Pattent, it cost me Thirty Pound, by this breath.*

*Punt. A very fair Coat, well charg'd and full of Armory.*

*Sog. Nay, it has as much variety of Colours in it, as you have seen a Coat have, how like you the Crest, Sir?*

*Punt. I understand it not well, what is 't?*

*Sog. Marry, Sir, it is your Bore without a head Rampant.*

[ ] *A Bore without a head, that's very rare!*

*Car. I, and Rampant too: troth, I commend the Heralds wit, he had decyphered him well: A Swine without a head, without Brain, Wit, any thing indeed, ramping to Gentility. You can blazon the rest, Signior? can you not?*

*Sog. O, I, I have it in writing here of purpose, it cost me two shillings the tricking.*

*Carl. Let's hear, let's hear.*

*Punt. It is the most vile, foolish, absurd, palpable, and ridiculous Escutcheon that ever this Eye survis'd. . . .*

*Car. Silence, good Knight: on, on.*

*Sog. Gyrony, of eight peeces; Azure and Gules, between three Plates; a Chev'ron, engrailed checkey, Or, Vert, and Ermins; on a cheefe Argent between two Ann'lets, sables; a Bores Head, Proper.*

*Car. How's that, on a cheef Argent.*

*Sog. On a cheef Argent, a Bores head Proper, between two Ann'lets sables.*

*Car. 'Slud, it's a Hogs-cheek, and Puddings in a Pewter field this. . . .*

*Sog. How like you 'em, Signior?*

*Punt. Let the word be, Not without Mustard; your crest is very rare, Sir.*

*Car. A Frying-pan to the Crest, had had no fellow.*

References:

(1) *The Works of Ben Jonson*, (London: Thomas Hodgkin, 1692), p. 42 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=Y1tdAAAACAAJ&pg=PA42>

(2) Donaldson, Ian, *Ben Jonson: A Life*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) at:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=oa1\\_iU3D1ckC&pg=PT162](https://books.google.ca/books?id=oa1_iU3D1ckC&pg=PT162)

(3) Greenwood, Granville George, *The Shakespeare Problem Restated*, (London: John Lane, 1908), pp. 461-3 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/shakespeareprobl00greeuoft#page/462/mode/2up>

(4) Price, Diana, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 68-73.

(5) Chiljan, Katherine, *Shakespeare Suppressed*, (San Francisco: Faire Editions, 2011), pp. 204-5.

(6) Miller, Ruth Loyd, 'Ben Jonson and the Arms of Sogliardo', *Oxfordian Vistas*, pp. 44-51.

(7) Ogburn, Charlton, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (McLean Virginia: EPM Publications, Inc., 1984), pp. 74-5.

(8) Shakespeare Documented website, 'First draft grants of arms based on John Shakespeare's and William Shakespeare's applications for acquiring a coat of arms (1596)', at:

<https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-1>

(9) Shakespeare Documented website, ‘Second draft grants of arms based on John Shakespeare’s and William Shakespeare’s applications for acquiring a coat of arms (1596)’, at:

<https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/exhibition/document/grant-arms-john-shakespeare-draft-2>

(10) Shakespeare Documented website, ‘Draft confirmation of arms, impaling Arden on Shakespeare’, at:

<https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/exhibition/document/john-shakespeares-draft-exemplification-arms>

(11) Jusserand, J.J., ‘Ben Jonson’s Views on Shakespeare’s Art’, *Stratford Town Shakespeare*, Vol. X, 1907.

***MYTH: In Every Man Out of His Humour, the ‘boar’ in Sogliardo’s coat of arms puns on the word ‘boor’ in the sense of an ill-bred fellow.***

Price (p. 7) states that:

*The “boar” in Sogliardo’s coat of arms puns on the word “boor,” in the sense of an ill-bred fellow. In his 1598 A Worlde of Wordes, Florio defined a boor as synonymous with “A clown” or a “rude fellow” (see the entry for “grossolano”).*

Although Price states the existence of the pun as a fact, the matter appears far from settled.

Since the alleged pun appears in a play, the focus has to be on the sound of the two words rather than how similar they might appear to be visually on a printed page.

Thus, there could be a pun if the Elizabethan pronunciation of ‘boar’ and ‘boor’ in 1599 was as close as the pronunciation of those two words in England appears to be today. Unfortunately we have no way of knowing precisely how ‘boar’ and ‘boor’ were pronounced by the Elizabethans, so from that point of view the question of whether there actually is a pun remains open.

If the American or Canadian pronunciation of the two words were under consideration there would be no pun since the American pronunciation of ‘boar’ rhymes with ‘soar’ whereas the American pronunciation of ‘boor’ rhymes with ‘poor’, and to an American or Canadian ‘soar’ and ‘poor’ sound quite different.

There’s also the question of how widely-used the word ‘boor’ was among the Elizabethans in 1599 in a derogatory sense.

In early English usage, ‘boor’ simply meant ‘husbandman, ‘peasant’ or ‘countryman’ without any negative connotation. From the *OED*:

*1. A husbandman, peasant, countryman. Obs., exc. as in sense 3, into which it passes in later use.*

*[c1430 Lydgate Minor Poems (1840) 192 Of tilthe of lande treteth the boueer.]*

*1551 W. Turner Herball (1568) A iij b Absinthium rusticum, that is bouris or pesantes wormwode.*

*1592 R. Johnson Nine Worthies sig. B4 A countrie Boore, a goodlie proper swayne.*

*a1616 Shakespeare Winter's Tale (1623) v. ii. 157 Not sweare it?.. Let Boores and Francklins say it, Ile sweare it*

It was only in 1598 that a derogatory meaning attached itself to the word ‘boor’, and both the 1598 sources raise questions. From the *OED*:

*3. a. A peasant, a rustic, with lack of refinement implied; a country clown.*

*1598 J. Marston Certaine Satyres in Metamorph. Pigmaliions Image 38 I dull-sprighted fat Boetian Boore.*

*c1610 S. Rowlands Terrible Battell 38 A paltry rusticke peasant boore.*

*b. fig. Any rude, ill-bred fellow; a ‘clown’.*

*1598 J. Florio Worlde of Wordes Grossolano, a lubber, a clowne, a boore, a rude fellow.*

The Marston quotation is from ‘Satire II’. See p. 269:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=uChAAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA269>

*I, that even now lisp'd like an amorist,*

*Am turned into a snaphance satirist.*

*O title which my judgment doth adore!*

*But I, dull-sprited fat Boetian boor*

*Do far off honour that censorian seat.*

It is difficult to determine exactly what Marston intended by his use of the word ‘boor’ since the view of the Athenians was that the Boeotians in general were stupid, not just Boeotian peasants. See:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=xP53BR\\_3GdcC&pg=PA127](https://books.google.ca/books?id=xP53BR_3GdcC&pg=PA127)

*... the age-old taunt of ‘Boeotian swine’.*

See also:

[http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Journals/AJP/16/3/reviews/The\\_Ancient\\_Boeotians\\*.html](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Journals/AJP/16/3/reviews/The_Ancient_Boeotians*.html)

*When Dicaeopolis in the Acharnians of Aristophanes opens his peace-shop, the first trader from abroad is a Megarian, the second is a Boeotian, and it is hard to tell which is the more contemptuously treated, the Megarian, who is starved out of all human feeling, or the Boeotian, who has been fattened into hopeless stupidity.*

Interestingly, according to Pausanius, Boeotia was known for its wild boars. See:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=bJpiAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA110>

It would thus be informative to know how the editors of the *OED* determined that Marston was speaking exclusively of peasants rather than of Boetians generally, with perhaps an allusion to Boeotian wild boars or Boeotian swine.

The Florio quotation also raises questions because Florio defines the Italian word ‘grossolano’ in terms of what he considers to be English synonyms, not a particularly reliable way of determining the first usage of an English word in a particular sense.

References:

(1) Price, Diana, *Shakespeare’s Unorthodox Biography*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), p. 71.

(2) Harton, Francois, *Memories of Odysseus*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 127 at:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=xP53BR\\_3GdcC&pg=PA127](https://books.google.ca/books?id=xP53BR_3GdcC&pg=PA127)

(3) Gildersleeve, B.L., Review of ‘The Ancient Boeotians’, *American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 16, No. 3, (1895), pp. 373-375 at:

[http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Journals/AJP/16/3/reviews/The\\_Ancient\\_Boeotians\\*.html](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Journals/AJP/16/3/reviews/The_Ancient_Boeotians*.html)

(4) Frazer, J.G., trans., *Pausanius’s Description of Greece*, Vol. V, (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1898), p. 110 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=bJpiAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA110>

**MYTH: *In Every Man Out of His Humour, the character Sogliardo purchases a coat of arms with the motto ‘Not Without Mustard’.***

There is no motto on the coat of arms purchased by Sogliardo in the play. The motto is suggested by Puntarvolo as a jest (see above).

References:

(1) Price, Diana, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), p. 69.

***MYTH: The original grant of a coat of arms to John Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon was made in 1596 and/or 1599.***

Although the two 1596 draft grants of arms by William Dethick contain four iterations of what appear to be words of rejection ('non, sanz droict', and variations), likely because the only authority cited therein for a grant of arms was that John Shakespeare's grandfather had been rewarded for service to Henry VII, the 1599 draft exemplification of John Shakespeare's arms by William Dethick and William Camden does not bear the words 'Non sanz droict', and instead states that John Shakespeare had produced a copy of the coat of arms granted to him while he was bailiff of Stratford:

*. . . and also produced this his ancient coat of arms heretofore assigned to him whilst he was her majesty's officer and bailiff of that town.*

Stratford records indicate that John Shakespeare was elected bailiff in 1568 and chief alderman in 1571. See:

<https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/exhibition/document/meeting-stratford-upon-avon-corporation-which-john-shakespeare-was-elected>

and:

<https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/exhibition/document/meeting-stratford-upon-avon-corporation-which-officers-following-year-were>

One of the two 1596 draft grants also contains notes at the foot mentioning the pattern for John Shakespeare's arms drawn up twenty years earlier by Robert Cooke, then Clarenceux King of Arms:

*This John [illegible] a pattern thereof under Clarenceux Cook's hand  
in paper 20 years past*

*A justice of peace and was bailiff, officer & chief of the town of Stratford upon Avon 15  
or 16 years past.*

If these statement are accurate, John Shakespeare was originally granted a coat of arms in 1568 (according to the 1599 draft exemplification) or in 1576 (according to notes on one



of the 1596 draft grants) by Robert Cooke, not in 1596 by William Dethick or in 1599 by William Dethick and William Camden, although it is possible that the 1568 or 1576 grant might not to have been properly formalized at the time.

From the modern spelling version of the 1599 draft exemplification by Dethick and Camden on the Shakespeare Documented website:

*[A]nd for that the said John Shakespeare having married the daughter and one of the heirs of Robert Arden of Wellingcote in the said county, and also produced this his ancient coat of arms heretofore assigned to him whilst he was her majesty's officer and bailiff of that town. In consideration of the premisses and for the encouragement of his posterity unto whom such blazon of arms and achievements of inheritance from their said mother, by the ancient custom and laws of arms may lawfully descend, we the said Garter and Clarenceux have by these assigned, granted, and confirmed, & by these presents exemplified unto the said John Shakespeare and to his posterity that shield and coat of arms viz. in a field of gold, upon a bend sables, a spear of the first, the point upward headed, Argent, and for his crest or cognizance, a falcon with his wings displayed, standing on a wreath of his colors, supporting a spear armed headed, Or, & steeled silver, fixed upon a helmet with mantels and tassels as more plainly may appear depicted on this margin. And we have likewise upon one other escucheon impaled the same with the ancient arms of the said Arden of Wellingcote.*

References:

(1) For the 1599 draft exemplification by William Dethick and William Camden to John Shakespeare (formerly MS R.21, no. 347), see:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/john-shakespeares-draft-exemplification-arms>

***MYTH: The 1599 exemplification of the coat of arms of John Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon impaling Arden was drafted by William Dethick alone.***

The 1599 exemplification was drafted jointly by William Dethick, and by Ben Jonson's 'mentor', William Camden, to whom Jonson had dedicated *Every Man In His Humour* (1598). See the facsimile of the 1599 exemplification on the Shakespeare Documented website, and Bloom, p. 239:

*Jonson could have known of these affairs at the College of Arms through his friendship with William Camden, the Clarenceux King-of-Arms, who assisted Sir William Dethick, Garter King-of-Arms, in drawing up the grant for the impalement, which was not issued.*

Chiljan (p. 205) states:

*Jonson may have learned about these applications from his former schoolmaster and longtime friend, William Camden, an official at the College of Heraldry.*

References:

(1) For the 1599 draft exemplification by William Dethick and William Camden to John Shakespeare (formerly MS R.21, no. 347), see:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/john-shakespeares-draft-exemplification-arms>

(2) Price, Diana, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 114, 234.

(3) Bloom, Harold, ed., *William Shakespeare*, (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2004), p. 239 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=CSrrkKclA8cC&pg=PA239>

(4) Chiljan, Katherine, *Shakespeare Suppressed*, (San Francisco: Faire Editions, 2011), p. 205.

***MYTH: Mary Arden was an heraldic heiress.***

The impalement of the Arden arms by John Shakespeare and the quartering of the Arden arms by William Shakespeare are complicated by the fact that Robert Arden, a male representative of the senior line of the Arden family in Warwickshire (the Ardens of Park Hall) was still living in 1599/1600. Robert Arden's father, Edward Arden of Park Hall, was executed in 1583 (see the *ODNB* entry), and his lands were forfeited, but Robert Arden was still the representative of the senior male line, and it's thus unclear why the arms of the Ardens of Park Hall were ever impaled on the 1599 draft at all, even though they were later crossed out. See:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/john-shakespeares-draft-exemplification-arms>

The 1599 draft sketch indicates that it was considered that John Shakespeare had connections to the Ardens of Park Hall. The fact that the impalement of the Arden arms on the 1599 draft is crossed out doesn't necessarily imply that the connection of the Shakespeares to the Ardens of Park Hall didn't exist. It may only imply that the senior representative of the male line, Robert Arden, was living, and thus John Shakespeare could not impale those arms, and would have to impale the arms of the cadet line from which his wife was descended.

Fox-Davies clarifies the fact that if Mary Arden was not a heraldic heiress, her son, William Shakespeare, would not have been entitled to quarter her arms after her death. See p. 523:

*The practice of the husband impaling his wife's arms, whether heiress or not, probably arose near the close of the fifteenth century.*

Thus, in Shakespeare's day, a wife need not be an heraldic heiress for her husband to be entitled to impale her arms.

Fox-Davies state further on p. 526:

*The arms of man and wife are now conjoined according to the following rules: — If the wife is not an heraldic heiress the two coats are impaled. If the wife be an heraldic heir or coheir, in lieu of impalement the arms of her family are placed on an inescutcheon superimposed on the centre of her husband's arms . . . .*

That was the modern rule in Fox-Davies' day, and does not necessarily apply to Shakespeare's day, but the statement does make it clear that a husband could impale his wife's arms even if she were not an heraldic heiress. Thus, John Shakespeare was entitled of right to impale the arms of his wife, Mary Arden, but William Shakespeare would not have been entitled of right to quarter his mother's arms after her death in 1608 if Mary Arden were not an heraldic heiress.

Mary Arden was granted a piece of land under her father's will, but according to Fox-Davies, that did not make her an heraldic heiress. See p. 526:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=DmV8CgAAQBAJ&pg=PT700>

*No person can be "heir" or "coheir" of another person until the latter is dead, though he or she may be heir-apparent or heir-presumptive. Though the word "heir" is frequently used with regard to material matters, such usage is really there incorrect, except in cases of intestacy. A person benefiting under a will is a legatee of money, or a devisee of land, and not an heir to either. . . . in the following remarks intestacy is ignored, and the explanations apply solely to heirship of blood.*

Thus, the fact that Mary Arden inherited a piece of land under her father's will did not make her an heraldic heiress. She could only be an heraldic heiress because of a blood relationship. But since a husband could impale his wife's arms even if she were not an heraldic heiress, the 1559 draft exemplification in and of itself does not clarify Mary Arden's status.

Fox-Davies has a sample pedigree on p. 527 in which he identifies 'Mary, Ellen and Blanche as coheirs of Thomas, their father', but in this case Thomas was the eldest son in the senior male line, which suggests that an heraldic heiress was an heiress in the senior

male line, and Mary Arden's father, if he were entitled to arms at all, was of a cadet branch of the family, Robert Arden being the male heir in the senior Park Hall line.

Moreover in contemporary documents, Mary Arden's father, Robert Arden, is described as a husbandman, rather than 'gentleman', or 'esquire', a description which casts doubt on the likelihood that he was entitled to bear arms himself, even as a younger son in a cadet line of some branch of the Arden family, and thus also casts doubt on whether his daughter could have inherited those arms from him.

It thus seems likely that Mary Arden was not an heraldic heiress, and that although John Shakespeare could impale Mary Arden's arms of right whether she was, or was not, an heraldic heiress, William Shakespeare could not quarter her arms of right after her death.

References: As above.

***MYTH: William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon was neither an actor nor a theater shareholder.***

A 1599 inventory of the property of the deceased Sir Thomas Brend states that William Shakespeare and others were then in occupation of the Globe. The petition of Thomasina Heminges in the 1615 Heminges vs. Ostler lawsuit states that Shakespeare was a shareholder in the Blackfriars. The 1619 answer of John Heminges and Henry Condell in the 1619 lawsuit of Witter vs. Heminges and Condell states that Shakespeare was a Globe shareholder. The 1635 answer of Cuthbert Burbage to a petition directed to Philip Herbert, then Lord Chamberlain, states that Shakespeare was a shareholder in the Globe in 1599 and an actor with the King's Men at the Blackfriars circa 1608/9.

That William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon was an actor is also established by the entry on the Pipe Rolls recording a Privy Council warrant dated 15 March 1594 [=1595] for payment to 'William Kempe, William Shakespeare and Richard Burbage, servants to the Lord Chamberlain', for 'two several comedies or interludes showed by them before her Majesty in Christmas time last past', and by College of Arms MS Dethick's Grants X, allegedly dated 10 February 1599 [=1600] and allegedly signed by Bluemantle Pursuivant, which on f. 28r contains a sketch of a coat of arms with the words 'Shakespeare the player' in the hand of Bluemantle.

References:

(1) Smith, Irwin, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars playhouse*, (New York University Press, 1964), pp. 557-9.

(2) Wallace, Charles William, *Advance sheets from Shakespeare, the Globe and Blackfriars*, (Stratford Upon Avon: Shakespeare Head Press, 1909).

(3) Chambers, Sir Edmund Kerchever, *The Elizabethan Stage*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), Vol. 2, pp. 58-64.

(4) Lewis, Benjamin Roland, *The Shakespeare Documents*, 2 vols., (Stanford University Press, 1940), pp. 508-520.

(5) E 351/542, rot. 207d, entry on the Pipe Rolls:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C6765172>

(6) College of Arms MS Dethick's Grants X, f. 28r, f. 29r, f. 30r on the Shakespeare Documented website at:

<http://shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/ralph-brookes-compilation-arms-granted-william-dethick-1600-copy-arms>

***MYTH: William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon was a secret Catholic.***

William Shakespeare's children were christened in Holy Trinity Church in Stratford, and the death of his son Hamnet was recorded in the parish register. His deposition in the Mountjoy lawsuit states indicates that he was resident with the Protestant Huguenot Mountjoy family in Silver Street in London circa 1602.

References:

(1) Fripp, Edgar I, *Master Richard Quyny, Bailiff of Stratford-upon-Avon and Friend of William Shakespeare*, (London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1924), pp. 36-7, 108.

(2) Wallace, C.W., 'Shakespeare and his London Associates as Revealed in Recently Discovered Documents', *University Studies*, University of Nebraska, Vol. 10, No. 4 (October, 1910), pp. 261-305.

***MYTH: A letter at Wilton House from Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, to her son states that 'we have the man Shakespeare with us'.***

An entry dated 5 August 1865 in the printed edition of the diary of William Johnson Cory (1823-1892) states that the Lady Herbert whose son Cory was tutoring at Wilton that summer did not show him the letter. The letter had never been reported on by anyone prior to that time, and has never been found since, although extensive searches have been made for it by, among others, E.K. Chambers.

Cory's informant was Lady Elizabeth Herbert (1822-1911), the wife of Sidney Herbert (1810-1861), 1st Baron Herbert of Lea. Cory's informant was not 'Lady Pembroke', as stated in the biography of William Johnson Cory by his great-niece, Faith Compton Mackenzie.

(The author of this website does not accept the identification of 'the man Shakespeare' mentioned in the alleged letter as Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, in the article by David Roper cited below. Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, would never have referred to the 17th Earl of Oxford as 'the man Shakespeare'. However the Roper article contains the most complete account to date of the alleged letter and the personages involved, and is cited for that reason.)

References:

- (1) Roper, David. "We have the man Shakespeare; Edward de Vere and the lost letter of Wilton". *Shakespeare Matters*, vol. 2 no. 3 (Spring 2003), pp. 1, 8-12.
- (2) Knutsen, Roslyn Lander, *The Repertory of Shakespeare's Company 1594-1613*, (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1991), p. 109.
- (3) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sidney\\_Herbert,\\_1st\\_Baron\\_Herbert\\_of\\_Lea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sidney_Herbert,_1st_Baron_Herbert_of_Lea)

**MYTH: Henry Willobie is the author of verses prefaced to *Willobie His Avis*.**

In *Shakespeare Bites Back*, it is claimed that '[William of Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon] is identified as the author of plays and poems by writers including Henry Willobie'.

In an epistle to the reader Hadrian Dorrell claims that 'my very good friend and chamber fellow M. Henry Willobie' was the author of *Willobie His Avis*. See Hughes, p. 7 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/cu31924013117332#page/n39/mode/2up>

It can thus hardly be the case that Henry Willobie wrote 'In praise of Willobie his Avis, Hexameton to the Author', which contains the mention of Shakespeare:

*Yet Tarquyne pluckt his glistering grape,  
And Shake-speare, paints poore Lucrece rape.*

References:

- (1) Edmondson, Paul and Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare Bites Back* at:

<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/shakespeare-bites-back-free-book>

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<http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/>

(2) Hughes, Charles, *Willobie His Avisia*, (London: Sherratt and Hughes, 1904).

**MYTH:** *The reference to ‘Shake-speare’ in verses prefaced to Willobie His Avisia (1594) indicate that the author of the verses was personally acquainted with William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, and identified William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon as a writer.*

There is no evidence of this. The relevant lines in ‘In praise of Willobie his Avisa, Hexameton to the Author’ merely mention Shakespeare as the author of *The Rape of Lucrece*. Moreover the name ‘Shake-speare’ is hyphenated, as it appeared on the title pages of some of Shakespeare’s published works. See:

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A15487.0001.001/1:5?rgn=div1;view=fulltext>

*Yet Tarquyne pluckt his glistering grape,  
And Shake-speare, paints poore Lucrece rape.*

References:

(1) Edmondson, Paul and Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare Bites Back* at:

<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/shakespeare-bites-back-free-book>

**MYTH:** *Richard Barnfield identified William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon as a writer and the author of plays and poems.*

Edmondson and Wells write:

*Then comes a mass of evidence from his contemporaries in works surviving either in print or in manuscript. During his lifetime Shakespeare is frequently mentioned by name as a writer, sometimes in general terms, at other times explicitly. He is identified as the author of plays and poems by writers including Henry Willobie, William Covell, Richard Barnfield, John Weever, Thomas Freeman, Anthony Scoloker, and the anonymous author of the Parnassus plays . . . .*

The implication of this passage is that Barnfield knew William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon personally, and on the basis of that personal acquaintance identified him as a writer, and the author of plays and poems.

In fact there is no evidence of Barnfield’s personal acquaintance with William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon on the basis of which he could have ‘identified’ him

as a writer and the author of plays and poems. Barnfield's 'A Remembrance of Some English Poets' contains verses on Spenser, Daniel, Drayton, and Shakespeare. The verses on Shakespeare evidence nothing more than Barnfield's acquaintance with Shakespeare's two long poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*:

*And Shakespeare thou, whose honey-flowing Vaine,  
(Pleasing the World) thy Praises doth obtaine.  
Whose Venus, and whose Lucrece (sweete, and chaste)  
Thy Name in fames immortall Booke haue plac't.  
Liue euer you, at least in Fame liue euer:  
Well may the Bodye dye, but Fame dies neuer.*

References:

(1) Edmondson, Paul and Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare Bites Back* at:

<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/shakespeare-bites-back-free-book>

(2) Arber, Edward, ed., *Richard Barnfield of Darlaston, Staffordshire, Esquire, Poems 1594-1598*, (Westminster: Archibald Constable, 1896), pp. 119-20 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/englishscholars114arbe#page/120/mode/2up/search/Shakespeare>

***MYTH: The reference to 'Shakespeare' in Epigram 22 in John Weever's Epigrammes in the Oldest Cut and Newest Fashion indicates that Weever was personally acquainted with William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, and identified William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon as a writer.***

There is no evidence of this. Weever's epigram merely evidences familiarity with Shakespeare's poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, and two of Shakespeare's plays. There is no indication in the epigram that Weever knew William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon personally, or that he identified William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon as a writer. See:

<https://archive.org/stream/epigrammesinolde00weeviala#page/74/mode/2up>

*Epig. 22. Ad Gulielmum Shakespeare.*

*Honie-tong'd Shakespeare when I saw thine issue  
I swore Apollo got them and none other,  
Their rosie-tainted features cloth'd in tissue,  
Some heauen born goddesse said to be their mother:  
Rose-checkt Adonis with his amber tresses,*

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*Faire fire-hot Venus charming him to loue her,  
 Chaste Lucretia virgine-like her dresses,  
 Prowd lust-stung Tarquine seeking still to proue her:  
 Romea Richard; more whose names I know not,  
 Their sugred tongues, and power attractiue beuty  
 Say they are Saints althogh that Sts they shew not  
 For thousands vowes to them subiectiue dutie:  
 They burn in loue thy children{n} Shakespear het the{m},  
 Go, wo thy Muse more Nymphish brood beget them.*

References:

(1) Edmondson, Paul and Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare Bites Back* at:

<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/shakespeare-bites-back-free-book>

(2) Weever, John, *Epigrammes in the Oldest Cut and Newest Fashion* (1599).

**MYTH:** *The reference to ‘Friendly Shake-speare’ in the humorous dedicatory epistle to Diaphantus (1604) indicates that the author, Anthony Scoloker, gentleman, was personally acquainted with William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, and identified William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon as a writer.*

As noted in the *ODNB*, it is merely an assumption that the author of *Daiphantus* was Anthony Scoloker since the work was published merely as by ‘An Sc’, gentleman’. From the *ODNB*:

*Scoloker, Anthony (fl. 1604), poet, is assumed to be the full name of the ‘An. Sc. Gentleman’ who published a poem described on the title-page of the quarto as Daiphantus, or, The Passions of Love (1604).*

There is no evidence of the existence of an ‘Anthony Scoloker’ at the time at which *Daiphantus* was published, and in particular no evidence whatever of an ‘Anthony Scoloker’ who could have designated himself as ‘gentleman’.

Moreover in the epistle the name Shakespeare is hyphenated (‘Friendly Shake-speares Tragedies’), indicating that the author of *Daiphantus* was merely alluding to the name as it had already appeared on the title-pages of published quartos of *Richard II*, *Richard III*, *Henry IV, Part I*, *The Phoenix and the Turtle*, and, in particular, the first quarto of *Hamlet*, not as a specific reference to William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon:

<https://archive.org/stream/cu31924013123074#page/n47/mode/2up>.

. . . *or to come home to the vulgars element, like Friendly Shake-speares Tragedies, where the Comedian rides, when the Tragedian stands on Tip-toe: Faith it should please all, like Prince Hamlet.*

For the hyphenation of the name Shakespeare on early quartos, see the Wikipedia article on the spelling of Shakespeare's name:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spelling\\_of\\_Shakespeare's\\_name](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spelling_of_Shakespeare's_name).

*Daiphantus'* connection to the first quarto of *Hamlet* is strengthened by an allusion in the poem itself to a stage production. From the *ODNB*:

. . . *the poem does provide a unique description of a piece of stage action in Hamlet. Daiphantus in his madness:*

*Puts off his cloathes; his shirt he onely weares,  
Much like mad Hamlet; thus as Passion teares.  
(Scoloker, sig. E4v)*

An allusion to the Bishops' ban and book-burning of 1599 indicates that the epistle to *Daiphantus* was written in 1600:

*And but for the Lord Mayor, and the two Sheriffes, the Innes of Court, and many Gallants elsewhere, this last year might haue been burned.*

See the Wikipedia article:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishops'\\_Ban\\_of\\_1599](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishops'_Ban_of_1599).

The epistle states that the author of *Daiphantus* is dead, although this is qualified by ('or was out of the Citie'):

*Also he desireth you to helpe Correct such errors of the Printer; which because the Authour is dead (or was out of the Citie) hath been committed.*

In summary, the circumstances of the publication of *Daiphantus* do not support the contention that the epistle refers to William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, or that the author was personally acquainted with William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon.

References:

(1) Edmondson, Paul and Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare Bites Back* at:

<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/shakespeare-bites-back-free-book>.

(2) Grosart, Alexander, ed., *Daiphantvs*, (1880) at:

<https://archive.org/stream/cu31924013123074#page/n5/mode/2up>

(3) Ellis, David, *The Truth About William Shakespeare: Fact, Fiction and Modern Biographies*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), p. 5 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=TYpvAAAAQBAJ&pg=PA5>

**MYTH:** *Thomas Freeman's epigram on Shakespeare indicates that Freeman was personally acquainted with William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, and identified him as a writer.*

There is no evidence that the epigrammatist Thomas Freeman was personally acquainted with William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, or that in his epigram he identified William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon as a writer. Freeman's epigram contains nothing more than the sort of knowledge which he could have gained by reading the poems and plays which had the name 'William Shakespeare' on the title page. See:

[http://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/detail/FOLGERCM1~6~6~1195439~191028?qvq=q%3Aacd\\_title%3D%22Rubbe%2C%2Band%2Ba%2Bgreat%2Bcast.%2BEpigrams.%2BBy%2BThomas%2BFreeman%2C%2BGent.%22%3Blc%3AFOLGERCM1~6~6%2CBINDINGS~1~1&mi=7&trs=49](http://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/detail/FOLGERCM1~6~6~1195439~191028?qvq=q%3Aacd_title%3D%22Rubbe%2C%2Band%2Ba%2Bgreat%2Bcast.%2BEpigrams.%2BBy%2BThomas%2BFreeman%2C%2BGent.%22%3Blc%3AFOLGERCM1~6~6%2CBINDINGS~1~1&mi=7&trs=49)

*Epigram 92*

*To Master W: Shakespeare*

*Shakespeare, that nimble Mercury thy braine,  
Lulls many hundred Argus-eyes asleepe,  
So fit, for all thou fashionest thy vaine,  
At th' horse-foote fountaine thou hast drunk full deepe,  
Vertues or vices theame to thee all one is:  
Who loues chaste life, theres Lucrece for a Teacher:  
Who list read lust theres Venus and Adonis,  
True modell of a most lasciuious leatcher.  
Besides in plaies thy wit windes like Meander:  
When needy new-composers borrow more  
Thence Terence doth from Plautus or Menander.  
But to praise thee aright I want thy store:  
Then let thine owne works thine owne worth vpraise,  
And help t' adorne thee with deserved Baies.*

Almost nothing is known of the epigrammatist Thomas Freeman. The brief *DNB* entry merely quotes the Bliss edition of *Athenae Oxonienses*:

[https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Freeman,\\_Thomas\\_%28DNB00%29](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Freeman,_Thomas_%28DNB00%29)

*FREEMAN, THOMAS (fl. 1614), epigrammatist, a Gloucestershire man, 'of the same family of those of Batsford and Todenham, near to Morton-in-Marsh' (Wood, Athenæ) became a student of Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1607, and took his degree of B.A. 10 June 1611 (Fasti, ed. Bliss, i. 341). 'Retiring to the great city and setting up for a poet,' he published in 1614 a collection of epigrams in two parts, 4to, dedicated to Thomas, lord Windsor. 'Rvbbe and a Great Cast' is the title of the first part, and 'Rvnne and a Great Cast. The Second Bowle' of the second. It is a scarce and interesting volume. There are epigrams on Shakespeare, Daniel, Donne, Chapman, Thomas Heywood, and Owen, the epigrammatist; also an epitaph on Nashe. One of the pieces, 'Encomion Cornubiæ,' is reprinted in Ellis's 'Specimens,' 1811, iii. 113.*

The current *ODNB* entry considers two possible Thomas Freemans as the epigrammatist:

*Freeman, Thomas (d. in or after 1630), poet, was according to Anthony Wood 'of the same family with those of Batsford and Todenham near Morton in Marsh', and a student of Magdalen College, Oxford, which he entered aged sixteen in 1607, graduating BA on 10 June 1611 (Wood, Ath. Oxon., 155). He may therefore be the Thomas Freeman who was baptized on 23 August 1590 in Bourton on the Hill, Gloucestershire, the son of Thomas Freeman. However, a number of his works (BL, Sloane MS 1889) cover events and people active in the 1590s, which suggests that Freeman the poet was born earlier than c.1590 and may possibly be the person of that name who, aged sixteen, matriculated from Magdalen Hall, Oxford, on 23 April 1585.*

A third possibility exists. The epigrammatist Thomas Freeman can perhaps be identified with Thomas Vavasour *alias* Freeman, the illegitimate son of Oxford's former mistress, Anne Vavasour, by Sir Henry Lee (d.1611). See Chambers, *Sir Henry Lee*, p. 222:

*Anne Vavasour had given him a bastard, probably in the earlier days of his association with her, since Thomas Vavasour alias Freeman was old enough to be appointed Yeoman of the Armoury in 1607-8.*

See also the entry for Anne Vavasour at:

<http://www.kateemersonhistoricals.com/TudorWomenU-V.htm>

For Thomas Vavasour *alias* Freeman, see also Hegarty, Andrew, *A Biographical Register of St. John's College, Oxford, 1555-1660*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2011), p. 464:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=jhsIycOY6N8C&pg=PA464>

From the *ODNB*:

*After moving to London Freeman published in 1614 a collection of 200 epigrams in two parts, dedicated to Thomas, Lord Windsor. . . .*

Thomas Freeman's patron, Thomas Windsor (1591-1641), 6<sup>th</sup> Baron Windsor, was the grandson of Oxford's half-sister, Katherine de Vere (1538-1600), who married Edward Windsor (1532?-1575), 3rd Baron Windsor, and was the mother of Frederick Windsor (1559-1585), 4<sup>th</sup> Baron Windsor, and his brother, Henry Windsor (1562-1605), 5<sup>th</sup> Baron Windsor, father of Freeman's patron, Thomas Windsor, 6<sup>th</sup> Baron Windsor.

References:

(1) Edmondson, Paul and Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare Bites Back* at:

<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/shakespeare-bites-back-free-book>

(2) Bliss, Philip, ed., 'Freeman, Thomas', *Athenae Oxonienses . . . By Anthony A. Wood*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Vol. II, pp. 155-7 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/athenaeoxoniense02wooduoft#page/n7/mode/2up>

(3) Chambers, E.K., *Sir Henry Lee: An Elizabethan Portrait*, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1936), p. 222.

(4) Freeman, Thomas, *Rubbe and a Great Cast* (1614), STC 11370:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/rubbe-and-great-cast-poem-addressed-shakespeare-thomas-freemans-epigrams>

(5) Freeman, Thomas, *Rubbe and a Great Cast* (1614),

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A01256.0001.001/1:4.48?rgn=div2;view=toc>

**MYTH:** *William Covell's marginal note on Shakespeare in Polimanteia (1595) indicates that Covell was personally acquainted with William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, and identified him as a writer.*

There is no evidence to that effect.

The epistle to *Polimanteia* in STC 5883 is merely signed 'W.C.'. See:

<https://archive.org/stream/polimanteiaorme00cove#page/n9/mode/2up>

However in a letter dated 5 July 1906, Edward Dowden announced his discovery of a copy of *Polimanteia*, STC 5884, in which the epistle is signed 'W. Covell'. See

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<http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/>

Chambers, E.K., *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1930), Vol. II, p. 193; and *Letters of Edward Dowden and his Correspondents*, (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1914), p. 340 at:

<https://archive.org/details/lettersofedwardd00dowduoft>

*I don't think I told you that just before leaving home I found a copy of "Polimanteia" (1595) – which makes the second mention by name of Shakespeare, and this copy, unlike others, gives the author's name. He is not as supposed Wm. Clerke, but a Wm. Covell, who wrote about Hooker – and Protestant controversial books, a Cambridge man.*

Dowden also announced his discovery of this variant copy identifying the author as Covell in a letter in *The Athenaeum*, 14 July 1906, p. 44.

William Covell (d.1613) was a fellow of Queen's College Cambridge from 1589-1599, during which time he published *Polimanteia* in 1595. However Covell's marginal note mentioning Shakespeare does not appear in *Polimanteia* itself but rather in an appended tract entitled *England to her Three Daughters, Cambridge, Oxford, Inns of Court, and to all her Inhabitants*. See:

<https://archive.org/stream/polimanteiaorme00cove#page/n115/mode/2up>

There is nothing in the text of *England to her Three Daughters* concerning Shakespeare. There is merely a marginal note: 'Lucretia Sweet Shak-speare'. The note merely indicates acquaintance with Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*, and in no way suggests that Covell was personally acquainted with William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, or that Covell specifically identified William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon as a writer.

It should also be noted that the name is hyphenated in the marginal note. It is unclear whether the hyphenation indicates a break occasioned by lack of space in the margin, or an intention to represent the name in the hyphenated form in which it appears on some title pages, or both. See:

<https://archive.org/stream/polimanteiaorme00cove#page/n137/mode/2up>

References:

(1) Edmondson, Paul and Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare Bites Back* at:

<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/shakespeare-bites-back-free-book>

**MYTH: William Basse wrote an epitaph on Shakespeare.**

The poem was initially attributed to John Donne (1572-1631), and first appeared in print as 'An Epitaph upon Shakespeare' in the 1633 edition of Donne's poems (JDP). See p. 149 at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/uofglibrary/5120176659>

*An Epitaph upon Shakespeare.*

*Renowned Chaucer lie a thought more nigh  
To rare Beaumont, and learned Beaumont lie  
A little nearer Spencer, to make roome  
For Shakespeare in your threefold fourefold tombe,  
To lie all foure in one bed make a shift,  
For, until doomesday hardly will a fift  
Betwixt this day and that be slaine,  
For whom your curtaines need be drawne againe,  
But, if precedency of death doth barre  
A fourth place in your sacred sepulchre,  
Under this curled marble of thine owne  
Sleepe rare Tragedian Shakespeare, sleepe alone,  
That, unto Vs and others it may bee  
Honor, hereafter to be laid by thee.*

This first printed version omits lines 13-14 found in other versions.

It has been noticed that neither this version, nor any other, 'agrees with the actual position of the tombs in the Abbey, where Chaucer's is between those of the others'. See Bond, p. 115.

Centerwall notes that the Chetham's Library copy is in the hand of William Basse (c.1583-1653?), and signed by him, but nonetheless argues that the poem was rightfully attributed to Donne in the 1633 edition, and should be restored to the Donne canon. Centerwall cites as evidence, *inter alia*, the fact that Basse did not include the poem in either of the two manuscript collections of his poems, *Polyhymnia*, and *The Pastorals and Other Workes*.

The version in Benson's 1640 edition, *Poems: Written by Wil. Shake-speare Gent*, is signed 'W.B.'. In that regard it should be noted that there is also a version in the handwriting of the poet William Browne, Lansdowne 777, fo. 67b, (see Bond, p. 113). Depending on where Benson obtained his copy, the initials in the Benson edition could therefore be those of William Browne.

For the Benson edition, see:

<http://www.rarebookroom.org/Control/shapms/index.html>

*On the death of William Shakespeare, who died in Aprill Anno Dom. 1616.*

*Renowned Spenser lie a thought more nigh  
To learned Chauser, and rare Beaumont lie  
A little neerer Spenser to make roome,  
For Shakespeare in your three-fold, foure-fold Tombe;  
To lodge all foure in one bed make a shift;  
Vntill Dommies-day, for hardly shall a fift  
Betwixt this day and that by Fate be slaine,  
For whom your Curtains may be drawne againe.  
If your precedencie in death doth barre,  
A fourth place in your sacred Sepulchre  
Vnder this sacred Marble of thy owne,  
Sleepe rare Tragedian Shakespeare, sleepe alone;  
Thy unmolested peace in an unshar'd Cave,  
Possesse as Lord, not Tennant of thy Grave.  
That unto us, and others it may be,  
Honour hereafter to be laid by thee.*

W.B.

References:

(1) Centerwall, Brandon S., 'Who Wrote William Basse's 'Elegy on Shakespeare'?: Rediscovering a Poem Lost from the Donne Canon', *Shakespeare Survey*, Volume 59, (Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 267-84 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=n1E96gLwxtcC&pg=PA270>

(2) Bond, R. Warwick, ed., *The Poetical Works of William Basse (1602-1653)*, (London: Ellis and Elvey, 1893), pp. 113-17 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/poeticalworksofw00bass#page/114/mode/2up>

(3) Wells, Stanley and Gary Taylor, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (1987), pp. 163-4.

(4) Shahan, John M. and Alexander Waugh, eds., *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt*, (Shakespeare Authorship Coalition, 2013), p. 195 at:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=kstPOZ\\_XIEYC&pg=PA195](https://books.google.ca/books?id=kstPOZ_XIEYC&pg=PA195)

**MYTH: William Basse's poem on Shakespeare is entitled 'On Mr Wm. Shakespeare / he dyed in Aprill 1616'.**



As noted above, the poem may be wrongly attributed to Basse, and the foregoing title of the version of the poem reprinted by Bond is only one of many titles under which the poem appears in manuscript and printed versions. Only a few of the variant titles contain the date of Shakespeare's death. The title in the first printed text of 1633 is merely '*An Epitaph upon Shakespeare*'.

Sir Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor collated 25 different titles (and one untitled version) found in 27 manuscripts and 6 seventeenth century printed texts, to which Centerwall (pp. 282-4) has added 7 additional manuscripts and one additional printed text.

In Wells and Taylor's list below, B1-B7, F1-F8, N, O1-O8, R1-R3 and Y1-Y2 are manuscript copies, while the other designations refer to printed texts, of which the most important is SP (the 1640 edition of Shakespeare's poems by John Benson). For some reason Wells and Taylor did not include in their list the title '*An Epitaph upon Shakespeare*' found in the 1633 edition of Donne's poems (DJP), and there are thus 26 items in the list below, rather than 27.

*An Epitaph vpon Poet Shakespeare B1;*  
*An Elegie vpon ye Death of Mr Wilyam Shakespeare B2;*  
*untitled B3;*  
*On Mr Wm Shakespeare he dyed in Aprill 1616 B4;*  
*Vpon Shackpeare B5;*  
*Epitaphium Gulielmi Shakspeare B6;*  
*On Mr William Shakspeare, FBP, WR, F1;*  
*Vpon Poet Shakespeare F2;*  
*An Epitaph prepared for Shakspeare, if hee had been been buried at Westminster. F3;*  
*An Epitaph vpon William Shakspeare F4;*  
*An Epitaph F5;*  
*On Mr Shakspeare F6;*  
*On Mr Willm. Shakespeare who dyed in April 1616 F7, HP2, R2;*  
*An Epitaph on mr Shakespeare F8;*  
*On Shakespeare. Basse. HP1, R1;*  
*On Mr. Shak-speare O1;*  
*An Epitaph on Shakespeare ye Poet O2;*  
*On Mr Wm Shakespeare Apr. 1616 N, O4;*  
*Basse his Elegie on Shakspeare O3;*  
*Basse his Elegie one Poett Shakesear, who died in April 1616 O5;*  
*Basse his Elegye of Shakespear O6;*  
*Shackspeares Epitaph O7, Y1;*  
*On Shakespeare's death O8;*  
*An Epitaph on Will: Shakespear (By William Basse [added in a later hand]) R3;*  
*On Willm Shakespear bury'd att Stratford vpon Avon, his Town of Nativity. Y2;*  
*On the death of William Shakespeare, who died in Aprill, Anno. Dom. 1616 SP.*

References:

(1) Nelson, Alan H., 'Stratford Si! Essex No! (An Open And Shut Case)', *Tennessee Law Review*, Vol. 72, No. 1 (Fall 2004), pp. 149-69 at p. 155-6, reprinted in Altrocchi, Paul Hemenway, *To All The World Must Die*, Vol. 8, (Bloomington, Indiana: iUniverse, 2014), p. 363 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=f3aIBAAAQBAJ&pg=PA363>

(2) Wells, Stanley and Gary Taylor, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (1987), pp. 163-4.

(3) Centerwall, *supra*.

(4) Bond, R. Warwick, ed., *The Poetical Works of William Basse (1602-1653)*, (London: Ellis and Elvey, 1893), pp. 113-17 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/poeticalworksofw00bass#page/114/mode/2up>

***MYTH: The interlineations in the will of William Shakespeare of Stratford, including the bequest to John Heminges, Richard Burbage and Henry Condell of money to buy rings, are in a different hand from the rest of the will.***

The statement was made by Enoch Powell in the 1989 PBS *Frontline* program, *The Shakespeare Mystery*. However it has never been established by expert evidence that the interlineations are in a different hand from the rest of the will.

References:

(1) <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shakespeare/tapes/shakespeareascript.html>

***MYTH: The casebook of Dr. John Hall contains an entry stating that 'My father-in-law died on Thursday.***

This alleged entry does not exist.

References:

(1) Joseph, Harriet, *Shakespeare's son-in-law; John Hall, man and physician; With a facsimile of the second edition of Hall's "Select Observations on English Bodies"*, (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1964).

***MYTH: Judith Shakespeare and Susanna Shakespeare were illiterate.***

Although Judith Shakespeare signed a deed of bargain and sale dated 4 December 1611 with her mark, Susanna Shakespeare signed her name to legal documents involving New Place and other properties on 27 May 1639 and 2 June 1647.

(1) Schoenbaum, Samuel, *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975, p. 241.

(2) Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Records Office (SBTRO) MS ER27/11 at:

<http://calm.shakespeare.org.uk/dserve/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqCmd=Show.tcl&dsqDb=Catalog&dsqPos=0&dsqSearch=%28Refno=%27ER27/11%27%29>

(3) Halliwell-Phillipps, J.O., *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, Vol. I, 7th ed., (London: Longmans, Green, 1887), p. 278, and Vol. II, pp. 108-9, 115 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=anjV6Gsx00MC&pg=PA115>

(4) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:SusannaHallsignature1647.jpg>

***MYTH: William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon wrote doggerel verses on John Combe (buried 12 July 1614).***

In 1904 Legg published a transcript of BL Lansdowne MS 213, ff. 315-84, an account by an unidentified Lieutenant Hammond, which contains this entry on p. 77:

*In that dayes travell we came by Stratford vpon Auon, where in the Church in that Towne there are some Monuments which Church was built by Archbishop Stratford; Those worth obseruing and which wee tooke notice were these.*

*A Monument for the E. of Totnes, and his Lady, yet liuing.*

*The Monument of Sir Hugh Clopton, who built that strong Stone Bridge of 18. fayre Arches, ouer that Riuer; He was Lord Mayor of London.*

*A neat Monument of that famous English Poet, Mr. William Shakespeere; who was borne heere.*

*And one of an old Gentleman a Batchelor, Mr. Combe, vpon whose name, the sayd Poet, did merrily fann vp some witty, and facetious verses, which time would nott giue us leaue to sacke vp.*

It should be noted that the first monument mentioned is that of George Carew (1555-1629), Earl of Totnes (1555-1629), favourite of King James I and his wife, Queen Anne,

who according to the *ODNB* ‘died on 27 March 1629 at his house in the Savoy, London, and was buried in the church of Stratford upon Avon on 2 May’. His wife was Joyce Clopton (1562-1637), Maid of Honour to Queen Elizabeth.

The monument last mentioned is that of John Combe (buried 12 July 1614), the son of John Combe (d.1588) by his first wife, Joyce Blount. John Combe (d.1588), married secondly Rose Clopton (buried 14 October 1579), the sister of William Clopton (1537-1592), owner of New Place (later purchased by William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon), who married Anne Griffith, the daughter of George Griffith, of Stockton, Warwickshire, by whom he was the father of Joyce Clopton (1562-1637), Maid of Honour to Queen Elizabeth and wife of George Carew, Earl of Totnes (see above).

With respect to the doggerel verses on the testator allegedly penned by Shakespeare, it should be noted that when Lieutenant Hammond passed through Stratford upon Avon on 9 September 1634 he did not record them for lack of time, and his information that they were written by Shakespeare cannot have been anything other than hearsay. Versions of the alleged epitaph on Combe were common at the time, including one printed in 1608 in *The More the Merrier* by H.P., a work now attributed to Henry Peacham. Moreover Hammond’s diary is not in his own hand; according to Legg, the diary and other pieces in BL MS 213 are all written in a hand which cannot date from earlier than the Restoration, i.e. 1660. As well, in 1602 John Combe sold 107 acres of land to Shakespeare (see SBTRO ER 27/1), and bequeathed him £5 in his will (see TNA PROB 11/126/415), facts which suggest that it is unlikely that Shakespeare would have penned doggerel verses on Combe.

#### References:

(1) Legg, L.G. Wickham, ed., *A Relation of a Short Survey of 26 Counties*, (London: F.E. Robinson, 1904), pp. 77-8 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/relationofshorts00capt#page/76/mode/2up>

(2) ‘Some Account of the Life of William Shakespeare, Written by Mr. Rowe’ in Malone, Edmond, *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare*, (London: H. Baldwin, 1790), p. 120 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=8lkUAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA120>

***MYTH: 'Moniment', spelled with an 'i' has a different meaning from 'monument', spelled with a 'u', which is significant in interpreting the line 'Thou art a moniment, without a tomb' in Ben Jonson's poem in praise of Shakespeare in the First Folio.***

The spellings 'moniment' and 'monument' were interchangeable in the Elizabethan period, and either spelling could be used for the various meanings of the word.

## References:

(1) 'Monument', *Oxford English dictionary, second edition, on compact disc*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

**MYTH:** *The Shakespeare manuscripts are enclosed within the Shakespeare monument at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford upon Avon.*

There are no manuscripts in the Shakespeare monument in Holy Trinity Church in Stratford upon Avon. For the search conducted for the manuscripts, see the PBS Frontline documentary at the link below.

In initiating the search in Holy Trinity Church for the Shakespeare manuscripts, Charlton Ogburn appears to have been following up on statements made to Percy Allen by the spirits of Francis Bacon and William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon in *Talks With Elizabethans*. The spirit of Francis Bacon revealed that a draft version of *Macbeth* was hidden in Shakespeare's tomb (p. 57):

*That first version, I was informed, is still in existence — "The draft will be discovered in time." Its hiding-place is "a tomb, not a grave — a stone tomb", namely, as we were told later, Will Shaksper's tomb in the parish church of Stratford-upon-Avon.*

This claim was expanded to include other Shakespeare manuscripts by the spirit of William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, who advised Percy Allen that he was still living, and that the Shakespeare manuscripts were buried in his tomb (p. 89):

*I asked him [Shaksper] whether he was not greatly surprised to find himself alive after death.*

*"I was not surprised, my dear sir . . . ."*

*"The Manuscripts were buried in my tomb. . . ."*

There are several page references to Percy Allen in the index to Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, including his evaluation of Percy Allen's work as 'scholarly' (p. 148) :

*Others whose scholarly work advanced and expanded on Looney's discoveries in those early years were Canon Gerald H. Rendall and Percy Allen in England . . . .*

It is thus clear that Charlton Ogburn was familiar with Percy Allen's works and had almost certainly read *Talks With Elizabethans*, and that in initiating the search for the Shakespeare manuscripts which was carried out in Holy Trinity Church and featured in

the PBS Frontline program, Ogburn was following up on the statements made to Percy Allen by the spirits of Francis Bacon and William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon.

References:

(1) See "The Shakespeare Mystery", PBS Frontline television documentary, April 18, 1989, at the 52-minute mark at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkqcLJZ9I3s>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkqcLJZ9I3s>

(2) Allen, Percy, *Talks With Elizabethans: Revealing the Mystery of "William Shakespeare"*, (London: Ryder & Company, 1947).

<https://archive.org/details/talkswithelizabe0000dowd/page/n5>

(3) Ogburn, Charlton, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (McLean, Virginia: EPM Publications, Inc., 1992), p. 148.

**MYTH: Michael Drayton never referred in print to Shakespeare.**

Michael Drayton mentions Shakespeare in his *Of poets and poesie*, published in 1627.

References:

(1) Chambers, Sir Edmund Kerchever, *The Elizabethan Stage*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), Vol. 1, p. 292.

**MYTH: Lieutenant Hammond's account of the tomb of William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon is written in his own hand.**

In 1904 Legg published a transcript of BL Lansdowne MS 213, ff. 315-84, an account by an unidentified Lieutenant Hammond, which contains this entry on p. 77:

*In that dayes travell we came by Stratford vpon Auon, where in the Church in that Towne there are some Monuments which Church was built by Archbishop Stratford; Those worth obseruing and which wee tooke notice were these.*

*A Monument for the E. of Totnes, and his Lady, yet liuing.*

*The Monument of Sir Hugh Clopton, who built that strong Stone Bridge of 18. fayre Arches, ouer that Riuer; He was Lord Mayor of London.*

*A neat Monument of that famous English Poet, Mr. William Shakespeare; who was borne heere.*

*And one of an old Gentleman a Batchelor, Mr. Combe, vpon whose name, the sayd Poet, did merrily fann vp some witty, and facetious verses, which time would nott giue us leaue to sacke vp.*

The description of BL Lansdowne MS 213 in the British Library states that it contains 39 tracts 'neatly copied in a hand of about Charles I's time, some of which are printed, and others not'. Two of these items (nos. 26 and 27), are listed as copies of Hammond's tract. The 39 items date from as early as the 1590s and as late as 1661, and are all in a hand dating from the Restoration, long after Hammond's visit to Stratford upon Avon. Hammond's original manuscript is no longer extant, and the relationship Hammond's original manuscript bears to the copies listed as nos. 26 and 27 is unknown.

There are errors in the version we now have. Some of these may have been introduced by the copyist, perhaps through his expansion of abbreviations in Hammond's original diary. On p. 76 of Legg's edition, for example, there is this statement concerning a church in the town of Warwick:

*Another Monument there is in the sayd Church, of Thomas Fisher Esq; and his wife; This Gentlemen built the neat Pryory, there; hee was sometimes Steward to that noble Duke of Norfolke.*

Thomas Fisher (d.1577) was not steward to the Duke of Norfolk, but rather to Leicester's father, John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland. See 'Notes on the Manors of Kibworth Beauchamp and Kibworth Harcourt', in *Transactions of the Leicestershire Architectural and Archaeological Society*, (Leicester: Crossley and Clarke, 1870), Vol. II, pp. 218-21 at p. 221:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=kf8UAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA221>

#### References:

(1) British Library catalogue, BL Lansdowne MS 213, at:

[http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo\\_library/libweb/action/dlSearch.do?query=toc,contains,%22IAMS040-002073686%22&indx=1&dym=false&onCampus=false&group=ALL&institution=BL&ct=search&vl%28freeText0%29=IAMS040-002073686&vid=IAMS\\_VU2](http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/dlSearch.do?query=toc,contains,%22IAMS040-002073686%22&indx=1&dym=false&onCampus=false&group=ALL&institution=BL&ct=search&vl%28freeText0%29=IAMS040-002073686&vid=IAMS_VU2)

(2) Legg, L.G. Wickham, ed., *A Relation of a Short Survey of 26 Counties*, (London: F.E. Robinson, 1904), pp. 77-8 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/relationofshorts00capt#page/76/mode/2up>

(3) History of Parliament entry for Thomas Fisher (d.1577):

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/fisher-thomas-151516-77>