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The Uncensored Truth about Shakespeare and his Works

Part IV THE REAL STRATFORD MAN AND THE REAL SHAKESPEARE

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Introduction

THE CONSUMMATE POET, the epitome of high art and culture, the fount of knowledge, the biggest contributor to modern English language, the master dramatist whose 400-year-old plays are performed, read and appreciated today, every day, in many languages, is Shakespeare. The Shakespeare professor or expert, however, would have you believe that a man with scant education, no evidence he could write (other than a crude signature), and no evidence during his lifetime that he was in fact a professional writer, was the same erudite, witty and super-brilliant wordsmith, Shakespeare. Left with so few facts about his personal life and literary career, the very best that the expert can do for the great author, the creator of so many gorgeous verses, and fascinating, lovable and psychologically complex characters, is to make guesses. Nothing but endless speculations and fantasies are offered to explain how England's greatest author reached the pinnacle of literary achievement. But does the professor look at the historical record? Apparently, he does not. If he did, he would see how obvious it is that his man, the Stratford Man, was not the great author, Shakespeare. And with only a little extra effort he would also see that the concept of the Stratford Man as Shakespeare is a very old and well-orchestrated fabrication. He would see that the maker of this fabrication or myth was Ben Jonson, directed and sponsored by William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, and that their instrument was Shakespeare's First Folio, published in 1623. This book of collected plays suggested for the very first time that "William Shakespeare" and an undistinguished businessman with a similar name who hailed from Stratford-upon-Avon were one and the same. The Stratford Man had been dead for seven years when the book was launched. Jonson and Pembroke's deception remained for the most part undetected for over two centuries. But by the time that unbiased observers were starting to catch on, the Shakespeare professor or expert had evidently become enamored with the idea that a boy with humble origins, little schooling and no connections had transformed himself into a polyglot, a polymath, a master of rhetoric, and a sophisticated, traveled, man of the world who could create timeless literary masterpieces. Any evidence that contradicted this picture was ignored, and that is the situation as it stands to this day.

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Numerous good books and articles dispelling the case of the Stratford Man as the true author and showing that "William Shakespeare" was someone's pen name have been written. But no matter how compelling the evidence and the arguments, the Shakespeare professor will entertain not one shred of a doubt about his Shakespeare. He and his peers comprise a tiny, elite minority who have become the rulers of Shakespeare opinion. But there are millions of Shakespeare fans all over the world that read and attend his plays, see the movies, buy biographies, and visit the "birth place," Stratford-upon-Avon. They care about Shakespeare and want to know more about him but they are unaware that the so-called experts are keeping them in the dark. Most devotees of Shakespeare do not know about the numerous problems surrounding his works and the experts' inability to solve them. The experts do not know with certainty when any of the Shakespeare plays were written, their order of composition, or how many he wrote. Many early printed Shakespeare plays have bad text, and the experts are still trying to make sense out of a legion of unclear lines - why were his writings left in such a state? Many printers pirated Shakespeare's works - why was this the case and why did the great author seemingly allow it? How are allusions to Shakespeare's plays in documents and in print before he supposedly wrote them explained? These puzzles are discussed by Shakespeare professors at conferences and written about in academic journals but they have never been adequately explained or even disclosed to the general public. The identities of the people addressed in Shakespeare's very intimate sonnets remain elusive. Who was the boy or young man, today referred to as the "Fair Youth," that he had admired, and what was the nature of their relationship? He was obsessed with the "Dark Lady" - who was she? The experts only put forth theories.

SHAKESPEARE SUPPRESSED

The lack of information about Shakespeare's personal and artistic life is the most frustrating problem of all, and the mystery is not made any clearer by the few facts known about the Stratford Man. No one who knew him in Stratford-upon-Avon ever referred to him as the great author. He and the great author shared the same name but no fact during his lifetime connects him to a literary career. It is believed that he was an actor, and a skilled one, but we do not know when or how he learned his trade or know a single role he played. If the Stratford Man was Shakespeare, then how did he acquire the extensive knowledge displayed in the plays, some of it only obtainable at a university, which the experts admit he never attended? What did the great author look like? Every painting proposed as a Shakespeare portrait is unauthenticated or has been proved a fraud. The two "concrete" images we do have – an engraving by Martin Droeshout and a sculpted bust – are significantly different, and both were rendered after his death. Despite these gaps, discrepancies and frauds, today's Shakespeare experts maintain that there is

nothing unusual about his biography. Shakespeare was the most prolific dramatist of his era, and the greatest, and was so acknowledged by his contemporaries – surely there should have been more solid information about him.

Are those who appreciate Shakespeare supposed to just meekly accept that there are no answers to any of these questions? Perhaps they would not if they knew that it is an unproven theory that William Shakspere, born in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564, was the great author, "William Shakespeare." Independent scholars demonstrated over a century ago that this is the case. All documentary evidence gathered about the Stratford Man reveals a successful businessman and property owner with ties to the theater, but that is all. It is pure speculation that he wrote poetry or drama. Shakespeare lovers need to know that the Shakespeare expert or professor has been forced to invent the great author's literary biography and dramatic career due to this lack of hard facts. He calls it biography but any critical reader would classify it as historical fiction. Students of Shakespeare ought to note that, in the classroom, only the literary aspects of the plays are discussed. This is because nothing in the traditional Shakespeare biography is reflected in any of his works. Are we expected to believe that Shakespeare alone among all great poets and dramatists in history did not insert any of his life experiences in thirty-eight or more plays, or in his sonnets, which were written in the first person? This factor alone should raise doubts about the Stratford Man. This book openly presents these problems to the reader and proposes new solutions for them based on contemporary evidence. The Shakespeare professor's case for the Stratford Man as the great author is also examined; the reader will learn that the professor's best evidence is posthumous. Meanwhile, the profile of the great author, as revealed in his works and as described by his contemporaries, sharply collides with the factual biography of the Stratford Man. The reader will learn from this book that "William Shakespeare" was the great author's pen name, that he was a nobleman, that he suppressed his authorship during his lifetime and that it continued to be suppressed after his death. The reader will also learn that some in the literary world knew this and very discretely expressed it in print. This book will also attempt to answer the most important question of all - after his death, why was the true identity of the great author deliberately concealed behind the bland face of the Stratford Man?

If the reader is intrigued by this introduction he may wish to know immediately the answer to the other big question: Why didn't the great author, whoever he was, claim or get credit for his own works? The quick response: the great author did not claim authorship during his lifetime because he was a nobleman. Generally speaking, those of high rank who wrote poetry or drama did not seek publication or compensation for what they wrote. After their death, however, the stigma of print would disappear, and their friends

or descendants could openly publish their work with their names. But for some reason - some very important and unusual reason - this courtesy was not extended to the great author. The short answer for the Stratford Man is that he never claimed the Shakespeare authorship because he was not the great author. The Shakespeare authorship was "given" to him after his death, or as Shakespeare would say, greatness was thrust upon him, and this book will provide an explanation why. This issue is a complex literary mystery - a series of puzzles - but it can be solved by looking critically and impartially at contemporary evidence and by looking at the absence of evidence. This book will not include as "evidence" the rumors and speculations about the great author that began a generation or more after he lived, many of which have now become accepted as fact. The Shakespeare problems and absences presented in this book are not controversial - the experts recognize them - but they have not been able to understand or solve them because they have been hampered and constricted by the wrong model, the Stratford Man model, one that has failed to shed light on any aspect of the great author's works or literary biography. Only with full information can the reader judge if there is indeed reason to doubt the Stratford Man's authorship of Shakespeare.

After twenty-six years of studying the Shakespeare authorship question, I am certain, "as certain as I know the sun is fire" (Coriolanus, 5.4.49), that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604), is the nobleman in question behind the pen name, "William Shakespeare." Fourteen years older than the Stratford Man, Oxford's extensive education (private tutors, university and law school attendance), European travel (especially Italy), and involvement in literature and the theater has been preserved in the documentary record. Many details and events of his life are paralleled in the Shakespeare plays, and almost every problem or puzzle associated with Shakespeare can be explained with Oxford as the true author. This book, however, will not present his case for the Shakespeare authorship. The question that must be resolved first is about the Stratford Man - is he the great author, aye or nay? There is no point arguing for Oxford, pro or con, until this point has been settled. And if the Stratford Man was not the great author, then why did he get the credit? How and why did the two identities become one? And finally, why was the great author's death not noted in the literary world when it had occurred? The answers to these questions are the keys to unlocking the mysteries surrounding Shakespeare and his works.

I gratefully acknowledge Ramon Jiménez for allowing me to "borrow" some of his Stratford Man eyewitnesses for this book. Ramon, and John Hamill, Dr. Rima Greenhill and Gordon Banchor, also have my special thanks for providing critical commentary on the text.

List of Terms

DNB: Dictionary of National Biography.

FIRST FOLIO: Today's nickname of the 1623 edition of collected Shakespeare plays. The book was printed on large folio-sized pages. The second edition, published in 1632, is called the Second Folio. The Third Folio was issued in 1663 and 1664, and the final edition, the Fourth Folio, in 1685. "First Folio" is meant wherever the capitalized word "Folio" appears.

THE GREAT AUTHOR: The creative genius responsible for the poetic and dramatic works credited with the name, "William Shakespeare," which was his pen name.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN: The holder of a high government office that, among other duties, supervised royal entertainment; the Lord Chamberlain also controlled the public theater and play publishing through the Master of the Revels.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S MEN: The name of an acting company active from 1594 to 1603 sponsored by the then Lord Chamberlain. After Queen Elizabeth I's death, many of the same members were embraced by King James I to form his own new acting company, The King's Men.

OED: Oxford English Dictionary.

QUARTO: The majority of individual Shakespeare plays were first printed in quarto, a page size defined as one quarter of the large sheet of paper used in the printing press.

SHAKESPEARE PROFESSOR OR EXPERT: The representative of the orthodox or Stratfordian position regarding Shakespeare, i.e., that the great author was unquestionably the Stratford Man. There are no Shakespeare professors in the formal sense, only English professors or lecturers who teach Shakespeare; for the sake of convenience, the masculine pronoun only will be applied to them.

SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS AND SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS: The former term specifically refers to the book published in 1609, reproducing the title exactly as it had appeared. The latter term simply refers to the sonnets of Shakespeare in general and not necessarily the 1609 book.

STATIONERS' REGISTER: The 16th and 17th century logbooks of the Stationers' Company, a guild, in which activities of English printers and publishers were recorded.

STC: Short-Title Catalogue. A list of English printed books dated 1475 to 1640; each work has a specific identity number. The Wing Catalogue lists books dated after 1640.

THE STRATFORD MAN (1564-1616): A businessman who hailed from Stratford-upon-Avon (Warwickshire County). His name, William Shakspere, resembled the great author's pen name. Contemporary documents spelled his surname phonetically, and most reflected a pronunciation like "Shackspur." Neither Mr. Shakspere nor his descendants claimed he was the great author. After his death, he was falsely credited as the author known as William Shakespeare.

"WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE" OR "WILLIAM SHAKE-SPEARE": The pen name of the great author. The words "shake" and "speare" are a noun and verb combination that suggests the literal shaking of spears, a much-used expression in the contemporary literature. A hyphen often separated these two words in printed occurrences. Both points suggest the name was an alias. The absence of any personal accounts of a writer named William Shakespeare during his lifetime, or proof of education for a William Shakespeare, substantiates this view.

As this is a book of evidence based upon primary sources, many quotations from the period are necessarily included. For the reader's ease, they are presented in modern spelling, with bracketed definitions for unusual or archaic words; italics or capital letters are true to the originally printed text. Underlines in inset quotes, unless otherwise noted, are added for emphasis. Most Shakespeare play citations are based on the Yale Shakespeare.

PART I

Shakespeare: Greatness & Great Problems



CHAPTER 1

Literary Supreme, Supreme Literary Mystery

SHAKESPEARE'S POEMS AND plays were a sensation in his lifetime and his contemporaries recognized his greatness. In 1598, only five years after the name, "William Shakespeare," first appeared in print, the great author was the subject of an extraordinarily high tribute by a literary critic. Francis Meres wrote that if the Muses, the mythological goddesses that preside over the arts and sciences, spoke English, they "would speak with Shakespeare's fine-filed phrase." Meres also listed Shakespeare's name among the best dramatists of comedy and tragedy, and among the best lyric poets and love poets. Shakespeare was "pleasing the world," wrote poet Richard Barnfield, that same year, and in 1601, Shakespeare was named as one of "the best and chiefest of our modern writers." The high regard for Shakespeare has never waned over the centuries, and probably never will. In the early 20th century, Samuel Clemens, alias Mark Twain, described Shakespeare:

The author of the Plays was equipped, beyond every other man of his time, with wisdom, erudition, imagination, capaciousness of mind, grace and majesty of expression. Every one has said it, no one doubts it. Also, he had humor, humor in rich abundance, and always wanting to break out.⁴

At the dawning of the 21st century, the British people voted Shakespeare the "Man of the Millennium." Shakespeare's works are perhaps only second to the Bible in the volume of literary scholarship devoted to them, and have inspired numberless derivative works by musicians, painters and other writers over the centuries. Shakespeare was romantic and his love of human beings is often reflected in the politeness, grace and elegance of his characters' language and expression. He loved all types of characters, and was a great observer of character, like Prince Hal in *Henry IV-Part 2*. When the king complained about Prince Hal's "base" company, his brother, the Earl of Warwick, defended him (4.4.67-69):

My gracious lord, you look beyond him quite: The prince but studies his companions Like a strange tongue, wherein to gain the language...

Much wisdom is imparted through Shakespeare's characters, and sympathy – even his villains are presented as real people rather than monsters. Shakespeare often put his characters in unusual or surreal situations, such as an abdicated King Lear wandering upon a field in a storm and Lady Macbeth sleepwalking. A few Shakespeare lines spoken aloud arrests the hearer – they are musical, and one knows it is something different. The super-aware artist who successfully dramatized pride, war, regicide and other complex issues also reinvented with enchantment the mythical world of the fairy.

Beyond his poetic genius, Shakespeare was a scholar, a linguist and a philosopher. He had an extraordinary breadth of knowledge and mastery of many subjects, including the law, classical languages and literature (Latin and Greek), modern languages and literature (Italian, French, etc.), European geography (especially Italy), the Bible, music, heraldry, plants and flowers, and much more. His knowledge was not superficial - he almost always used or expressed it correctly. A multiple-volume study by Geoffrey Bullough is filled with the sources Shakespeare used for his plays, scores of books including foreign-language works not yet translated into English and some works that existed only in manuscript. His knowledge of English history and literature was extensive. Shakespeare was aware of the latest discoveries in science, medicine and astronomy, sometimes alluding to them before they were published, which implies that he was in contact with other intellectuals. With abundant self-confidence, Shakespeare bent the grammar rules to suit his meaning or to fit the poetical meter (like omitting suffixes and prefixes, frequent usage of double and even triple negatives). And if a word did not exist that conveyed his meaning, he would coin one. He turned nouns into verbs, adverbs into adjectives.5 Shakespeare created at least 1,900 English words,6 many commonly used today (for example, successful, lackluster, submerge, employer, lonely, laughable, gloomy). His vocabulary totaled 31,534 different words, including variations of the same word, according to a study made at Stanford University Department of Statistics;7 his vocabulary without variations of the same word totaled about 17,000 words.8 John Milton's vocabulary totaled about 8,000 words, and Christopher Marlowe's about 7,000 words.9 Shakespeare's play, Hamlet is full of phrases routinely said today, like "brevity is the soul of wit," "though this be madness, yet there is method in it" (now said as "there's method in my madness"), "to be or not to be," "frailty thy name is woman," "to the manner born," and "neither a borrower nor a lender be." To summarize his achievement with one of his own phrases, Shakespeare "laid great bases for eternity" (Sonnet 125).

Supreme Literary Mystery

Shakespeare is the most mysterious man in literature. Despite his prolific and incomparable achievement, and recognition by his contemporaries, nothing of a personal nature about him was recorded while he was alive. None of his play manuscripts survive, or personal letters. Exhaustive research by scholars in the environs of Stratford-upon-Avon, the great author's supposed hometown, has failed to illuminate a literary life. The Shakespeare professor usually skips over the mundane facts found there because they shed no light on the great author's poems or plays. These records mostly comprise the Stratford Man's christening (1564), his marriage (1582), his children's christenings (1583, 1585), and his death (1616); sale records of property, grain and stone; records of debts, taxes owed, and other money matters. His name was on a list of grain hoarders during the famine of 1598.10 The professor refers to the period of 1585 to 1592 as the "The Lost Years" of the Stratford Man's life. This is because the documentary record is nearly blank - only the christening of his twins and interest in his mother's property is recorded. The Stratford Man was aged 21 to 28 during this period. But such blankness has allowed the experts to indulge in fantasies about the Stratford Man's acquisition of culture, knowledge and experience so superbly expressed in the Shakespeare canon. For example, we read that he was a law clerk, a schoolmaster, a soldier. He lived as a servant in the Hesketh household in Lancaster, but his name was "Shakeshafte." 11 No facts support any of these speculations. In the "unlost" years, the first twenty years of the Stratford Man's life (1564-84), nothing recorded is related to education. The professor does not speculate about the Stratford Man's writing career until he can place him in London, the theater center. A scathing remark made by writer Robert Greene in 1592 about an unnamed actor-writer whom he characterized as an "upstart" and a "Shake-scene" is the "fact" that allows the expert to identify him as the Stratford Man. The documentary record does place the Stratford Man in London in 1592, but in an entirely different context: he made a loan of £7 to John Clayton. 12 The experts usually deny that the moneylender, "Willelmus Shackespere," named on this document was the Stratford Man. Three years will pass before the next documentary record in London involving the Stratford Man occurs, a payment to an acting company in 1595. It is the very first document that connects the Stratford Man with the theater: he was thirty years old. Four years after this, the Stratford Man bought shares in the Globe Theater (1599)

and then in the Blackfriars Theater (1608). In 1603 he was named as an official member of the newly formed King's Men acting company.

Now contrast the above factual summary of the Stratford Man's known life with the emergence of the great author on the London literary scene. In 1593, "William Shakespeare" came out of nowhere and published what would become an instant bestseller, the highly polished narrative poem, Venus and Adonis, a story about the love goddess' seduction of a handsome teenager preoccupied with hunting. The Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, personally ushered the work into print. This outstanding literary debut, a work that inspired much imitation, was matched again the following year with another admired and best-selling poem, The Rape of Lucrece. Both of these works were dedicated to one of the most glittering aristocrats of Queen Elizabeth's court, Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton. Shakespeare's signed dedication letters to this young favorite of the queen, especially the second one, implies a friendship beyond mere acquaintanceship, yet nothing in the documentary record accounts for it. The printer of both of these works, Richard Field, was at the time under the patronage of the queen's top minister, Lord Burghley, printing political propaganda. 13 Field also printed works by several courtier poets, including Sir Philip Sidney, Sir John Harington and Edmund Spenser, as well as the anonymous work of literary criticism, The Art of English Poesy (1589), in which Field supplied the dedication letter to Lord Burghley. (Much is made of Field having the same hometown as the Stratford Man; it is possible that they knew each other, but Field left Stratford-upon-Avon permanently in 1579, when the Stratford Man was age 15.) Only a few months after Lucrece was released, an anonymous author published a "fiction" (Willobie His Avisa) that mocked Shakespeare and Southampton's friendship and hinted at their involvement in an adulterous love triangle. If the Stratford Man were the great author, then his transformation from a barely schooled and unknown moneylender from a small town into a highly educated and refined poet of classical themes, and the close companion of a dazzling courtier, would be nothing less than miraculous. In 1598, the world suddenly learned that the great author, hitherto known only as a poet, had penned twelve or thirteen dramas, one of which, Love's Labour's Lost, had been presented before Queen Elizabeth.14

Holes in the Historical Record

The reader was given a brief summary of the Stratford Man in the documentary record but much basic information has been left unanswered, if he was the great author. The Shakespeare absences explored below are not only strange but also inconsistent with the historical and literary record left by other poets

and playwrights of the same period. Separately, one could perhaps explain away one or two of these absences, but together, they are mystifying. Do not expect the Shakespeare professor to point out these holes in the historical record. He merely accepts them as a lamentable circumstance or denies their relevancy. If evidence to the contrary existed for any of them, then his case for the Stratford Man as the great author would be more plausible.

No evidence of schooling for "Shakespeare"

The majority of poets and dramatists of the period have left behind evidence of schooling. While it is generally accepted that the Stratford Man attended his hometown's grammar school, it cannot be verified because the enrollment records for that period have not survived. Even if he did attend the grammar school, he would not have learned there Greek, rhetoric, the law, etc., subjects that the great author knew well. No other school, university, or the Inns of Court (law schools) recorded a "William Shakespeare" as an attendee. The Stratford Man's parents were illiterate.

No surviving "Shakespeare" handwritten manuscripts of plays, poetry, letters, etc.

Despite an output of almost forty plays, two long poems, and over 150 sonnets, "Shakespeare" left behind not one page of handwritten manuscript, and no diaries, journals, personal letters or notes. Although it is true that most Elizabethan-Jacobean play manuscripts have not survived, Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Queens* exists, despite the fire that he said destroyed his personal library and papers in 1623. Handwritten verses or letters by prominent writers of the period, including Thomas Nashe, Gabriel Harvey, Samuel Daniel, and George Peele, have survived. Many non-famous and "unimportant" Elizabethans and Jacobeans left behind manuscripts. For example, the personal diary of Edward Pudsey, a resident of Warwickshire, survives, and in it Mr. Pudsey copied down Shakespeare phrases. 15

No authentic image of "Shakespeare"

There are only two "official" portraits of Shakespeare: the engraving displayed on the title page of his collected dramas (First Folio, 1623) and the effigy in the "Shakspeare" monument in the Stratford-upon-Avon church. Neither look like each other and both were rendered posthumously. Upon what likeness were they based? It is not known. Over the past two centuries, numerous portraits have been put forward as Shakespeare's but they either were adjudged as fakes or remain unauthenticated. Many of them are real portraits of the period of other men that were later altered to resemble the two

"official" images named above. The Chandos Portrait of Shakespeare at the National Portrait Gallery in London is widely accepted as authentic, yet the experts acknowledge that it "is likely to remain unproven." It is big news when new portraits are claimed as Shakespeare's, but such claims inevitably fizzle due to a lack of hard evidence. Today's publishers of Shakespeare's plays and biographies routinely place unverfied portraits of Shakespeare on their book covers without qualification. Shakespeare's personal effects have also not survived. Relics left by Shakespeare's contemporary, the famous actor-producer Edward Alleyn, include an authentic full-length portrait, personal letters, his business diary, a signet ring with his coat of arms, his seal, and a silver-gilt chalice. Alleyn was childless; the Stratford Man had two daughters and a granddaughter who survived him.

No payments to "Shakespeare" as an actor or playwright

No payments for writing to anyone named Shakespeare, or to an unnamed writer of a Shakespeare play, have survived. There is no proof that Shakespeare was compensated for his writing in the form of theater shares. This absence of evidence suggests the great author was not writing for box office receipts. In 1595, William Kemp, William Shakespeare and Richard Burbage received a payment on behalf of the Lord Chamberlain's Men for two play performances. As no other documentary evidence ties "William Shakespeare" to the theater before this document, in what capacity he served this company cannot be ascertained, other than as one of the receivers of a payment (Chapter 5 contains more explanation of this document). The diary of theater owner Philip Henslowe survives, a business journal filled with the names of numerous playwrights and actors, listing loans and payments given to them. The entries are dated between 1592 and 1603, covering roughly the same period that the Shakespeare professor believes the great author was busily penning his plays, but "William Shakespeare" is nowhere named in the diary. Shakespeare play titles, however, are listed, such as Hamlet and Henry VI.

No personal information written about Shakespeare during his lifetime

"William Shakespeare" was a name renowned in the literary world after the debut of *Venus and Adonis* in 1593, but no one openly published personal details or encounters with him during his lifetime. Dramatist Ben Jonson recorded in his private diary that Shakespeare made a retort to someone said "in the person of Julius Caesar," but the diary was published after both Shakespeare and Jonson were dead. Contemporary writers did print clues about Shakespeare the man during his lifetime (the subject of Chapter 15) but they are generally unnoticed or unrecognized by the experts.

No notice of "Shakespeare's" death

Within one year of the deaths of the well-known writers, Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Nashe, George Chapman and Ben Jonson, notice was taken. Within one year of the death of the supposed Shakespeare in April 1616, there was complete silence, and for four years after that. Dramatist Francis Beaumont also died in 1616 and he was honored with burial in Westminster Abbey, as was poet Edmund Spenser when he died in 1599. "William Shakespeare" died without any tributes or notice and he was not buried in Westminster Abbey. Yet Shakespeare's works elicited high praise throughout his life, and were admired by two English monarchs.

The first mention in print that the great author was no longer living occurred in a short verse by John Taylor in 1620; he had listed Shakespeare's name among other famous dead poets (The Praise of Hempseed). In 1616, Ben Jonson published over one hundred epigrams to various acquaintances, including writers, but Shakespeare was not among them. Seven years had passed when Jonson printed his first tribute to Shakespeare (in the First Folio), calling him his "beloved." The year of Shakespeare's death was first printed in 1640, and the exact date of death in 1656, when the inscription on the "Shakspeare" monument in Stratford-upon-Avon was reproduced in a book. 19 In 1618, Richard Brathwait published a survey of interesting epitaphs, one of which was located in the church where the Stratford Man was buried. 20 But it was not the Stratford Man's epitaph that caught Brathwait's eye, it was that of John Combe (d. 1614), a "notable usurer." Yet the monument and the gravestone of a notable writer, it is supposed, were only a few feet away. We know that Brathwait had admired Shakespeare because he alluded to his works in his earlier book, Strappado for the Devil (1615). The lack of notice upon the decease of England's acclaimed poet and playwright, William Shakespeare, is one of the strangest facts about him.

No direct evidence of patronage for "Shakespeare"

In 1593 and 1594, William Shakespeare dedicated his poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, to Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton. It is logical to assume that Southampton was Shakespeare's patron, but documentary evidence that they knew each other is lacking. Charlotte Stopes, the author of Southampton's first full biography, searched specifically for this evidence but never found it. Subsequent biographers also failed to find it. Documentary evidence of a connection between Shakespeare and his other supposed patron, William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, is also non-existent.

No evidence of government approval of Shakespeare's English history plays

Any book or play written in Elizabethan and Jacobean times not liked by the Crown could be censored, recalled or eradicated. In November 1589, about the time when the professor believes the Stratford Man commenced his writing career, the Office of the Revels was created to examine the comedies and tragedies of playing companies

to strike out or reform such part and matters, as they shall find unfit and undecent to be handled in plays both for divinity and state. 21

In 1599, the printing of plays and histories became subject to control: "That no English histories be printed except they be allowed by some of Her Majesty's Privy Council," and "That no plays be printed except they be allowed by such as have authority."22 The great author wrote at least ten plays about English history, portraying real English kings and queens, and some of them were not flattering. One play depicts an English king being deposed and murdered (Richard II), another poisoned (King John), and another as a murderer of adults and children (Richard III). Apparently the government approved of these plays because there are no records of Shakespeare getting questioned, arrested or disciplined for his writing. As this cannot be said about other prominent writers of the time, including Ben Jonson, Thomas Nashe, and Samuel Daniel, Shakespeare's exemption from interrogation after a public performance of his play, Richard II, in 1601 is especially conspicuous. The play was performed the day before the Earl of Essex's rebellion against the government, and was paid for by his supporters. They apparently believed that a showing of this particular drama, in which an English king is successfully deposed, would rouse Londoners in Essex's favor. The deposition scene was so controversial that the first three printed editions of the play (dated 1597 and 1598) had excluded it. After the rebellion, the government questioned actor Augustine Phillips about this production but not the writer of the play. Phillips was a member of the Lord Chamberlain's Men; the Shakespeare professor believes that the great author was also a member of this acting company. The government's lack of interest in Shakespeare is even more odd considering his very public association with Essex's co-conspirator, the Earl of Southampton, the dedicatee of his two acclaimed poems. Southampton received a death sentence for his part in the rebellion. Shakespeare's play was also alluded to at Essex and Southampton's treason trial. The prosecuting attorney, Sir Edward Coke, accused them of attempting to capture the queen. Southampton challenged Coke to say what he thought would be done to her if they had. In his reply, Coke asked, "how long lived King Richard the Second after he was

surprised in the same manner?"23 And Essex quoted a Shakespeare line during his sentencing when he said, "I owe God a death"; in Henry IV-Part 1, Prince Hal said to Falstaff before a battle, "Thou owest God a death" (5.1.126).24 Queen Elizabeth also alluded to Shakespeare's Richard II six months after the revolt in a conversation with William Lambarde: "... so her Majesty fell upon the reign of King Richard II, saying, 'I am Richard II. Know ye not that?"" The queen also said, noted Lambarde, "this tragedy was played forty times in open streets and houses." The "tragedy" was Shakespeare's play. If the queen saw herself portrayed as the ill-fated Richard II in Shakespeare's play, wondered Charlton Ogburn, then why did she tolerate forty performances of it?25 The queen evidently took no offense to its author, and her relationship with the Lord Chamberlain's Men remained unchanged after the rebellion - in fact, they performed before her the night before Essex's execution. Yet, two years before the rebellion had occurred, in 1599, the queen imprisoned John Hayward for publishing his history of Henry IV, which included an account of Richard II's deposition. He was only released after the queen passed away. Hayward may have borrowed Shakespeare's image in Richard II (5.2.18-21) of the future Henry IV bareheaded and bowing while greeting crowds for use in his history. 26 Shakespeare was evidently immune to government interference, implying that he had very high connections at court.

No recorded meeting between "Shakespeare" and Queen Elizabeth or King James, yet they liked the Shakespeare plays

Ben Jonson wrote in the First Folio that Elizabeth I, and James I, "delighted" in the Shakespeare plays. Love's Labour's Lost and Merry Wives of Windsor were performed for Queen Elizabeth (as mentioned on the quarto title pages), yet there is no record that she met Shakespeare. Her encounters with writers Edmund Spenser, George Gascoigne, John Lyly and others were recorded. One and a half years after King James ascended the English throne, six different Shakespeare plays were performed at his court during the Christmas holidays - a tremendous honor. The Merchant of Venice was played twice "commanded by the King's Majesty,"27 but there is no record that Shakespeare was ever present on these occasions. The same is true when several Shakespeare plays were performed at the king's court in 1612-13. The second printed edition of Shakespeare's play, Hamlet (1604-05), featured the royal court of arms in an ornament on the first page of text. Printer James Roberts used this particular ornament in only one other publication: To the Majesty of King James. A Gratulatory Poem by Michael Drayton (1603). James's consort, Queen Anne, commissioned Samuel Daniel and Ben Jonson to write entertainments for her, 28 but made no commissions for the great Shakespeare.

No eulogy written by "Shakespeare" for his supposed royal sponsors

The Shakespeare professor believes the great author was a member of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, which performed for Elizabeth I, and the King's Men, sponsored by James I. Unlike other writers, the great author apparently could not be bothered to compose a eulogy for Elizabeth at her death (despite promptings by his contemporaries), or a congratulatory verse upon King James's accession, or even a poem upon the death of the 17-year-old Prince Henry in 1612. The prince's death "gave vent to an unprecedented outburst of lamentation," writes Michael Brennan, and within a two-year period, the prince was eulogized in "four university anthologies, two volumes of funeral sermons and over fifty elegies." Shakespeare also never took the trouble to compose a commendatory poem for any of his fellow actors, poets or playwrights.

No evidence "Shakespeare" met Lord Burghley or the 17th Earl of Oxford, both characterized in Hamlet

Scholars have noted that William Cecil, Lord Burghley (d. 1598), was satirized in Shakespeare's Hamlet with the character, Corambis; in Latin, this name could mean "double-hearted" (cor = heart, ambo = both). The name parodied Burghley's family motto, "Cor Unam," Latin for "one-hearted." In one scene, Hamlet called Corambis a fishmonger; Burghley had proposed a law for one fish-eating day per week. These are only two of many coincidences between Burghley, who was the Lord Treasurer of England, and Corambis, who was King Claudius's councilor. The name, Corambis, featured in the play's first printed edition (1603), was changed to Polonius in the second edition (1604-05), which seems to confirm that the name alluded to Lord Burghley. The play was written and performed during Burghley's lifetime (as shown in Chapter 3). These and other negative comments in the play were aimed at the most politically powerful man in England, so how did Shakespeare avoid repercussion? For example, when John Stubbs wrote against the queen's proposed marriage with a French duke, his hand was cut off. This again suggests that the great author had a privileged standing at court or in the government. There is also no evidence that "Shakespeare" met Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, whose life in many ways paralleled Hamlet's. Like Oxford, Hamlet was a university student, a traveler, a courtier and an intellectual. Like Oxford, Hamlet was in a ship that was attacked by pirates. Hamlet loved Corambis's daughter, Ophelia; Oxford married Burghley's daughter, Anne, and like Ophelia, she died young. How did Shakespeare know such details in this nobleman's life? There are apparent satires of other courtiers in Shakespeare's works, including Sir Christopher Hatton (Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*), Antonio Perez (Don Armado in *Love's Labour's Lost*), Sir Walter Ralegh (Tarquin in *The Rape of Lucrece*), and Sir Robert Cecil (title character, *Richard III*). ³¹ If so, then how did the Stratford Man come to know them if he was the great author?

Best Explanation: "William Shakespeare" was a Pen Name

The great author's absence in the full light of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras, when records, personal letters and diaries abounded, with much still surviving, is best explained if he was writing anonymously or using a pen name. The great author's real name was not "William Shakespeare," which is why, during his lifetime, no one claimed to personally know Shakespeare, why "William Shakespeare" was not named in school or university enrollment lists, why no records of payment to a writer Shakespeare survive, and why Shakespeare was never questioned by the authorities. The first reference to the great author in print hyphenated the name, "Shake-speare" (prefatory poem, Willobie His Avisa), and the hyphen was used in about half of all printed occurrences of the name, including the title pages of Shakespeare's plays. The inclusion of the hyphen indicates that the surname's first syllable was pronounced "shake," with a long a, but the majority of records for the Stratford Man's name, which were spelled phonetically, emphasized a short a, like "shack." (Sir George Greenwood noted that a hyphen was never applied to the Stratford Man's name in any surviving document.)32 The hyphen suggests the literal action of shaking a spear, a noun and verb description. This is pointed out quite openly in Jonson's elegy to Shakespeare in the First Folio in which he punned on the name. Jonson wrote that within Shakespeare's "well turned, and true-filed lines"

> he seems to <u>shake a Lance</u>, As brandish'd at the eyes of Ignorance.

Lance is another word for spear. Three others punned on Shakespeare's name. In the play, *Histrio-mastix* (printed 1610), an acting company performs a scene with Troilus and Cressida, characters that were also the subject and title of a Shakespeare play. In an apparent pun on the name of the playwright, Troilus says to Cressida:

Behold behold thy garter blue Thy knight his valiant elbow wears, That when <u>he shakes his furious Speare</u> Thy foe in shivering fearful sort ... [lines 271-74] Another pun occurs in Two Books of Epigrams and Epitaphs (1639) by Thomas Bancroft in his epigram No. 119 to Shakespeare:

> Thou hast so us'd thy Pen (or shook thy Speare) That Poets startle, nor thy wit come near.

Finally, Thomas Vicars in Cheiragogia (1628) did not name Shakespeare in his list of great poets - he described him:

> ... that well-known poet who takes his name from the shaking of a spear ... 33

Shakespeare used similar expressions of weapon shaking in his works. In Timon of Athens (5.1.169), the "savage" Alcibiades

> ... shakes his threatening Sword Against the walls of Athens.

All's Well That Ends Well (2.5.95):

Go thou toward home; where I will never come whilst I can shake my sword or hear the drum.

The Tempest (1.2.205):

... his [Neptune's] bold waves tremble, yea his dread trident shake.

Henry VI-Part 2 (4.8.19):

Shake he his weapon at us, and pass by.

In The Rape of Lucrece (line 505), the character, Tarquin

shakes aloft his Roman blade ...

Spear shaking was an often-used expression in the contemporary literature, as demonstrated in excerpts below. (The word "spear" is given as originally spelled, and dates refer to printed editions.) In the gloss to Edmund Spenser's The Shepherd's Calendar (1579), E.K. wrote that the fully armed goddess, Pallas Athena,

> shaked her speare at him [Vulcan], and threatened his sauciness. ["October"]

In John Lyly's play, Campaspe (1584), Hephestion asks Alexander,

Will you handle the spindle with Hercules, when you should shake the speare with Achilles? [2.2]

1. LITERARY SUPREME, SUPREME LITERARY MYSTERY

Christopher Marlowe's play, Tamburlaine the Great-Part 1 (1590):

Five hundred thousand footmen threat'ning shot, Shaking their swords, their speares and iron bills ... [4.1.24-25]

In George Peele's play, Edward I (1593), when the Lord of Gallaway is proclaimed the King of Scotland, Queen Elinor says:

Shake thy speres in honor of his name ... [scene 3]

Barnabe Barnes's poetry work, Parthenophil and Parthenophe (1593):

When Mars return'd from war, Shaking his speare afar Cupid beheld: And him in jest Mars shak'd his speare ... [Ode 15]

Edmund Spenser's poem, The Faerie Queene (1596):

With that they 'gan their shivering speares to shake ... [Book 4, Canto 2, No. 14]

He all enrag'd, his shivering speare did shake ... [Book 4, Canto 3, No. 10]

Andrew Fairfax's translation, Godfrey of Bulloigne, or The Recovery of Jerusalem, by Torquato Tasso (1600):

> [Women, etc.] durst not shake the speare, nor target hold. [Book 3, Stanza 11]

These hands were made to shake sharp spears, and swords. [Book 5, Stanza 42]

In light of the name Shakespeare being a descriptive action, in light of the repeated inclusion of a hyphen suggesting it was a made-up name, and in light of the absence of historical evidence of an actual person of this name in relation to literature or education, it is reasonable to assume that "Shakespeare" was a pen name. Shaking spears, swords and other weapons was a common expression that described a warlike action, as shown above by excerpts from the contemporary literature. A spear-shaker also describes a tournament jouster. The great author must have enjoyed this sport or identified himself with soldiery. It was by winning a jousting tournament that the title character in Shakespeare's play, *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, was able to reverse his fortune after a shipwreck.

The great author himself declared that "William Shakespeare" was a pen name in two instances. The first is found in one line of the dedication letter for his poem, *Venus and Adonis* (1593):

But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed ...

The "first heir" refers to Venus and Adonis, and critics assume that "my invention" means his art or creativity. But unless the great author was lying, Venus and Adonis could not have been his first effort at poetry because the piece was too sophisticated. The "invention," therefore, is the invented name, "William Shakespeare." Venus and Adonis sports the first application of the pen name. It is fact that Venus and Adonis was the first occasion that the name, William Shakespeare, appeared in print. In the second example, the great author says in Sonnet 81 that a name attached to a great written work ("such virtue hath my Pen") is assured immortality.

From hence your memory death cannot take, Although in me each part will be forgotten. Your name from hence immortal life shall have, Though I (once gone) to all the world must die ...

When all the breathers of this world are dead, You still shall live (such virtue hath my Pen) ...

The great author is addressing the Fair Youth, so he believes the Fair Youth's name is destined for immortality due to the greatness of his "pen." The Fair Youth's name is not mentioned in any of the sonnets, so his name had to have been already associated with another Shakespeare work. The 3rd Earl of Southampton was the only one to whom Shakespeare made a dedication, in Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece. Enormously popular, each edition of these poems carried the names Shakespeare and Southampton. Southampton's immortality, therefore, is assured so long as these works remain in print, says Shakespeare in Sonnet 81, yet in the same sonnet he says his own name "to all the world must die." The only logical explanation for this contradiction is that one name was real (Southampton's) and the other was not (Shakespeare's). The great author's pen name will live forever, but not his real name,

and this is what he was somberly relating in Sonnet 81. And he was right: after four centuries, almost nothing is known about his personal life or his literary life, just like he had presciently stated, "in me each part will be forgotten."

The Likelihood of His Nobility

Why would a highly acclaimed and popular author need to use a pen name? Answer: politics and social status. If printed material were political or controversial, then anonymity or an invented name would be mandatory. Freedom of speech was not a right in the Elizabethan-Jacobean era. In the case of the great author, however, politics could not have been the main reason initially because the first work published with his alias, *Venus and Adonis*, was poetry based on a classical theme. It enjoyed several printings and was politically approved. John Whitgift, the Archbishop of Canterbury, licensed it for press. Whitgift was a close friend and advisor to Queen Elizabeth. Protection of social status is the other reason for usage of a pen name. The highly ranked avoided public display of their poetry because it would stigmatize them socially. This was clearly explained in *The Art of English Poesy* in 1589:

Now also of such among the Nobility or gentry as be very well seen in many laudable sciences, and especially in making or Poesy, it is so come to pass that they have no courage to write, & if they have, yet are they loath to be aknown of their skill. So as I know very many notable Gentlemen in the Court that have written commendably, and suppressed it again, or else suffered it to be published without their own names to it: as if it were a discredit for a Gentleman, to seem learned, and to show himself amorous of any good Art. [Book 1, Chapter 8]

Even royalty "take delight in Poets," wrote this author, but "universally it is not so." The "honorable," meaning titled people or the gentry, who are known to be poets, are "infamous" and "subject to scorn and derision," and, "in disdain," they are called "fantastical."

But in these days (although some learned Princes may take delight in them) yet universally it is not so. For as well Poets and Poesy are despised, and the name become of honorable infamous, subject to scorn and derision, and rather a reproach than a praise to any that useth it, for commonly whoso is studious in the art or shows himself excellent in it, they call him in disdain a "fantastical"; and a light-headed or fantastical man (by conversion) they call a poet. [Book 1, Chapter 8]

The unnamed author of *The Art of English Poesy*, sometimes attributed to John, Lord Lumley, ³⁵ boldly revealed names of poets who were also courtiers:

And in her Majesty's time that now is are sprung up another crew of <u>Courtly makers Noblemen and Gentlemen</u> of her Majesty's own servants, who have written excellently well as it would appear <u>if their doings could be found out and made public with the rest</u>, of which number is first that noble Gentleman <u>Edward</u>, Earl of Oxford. Thomas Lord of Buckhurst, when he was young, <u>Henry Lord Paget</u>, Sir <u>Philip Sidney</u>, Sir <u>Walter Ralegh</u>, Master <u>Edward Dyer</u>, Master <u>Fulke Greville</u>, <u>Gascoigne</u>, <u>Breton</u>, <u>Turberville</u> and a great many other learned Gentlemen ... [Book 1, Chapter 31]

One of high rank could circulate pieces of poetry in manuscript among friends during his lifetime, but printing a poetical work with his own name was socially acceptable only after death. It is on record that the sonnets of Shakespeare were privately circulated in manuscript (Francis Meres, *Palladis Tamia, or Wit's Treasury*, 1598). There are some instances of poems "escaping" into print and credited to the highly ranked, but not whole works with authority. Almost fifty years after *The Art of English Poesy*, John Selden wrote in his book, *Table Talk* (1636), "Tis ridiculous for a Lord to print verses, 'tis well enough to make them to please himself, but to make them public is foolish." The only way one of high rank could circumvent the stigma of print during his lifetime, if he so desired, would be to print anonymously or with a pen name. Even more stigmatizing – and even scandalous – for a member of the upper class was to write plays that were performed in the public theater. Maintaining the dignity of one's rank and family name was extremely important during this period.

Another reason to suppose that the great author was a man of rank or the nobility is because he had an excellent education. If a child of the upper class displayed signs of genius, he could be immediately accommodated with tutors and a university education. A bright child named William Shakespeare was apparently never brought to the attention of any literate person: not a teacher, tutor, clergyman, mentor, or future patron. The protagonists in Shakespeare's plays were mostly aristocratic men and women, often royalty, and they were realistically portrayed - the "commoner" characters usually served as comic relief. The great author well knew the speech, customs, dress, food and sports (like tennis and falconry) of the nobility. One contemporary wrote that no one could discuss hunting and falconry "in correct technical language unless he was familiar with the sports. It is an easy thing to trip up in one's terms, as Father [Francis] Southwell used to complain."36 Shakespeare's plays evidently characterized real living courtiers, including the most powerful, Lord Burghley. The great author must have had sufficiently high status to be acquainted with these courtiers and to escape retaliation for alluding to them in his plays, a status the Stratford Man lacked. A nobleman would not be tied down by work obligations to focus upon his art, and would have money and leisure to study and travel (Shakespeare had detailed knowledge of European geography, especially cities in Italy). And a nobleman would not need a patron to sponsor or protect his art. For those who were aware of the great author's nobility, there would have been a natural fear of reprisal had they exposed the pen name. "Shake-speare we must be silent in thy praise" was anonymously written in 1640,³⁷ a generation after Shakespeare lived. This phrase alone is proof that there was something secret about him. Why would silence be necessary if the great author were the Stratford Man, a man with humble beginnings whose art pleased and impressed all classes?

Conclusion

Hungry for knowledge about their hero, Shakespeare enthusiasts keep buying biographies that the experts write. But they are not real biographies of Shakespeare, they are mostly invented ones framed within a description of the age. The paucity of facts of relevance, such as Shakespeare's education and his literary life, should long ago have been considered unsatisfactory and suspicious, if not impossible. The lack of personal remembrances by his contemporaries and the nonexistence of his manuscripts or personal letters increases the likelihood that "William Shakespeare" was someone's pen name. The fact that the surname was often hyphenated, a sign of a made-up name, and that spear shaking was a known expression, makes this conclusion nearly absolute - there would be no other reason to apply a hyphen to the name. On the first occasion that the name "William Shakespeare" appeared in print, the great author openly called it his "invention." The great author's primary interest with the upper classes and royalty, their politics and the succession, his complete familiarity with them and their culture, and the extensive learning and experience displayed in the works, inspires the natural conclusion that he himself was from a similarly privileged background. The "nobility or gentry" who wrote poetry were "loath to be aknown of their skill," wrote a contemporary, because it was considered a frivolous or "fantastical" occupation. It was also a social convention of the highly ranked to not publish their creative writing with their names attached while alive; doing so would give the appearance that they were writing for financial gain, which was déclassé. For an aristocrat to be directly involved with the theater and actors was even more socially degrading, and public knowledge of it would certainly mar his reputation, thus the need for anonymity or an alias.

More evidence of the great author's high status was his apparent acquaintance with highly placed people: the first published work signed by Shakespeare had the approbation of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the 3rd Earl of Southampton, two intimates of Queen Elizabeth, and it was issued

by a printer who at the time was in the patronage of the Lord Treasurer of England, Lord Burghley. The great author evidently knew Lord Burghley, and his son-in-law, the 17th Earl of Oxford, and by implication, had the government's approval for his dramatic versions of English history. There is no documentary evidence that the Stratford Man was acquainted with any of the aforementioned personages. All of the problems surrounding Shakespeare's biography listed in this chapter are well known to the experts but they ignore the most obvious explanation for them - the name was an alias - because of the existence of another man involved in the theater who was named William Shakespeare. For some reason, it is beyond the experts' comprehension that there could have been two separate people with similar names that had theatrical interest, just like there were two men named John Davies who published poetry and were contemporaries. Although there was an explosion of literary and theatrical activity during this period, it was not an age that one could openly criticize the government, the nobility, or influential people without repercussion. Allegory, symbolism and veiled references in print were the norm, and the reader will learn that such devices were regularly applied when referring to Shakespeare.

CHAPTER 2

A Mess of Genius: Shakespeare's Early Printed Texts

THE SHAKESPEARE PROFESSOR is not only frustrated by the lack of hard facts in great author's biography, but by the appalling state of his literary remains. Shakespeare composed at least 38 plays, 154 sonnets, and more nearly one million words - and not one page of an original manuscript survives in his handwriting. All that has survived is in printed format and in various states of condition. It is evident that the great author was involved with the publication of his two long narrative poems, Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece: both texts have minimal errors, and for each one he provided signed dedication letters to the Earl of Southampton. The state of the great author's theatrical output, however, is another kettle of fish entirely. Most of the earliest printed play editions have messy texts. It was not because the great author was careless but because these texts were mostly, if not entirely, compiled from sources other than the great author's copy. This is never revealed to the student or the general reader and has never been adequately explained. These individually printed plays, called the quartos, were evidently pirated editions, and yet, neither the great author nor the acting companies ever openly complained about the thefts. This contradicts the story promoted by the professor that the great author wrote for the theater for profit.

Textual Disorder

Seventeen different Shakespeare plays were printed individually between 1594 and 1622, some with multiple issues. Some of these quarto editions had good texts and some had bad texts, thus the now universal terms "good quartos" and "bad quartos." Each Shakespeare quarto had a different degree of textual accuracy but all were to some extent flawed. Those who printed them knew this, so if the text were subsequently improved, the next edition would often announce it with a phrase like "newly corrected" on the title page. In these cases, some of the text was corrected and even enlarged, but new errors would be introduced. In 1623, thirty-six Shakespeare plays were printed in one large

volume, today called "The First Folio," "First" because three others followed, and "Folio" because of the large page size. Twenty of the 36 plays it contained had never before been printed and at least four of them were unknown to the public. Studies have shown that the Folio play texts were also imperfect. In some cases, the Folio featured the quarto version of a play, the good and the bad. Even particular passages within the same play vary – sometimes the Folio version is better, sometimes the quarto version is better, with no consistency. Sometimes a given passage will be identical in both the Folio and quarto versions with the exception of one word with no way of knowing which one was the great author's intent. Which version was the authoritative one? Were any? The evidence shows that these early publishers or editors were constantly interpreting and guessing the great author's lines and they often got it wrong. The nature of these imperfections include:

- missing lines (sometimes in the hundreds Hamlet, for example), duplication of lines, lines out of place
- · omitted scenes and unclear scene structure
- · messy, missing or unclear stage directions
- a character's name changes throughout the text, sometimes within one scene (for example, Queen Eleanor in King John is labeled "Elia," "Ele," "Eli," "Queen," "Qu Mo," "Old Queen")¹
- · an actor's name replaces a character's name
- "ghost" characters (a character listed at the beginning of a scene, but has no lines and is never mentioned again)
- · words or lines assigned to the wrong character
- · prose printed as verse and verse as prose
- verse lines wrongly divided
- misspelling, missing or faulty punctuation, extra or redundant words
- misinterpretation/mishearing of words (for example, "him, most" for "hindmost")
- paraphrased lines, paraphrased speeches, or a synonym replaces the actual word
- · lines taken from another play (sometimes not Shakespeare's)

The three earliest editions of *Hamlet* (quartos of 1603 and 1604-05, and the First Folio) are all different. The 1604-05 edition is almost twice as long as the 1603 edition, and the Folio version is 200 lines shorter than the 1604-05 edition. It is not known which edition best represents the great author's final version. The only text that survives for *Macbeth* appeared in the Folio; it is unusually short – about one thousand lines shorter than Shakespeare's other tragedies. Some critics consider it a hacked version of the original. The 1622 quarto edition of *Othello* has thirteen lines or parts of lines that are unique, and the Folio version has 160 unique lines.² Many textual errors of

Shakespeare's plays have been fixed by modern editors, but for some lines, there is no remedy. King Lear's final lines in the 1608 quarto, for example, are completely different than those in the Folio version. Ron Rosenbaum called this situation "scandalous" because these lines (comments about Cordelia's death) are considered the key to interpreting King Lear's character for scholars, actors and directors.³ An example of the Shakespeare editor's dilemma follows. Seeing his father for the first time with his eyes gouged out, Edgar in King Lear (4.1.10) says:

A. "My father poorlie, leed" (quarto, 1608) B. "My father parti, eyd." (quarto, 1619) C. "My Father poorely led?" (Folio, 1623)

As pointed out by Michael J.B. Allen and Kenneth Muir, modern editors usually employ B, edited as "my father, parti-eyed." Parti-eyed is supposedly synonymous with parti-colored, describing the colors on the father's mutilated face (blood against flesh). The true phrase will probably never be known.

It is fact that the entire corpus of the Shakespeare plays was left to posterity in imperfect form. It can be inferred then that the great author was not involved in the printing process nor did he provide the printers with the original completed copy of any play. This is supported by the fact that the great author never included a letter to the reader or a dedication page in any edition of his plays. Laudatory verses by friends is also absent in the over forty early Shakespeare quartos that have survived. Such prefatory material was common in play editions. The distorted state of most of these early printed plays implies that the printers were entirely on their own with the text. Although the demand for Shakespeare copy was high (added together, there were sixteen printed editions of Venus and Adonis and Lucrece by 1616), it appears the great author would not authorize the issuing of his plays. The inevitable result was piracy. If the printers did not use the great author's originals, then how did they get the play texts? Shakespeare actors could be paid for a copy of their roles or to recite their lines to a scribe, or stenographers could be placed in the audience during a play performance. This would explain why the bad quartos had wrong or misheard words and phrases, and paraphrases; why verse was printed as regular dialogue and vice-versa, stage directions printed as dialogue, an actor's name replacing a character's name, etc. At least four stenography books were published between 1588 and 1602.5 It is believed that some Shakespeare text derived from prompt-books, the stage version of the play, which was usually shorter than the author's original. This is possible, but no prompt-book of a Shakespeare play has survived. It is likely that some or all of the above methods were employed to print a Shakespeare play.

These "bad" editions were alluded to in the First Folio's preface, that readers had been

abused with diverse stolen, and surreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed by the frauds and stealths of injurious imposters, that exposed them.

In 1609, the second issue of Shakespeare's play, *Troilus and Cressida*, featured an anonymous letter to the reader explaining that this play had "escaped" the "grand possessors" for which readers should "thank fortune" – a bold and defiant admission of piracy.

"Fair is foul and foul is fair." (Macbeth)

To account for the "good quartos" that have decent but still imperfect text, the Shakespeare professor's traditional position is that it derived from the great author's "foul papers" - his first draft, or rough draft, of the play, containing his additions, deletions, and corrections. He further posits that the few plays with cleaner text derived from a "fair copy," the edited version of the "foul papers." The reader must be cautioned that these explanations are purely hypothetical. Shakespeare foul or fair copy papers do not exist. The Shakespeare professor asserts with great confidence that the Lord Chamberlain's Men, which the great author was supposedly a member, owned the Shakespeare plays; that they used the great author's "foul papers" and made prompt-books from them which were then given to the printers for profit. This explanation is also purely hypothetical. No evidence confirms the Lord Chamberlain's Men or any acting company purchased or owned the Shakespeare plays or sold them to printers. There is not one payment to "Shakespeare" for writing or any indication of an arrangement of profit sharing in lieu of writing services. It is true that the Lord Chamberlain's Men performed some Shakespeare plays, but so did the Lord Pembroke's Men, the Lord Admiral's Men and the Lord Sussex's Men. Who owned what? To this day, it is still not clear to scholars. Even if an acting company owned a Shakespeare play, then why didn't the company provide printers with clean text, or prosecute those who pirated it? And it raises more questions: why would the acting company possess the great author's imperfect foul papers? How could the company act the play with such text? The Lord Chamberlain's Men also performed plays by Ben Jonson, and he evidently published them without this company's involvement.

The professor has no explanation for the Shakespeare piracies and is reluctant to admit that they even occurred, thus the terms "reported text," "memorial reconstruction," "assembled text," and "composite text." All describe

Shakespeare text that is incomplete, imperfect or garbled, indicating derivation from a source other than the great author. These special phrases still imply that neither the great author nor the theater company provided printers with a finished copy. Even the First Folio's collection of the Shakespeare plays, purportedly derived from the great author's "true original copies," used some text from the bad quartos. As almost every early Shakespeare play text is imperfect, it is possible that each one was pirated. Phrases like "newly corrected" on several editions indirectly admits that inferior versions preceded them; the copyists kept improving their product. If the great author were a man of high social status, then the "stigma of print" would explain why he was not involved with the publishing of his plays, and he could not prosecute printers of unauthorized editions in the regular law courts without making known his true identity. Since the Stratford Man sued people to recover his money, it is hard to believe that he would not have sued for the theft of his supposed literary property. It is even harder to believe that the great author was not disturbed seeing his superlative dramas printed in such slipshod condition. There are indications, however, that he attempted to stop it.

"Stop Press" Shakespeare

Almost completely unreported to the student and general public is the fact that some of the earliest publishers of Shakespeare's works were stopped by authority, and on three occasions their presses were seized. We know this thanks to the surviving registers of the Stationers' Company. Shortly before publication, printers would pay a licensing fee to the Company, which was recorded. Fines and directives from within the Company, and without, were also recorded. Two possible "stop-press" Shakespeare incidents occurred in 1594. (1) The Winter's Tale. On May 22, 1594, publisher Edward White registered "a book entitled, a winters nights pastime," which evidently never saw print. The expert would discount this reference because he believes Shakespeare's play was written in 1610 or 1611, but "a winters nights pastime" is very close to "the winters night tale," an undisputed reference to Shakespeare's play in 1611 (Appendix A, No. 77). White had also registered the anonymous play, King Leir, the week before, on May 14, 1594.7 King Leir is considered as the main source of Shakespeare's King Lear but it may have been an early version of the same play. There is no sign that White's edition of King Leir was printed (the first surviving edition was dated 1605 and was published by others). (2) Titus Andronicus. On February 6, 1594, publisher John Danter registered this play. The one surviving copy was discovered in Sweden in 1904.8 (Interestingly, in 1593, a warrant for Danter's arrest was recorded in the register for an unstated reason.)9 These incidents of a no-show

and a sole surviving copy could indicate that as early as 1594 the great author was trying to stop unauthorized editions of his plays.

The first confirmed "stop press" Shakespeare involved the first quarto of Romeo and Juliet, a notorious piracy. John Danter printed the play during late 1596 or early 1597.10 Sometime during the period of Lent (February 9 to March 26, 1597), Danter's two presses were seized "by virtue of the decrees of the Star Chamber," and on April 10, 1597 they were ordered to be "defaced and made unserviceable for printing..." Danter's offense was for printing a Catholic work, Iesus Psalter, "and other things without authority..."11 Danter, however, had already been punished for printing Jesus Psalter - his press was brought to the Stationers' Company by July 1596, and he evidently went to jail. 12 Although Danter's name alone appeared on the title page as the printer of Romeo and Juliet, he only printed sheets A to D - sheets E to K were printed by Edward Allde. 13 Allde's press was also seized within the same period and also ordered for destruction on April 10. Allde's recorded offense was for printing the "popish" work, A Brief Form of Confession, "without authority license [or] entrance..."14 Allde was not involved with the printing of Jesus Psalter. The inevitable conclusion to be drawn is that Danter and Allde's mutual printing of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet was the underlying cause of the seizure and destruction of their presses, and that this play must have constituted "other things without authority ... " Danter was constantly in trouble with the Stationers' Company before this incident, but this one ended his printing career. Another incident occurred in late 1598 or early 1599. William Jaggard published two editions of The Passionate Pilgrim, a poetry work that he ascribed to "W. Shakespeare"; only fragments of the first edition and two complete copies of the second edition have survived. Later testimony by writer Thomas Heywood that this work had upset the great author confirms it was a piracy: "... so the Author I know much offended with M. Jaggard (that altogether unknown to him) presumed to make so bold with his name."15 Thirteen years had elapsed before Jaggard ventured to print a third edition (1612), perhaps an indication of intimidation on the great author's part. On January 3, 1600, printer Eleazar Edgar registered "A book called Amours by J.D. with certain other sonnets by W.S."16 Occurring so soon after Jaggard's illicit publication, which had featured the first two Shakespeare sonnets in print, "certain other sonnets by W.S." were almost certainly more of Shakespeare's. The work never saw print, perhaps another indication that the great author had intervened.

Publisher James Roberts experienced a rash of "stop press" Shakespeare incidents. The first occurred on July 22, 1598 when he registered *The Merchant of Venice*. Roberts, a 30-year veteran in the publishing trade at the time, was bound by a very unusual condition involving a high government official:

Provided, that it be not printed by the said James Roberts or any other whatsoever without license first had from the right honorable the Lord Chamberlain. ¹⁷

Outside of the monarch and the privy council, the Lord Chamberlain held the authority over theatrical activity and play publication (George Carey, 2nd Baron Hunsdon, held this position from 1597 to 1603). Two years passed with no edition of Merchant. Then on October 28, 1600, the play was registered again "with the consent" of Roberts for Thomas Hayes to publish it. 18 Roberts was still involved, however, as he was listed on the title page as the printer ("J.R."). It seems that Roberts purposely had transferred his publishing rights to the play to one not specifically bound by a restriction. Merchant was not printed again until 1619. During the year 1600, Roberts tried to publish six plays, including three by Shakespeare, and all were stayed. 19 He registered As You Like It, Henry V and Much Ado About Nothing on August 4, 1600. The staying order was made soon after this date because Henry V and Much Ado were reregistered nineteen days later by others and printed that year; 20 As You Like It remained unpublished until the First Folio. The staying order may have been the consequence of Roberts's reprint of Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus that same year (1600). Roberts made no attempt to publish Shakespeare in 1599, but that year two works he wanted to print were stopped and two more were ordered to be burned.²¹ Ever persistent, Roberts registered another Shakespeare play, Hamlet, on July 26, 1602, but Nicholas Ling beat him to press with the first edition in 1603. (Roberts, however, teamed up with Ling in late 1604 to print an enlarged version of Hamlet.) On February 7, 1603, Roberts again registered a Shakespeare play for publication, which again required special permission:

to print when he hath gotten sufficient authority for it, the book of *Troilus and Cressida* as it is acted by my Lord Chamberlain's Men.²²

Roberts never printed *Troilus and Cressida*. In 1606, he sold his business to William Jaggard. The Shakespeare professor's explanation for Roberts's frustrations is that he was serving the Lord Chamberlain's Men by registering plays and purposely not printing them on their behalf, that they were "blocking entries." The unwavering belief that this acting company owned the Shakespeare plays and that the Lord Chamberlain was protecting them has led him to this conclusion, but both beliefs are mere assumption. Did Roberts not have a hand in the publication of *The Merchant of Venice*, *Titus Andronicus* and *Hamlet*? Could not the Lord Chamberlain have been acting on someone else's behalf? Perhaps it was the great author or his family that was trying to stop unauthorized editions of these works, and were people with

enough clout to influence the Lord Chamberlain and the Stationers' Company. Such a scenario is never considered.

Another remarkable incident of "stop press" Shakespeare involved printers Thomas Pavier and William Jaggard. They printed three plays (*Pericles, Merry Wives of Windsor* and *A Yorkshire Tragedy*) with the current date of 1619 on the title page and Shakespeare as the author. Then something happened, causing Pavier and Jaggard to print five more plays (*A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Merchant of Venice, Sir John Oldcastle-Part 1, Henry V*, and *King Lear*) with the false dates of 1600 and 1608 on the title pages, and two with no dates (the Contention plays). Two of the falsely dated title pages named a printer who no longer held the copyright.²³ A directive by the Lord Chamberlain to the Stationers' Company in May 1619 was evidently aimed at them for unauthorized printing of Shakespeare's plays.²⁴ But Pavier and Jaggard circumvented the directive by printing false dates on the title pages to make it appear that these plays were old merchandise, that they were printed long before the Lord Chamberlain's order. This was Jaggard's fourth instance of illicit printing of Shakespeare, preceded by his three editions of *The Passionate Pilgrim*.

Pavier and Jaggard's false dating scheme was apparently inspired by an earlier incident of the same kind in yet another "stop press" Shakespeare. The title page of Venus and Adonis, eighth edition (STC 22360), featured the date of 1602, which in the 20th century was proven to be false. 25 This edition had used an ornament that Harry Farr identified as that owned by Robert Raworth, who only began printing in 1606; his career suddenly ended by 1609. The reason why is contained in a 1635 notation in the Stationers' Register: the press owned by Raworth and his partner, John Monger, had been "suppressed (for printing Venus and Adonis)."26 Raworth was not allowed to print for twenty-five years after this incident. More explanation appears on another register page: "Robert Raworth, suppress'd for printing another's Copy."27 The copyright holder of Venus and Adonis at the time was William Leake, a warden of the Stationers' Company (1604-07 and 1610-11). This given reason for putting Raworth out of business gets suspicious when more facts are known. The title page of Raworth's edition of Venus and Adonis openly stated that it was "Imprinted at London for William Leake," implying Leake's cooperation. Raworth certainly had Leake's cooperation in 1608, when Leake employed him to print Two Sermons by Henry Smith. But what is especially telling is that after the Raworth incident, Leake employed a different printer (Humphrey Lownes) to issue another edition of Venus and Adonis, and it also sported the false date of 1602 on the title page. A third edition with the 1602 false date was printed, also by Lownes for Leake, but today only the title page survives. As the official owner of the text since June 25, 1596, Leake would have had no reason to use a false date, which means that Raworth's

suppression had nothing to do copyright infringement but had everything to do with the author, the text, or the times. Raworth had based his text upon the previous, or seventh, edition of *Venus and Adonis* (STC 22359), which cannot be certainly dated because the sole surviving copy (now at the Bodleian Library) lacks the title page.

When were these three falsely dated editions of Venus and Adonis actually printed? Harry Farr conjectured sometime between 1607 and 1610. Raworth started to print books in the latter half of 1606, in which he produced one book; in each of the years 1607 and 1608, he produced about three books. Leake's employment of Raworth to print Two Sermons in 1608 shows that they were on friendly terms at that time, and, presumably, the year before (1607). Raworth printed no books with 1609 on the title page. The year 1609 also saw a letter to the reader added to the second issue of Troilus and Cressida warning of a coming scarcity of Shakespeare's "comedies." As it happened, no Shakespeare play or poem was openly published in 1610, which seemed to confirm the warning. The year 1611 saw three Shakespeare plays in print (Titus Andronicus, Hamlet and Pericles) so it was evidently safe to print Shakespeare that year, but not in 1610 or part of 1609 (the next edition of Venus and Adonis occurred in 1617, after Leake sold his publishing rights). The Rape of Lucrece was published in 1607, apparently without incident, but was not published again until 1614. The cumulative evidence strongly suggests that 1609 was the actual printing year of Raworth's falsely dated edition of Venus and Adonis; since the two Leake-Lownes editions with false dates followed Raworth's edition, they were likely released in 1609 or 1610. As noted above, Pavier and Jaggard had used earlier false dating on their Shakespeare editions to elude a directive by the Lord Chamberlain. Obviously, something of the same nature must have occurred in 1609, despite the lack of evidence in the official record. Whatever it was, it was extremely serious, enough to destroy Raworth's printing career for his very first offense; the typical punishment for printing another's copy was a fine, usually a small one. 28 Leake and Lownes were apparently unaffected by this incident, but neither involved himself in a Shakespeare printing again. It seems that Raworth took the fall for the evidently unallowed printing of Venus and Adonis. Farr detected some "deception."

If Leake connived at the printing of these editions with a spurious date while taking steps to suppress Raworth for infringing his copyright, we have here a very pretty piece of deception. But his association with Jaggard in the publication of *The Passionate Pilgrim* is some evidence that he was not incapable of it.²⁹

One could surmise that Leake ordered Raworth to print *Venus and Adonis* with a false date to avoid the authorities, but when it was discovered, he tried to save

his own skin by accusing Raworth of printing it without his permission. But the text must have been much sought after at that time, so Leake took the risk of printing two more editions with the same false date, as if they were more of Raworth's edition. As noted by Farr, Leake's involvement (as bookseller) with the 1598-1599 editions of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, confirmed Shakespeare piracies, indicates that he was "not incapable" of such deception. The year 1609 will prove to be the most critical in the Shakespeare authorship question.

Conclusion

However the expert labels the early editions of the Shakespeare plays, as good or bad quartos, fair or foul copy, the state of these early texts ranges from imperfect to bad. The same is true for the twenty plays that made their print debut in the First Folio, contrary to the Folio's claim that it contained the great author's "true original copies." One can conclude, therefore, that the great author was not involved in the printing process for any of his plays and he did not make copies of his complete texts available to acting companies or to printers. The printers apparently obtained Shakespeare play text in many ways: employing stenographers to copy the plays by ear in the audience; paying actors to recite their roles; perhaps obtaining prompt-books and other playhouse working copies of a play, and hiring other writers to fill in the blanks. These patchwork editions of the Shakespeare plays - some close to the original, some butchered, some later improved - are evidence that most if not all of the early texts were either stolen or unauthorized editions. As Ernest Honigmann observed regarding Shakespeare, "no other dramatist was honoured by surreptitious publication to anything like the same extent."30 The Shakespeare professor cannot explain why Shakespeare fell victim to pirates when, if he were the Stratford Man, he would have had every reason to publish his works for his own livelihood and profit, especially since they had such high public demand. These imperfect texts also negate the consistent assumption that the acting companies owned Shakespeare's plays. Even the presumed Folio producers, King's Men actors Heminges and Condell, did not make the claim of Shakespeare play ownership - in their own words, they printed his plays merely as a favor for their "fellow."

The most likely profile of a writer during this era who would allow some of his poetry to be published, albeit with an alias, but who would not publish his dramas, is someone of high rank. Although considered frivolous, writing poetry and circulating it in manuscript was tolerated among the upper class, but writing dramas that eventually got played in the public theater was considered degrading. The substantial evidence that "Shakespeare" was a pen name makes this an inescapable conclusion. The great author did not openly

complain about the pirated text of his plays because doing so would publicly expose his true identity. In this scenario, the pirates knew the great author was a nobleman in a "catch-22" situation and fearlessly took advantage. The great author apparently tried to stop this activity, perhaps as early as 1594, but certainly during the years 1597 to 1603, when six Shakespeare plays were stopped from publication. The Lord Chamberlain and officials in the Stationer's Company were apparently acting on the great author's behalf. Why else would two printers get their presses seized for printing Romeo and Juliet and another one put out of business for printing Venus and Adonis - both love stories with no apparent political content? Romeo and Juliet was "often (with great applause) played publicly," according to the title page of its first edition (1597), and the Archbishop of Canterbury originally licensed Venus and Adonis for press. Not allowing themselves to be thwarted by the authorities, some publishers of Shakespeare simply took the risk and others resorted to taking unusual steps, such as printing with false dates or no dates. Today's Shakespeare plays are sanitized versions based on centuries of editing work, melding the best texts from the early editions, fixing lines or words to better suit the context or the poetical meter, and correcting evidently misheard or misinterpreted text. The early Shakespeare editions were an imperfect mess, but a mess of genius. The great author's non-cooperation with publishers of his dramas suggests that the original manuscript copies of the plays were kept in his possession, and that they may still exist. If such copies ever get found, then Shakespeare scholarship would be plunged into a whole new world of perfect text, with even more brilliant lines. Has the world yet to read the real Shakespeare plays?

CHAPTER 3

Shakespeare Problems the Professor Still Cannot Solve

EARLY MESSY TEXT is only one of many unsolved problems with the Shakespeare plays. What was the first play Shakespeare wrote? The last? When and in what order were the plays written? After 200 or more years of analysis, the Shakespeare professor has no certain answer for any of these questions. The final tally of plays the great author wrote is also guesswork, as is the play that can be rightly proclaimed the first in print. Adding to the confusion are anonymously written plays closely resembling Shakespeare's plays that the professor deems "too early" to have been written by Shakespeare. And plays listed as Queen Elizabeth's entertainment in the 1560s to 1580s with titles similar to or descriptive of Shakespeare's plays are likewise deemed "too early" to have been written by Shakespeare. And references to Shakespeare's plays, or allusions to lines in them, from the 1560s onward are ignored because they are dated "too early" for the professor's consideration. This abundant "too early" evidence does not fit the Stratford Man model, which dates his earliest plays at circa 1590. The constraints imposed by this model, therefore, forces the expert to conclude that the great author was a plagiarist that stole material from many sources. He makes this judgment despite having not one firm composition date for any play. One can begin to find solutions to these problems once the Stratford Man model is put aside, which is the approach of this chapter.

A. The Problems of Shakespeare Play Dating and Chronology

The Shakespeare professor usually has to work backward in assessing composition dates for the Shakespeare plays, working with end dates of composition, or *terminus a quo*, based upon the date they were first published, entered in the Stationers' Register, or appeared in Francis Meres's 1598 list of Shakespeare's plays. Less than half of the plays can be dated this way – the rest is based on the writing style or mere guess. The experts have formed an approximate composition dating range of 1590 to 1613 for the complete

plays. The starting point is based upon one supposed allusion to Shakespeare as a new writer published in 1592 (Robert Greene's Groats-worth of Wit). The end point is based on the morris dance in The Two Noble Kinsmen (3.5), which was copied from a masque written by Francis Beaumont in early 1613; it is believed that Shakespeare co-wrote this play with John Fletcher in a state of semi-retirement. In an approximate time frame of twenty-four years, therefore, the Shakespeare professor must find a way to cram thirty-eight or more plays. Accepting "new" plays into the Shakespeare canon, such as Edward III, makes this tight model even more unwieldy. Besides the 38 plays solidly attributed to him are plays labeled "Shakespeare Apocrypha," which comprise the seven plays added to the Third Folio (1664 edition). Among them, Pericles, Prince of Tyre, is an accepted Shakespeare play, but the authorship of the other six (The London Prodigal, The Puritan Widow, A Yorkshire Tragedy, The Tragedy of Locrine, The History of Thomas, Lord Cromwell, and Sir John Oldcastle) is doubtful or denied. More plays "to be considered" as Shakespeare's include Thomas of Woodstock (or Richard II-Part 1), and Edmund Ironside. There is also the lost Shakespeare play, Love's Labour's Won, that Meres had mentioned; it must have been printed because this title was included in a bookseller's list of items sold in August 1603.2

The lack of parallels in the Stratford Man's biography to themes or situations in the Shakespeare plays is a large obstacle in dating them. Meanwhile, allusions in the plays to current historical events that could help them get ignored because they occur too early in the Stratford Man's life. For example, the experts consider it fact that Shakespeare made a contemporary reference to Robert Devereux, 2^{nd} Earl of Essex, in *Henry V* – that he was the "General of our gracious Empress" that Shakespeare had imagined having a triumphant return to London "from Ireland."

Were now the General of our gracious Empress, As in good time he may, from Ireland coming, Bringing Rebellion broachéd on his Sword, How many would the peaceful City quit, To welcome him? [Act 5, chorus, lines 30-34]

It is true that Queen Elizabeth had sent an army to Ireland in 1599 with Essex as general to put down Irish rebels, but he completely failed in his mission and returned in disgrace. He had set out with an 18,000-man army, and three months later, only 4,000 men were left.³ The queen ordered Essex to carry on with the war but instead he signed a truce with the rebel leader, the Earl of Tyrone. Then he abandoned his post without permission and hurried back to London. Ramon Jiménez's analysis of this passage shows that Shakespeare had a different general in mind, one that met with a notable success.⁴ In 1583,

the English forces under general Thomas Butler, $10^{\rm th}$ Earl of Ormond, caught the Irish rebel, Earl of Desmond. Desmond was decapitated and his head was brought on a sword to Ormond; later the head was brought to the queen. So it was General Ormond who brought "rebellion broachéd on his sword." *Henry V* therefore, should be dated circa 1583-84 rather than circa 1598-99.

B. The Problem of "Too Early" Allusions to Shakespeare's Plays in Other Works

The experts have found numerous examples of phrases or unusual word clusters in Shakespeare's plays that are similar to those in the works of other writers. Since many were written "too early" to be echoes of Shakespeare, the experts are forced to believe that the great author was stealing or "improving" the work of lesser writers, that Shakespeare was "derivative." But as he cannot firmly date any Shakespeare play, it is open to debate as to who borrowed from whom. In many cases, these same "derivative" authors actually borrowed from Shakespeare but this usually goes unnoticed. In fact, the two earliest works in print with Shakespeare's name, Venus and Adonis (1593) and The Rape of Lucrece (1594), were immediately imitated and plagiarized by several writers.⁵ In Appendix A, I have compiled 93 "too early" allusions to 32 different Shakespeare plays made by 30 different writers in 53 different works or sources. Taking this substantial amount of borrowing into account, and the great author's creative genius, it is far more likely that these "derivative" writers were actually imitating, or echoing lines from, Shakespeare's great and already popular plays. If the "too early" allusion to a Shakespeare line does not fall into the derivative or plagiarist categories, then the expert will usually declare it a "commonplace" or proverbial expression first recorded by Shakespeare.

This section will detail twelve "too early" allusions to one of Shakespeare's greatest masterpieces, *Hamlet*, from twelve different sources. They are dated circa 1588 to 1597, yet the Shakespeare professor still believes that Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was written circa 1600-01. One allusion appeared in a letter about the current literary scene by the professional writer, Thomas Nashe. It was so obviously an allusion to Shakespeare's play, and so damaging to the orthodox dating of the entire Shakespeare canon, that a clever excuse was created: Nashe alluded to an earlier, now "lost" play about Hamlet upon which Shakespeare based his play. This theoretical play has been dubbed "Ur-Hamlet." "Ur" means "original." *The "Ur-Hamlet" is a complete invention with no basis in fact.* As most of the twelve "too early" allusions to *Hamlet* have unusual word clusters that mimic those used in Shakespeare's play, the Ur explanation is useless. A few experts believe that the non-existent "Ur-Hamlet" was written by Shakespeare, but even an early version of this intellectually

and psychologically complex drama could not be placed near the start of his dramatic output without completely disrupting the currently accepted timeline for the rest of his plays.

On September 7, 1598, Palladis Tamia, or Wit's Treasury by Francis Meres was registered for publication. The book listed twelve Shakespeare play titles, including Henry IV, which comprises two separate plays. So by September 1598, it cannot be denied that Shakespeare had written thirteen plays. The Shakespeare professor would add another four plays that Meres did not list (all three parts of Henry VI, and Taming of the Shrew), totaling seventeen plays in an estimated time period of about nine years (1590-98). Contrast this supposed output, for example, with that of Christopher Marlowe: seven plays written in a seven or eight year period. The expert attributes Shakespeare's high output of amazing quality in so short a time simply to the "miracle of genius." The evidence compiled in Appendix A explodes this facile explanation: sixteen additional Shakespeare plays were alluded to by 1598. With the Stratford Man model, it would mean that he had written thirty-three plays in approximately nine years, among them, two of his greatest tragedies; this does not include the eight separate but early Shakespeare play versions named in Section C, all written by 1594, which, presuming they were written by Shakespeare, would total 41 plays in eight or nine years. Add to this dramatic pile Shakespeare's two popular narrative poems and enough sonnets to warrant mention by Meres. The Stratford Man model simply cannot contain such a gargantuan effort in so short a period of time. Below are the twelve "too early" allusions to Shakespeare's Hamlet, dates in brackets reflect the orthodox dating. The complete compilation of "too early" allusions to Shakespeare's plays is placed in Appendix A, with a summary of the study placed at the end of this chapter.

Twelve "Too Early" Allusions to Shakespeare's Hamlet

(1). circa 1588: "Too early" allusion to *Hamlet* [1600-01?].

Thomas Kyd (?), play, *Soliman and Perseda*. Although registered on November 20, 1592, this play can be dated to circa 1588. Editor John J. Murray noted that at this time there was a vogue for plays with Turkish conquerors, like Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (1587), and complimentary references to the Spanish in the play must have predated the Spanish Armada battle of August 1588.⁶

In *Soliman and Perseda* (4.1.77-78), Soliman compares Perseda's hair to that of a sun god and her forehead to Jove:⁷

Fair locks resembling Phoebus [sun god] radiant beams,

Smooth forehead like the table of high Jove ...

In *Hamlet* (3.4.57), the title character compares his father's hair to that of a sun god and his forehead to Jove:

Hyperion's [sun god] curls, the front [forchead] of Jove himself ...

Soliman and Perseda contains "too early" allusions to three more Shakespeare plays, as shown in Appendix A (nos. 31-34).

(2). circa 1588: "Too early" allusion to Hamlet [1600-01?].

John Lyly, play, *Mother Bombie* (registered June 18, 1594 and printed that year). The play definitely dates earlier than the year of registration because it was first performed by the Children of Paul's, a company that was suspended or disbanded in early 1590 for about a decade. Most scholars, including Michael Pincombe, date the play circa 1588.8

Mother Bombie:9

the nearer we are in blood, the further we must be from love; and the greater the kindred is, the less the kindness must be. [3.1]

A line in Hamlet (1.2.65), first printed in Quarto 2 (1604-05):

KING CLAUDIUS
But now my Cousin Hamlet, and my son.

HAMLET
A little more than kin, and less than kind.

Lyly's play also has a "too early" allusion to King Lear (Appendix A, No. 29).

(3). circa 1589: "Too early" allusion to Hamlet [1600-01?].

Anonymous play, *Histrio-mastix, or the Player Whipp'd* (first printed 1610). This play has no consensus on dating. Roslyn Knutson demonstrated that John Marston was not the play's author, freeing it from the supposed circa 1599 dating, and noted that it contained allusions that were "plausibly topical in 1588-91." E.K. Chambers's latest date for the play was 1591, and believed, like others, that it was an academic play rather than one written for the public theater. *Histrio-mastix* referred to Marlowe's play, *Tamburlaine* (ca. 1587), and evidently satirized its lead actor, Edward Alleyn. The line, "O, sweet-

heart, the Spaniards are come!" (Act 5, line 234), argues for a date after the 1588 Armada invasion. For these reasons, the play is here dated circa 1589.

In *Histrio-mastix* (Act 2, lines 160-61), two characters enter with a dog ("water-spaniel") and a duck:

VOURCHIER
One of the goodliest Spaniels I have seen.

LYON-RASH
And here's the very quintessence of ducks.

Charles Cathcart noted this allusion as a "verbal parody of the speech from *Hamlet*," where Hamlet ponders man's attributes:

... The beauty of the world, the paragon of <u>animals</u>; and yet to me, what is this <u>quintessence of dust?</u> [2.2.315-17]

These lines first appeared in print in Quarto 2 of *Hamlet* (1604-05). Another line in the same speech, "What a piece of work is man," is echoed in *Histriomastix* (Act 5, line 246): "O, what a thing is man ..." *Histrio-mastix* also alludes to Shakespeare's play, *Troilus and Cressida* (Appendix A, No. 41).

(4). 1589: "Too early" allusion to *Hamlet* [1600-01?].

Thomas Nashe, prefatory letter to Robert Greene's novel, Menaphon (registered August 23, 1589).

Nashe's long letter about the current literary scene was addressed to "the Gentlemen Students of Both Universities." In one line he refers to "Hamlet" with its "handfuls of tragical speeches" written by "English Seneca." Since the Shakespeare professor does not believe that Shakespeare was an established London playwright in 1589, he can only theorize that Nashe's reference was to an earlier play about Hamlet that has been lost – the "Ur-Hamlet." The presence of the word "Kid" two sentences following it, it is further believed, was a punning reference to the playwright, Thomas Kyd: ergo, Kyd was the writer of this "Ur-Hamlet." This explanation has not satisfied many orthodox scholars, including Nashe's editor, Ronald McKerrow, but it has stuck for over two centuries for lack of a better one; today it is treated as fact. Yet Nashe's line can be credibly explained as an allusion to Shakespeare's Hamlet when placed into its proper context and if the Stratford Man model is deferred.

In the following passage, Nashe poked fun at writers who translate, with little ability, the Latin works of the ancient Roman writer, Seneca, and use this material for "endeavors of Art," later identified as "stage" writing.

I'll turn back to my first text, of studies of delight; and talk a little in friendship with a few of our trivial translators. It is a common practice nowadays amongst a sort of shifting companions, that run through every art and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *Noverint* [scrivener/scribe] whereto they are born, and busy themselves with the endeavors of Art, that could scarcely Latinize their neck-verse if they should have need; yet English Seneca ...

Nashe makes one exception among those who translate Seneca for play material: a writer of "tragical speeches" whom he calls "English Seneca." Nashe clearly separates English Seneca from the "trivial translators" with a semicolon followed by the transition term, "yet."

yet English Seneca read by candlelight yields many good sentences, as Blood is a Beggar, and so forth: and if you entreat him fair in a frosty morning, he will afford you whole Hamlets, I should say handfuls of tragical speeches. But o grief! [italics original]

Most commentators would say that "English Seneca" refers to a book, a translation of Seneca into English. There was such a book printed in 1581, Seneca His Ten Tragedies, but the choice sentence, "Blood is a Beggar," is not in it or in any work of Seneca. English Seneca is clearly a person, an English dramatist who writes as well as, or like, Roman Seneca. Nashe recommends these lesser writers to read the work of English Seneca, and that if they "entreat him fair," i.e., ask him nicely, "he will afford" them "handfuls of tragical speeches" from Hamlet. Since no English play called Hamlet had yet been printed, Nashe was apparently encouraging the "trivial translators" to approach English Seneca personally to see the manuscript copy of his play.

In the lines that follow, Nashe reports that since the "trivial translators" of Latin have translated Seneca "to death" for "our stage" (i.e., the theater), they now (ca. 1589) "leap into a new occupation" of translating Italian authors.

But o grief! tempus edax rerum, what's that will last always? The sea exhaled by drops will in continuance be dry, and Seneca let blood line by line and page by page, at length must needs die to our stage: which makes his famished followers to imitate the Kid in Aesop, who enamored with the Fox's newfangles, forsook all hopes of life to leap into a new occupation; and these men renouncing all possibilities of credit or estimation, to intermeddle with Italian translations:

To describe the new vogue among writers of translating Italian works into English, Nashe evokes Aesop's fable about a kid (young goat) and a fox.12 The fox had tempted the kid out of safety with a new-fangled object and then devoured him. As mentioned above, the Shakespeare professor connects the "kid" reference to writer Thomas Kyd, and this I do concur. Kyd probably wrote the heavily Senecan play, The Spanish Tragedy, which was performed circa 1587. In 1588, Kyd translated a prose work by the Italian writer, Torquato Tasso,13 so one could say that he "leapt into a new occupation." Kyd was also "born" into the trade of "noverint," a scrivener or scribe; this was his father's occupation. Kyd, therefore, could be counted among those "trivial translators" that Nashe was needling, but he was not English Seneca, the clear exception among writers. The Shakespeare professor makes the connection between a play called Hamlet and Thomas Kyd merely from the proximity of the two words "Hamlets" and "Kid," not from reading the sense of the passage. This groundless "evidence" is enough to proclaim the existence of Kyd's "Ur-Hamlet," thereby assigning an invented authorship to an invented play.

Instead of theorizing about "Ur-Hamlet" the Shakespeare professor should try to identify English Seneca with the clues that Nashe had provided. First it must be assumed that the identity of English Seneca was already known to university students, the addressees of the letter, otherwise Nashe would not have used this epithet. English Seneca was obviously influenced by Roman Seneca. He wrote a tragedy about Hamlet. Now the Englishman Shakespeare wrote a very famous play called Hamlet, performed at both universities (according to the first printed edition in 1603), and several of his tragedies show a marked influence of Seneca. Indeed, Francis Meres compared Shakespeare with Seneca in 1598.

As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latins: so Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage; [Palladis Tamia, or Wit's Treasury]

Later, in the First Folio, Ben Jonson compared Shakespeare to six classical writers, including "him of Cordova dead," i.e., Seneca, who hailed from Cordoba, Spain. Considering the conjunction of "English Seneca" and "whole Hamlets" in the same sentence, it is perhaps not coincidental that the sole mention of Seneca in the entire Shakespeare canon occurs in Hamlet (2.2.409): "Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light." So "English Seneca" was a fitting name for Shakespeare. (Shakespeare was also called "English Terence" by John Davies of Hereford after Terence, the ancient Roman comedy writer.) Nashe provided a quote from English Seneca in his preface letter: "Blood is a Beggar," which was set apart in the text by italics. Shakespeare may prove to

be the only writer of this period to have written a similar phrase, "Beggar'd of blood," published twenty years later in Sonnet 67. Samuel Daniel had also seen Shakespeare's Sonnet 67 – as early as 1592, says Claes Schaar, ¹⁴ and had borrowed "phrases and image fragments" from it for his poem, *The Complaint of Rosamond*:

Such one was I [Rosamond], my beauty was mine own, No borrowed blush which banck-rot [bankrupt] beauties seek: The new-found shame, a sin to us unknown, Th'adulterate beauty of a falsed cheek: [lines 134-37]

Compare with lines in Shakespeare's Sonnet 67:

Why should <u>false</u> painting imitate his <u>cheek</u>, And steal dead seeing of his living hue? Why should poor <u>beauty</u> indirectly <u>seek</u> Roses of shadow, since his Rose is true? Why should he live, now nature <u>bankrout</u> [bankrupt] <u>is</u>, Beggar'd of blood to blush through lively veins ...

Another clue points to Shakespeare as English Seneca. When Nashe advised the translators to "entreat him fair," meaning English Seneca, he was employing a favorite Shakespearean expression, one that occurred in five of his plays. ¹⁵ In the line after "whole *Hamlets*," Nashe used the Latin phrase, "tempus edax rerum." This line appears in *The Troublesome Reign of John, King of England* (scene 11), a play later attributed to Shakespeare. ¹⁶ Nashe's letter in *Menaphon* provides enough evidence to show that English Seneca was Shakespeare and that *Hamlet* had been written as early as 1589. There is no need to presume or invent the existence of an earlier lost play. The additional "too early" allusions to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in this section, all dated well before the play's orthodox dating of circa 1600-01, fortify this conclusion.

If any heavenly joy in woman be, Sweet of all sweets, sweet Nell it is in thee. [scene 3]

In Hamlet, Queen Gertrude throws flowers on Ophelia's grave:

^{(5).} circa 1590: "Too early" allusion to Hamlet [1600-01?].

George Peele, play, *Edward I* (registered October 8, 1593, published the same year). The consensus for the dating of this play is ca. 1590-91.¹⁷

In Edward I, the title character says to Queen Elinor:

Sweets to the sweet, farewell! [5.1.245]

Peele's Edward I uses the phrase, "mounting mind," to describe Queen Elinor (Scene 1). This same phrase appeared in *Love's Labour's Lost* (4.1.4) as noted by editor A.H. Bullen in *The Works of George Peele* (1888).

(6). circa 1592: "Too early" allusion to Hamlet [1600-01].

Christopher Marlowe, play, Edward II.

While Marlowe's character, Young Mortimer, is about to be taken away and executed, he speaks to the queen:

Farewell, fair Queen; weep not for Mortimer, That <u>scorns the world</u>, and as a <u>traveler</u>, Goes to <u>discover countries</u> yet <u>un</u>known. [5.6]

Compare the lines above with the two quarto versions of Hamlet's famous soliloquy on suicide. *Hamlet*, Quarto 1 (1603):

For in that dream of death, when we awake,
And borne before an everlasting Judge,
From whence no <u>passenger</u> ever return'd,
The <u>undiscovered country</u>, and the accurs'd damn'd.
But for this, the joyful hope of this
Who'ld bear the <u>scorns</u> and flattery of <u>the world</u>,
Scorned by the right rich, the rich cursed of the poor? [Scene 18]

Hamlet, Quarto 2 (1604-1605):

For who would bear the whips and scorns of time ...

But that the dread of something after death, The <u>undiscover'd country</u>, from whose borne No <u>traveler</u> returns, puzzles the will ... [Signature G2]

Marlowe's play contains "too early" allusions to three other Shakespeare plays (Appendix A, nos. 60-62). Robert Southwell, in a work that was circulating in manuscript by 1591 (*Saint Peter's Complaint*), ¹⁸ used the phrase "The scorn of Time" (Stanza 5). ¹⁹

(7). 1593: "Too early" allusion to Hamlet [1600-01?].

Gabriel Harvey, essay, A New Letter of Notable Contents (reg. October 1, 1593).

A New Letter (signature B3):

May they not surcease to wonder, that wonder how Machiavell can teach a Prince to be, and not to be, religious? Another question, or two of a sharper edge, were at my tongue's end.

Shakespeare's Prince Hamlet (3.1.56):

To be, or not to be, that is the Question:

Harvey's italics (with the exception of "and," which was not in Shakespeare's line) indicates a quotation. Harvey mixed Shakespeare's very famous line from Prince Hamlet's very famous soliloquy with an allusion to Machiavelli's treatise, *The Prince.*²⁰

(8). 1593: "Too early" allusion to Hamlet [1600-01?].

Michael Drayton, poem, Piers Gaveston, Earl of Cornwall (reg. Dec. 3, 1593).

Piers Gaveston (line 995-96):

Base <u>dunghill</u> mind, that dost such <u>slavery</u> bring, To live a <u>peasant</u>, and be born a King.

Ross D. Waller noted the unusual word cluster of "dunghill," "slavery" and "peasant" in Drayton's lines with one line spoken by Shakespeare's Hamlet.²¹ The line in question was transmitted slightly differently in quartos 1 and 2 of *Hamlet* (2.2.560).

Hamlet, Quarto 1 (published 1603):

Why what a dunghill idiot slave am I?

Hamlet, Quarto 2 (published 1604-05) and Folio versions:

Oh, what a rogue and peasant slave am I?

(9). 1594: "Too early" allusion to Hamlet [1600-01?].

Thomas Nashe, essay, Christ's Tears Over Jerusalem (2nd edition).

Nashe criticizes Gabriel Harvey in the "Epistle to the Reader":

His [Harvey's] vainglory (which some take to be <u>his gentlewoman</u>) he hath new <u>painted</u> over <u>an inch thick</u>.

Shakespeare's Hamlet holds the skull of the jester, Yorick, and says to it:

Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come. Make her laugh at that. [5.1.195-96]

Joseph W. DeMent noted this allusion, and another from Henry IV-Part 1 (Appendix A, nos. 75-76), in Shakespeare Quarterly.²²

(10). 1594: "Too early" allusion to Hamlet [1600-01?].

Diary of Philip Henslowe: "Hamlet," the performance of a play recorded on June 9, 1594. 23

(11). 1596: "Too early" allusion to Hamlet [1600-01?].

Thomas Lodge, pamphlet, Wit's Misery, and the World's Madness.

Lodge compared the devil to the ghost in *Hamlet*, which he saw at a playhouse called "The Theatre." The devil is as pale as

the ghost which cried so miserably at the Theatre, like an oyster wife, *Hamlet*, *revenge*: [p. 56]

The Theatre was built in 1576 and torn down in 1597 (its foundation was discovered in 2008). The 1603 printed edition of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was registered as "A book called the Revenge of Hamlet, Prince [of] Denmark..."²⁴ Thomas Dekker's 1601 play, *Satiro-mastix or the Untrussing of the Humorous Poet*, also referred to the "revenge" portion of the play's title:

my name's Hamlet revenge: Thou hast been at Paris garden hast not? [4.1.150]

The Paris Garden was the London theater district. Satiro-mastix also referred to other Shakespeare plays: Anthony and Cleopatra ("Come, buss thy little Anthony now, now, my clean Cleopatra") in 3.1.314, Justice Shallow (character in Henry IV-Part 2 and Merry Wives of Windsor) in 2.2, Timon of Athens in 5.2.210, and The Comedy of Errors in the 1602 edition's letter to the reader ("behold this short Comedy of Errors").

An Humorous Day's Mirth (2.2.7):

A king of clouts [rags], a scarecrow, full of cobwebs ...

Hamlet (1603 edition):

A king of clouts, of very shreds. [scene 11, line 49]

Scholars know that Chapman borrowed details from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* for his play, *Bussy D'Ambois* (1604): one character says that "faulty apprehensions" form dragons, lions and elephants from clouds (3.1.23-25), and Shakespeare's Hamlet teased Polonius into seeing clouds shaped like a camel, weasel and a whale (3.2.384-90, 1603 ed.). In *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* (c. 1610), Chapman "imitated the closet scene between Hamlet and his mother." Chapman also borrowed "rude mechanicals," from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for his translation of Homer's *Odyssey* (1609).

C. The Problem of Early Versions of the Shakespeare Plays

Eight anonymously written plays of the Elizabethan period are directly related to Shakespeare's plays and have similar titles. Most are considered as the source of the corresponding Shakespeare play. Although they are distinctly separate from Shakespeare's plays, they share similar plots and characters, and sometimes similar phrases and metaphors. In some cases, the Shakespeare play and the earlier anonymous play are so closely related that knowledge of the earlier play will explain irregularities in plot or dialogue in the Shakespeare play. The expert's conundrum is how to place the early plays: did the great author plagiarize them, or are they his early versions later rewritten with a more mature hand? Seven of these plays were registered or printed between 1591 and 1595 (five in 1594) and one survived in manuscript only, but not in the author's hand. If Shakespeare did not pen these early plays, then who did? No other author claimed them, or was claimed for them. There is one exception: *The Troublesome Reign of John, King of England* (No. 5 below) which was ascribed to "W. Sh." (1611 edition) and "W. Shakespeare" (1622 edition).

The experts accept that at least portions of *The Contention* (No. 1 below) and the *True Tragedy of Richard, Duke of York* (No. 2 below) were written by Shakespeare, but they do not regard them as early versions of *Henry VI*, parts two and three – they are bad quartos of the plays.²⁹ But the differences between these two sets of plays, wrote Jane Lee, are too substantial for the bad quarto theory to hold:

... we must suppose that some dramatist took [Shakespeare's] stolen copies or his shorthand notes and regularly rewrote them. We

^{(12). 1597: &}quot;Too early" allusion to Hamlet [1600-01?].

George Chapman, play, An Humorous Day's Mirth (acted May 11, 1597). 25

must suppose that he newly versified the plays; that he introduced fresh circumstances; that he added much new and poor matter; and that he left out the greatest and most thoughtful passages. On no other supposition can the *Contention* and *True Tragedy* be imperfect copies of *Henry VI*., Parts 2 and 3.³⁰

The experts cannot accept these two plays as "separate but early" versions by Shakespeare because they are not his top quality and because they would be too early - meaning a composition date outside of the accepted timeline. If they did accept them as early versions, then they would have to likewise accept or seriously consider as Shakespeare's the other similar plays (nos. 3-8 below). And as separate plays, how can they possibly fit into an already overcrowded chronology? If all eight were accepted as "separate but early" Shakespeare plays, then it would push the great author's total output to 46 plays (38 + 8) written during approximately twenty-four years. To see the similarities between these anonymously written plays and Shakespeare's one must study them both, but even a glance at the titles as first published for both works is telling. Although these plays are mostly rejected by the Shakespeare professor as the great author's work, the authorial status of items 3 to 8 below remains undecided. Accepting them all into the Shakespeare canon would force the Shakespeare professor to open his composition dates to the 1580s, when there was no sign of the Stratford Man in London, the theater center. Questionable early play versions are unique to Shakespeare. Making this problem even more acute, Appendix A (nos. 7-8, 12) exposes "too early" allusions to Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew in 1578 and Timon of Athens in 1579. This would mean that their corresponding early versions (nos. 4 and 8 below) would have to be dated even earlier than that. The True Tragedy of Richard the Third (No. 3 below), a possible early version of Shakespeare's Richard III, may have inspired the lost ballad, "A Tragical Report of King Richard the 3," which was registered on August 15, 1586.31 All of these plays need reevaluation of composition dates based upon contemporary evidence rather than trying to fit them within the dubious Stratford Man model. In the list below, the first title is the proposed "early version" play and the second title is the corresponding Shakespeare play. Brackets contain the earliest publication dates.

Early Versions of Shakespeare's Plays

 First Part of the Contention Betwixt the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster, with the Death of the Good Duke Humphrey: [1594]
 and

The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth, with the Death of the Good Duke Humphrey [First Folio, 1623]

 The True Tragedy of Richard, Duke of York, and the death of good King Henry the Sixth, with the whole contention between the two houses Lancaster and York [1595]

and

The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth. With the Death of the Duke of York [First Folio, 1623]

 The True Tragedy of Richard the Third: Wherein is shown the death of Edward the Fourth, with the smothering of the two young princes in the Tower [1594]

and

The Tragedy of King Richard the Third. Containing, His treacherous plots against his brother Clarence: the pitiful murder of his innocent nephews ... [1597]

4. A Pleasant Conceited History, called The Taming of A Shrew [1594] and

The Taming of The Shrew [First Folio, 1623]

 The Troublesome Reign of John, King of England, with the discovery of King Richard Cordelion's base son (vulgarly named, The Bastard Falconbridge): also the death of King John at Swinstead Abbey.
 [1591, published in two parts]

and

The Life and Death of King John [First Folio, 1623]

 The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth: Containing the honorable battle of Agincourt [registered May 14, 1594; first surviving edition, 1598]
 and

The Chronicle History of Henry the Fifth, with his battle fought at Agincourt in France ... [1600]

 The True Chronicle History of King Leir and His Three Daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordella [registered May 14, 1594; first surviving edition, 1605]

and

M. William Shak-speare: His True Chronicle History of the Life and Death of King Lear and his Three Daughters.
[First recorded performance Dec. 26, 1606; published in 1607]

 Timon [manuscript, circa 1581-1591, Victoria and Albert Museum] and

The Life of Timon of Athens [First Folio, 1623]

D. The Problem of "Too Early" Shakespeare Play References in the Oueen's Revels

Possible references to six different Shakespeare plays are contained in the surviving revels accounts, a record of entertainments given before Queen Elizabeth I and her court (she never attended a public theater). They were acted between the years 1566 and 1585 – "too early" to be Shakespeare play references because the Stratford Man was too young or because they fall outside the traditional composition dates. Had they conformed to the Stratford Man model, they would have naturally been considered as the great author's early plays with titles that were later changed. As no Shakespeare play has a certain composition date, this explanation cannot be ruled out. The most obvious parallels are "The History of Error" (1577) with *The Comedy of Errors*, and "The History of Caesar" (1583) with *The Life and Death of Julius Caesar*.

Queen Elizabeth I was acquainted with Shakespeare's plays. She viewed Love's Labour's Lost and Merry Wives of Windsor, according to the printed editions of 1598 and 1602. Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, or, What You Will, was almost certainly the play performed before the queen and her foreign guests of honor in 1601.32 One of the guests was Virginio Orsino, Duke of Bracciano, and coincidentally, a main character in Twelfth Night is Orsino, Duke of Illyria. A similarity of names between a guest of honor and a main character in an entertainment would certainly flatter the guest. The play was acted on the evening of January 5, 1601, which is called Twelfth Night (the eve of the Epiphany, which is twelve days after Christmas). The Shakespeare play makes no reference to Twelfth Night and has no relevance to Twelfth Night, which implies that the title derived from the day it was performed. What You Will, the subtitle of this play, may have been the original title. (The first allusion to the double title was a diary entry by John Manningham on February 2, 1602 for a performance he saw at Middle Temple, a law society.)33 These three Shakespeare plays shown to the queen, added to the six early revels plays listed below, total nine possible Shakespeare plays shown for the queen's entertainment. Accepting them as such is to accept an altered view of the great author's career - that he was initially a dramatist of the royal court and not a common player who later made a stab at writing for the public stage. It would mean that the great author had early access to the royal court and enjoyed Queen Elizabeth's favor for several decades. Listed below are titles that appeared in the records of the queen's revels and the Shakespeare play it could describe, with following. Eva Turner Clark noted most of them in Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays (New York, 1931). The dates in brackets represent the "orthodox" Shakespeare dating according to Sir Edmund Chambers.34

DATE		QUEEN'S REVELS PLAY TITLE	CORRESPONDING SHAKESPEARE PLAY	
1.	1566 SEPT. 2	Palamon and Arcyte by Richard Edwards	The Two Noble Kinsmen [1612-13?]	
2.	1572 JAN. 1	Ajax and Ulysses	The Tragedy of Troilus and Cressida [1601-02?]	
3.	1577 JAN. 1	The History of Error	The Comedy of Errors [1592-93?]	
4.	1577 FEB. 19	The History of Titus and Gisippus	Two Gentlemen of Verona [1594-95?]	
5.	1579 FEB. 26	A History of the Duke of Milan and the Marquis of Mantua	Two Gentlemen of Verona [1594-95?]	
6.	1583 JAN.	The History of Caesar	The Life and Death of Julius Caesar [1599-00?]	
7.	1583 FEB. 12	A History of Ariodante and Genevora	Much Ado About Nothing [1598-99?]	
8.	1584 DEC. 27	The History of Agamemnon and Ulysses	The Tragedy of Troilus and Cressida [1601-02?]	
9.	1585 JAN. 1	The History of Felix and Philiomena	Two Gentlemen of Verona [1594-95?]	

(1). The "lost" play, "Palamon and Arcite," was performed by students at Oxford University in honor of Queen Elizabeth's visit in 1566. Richard Edwards was the attributed author of this play, and it received smashing reviews by eyewitnesses. Palamon and Arcite are also the main characters in the play, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, attributed to William Shakespeare and John Fletcher on the first printed edition (1634). Although the text of the Oxford University play has not survived, there is a link between it and a phrase in the prologue of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.³⁵

If this play do not keep, A little dull time from us, we perceive Our losses fall so thick, we must needs leave.

The meaning of "Our losses" has baffled scholars but most agree it referred to a current event. Disaster struck shortly before the Oxford University performance: a staircase in the building where the performance was being held had collapsed, killing three people and injuring several more. The show still went on, so acknowledging the tragedy with a few words in the prologue would be expected. The "lost" 1566 play and Shakespeare's play are linked in another way. In *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (5.4.44), Palamon makes this comment after learning that his life has been spared: "Can that be, /When Venus, I have said,

is false?" Nowhere in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* did Palamon berate the goddess, but he did so in the 1566 play. Spectator John Bereblock, in his summary of the 1566 play, wrote that Palamon had prayed to Venus to win a duel for the hand of Emilia. After he lost, Palamon "casts reproaches upon Venus, saying that he had served her from infancy and that now she had neither desire nor power to help him." The play's conclusion was met with "a tremendous shout and clapping of hands." ³⁶

SHAKESPEARE SUPPRESSED

Most scholars agree that the main plot of The Two Noble Kinsmen was composed by Shakespeare, and that the subplot - the play's majority - was written by Fletcher, explaining why his name topped Shakespeare's on the 1634 title page and why it was excluded from the First Folio. Scholars assume that Shakespeare and Fletcher had collaborated and they date the play circa 1613. They also conclude that Shakespeare's portions of The Two Noble Kinsmen were his very last dramatic effort, yet the writing quality is inconsistent with that of his later works. If it were accepted, however, that Shakespeare wrote or co-wrote with Edwards the 1566 play, one could surmise that Fletcher had obtained Shakespeare's portions of the 1566 play and filled it in with his own work several decades later. Another play titled "Palaman and Arcite" had four performances at the Rose Theater in 1594;37 this may have been a revised version of the 1566 play. Ben Jonson's line, "the Play, Palemon," in his play, Bartholomew Fair (4.3), written in 1614, probably alluded to The Two Noble Kinsmen by its earlier title; the earliest reference to a play titled, The Two Noble Kinsmen, occurred on a manuscript dated between 1612 and 1619.38 Shakespeare was familiar with the work of Richard Edwards, who died in the month following the Oxford University performance. Edwards's poem, "In Commendation of Music" (first printed in The Paradise of Dainty Devices in 1576), was quoted in Romeo and Juliet (4.4.155-57, 171-72).

(2) and (8). Shakespeare's play, *Troilus and Cressida*, contains characters that were featured in two "lost" revels plays, "The History of Ajax and Ulysses" (1572), and "The History of Agamemnon and Ulysses" (1584). Shakespeare's storyline involving the Grecian leaders, Ajax, Ulysses and Agamemnon, have little intersection with the love story between the Trojan characters, Troilus and Cressida. The two different plots are of similar importance and weight in the play, so theoretically, the "lost" revels play titles are just as fit a title as "Troilus and Cressida," if these plays were essentially the same one by Shakespeare. Allusions to phrases in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* occurred circa 1588-89, as noted in Appendix A (nos. 24 and 41), even though orthodox dating places it at circa 1601-02.

(3). The January 1577 performance before the queen and her court of the "lost" play, "The History of Error," obviously suggests Shakespeare's play of a similar

name, *The Comedy of Errors*, first printed in 1623. On January 6, 1583, there was another performance at court of "A historie of fferrar," and it contained "diverse new thinges As one Citty, one Battlement of canvas…"³⁹ which suggests the earlier revels play had been revised. Confirmed references to Shakespeare's play varied the title: "a Comedy of Errors" in 1594, "his Errors" in 1598 (regarding a "comedy" by Shakespeare), and "the Play of Errors" in 1604-05.⁴⁰ (A 1580 allusion to Shakespeare's play is noted in Appendix A, No. 18.)

(4), (5) and (9). The "lost" revels play, "Titus and Gissippus" (1577), shared its title with a chapter in The Governour (1531) by Sir Thomas Elyot. In Elyot's story, Titus, upon learning that his best friend, Gissippus, is in love with his fiancée, willingly hands her over to him. This story has a direct parallel in the final scene of Shakespeare's Two Gentlemen of Verona, and is frequently noted by scholars: Valentine surrenders his beloved, Silvia, to his friend, Proteus. (This story also appears in Boccaccio's The Decameron, with characters Tito and Gesippo.) Another "lost" revels play title, "The History of the Duke of Milan and the Marquis of Mantua" (1579), resembles characters in Shakespeare's Two Gentlemen of Verona. The Duke of Milan in Shakespeare's play banishes Valentine after he attempts elopement with his daughter. After leaving the city in disgrace, Valentine encounters a group of outlaws and eventually becomes their leader; they "work" in the forest of Mantua. As Mantua was a marquisate, Valentine could be described as the "outlaw" Marquis of Mantua who is at odds with the Duke of Milan. The "lost" revels play titled, "The History of Felix and Philiomena" (1585), was probably based on a Spanish story by Jorge de Montemayor called Diana Enamorada (1542). In Montemayor's story, Felismena, disguised as a boy, becomes the "page" to her lover, Felix, who employs "him" to woo Celia; a similar situation occurs in Two Gentlemen involving the characters Julia, Proteus and Silvia.

(6). The "lost" play, "The History of Caesar," presented at the royal court in January 1583, may have been what was later titled, *The Life and Death of Julius Caesar*, in Shakespeare's First Folio, where it debuted in print. Lines in Shakespeare's play were alluded to as early as 1589 (Appendix A, No. 45), and Henslowe's diary recorded a play about Caesar in two parts in 1594.⁴¹ Over 150 masquers, including one in the costume of Julius Caesar, performed at the royal court on Feb. 1, 1562.⁴² The two royal entertainments of 1562 and 1583 may have been related to Shakespeare's play.

(7). The "lost" revels play, "A History of Ariodante and Genevora," presented in 1583, was evidently based upon a story with the same characters in Canto 5 of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1516). Shakespeare made use of this same

canto for his play, *Much Ado About Nothing*. Shakespeare's characters Hero, Claudio and Don John mirror those in Ariosto's story: Ariodante (Hero) is accused of infidelity by Genevora (Claudio), who is made to believe by false testimony (Don John) that he saw her with another man at her bedroom window; Genevora (Claudio) then rejects her. This same plot occurs between the lovers Sir Timbreo and Fenicia in Matteo Bandello's *Novelle* (1554). Scholars believe that "Panecia," another "lost" play acted before the queen on January 1, 1575, was a misspelling of Fenicia, and therefore another possible early source for *Much Ado*. "Panecia," of course, may have been the earliest reference to Shakespeare's *Much Ado*. A "too early" allusion of *Much Ado* occurred in late 1592 (Appendix A, No. 64).

Conclusion

Because the Stratford Man left posterity no clues about his education or his literary biography, or other significant details of his life, the Shakespeare professor cannot provide one solid date of composition for any Shakespeare play, or a solid writing order for the plays in total. Meanwhile he usually ignores "too early" references to the plays and possible early versions of the plays because they do not fit the accepted timeline for the Stratford Man. Or he explains them away by saying the great author plagiarized other writers or that he co-wrote with other writers or that he rewrote or retouched or recast other writers' works, all without proof. He would rather doubt the great author's creative genius than question the Stratford Man's authorship. He even invents early, lost plays that Shakespeare must have based his upon, labeled with the prefix "Ur," to fathom their existence. The great author was evidently connected to the court, as some revels plays descriptive of Shakespeare's plays were performed before Queen Elizabeth in the 1560s to 1580s, decades before the experts believe Shakespeare was writing. The superabundance of "too early" allusions to Shakespeare's plays dated 1562 to 1606 (compiled in Appendix A) would lead any observer without preconceived notions to conclude that almost every Shakespeare play was written earlier than the conventional timeline. The great author did not plagiarize. Many admiring writers were borrowing lines, scenes and subject matter from Shakespeare's plays that he had already made famous - borrowing possibly made in homage. The Shakespeare professor's passionate attachment to the Stratford Man model in light of these allusions defies common sense.

First "Too Early" Allusions to Shakespeare's Plays, Chronological* (Appendix A)

1562	Romeo and Juliet	[1594-95?]
1578	The Taming of the Shrew	[1593-94?]
1578	Measure for Measure	[1604-05?]
1579	The Merchant of Venice	[1596-97?]
1579	Timon of Athens	[1607-08?]
1579	Anthony and Cleopatra	[1606-07?]
1579	King John	[1596-97?]
1579	Twelfth Night	[1599-00?]
1579	Much Ado About Nothing	[1598-99?]
1579	Henry IV-Part 2	[1597-98?]
1583	Cymbeline	[1609-10?]
1587	Henry VI-Part 1	[1591-92?]
1587	Richard III	[1592-93?]
1587	Julius Caesar	[1599-00?]
1587	Merry Wives of Windson	[1600-01?]
1588	Titus Andronicus	[1593-94?]
1588	Troilus and Cressida	[1601-02?]
1588	Richard II	[1595-96?]
1588	King Lear	[1605-06?]
1588	Hamlet	[1600-01?]
1589	Henry VI-Part 2	[1590-01?]
1589	Henry VI-Part 3	[1590-91?]
1589	Henry IV-Part 1	[1597-98?]
1589	Othello	[1604-05?]
1592	As You Like It	[1599-00?]
1592	Love's Labour's Lost	[1594-95?]
1593	The Tempest	[1611-12?]
1593	A Midsummer Night's Dream	[1595-96?]
1593	The Winter's Tale	[1610-11?]
1596	Macbeth	[1605-06?]
1601	Pericles	[1608-09?]
1606	The Two Noble Kinsmen	[1612-13?]

^{*}The plays may have been written before these dates, or revised after these dates. The dates of composition in brackets and question marks are those estimated by E.K. Chambers.

Possible Shakespeare Plays Acted before Queen Elizabeth (Section D)

1566	The Two Noble Kinsmen
1572	Troilus and Cressida
1577	The Comedy of Errors
1577	The Two Gentlemen of Verona
1579	Twelfth Night
1583	Julius Caesar
	Much Ado About Nothing

"Early Version" Shakespeare Plays* (Section C)

Timon [manuscript]
The Troublesome Reign of John,
King of England
The Contention Betwixt the Two Famous
Houses of York and Lancaster
The True Tragedy of Richard, Duke of York
The True Tragedy of Richard the Third
The Taming of A Shrew
The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth
The True Chronicle History of King Leir and His Three Daughters

*All written by 1594.

Plays Possibly Written by Shakespeare

Edward III
Edmund Ironside
Thomas of Woodstock (or The Tragedy of
Richard II, Part 1)

Lost Shakespeare Play

Love's Labour's Won

Shakespeare's Plays Listed in Palladis Tamia, or Wit's Treasury (1598)*

The Two Gentlemen of Verona
The Comedy of Errors
Love's Labour's Lost
Love's Labour's Won [lost play]
A Midsummer Night's Dream
The Merchant of Venice
Richard II
Richard III
Henry IV [presumably parts 1 and 2]
King John
Titus Andronicus
Romeo and Juliet

*Listed in the order stated by the author, Francis Meres.

Shakespeare Plays (17) printed before the First Folio (1594-1622)

Hamlet Henry IV-Part 1 Henry IV-Part 2 Henry V King Lear Love's Labour's Lost The Merchant of Venice Merry Wives of Windsor A Midsummer Night's Dream Much Ado About Nothing Othello Pericles Richard II Richard III Romeo and Juliet Titus Andronicus Troilus and Cressida

Shakespeare Plays (20) with Print Debut in the First Folio (1623)

All's Well that Ends Well Anthony and Cleopatra As You Like It The Comedy of Errors Coriolanus Cymbeline Henry VI-Part 1 Henry VI-Part 2 Henry VI-Part 3 Henry VIII Iulius Caesar King John Macbeth Measure for Measure The Taming of the Shrew The Tempest Timon of Athens Twelfth Night The Two Gentlemen of Verona The Winter's Tale

Shakespeare Play with Print Debut after the First Folio

The Two Noble Kinsmen (1634) (with later additions by John Fletcher)

Plays Added to the Third Folio (1664)*

Pericles
The London Prodigal
The History of Thomas, Lord Cromwell
Sir John Oldcastle
The Puritan Widow
A Yorkshire Tragedy
The Tragedy of Locrine

CHAPTER 4

The Sonnets and Other Puzzle-Poems

THE INTROSPECTIVE AUTHOR of Shakespeare's sonnets, which were written in the first person, describes himself as a nobleman with a tarnished reputation. His love and admiration for a younger aristocrat, and his sexual obsession with a dark beauty, his mistress, were also described. This blatantly autobiographical picture clashes spectacularly with the known life of the Stratford Man. The Shakespeare professor, consequently, struggles with every aspect of the sonnets, if he does not outright deny that they were autobiographical. Shakespeare's poem, A Lover's Complaint, likewise centered upon a nobleman, and one that had talents similar to those that the great author displayed in his works; it too was written in the first person. A Lover's Complaint was evidently an expansion on the theme of a shorter poem written circa 1570 by the 17th Earl of Oxford. Sir George Greenwood described Shakespeare's two poems in Love's Martyr as "puzzle-poems." The underlying subject of these morbid but majestic verses may be puzzling, but even more puzzling is why the great author involved himself in a politically dangerous publication, a work that allegorically contradicted the "fact" of Queen Elizabeth's virginity and broached the taboo topic of the succession. The Passionate Pilgrim by "W. Shakespeare," a small collection of poems, was a notorious piracy. Although privately this unauthorized publication had "offended" the great author, he never publicly complained about it or took legal recourse against the publisher. The experts dismiss Shakespeare's authorship of eleven of the twenty poems it contained, yet they were never credited to anyone else. Have they been put off by evidence of "too early" dating? This chapter will explore these four Shakespeare poetry works, which, excepting the sonnets, get mild attention by the Shakespeare professor and are generally unknown to readers - in fact, none of these works were openly discussed until several generations after their publication. These poetry works in total support the conclusion that they were authored by a man of high rank and influence who was writing years before conventional belief. Shakespeare's sonnets and his other puzzle-

^{*}All but Pericles considered apocryphal.

poems need not be mysterious – what they need is examination without preconception.

SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS

The reader must excuse this short summary about the sonnets of Shakespeare, the great author's poetic tour de force, and the subject of thousands of books and articles. A sonnet is a fourteen-lined poem, and 154 of them were printed in 1609, titled SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS (three, however, were not strictly sonnets). They differed from other sonnet collections of the period in that they were not addressed to one person, usually a named woman (Aurora, Licia, Delia, et al). The sonnets of Shakespeare were addressed to at least two unnamed people whom he adored, a fair young man, today called the "Fair Youth," and a younger married woman, today called "the Dark Lady." The majority of sonnets were written to or were about the Fair Youth. Who was he and what was his relationship with the poet? Who was the Dark Lady? The publisher, not the author, of SONNETS, signed the dedication. Why was this the case when the presumed "Shakespeare," the Stratford Man, was alive? Who was "Mr W.H.," the dedicatee? Who supplied the manuscript? Was the printed sequence in the actual order that the great author wrote them? Despite two centuries of analysis, all of these questions, and the true story behind the sonnets, remain maddeningly elusive. The reason: these sonnets are the great author's personal ruminations, are strictly autobiographical, and, as far as scholarship has shown, have nothing to do with the Stratford Man. This last point has caused some experts to believe, or they are forced to believe, that the sonnets were a mere literary exercise, i.e., fiction. Yet the great author testified that his sonnets were autobiographical: "every word doth almost tell my name" (Sonnet 76); "My life hath in this line some interest /Which for memorial still with thee shall stay" (Sonnet 74); and, in spite of death "I'll live in this poor rhyme" (Sonnet 107). Most experts acknowledge that the sonnet sequence by Sir Philip Sidney, Astrophel and Stella, was for the most part autobiographical. Astrophel, which shares a syllable with Philip, represented Sidney; Stella represented the married woman, Penelope Rich, for whom Sidney held an "adulterous passion." When were Shakespeare's sonnets written? The professor only knows that enough existed by 1598 to inspire Francis Meres's comment in Palladis Tamia, or Wit's Treasury that Shakespeare's "sugared sonnets" were being "circulated among his private friends."

Presented below are sonnet lines in which the great author describes himself: a man of high rank, older, lame and disgraced. He believed that his works would live forever but his name would not, a contradiction reasonably explained if the great author were writing anonymously or with a pen name. It would also explain his complaint in Sonnet 66: "And art made tongue-ti'd by authority." The following is not interpretation; it is the great author's own first-person testimony. Evidence for the identities of the Dark Lady and the Fair Youth will be given in chapters 14 and 16.

The great author was highly ranked

- 62_ Methinks no face so gracious is as mine
- 66_ And gilded honor shamefully misplac'd
- 88_ Upon thy part I can set down a story /Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attainted
- 110_ Alas 'tis true, I have gone here and there, /And made myself a motley to the view
- 111_ That [Fortune] did not better for my life provide, /Than public means which public manners breeds. /Thence comes it that my name receives a brand, /And almost thence my nature is subdu'd /To what it works in, like the Dyer's hand
- 125_ Were't aught [anything] to me I bore the canopy, /With my extern the outward honoring ... ?

In Sonnet 62, the great author described his face as "gracious," a word he repeatedly used in the plays to describe royalty and aristocracy ("gracious lord," "gracious lady," "gracious prince," etc.). Gracious is defined as "condescendingly kind, indulgent and beneficent to inferiors" (OED). In Sonnet 66, the great author listed many of his personal complaints from which death could release him, including "gilded honor shamefully misplac'd," implying high social status that was compromised. The word "attainted" in Sonnet 88 at the very least meant to lose one's honor (OED), and legally, the disbarring of estates and honors due to a crime, which applied only to the highly ranked. In Sonnet 125, the great author said he "bore the canopy," the practice of holding a canopy over the monarch during public occasions, an honor usually performed by courtiers or those with important positions. In Shakespeare's play, Henry VIII (5.5), "four noblemen bearing a canopy" was held over the new-born Princess Elizabeth Tudor in the procession to her christening.³ At the Earl of Hertford's home, Elvetham, an elaborate green satin canopy was created for the queen to sit under while she watched water entertainments. The canopy was "upheld by four worthy Knights" (Sir Henry Grey, Sir Walter Hungerford, Sir James Marvin, and Lord George Carey). 4 The first line of Sonnet 125, "Were't aught to me I bore the canopy ...?" can be read as, "Did it mean anything to me that I bore the canopy ...?" These words sound like

those of a seasoned courtier bored with superficial shows. Making "myself a motley to the view" (Sonnet 110) appears to be a reference to acting on the public stage, which the great author admits with regret ("Alas"). In Sonnet 111, the great author complained that his name received a brand for accepting public money ("public means"). Both statements make sense if uttered by a nobleman or one of rank but nonsensical if they were the words of a commoner who had profited from the public stage by his acting and writing. The great author's "work," which is writing plays, figuratively stains him as a dyer's work literally stains his hands (Sonnet 111). In Chapter 15, three overlooked remarks about Shakespeare concern staining: "purple robes distain'd" (No. 6), "the stage doth stain pure gentle blood" (No. 10), and "so clear a spring did stain" (No. 12).

The great author wrote with a pen name

- 66_ And art made tongue-ti'd by authority
- 72_ Oh lest the world should task you to recite, /What merit liv'd in me that you should love /After my death ... /My name be buried where my body is
- 76_ Why write I still all one, ever the same, /And keep invention in a noted weed, /That every word doth almost tell my name, /Shewing their birth, and where they did proceed?
- 81_ From hence your memory death cannot take, /Although in me each part will be forgotten. /Your name from hence immortal life shall have, /Though I (once gone) to all the world must die ... /You still shall live (such virtue hath my Pen)

Two sonnets demonstrate the great author's belief that his works would live forever, but his name would not, and one pointedly addresses his usage of a pen name. In Sonnet 72, he wrote that "after my death" the world may ask the Fair Youth about his "merit," implying fame from his artistry, yet he believed his own name would "be buried where my body is." He repeats this sentiment in Sonnet 81, predicting immortality for the addressee, because "such virtue hath my pen," while believing that he, "once gone, to all the world must die." As stated in the introduction, this contradiction is explainable if the great author wrote anonymously or with a pen name.

In Sonnet 76, the great author questioned himself: why do I write in the same style, and why do I "keep invention in a noted weed...?" In the context of this sonnet, "invention" is his creative writing, and "noted weed" can be interpreted as "well-known alias." Weed is another word for garb or clothing. So he specifically asks himself why he bothers to "keep" his "invention" – his plays and poems – in a name that everyone knows is an alias, especially since

"every word doth almost tell my name," i.e., every word reveals who he is. Evidently, when he wrote this sonnet, many in the literary world knew that "William Shakespeare" was a pen name. In Sonnet 66, the great author disclosed that "authority" kept him from speaking in his own voice: "And art made tongue-ti'd by authority." He apparently provided more detail in *The Winter's Tale*, as explained in Chapter 13.

The great author was disgraced

- 25 Let those who are in favor with their stars, /Of public honor and proud titles boast, /Whilst I whom fortune of such triumph bars
- 29_ When in disgrace with Fortune and men's eyes, /l all alone beweep my outcast state
- 37_ So then I am not lame, poor, nor despis'd
- 66_ And gilded honor shamefully misplac'd ... /And right perfection wrongfully disgrac'd
- 72_ My name be buried where my body is, /And live no more to shame nor me, nor you. /For I am sham'd by that which I bring forth
- 111_ Thence comes it that my name receives a brand
- 112_ Which vulgar scandal stamp'd upon my brow
- 121 'Tis better to be vile than vile esteemed

In Sonnet 66, the great author wrote that he had enjoyed "gilded honor" before "vulgar scandal" (Sonnet 112) ruined it. He is in an "outcast state" (Sonnet 29), and is "vile esteemed" (Sonnet 121) and "despis'd" (Sonnet 37). Sonnet 111 refers to a stigma ("brand") on the great author's name. "Fortune," he wrote, "bars" him from "triumph" of "public honor and proud titles" (Sonnet 25). These statements prove that the great author was a man of high rank with a sterling reputation before scandal ruined it. The list of highly ranked men who were scandalized, and who were also poets, is very short indeed. No evidence exists that the Stratford Man suffered shame or disgrace during his lifetime, and he would have had no reason to feel ashamed if what he had "brought forth" (Sonnet 72) were the Shakespeare plays.

The great author was lame, older and felt death nearing

- 22_ My glass shall not persuade me I am old
- 32_ When that churl death my bones with dust shall cover
- 37_ As a decrepit father takes delight, /To see his active child do deeds of youth, /So I, made lame by Fortune's dearest spite ... /So then I

am not lame, poor, nor despis'd

- 62_ But when my glass shews me myself indeed /Beaten and chopp'd with tann'd antiquity
- 66_ Tir'd with all these for restful death I cry ... And strength by limping sway disabled
- 71_ No Longer mourn for me when I am dead
- 72_ After my death (dear love) forget me quite
- 73_ That time of year thou mayst in me behold, /When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang /Upon those boughs, which shake against the cold ... /In me thou seest the twilight of such day, /As after Sunset fadeth in the West ... /In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire, /That on the ashes of his youth doth lie
- 74_ But be contented when that fell arrest, /Without all bail shall carry me away, /My life hath in this line some interest, /Which for memorial still with thee shall stay ... /So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life, /The prey of worms, my body being dead
- 81_ Or I shall live your Epitaph to make, /Or you survive when I in earth am rotten, /From hence your memory death cannot take, Although in me each part will be forgotten ... /Though I (once gone) to all the world must die, /The earth can yield me but a common grave
- 89_ Speak of my lameness, and I straight will halt
- 138_ Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young, /Although she knows my days are past the best

When the great author penned Sonnet 138, he believed his "days" were "past the best." This sonnet was first published in *The Passionate Pilgrim* in 1598-1599, when the Stratford Man was 34 years old. The great author dwelled on his impending death in several sonnets (66, 71-74, 81). His complaint of lameness in three sonnets (37, 66, 89) cannot be accounted for in the Stratford Man's known biography.

The great author was dead when SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS was published

Shakespeare orthodoxy unanimously agrees that the great author was not involved with the 1609 printing of his sonnets – although the text is fairly good, there are numerous misspellings and mistakes. Some scholars even consider it a pirated work despite publisher Thomas Thorpe's very clean record (he published over forty books). More of the author's absence is indicated in the dedication of SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS, which was signed by Thorpe:

To the only begetter of these ensuing sonnets Mr W.H. all happiness and that eternity promised by our ever-living poet wisheth the well-wishing adventurer in setting forth. T.T.

The great author is described as "our ever-living poet." Ever-living is a term applied to the famous dead. Publisher Thorpe wrote three dedications for books by deceased authors, including one by Christopher Marlowe. The title, SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS, suggests finality, that this edition comprised all of his sonnets. Shakespeare's play, Troilus and Cressida, was also printed in 1609; the unsigned letter to the reader added to the second issue of this edition said the play "escaped" the "grand possessors," implying Shakespeare was then not in control of his own works. These five points combined strongly suggest that the great author was dead in 1609, but the Stratford Man was still living. Two overlooked remarks about Shakespeare in Chapter 15 also suggest he was dead by this year. Although the great author expected his sonnets to be published, he apparently did not wish it to occur during his lifetime. As noted in Chapter 2, the great author was "offended" by William Jaggard's issue of The Passionate Pilgrim, which featured two of his sonnets, and in 1600, an attempt to publish "certain sonnets by W.S." was evidently blocked. It is slightly problematic that a work of Shakespeare would feature a dedication that implied he was dead, but did not feature tributes by others. It may have been for the same reason that his death was not noted by the literary world when it had occurred.

Conclusion

Because the Shakespeare professor has the wrong man, he will never be able solve any of the mysteries of the great author's very personal sonnets. Try as he may, he cannot tie one line among the over two thousand to events in the Stratford Man's known life. In apparent desperation, however, some experts see a pun on Hathaway, the maiden name of the Stratford Man's wife, in Sonnet 145:

"I hate," from hate away she threw, And sav'd my life saying "not you." [quotation marks added]

It would be less of a strain to see a pun on the 17th Earl of Oxford's name, Edward de Vere, in Sonnet 76: "Every word doth almost tell my name" ("E. Ver.y word ..."). The experts conveniently forget that in Sonnet 145 the great author was quoting his lover, the Dark Lady, not his wife. The "will" sonnets (nos. 135, 136, 143) punned on the first name, William, but the meaning would not change a whit if "William Shakespeare" was the great author's pen name. The sonnets would be more understandable if only the experts would take the great author at his own word – that he was a disgraced nobleman cognizant of his literary greatness but "tongue-ti'd by authority" and social convention from revealing himself as writer behind the name Shakespeare.

The great author was dead as of 1609, according to the dedication page of *SONNETS*. As such a picture does not fit with the Stratford Man's factual life, or invented life, such important identifying clues are doubted or never followed.

A LOVER'S COMPLAINT (1609)

Very few Shakespeare fans have read or even know about Shakespeare's poem, A Lover's Complaint. Although published along with SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS in 1609, both making their print debut, A Lover's Complaint is usually left out of modern editions of the sonnets, and in scholarship, it is among Shakespeare's most neglected works. Recently, one English professor tried to expel it from the Shakespeare canon. Why is this the case? Does A Lover's Complaint contain biographical elements, like the sonnets? Are these two works connected? There are distinct parallels between the young man of A Lover's Complaint and the older poet of the sonnets. If they were the same person, then the great author was a nobleman-courtier who did not spend his youth in a small rustic town.⁵

A Lover's Complaint opens with the poet describing, in the first person "I," a scene he is witnessing in the countryside. A woman is ripping up letters and tossing rings into a river. An old man appears and asks to know her story. The poet is close enough to hear it. Her "complaint" is regret for allowing herself to be seduced by a known womanizer who pleaded true love and later "betrayed" her. The poem gives few details about the woman but her ex-lover is fully described in eight stanzas. He is twice called a "youth," and this is confirmed with line 92, "small show of man was yet upon his chin." He is handsome and very popular.

O one by nature's outwards so commended, That maidens' eyes stuck over all his face. [lines 80-81]

Women obtain his picture and fantasize about being his lover or wife, and they send him gifts of sonnets, pieces of their hair, and jewels, like offerings to a god. He has had numerous conquests including married women, some bearing his children ("his plants in others' orchards grew," line 171). He attracts followers, young and old, "in personal duty." He is also "accomplished." He is an expert horseman, and is a witty and persuasive speaker. In this passage, the woman could easily have been describing Shakespeare's particular gifts:

So on the tip of his subduing tongue All kind of arguments and question deep, All replication [replies, a legal term] prompt, and reason strong For his advantage still did wake and sleep,
To make the weeper laugh, the laugher weep
He had the dialect [rhetoric] and different skill,
Catching all passions in his craft of will. [lines 120-25]

This young man moves in a social circle of moneyed people - those who could afford to buy his portrait and give him expensive presents, and those educated enough to know the sonnet form. He is rich: he gave jewels (of gold and amber) to the woman, and letters tied with silk. Expert horsemanship in so young a man implies that he had the leisure to learn this skill. The phrase, "all replication prompt, and reason strong," and the word "dialect" in the passage above betrays knowledge of law and rhetoric. One of his paramours was a nun who was once wooed by noble courtiers (lines 232-34). The woman's description of a rich, educated and privileged young man, often using the word "grace," indicates that he too is a nobleman. Fully aware of the young man's "falseness" and numerous affairs, the woman initially resisted his seduction, "with safest distance I mine honor shielded" (line 151). Eventually he persuaded her that his love was true, and when he started crying, she "daffed" her "white stole of chastity" (line 297). But "his passion" was only an act - "an art of craft" (line 295). He could blush, cry and turn pale whenever it suited his aims. The poem ends with the woman wondering if she would yield again should he try another seduction. The poet, who opened the poem in his own voice and who was watching the scene and listening to her story, offered no final remarks. He let the deceived lover finish her story without comment. The poet's eavesdropping and his silence at the conclusion of her story suggests that he was the young seducer. Almost certain confirmation of this is in line five, written in the poet's voice:

Ere long [I] espied a fickle maid full pale ...

Even before he heard her story, the poet describes the woman as "fickle," a word of judgment, implying that he already knows her and her personality. In the final two lines of the poem, the woman gives it away herself that the youth had seduced her more than once, and that he

Would <u>yet again</u> betray the fore-betrayed, And new pervert a reconciled Maid.

"Again" means twice, but "yet again" means three times, so the woman is saying that the youth would attempt to seduce her a third time. Apparently, the woman was hot and cold with the poet, which inspired his "fickle" com-

ment. It is clear, therefore, that the poet of A Lover's Complaint was the young seducer of the poem. When one remembers that Shakespeare is the author, and is writing in the first person, one can see that he was poeticizing a personal incident, and by doing so, indirectly revealed his high status. This makes A Lover's Complaint a prime piece of anti-Stratfordian evidence, especially when viewed in conjunction with his sonnets.

A Lover's Complaint and SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS debuted at the same time in the same publication, and for each work Shakespeare was separately credited as the author. The works were both written in the first person and all characters involved were unnamed. They both featured one similar character - a young man of high rank, beautiful, admired and sought after. It would be logical to connect the youth of A Lover's Complaint with the "Fair Youth" of the sonnets, but there are major differences. The youth of A Lover's Complaint is verbally gifted, theatrical, seductive, and is an excellent horseman - qualities Shakespeare never credited to the Fair Youth in over one hundred sonnets to him. But if one compares the profile of the poet of SONNETS, who described himself as older in at least four sonnets, with the young seducer of A Lover's Complaint, the only difference is age. As noted above, "grace" was used to describe the youth of A Lover's Complaint, a word that often described the nobility or royalty, and in Sonnet 62, the poet wrote, "Methinks no face so gracious is as mine." The poet of SONNETS also uses the phrases, "wherein I am attainted" (Sonnet 88) and "were't aught to me I bore the canopy" (Sonnet 125), implying he was a man of rank and a courtier. In Sonnet 121, the poet admits he has "sportive blood."

For why should others' false adulterate eyes Give salutation to my sportive blood?

The young man of *A Lover's Complaint*, also a man of rank and privilege, said his sensual "offenses"

Are errors of the blood, none of the mind. [lines 183-84]

The youth of A Lover's Complaint had affairs with married women (lines 171-75); the poet of SONNETS, who was married at the time (Sonnet 152), had an affair with the "Dark Lady." The youth of A Lover's Complaint was a good actor, and the poet of SONNETS WIOTE,

Alas 'tis true, I have gone here and there. And made myself a motley to the view ... [Sonnet 110] indicating with regret that he acted on the stage, most likely the public stage; "motley" refers to "the profession or practice of a jester, clown or (occasionally) actor" (OED). There are enough parallels between these two figures to suggest they are the same person at different ages. Regardless, there are two Shakespeare works written in the first person using language applicable to noblemen-courtiers. Social convention of the time required noblemen who wrote poetry to do so anonymously or with a pen name, which the hyphen in SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS on the title page and throughout the work (in the running titles) seems to imply.

Dating A Lover's Complaint

Scholars cannot agree upon a composition date for A Lover's Complaint but there are clues. Some words in the poem were archaic by 1600, for example, eyne (eyes), feat (elegantly), real (regal), sounding (swooning), maund (basket), and teen (suffering, hurt). The author invented many new words for this piece (appertainings, fluxive, impleached, pensived, unexperient, encrimsoned, annexions, blusterer, acture, invised, enpatron, etc.),6 so the poem is a strange combination of new and archaic words. The logical explanation for this contradiction is that the archaic words were current when the work was written which would date the poem to before 1600. This is supported by the fact that the vogue of "complaint" poems, some paired with sonnet cycles, was outdated when SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS and A Lover's Complaint were first printed. The Shakespeare professor routinely says that, for A Lover's Complaint, Shakespeare borrowed from Edmund Spenser's poem, Ruins of Time (published in Complaints, 1591), and from Samuel Daniel's poem, The Complaint of Rosamond (1592). But the supposed borrowing did not end there. Lines 123-24 of A Lover's Complaint,

> For his advantage still did wake <u>and sleep</u>, To make the <u>weeper laugh</u>, the laugher weep

echo those in Thomas Lodge's poetry work, Phillis (1593):

Then lay you down in Phillis' lap <u>and sleep</u>. Until she weeping read, and reading weep. [Induction]

(*Phillis* was accompanied by the poem, *The Tragical Complaint of Elstred.*) Lines from *A Lover's Complaint* and a Shakespeare sonnet also are echoed in *Parthenophil and Parthenophe* (1593) by Barnabe Barnes.

Parthenophil and Parthenophe (Sonnet 49, lines 6-9):

A <u>Siren</u> which within thy breast doth bath her
A <u>fiend</u> which doth in <u>graces garments</u> grath [clothe] her,
A fortress whose force is impregnable:
From my love's <u>limbeck</u> [distilling device] still <u>still'd tears</u>, oh tears!

Compare the above lines with A Lover's Complaint (lines 316-17):7

Thus merely with the <u>garment</u> of a <u>grace</u>, The naked and concealed <u>fiend</u> he cover'd ...

And also compare with lines in Shakespeare's Sonnet 119:8

What potions have I drunk of <u>Siren tears</u> Distill'd from <u>Limbecks</u> foul as hell within ...

Two more lines by Barnes in the same work (Madrigal 1),

<u>From</u> winds my sighs, from <u>concave</u> rocks and steel, My sides and <u>voices Echo</u> ...

recall the opening lines of A Lover's Complaint:

<u>From</u> off a hill whose <u>concave</u> womb <u>reworded</u>. A plaintful story from a sist'ring vale My spirits t'attend this <u>double voice</u> accorded ...

Echoes of A Lover's Complaint and Shakespeare's sonnets in the poetry of others suggest that the two works were circulating together in manuscript in the early 1590s or before and were imitated. Another poem by Spenser, Ruins of Rome: by Bellay (1591), contains remarkable parallels with Shakespeare's sonnets. A. Kent Hieatt stated that "the evidence of Shakespeare's verbal recall of Ruins [of Rome] is so extensive that the place of this sequence in his imagination is beyond question ..." He noted the following examples:

Spenser's Ruins of Rome (Sonnet 7, lines 9-10):

And though your frames do for a time make war 'Gainst time ...

Compare with lines from Shakespeare's sonnets 15 and 16:

And all in war with Time for love of you ... [15] Make war upon this bloody tyrant time ... [16] Spenser's Ruins of Rome (Sonnet 3, line 8):

The prey of time, which all things doth devour.

Compare with lines from Shakespeare's Sonnet 19:

Devouring time, blunt thou the Lion's paws, And make the earth devour her own sweet brood ...

(Barnabe Barnes also used the phrase, "Devouring time," in a dedicatory poem in his *Parthenophil and Parthenophe*.)¹⁰

Spenser's Ruins of Rome (Sonnet 27, line 6):

The which injurious time hath quite outworn ...

Compare with a line in Shakespeare's Sonnet 63:

With time's injurious hand crush'd and o'erworn ...

Sonnet 20 of Spenser's *Ruins of Rome* employed the words "fade" and "vade" just as Shakespeare did in his Sonnet 54. Another poem by Spenser, *Prothalamion or a Spousal Verse* (1596), is so close to *A Lover's Complaint* that MacDonald Jackson believes "one poet was unconsciously echoing the other ... "11 Jackson views Shakespeare as the unconscious borrower, but cumulative evidence suggests the opposite, that Spenser and others were the conscious borrowers of Shakespeare. There is one poem, however, that overshadows all of these supposed influences upon *A Lover's Complaint* that has never been acknowledged by Stratfordians. Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, wrote a much shorter poem with a similar subject as *A Lover's Complaint* that dates to circa 1570. Written in the first person, Oxford, as the poet, observes a lady speaking out loud about a "youth" that has captured her heart. An echo reveals Oxford's surname, "Vere."

Sitting alone upon my thought in melancholy mood, In sight of sea, and at my back an ancient hoary wood, I saw a fair young lady come, her secret fears to wail, Clad all in color of a nun, and covered with a veil; Yet (for the day was calm and clear) I might discern her face, As one might see a damask rose hid under crystal glass.

Three times, with her soft hand, full hard on her left side she knocks, And sigh'd so sore as might have mov'd some pity in the rocks; From sighs and shedding amber tears into sweet song she brake,

When thus the echo answered her to every word she spake:

"Oh heavens! who was the first that bred in me this fever? Vere Who was the first that gave the wound whose fear I wear forever? Vere What tyrant, Cupid, to my harm usurps thy golden quiver? Vere What wight [creature] first caught this heart and can from bondage it deliver? Vere

"Yet who doth most adore this wight, oh hollow caves, tell true? You

What nymph deserves his liking best, yet doth in sorrow rue? You What makes him not reward goodwill with some reward or ruth? Youth What makes him show besides his birth, such pride and such untruth? Youth

May I his favor match with love, if he my love will try? Aye May I requite his birth with faith? Then faithful will I die. Aye"

And I, that knew this lady well, Said, Lord how great a miracle, To her how echo told the truth, As true as Phoebus oracle. 12

In the opening lines of A Lover's Complaint, the poet heard echoing sounds coming from a hill, and drawing nearer, saw they emanated from a woman's voice; she was at a river. In Oxford's poem, the poet is "in sight of sea" near woods and observes a lady near rocks speaking out loud which causes echoes. The woman in A Lover's Complaint is distressed about her lover and is crying, "often did she heave her napkin to her eyne" (line 15), just as the lady in Oxford's poem is "sighing" and "shedding amber tears" over him. The poet of A Lover's Complaint, and Oxford in his poem, eavesdrop on complaining lady lovers, and each knows the woman in question. Both complaining ladies are in love with a young courtier of high birth who is adored by others, who has lied to them, and who does not fully return their love. Oxford's poem only existed in manuscript until modern times.

Conclusion

SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS, and its companion piece, A Lover's Complaint, were both written in the first person and published together. Scholars prefer to study these two pieces separately, as if they were unrelated. Yet in both works Shakespeare describes himself as a nobleman-courtier with a busy love life: as a younger man in A Lover's Complaint and as an older man in SONNETS. It is reasonable to conclude that both voices were the same person at different ages. Edmund Spenser's poetry work, Complaints, registered in 1590 and published in 1591, contains phrases similar to those used in A Lover's Complaint and Shakespeare's sonnets. Spenser's work also featured praise of Shakespeare ("our pleasant Willy" in The Tears of the Muses), and revealed that he was a

nobleman and already an accomplished playwright (Chapter 15). That Shakespeare stole or borrowed lines from Spenser, Samuel Daniel, Thomas Lodge and other writers for *A Lover's Complaint* is impossible to prove because this work has no concrete dating. It is far more likely that "lesser" poets were borrowing and imitating lines from the inventive genius, Shakespeare, rather than the opposite. The archaic words employed in *A Lover's Complaint* accord with this perspective. With Spenser established as the borrower of Shakespeare, one can conclude that *A Lover's Complaint* and some of Shakespeare's sonnets were circulating together in manuscript as early as 1590, and, along with the sonnets of Sir Philip Sidney (first printed in 1591) may have helped set off the ensuing publishing craze of sonnet cycles, works that were often accompanied by "complaint" poems.

LOVE'S MARTYR: OR, ROSALIN'S COMPLAINT (1601)

Shakespeare contributed two beautiful but perplexing poems to a work by Robert Chester titled *Love's Martyr: or, Rosalin's Complaint*. The poems by Shakespeare and others, located in a separate section, titled *Diverse Poetical Essays*, touch upon the same theme as Chester's work, a story about the phoenix – the beautiful bird of myth. The phoenix would would burn itself on a pyre after 500 years of age and from its ashes another phoenix would arise. Comprising a total of 67 lines, Shakespeare's two poems are filled with meaning that has eluded the experts. The first poem, "Let the bird of loudest lay," describes a funeral procession of specially invited birds. The funeral is for the Phoenix and Turtle Dove, mates that had burned together. If one views Shakespeare's poems within the context of the main work by Chester, then it appears the great author and the other contributors were treading on very dangerous ground – the succession of the current monarch, Queen Elizabeth I.

Chester's Phoenix unmistakably symbolized Queen Elizabeth. Numerous works printed throughout her reign and after described her as a phoenix, including Shakespeare in his play, *Henry VIII* (5.5.39). The queen employed the phoenix as her personal symbol. A coin issued in the year of her accession (1558) featured her portrait on one side and a burning phoenix on the reverse. A larger medallion with similar images was created in 1574, today called "The Phoenix Badge" (Plate 2). This medallion most notably featured "ER" (Elizabeth Regina) above the phoenix's head, and a crown above that. Nicholas Hilliard's portrait of the queen, dated circa 1574, is known as the "Phoenix Portrait" (see Plate 3). It features the queen wearing a large jeweled pendant of a phoenix; the piece is placed just above her hand, which holds a red rose, the Tudor emblem. In 1596, a large portrait engraving of the queen

was published. She is depicted standing between two columns – atop one column is a burning phoenix, and on the other, a pelican, another symbol of the queen. ¹⁵ Posthumously, Queen Elizabeth was depicted in a full-length statue with a phoenix beneath her feet. ¹⁶ In the main text of Chester's *Love's Martyr*, and in the poems by the other contributors (Shakespeare, John Marston, George Chapman, Ben Jonson), the phoenix legend was altered to suit the queen: the phoenix was characterized as female but traditionally it is male, and the turtle dove in literature is traditionally female, but it was characterized as male. (Shakespeare's Sonnet 19, probably among those in circulation by this time, also feminized the phoenix, and so did a poem read to Queen Elizabeth at Cowdray in 1591.)¹⁷

No connection whatsoever existed between the phoenix and a turtle dove before *Love's Martyr*. ¹⁸ The title of the work plainly said these two characters were "allegorically shadowed," announcing that they represented real people and their real love story.

Love's Martyr: or Rosalin's Complaint. Allegorically shadowing the truth of Love. in the constant Fate of the Phoenix and Turtle.

Chester offered more information that Elizabeth was the phoenix of his work in another title that occurred on the first page of his narrative:

Rosalin's Complaint, metaphorically applied to Dame Nature at a Parliament held (in the high Star-chamber) by the Gods, for the preservation and increase of *Earth's beauteous Phoenix*.

The "complaint" of Rosalin, or Dame Nature, is presented at "a Parliament" in the "Star Chamber," which was a courtroom in Westminster Palace, the seat of Elizabeth's government. Dame Nature describes the Phoenix, not as a bird, but as a woman: she has hair, forehead, cheeks, chin, lips, teeth, arms, hands, and fingers. In the section titled "Cantos," the Turtle Dove describes the Phoenix several times with the terms rose, queen, and sovereignty. The Turtle Dove chides the Phoenix for her "chasteness," an undisguised reference to Elizabeth's much vaunted virginity. In *Diverse Poetical Essays*, Jonson's two poems about the Phoenix described it as a "Woman" and a "Lady," one with quick wit and "graces," whose "Judgment (adorn'd with Learning) /Doth shine in her discerning," qualities often attributed to Elizabeth (but not usually to mythical birds!). Evidence that the public had understood Chester's phoenix symbolized the queen is contained in *The Mirror of Majesty* (1618), attributed to Sir Henry Goodyere. Goodyere likened Queen Anne, the consort of King James I, to a phoenix. She emerged

From old Eliza's urn, enriched with fire ... One Phoenix born, another Phoenix burns.

The urn was a direct reference to *Love's Martyr* because it was the first work to associate an urn with the phoenix – in Shakespeare's poem, "Threnos," and in the poem signed Ignoto, both in *Diverse Poetical Essays*. ¹⁹ Goodyere had also copied a near-verbatim line from Ignoto's poem:

Her rare-dead ashes, fill a rare-live urn: One *Phoenix* born, another *Phoenix* burn.

Josuah Sylvester also used the phoenix and urn imagery in recalling the late queen Elizabeth in his *Bartas His Divine Weeks and Works* (1605), and extended the image to her successor, King James:

From Spicy Ashes of the sacred URN Of our dead Phoenix (dear ELIZABETH) A new true PHAENIX lively flourisheth, Whom greater Glories than the First adorn.

The evidence that Queen Elizabeth I was "allegorically shadowed" as the Phoenix in Chester's work is so obvious that it is bewildering that critics rarely consider it, or its implications, in their analysis of Shakespeare's two poems. Perhaps this is the case because hidden behind Chester's allegory was the belief that she had a lover and a grown child, as explained below. To cover himself in case the work offended the queen, Chester proclaimed on the title page that the book was his translation of the "venerable Italian Torquato Caeliano." No writer of this exact name ever existed. Chester evidently invented it by combining the names of the 16th century Italian poets Torquato Tasso (d. 1595) and Livio Caeliano; the latter was the pseudonym of Angelo Grillo (1557-1629). When *Love's Martyr* was rereleased in 1611 (with a new title), the prefatory poem, "The Author's request to the Phoenix," was dropped, presumably because the addressee, Queen Elizabeth I, was dead.

Phoenix-Elizabeth Bore a Child?

The complaint of Rosalin, or Dame Nature, is about the Phoenix's "preservation and increase," which in the context of Queen Elizabeth I could only mean the succession, a topic she reviled and consequently it was illegal to discuss. The name Rosalin is significant because it suggests rose, the symbol of the House of Tudor. ²⁰ The queen was often portrayed with the Tudor Rose. Nicholas Hilliard's "Pelican Portrait" of Elizabeth (circa 1574), for example, prominently displays the figure of a large red rose with a royal crown above it.

Another example is an engraving issued circa 1595 to 1600 which featured a portrait of the queen surrounded by roses and eglantine and the words, "Rosa Electa."21 Rosalin-Dame Nature fears that the rare and beautiful Phoenix will die childless, i.e., the Tudor ancestors of Elizabeth fear that their dynasty will end unless she produces an heir. The head god, Jove, instructs her to take the Phoenix to the island of Paphos, a place associated with the goddess, Venus. There the Phoenix will find her mate, the Turtle Dove. Just as the Phoenix was described as a woman rather than as a bird, the Turtle Dove was described like a man rather than a bird: "His name is Liberal honor" (p. 19) and he has curly hair and a rosy complexion (p. 20). A prayer is made to Christ that the Phoenix will have a child: "Let her not wither Lord without increase, / But bless her with joy's offspring of sweet peace. Amen. Amen." (p. 23). The poem that follows is titled, "To those of light belief," presumably addressing those who may not take the story about to be told seriously, which is described as "Plain honest Truth and Knowledge ... " (p. 23). The story continues. Rosalin-Dame Nature meets the Phoenix, who is sullen and weeping. "Envy" has arisen, the Phoenix says, "A damned Fiend o'er me to tyrannize" (p. 28). Rosalin-Dame Nature replies, "He shall not touch a Feather of thy wing, /Or ever have Authority and power, /As he hath had in his days secret prying ... " As the reader has been warned that this is a true story, it appears that Envy (note the initial E) allegorizes the Earl of Essex, who attempted to "tyrannize" the queen in early 1601, the year of Love's Martyr's issue. Rosalin-Dame Nature banishes Envy and in relief the Phoenix says:

What is he gone? Is <u>Envy</u> pack'd away?
Then one foul blot is moved from his Throne,
That my poor honest Thoughts <u>did seek to slay</u>:
Away foul grief, and over-heavy Moan,
That do o'er charge me with continual groans. [p. 29]

Envy wanted "to slay" the Phoenix's "poor honest Thoughts," which also suggests Essex, who wanted "to slay" the queen, or divest her of her "Throne." A line on page 31 clearly refers to the Essex Rebellion: the Phoenix-Queen Elizabeth says that Lady Fortune "did conspire /My downfall" by sending to her "Envy with a Judas kiss..." Essex was a Judas, a traitor, but it is known that after his execution, the queen would shed tears at the mention of his name. Rosalin-Dame Nature then takes the Phoenix out of Arabia in a flying chariot, and one hundred pages later, they have landed in Paphos. The Turtle Dove sees the "beauteous Phoenix," they pair up, and both commit to "sacrifice" their bodies "to revive one name" (p. 136). In this context, the name that would need reviving is Tudor, which was to expire should Queen Elizabeth die childless. "Of my bones," says the Phoenix, "must the Princely Phoenix

rise," a "Creature" that "shall possess both our authority" (pp. 138-39). Chester's allegory has Queen Elizabeth declaring that a child from her own body will rule after her. In the last line of this dialogue, Chester writes: "And thus I end the *Turtle* Dove's true story. Finis. R.C." (p. 139). Chester also wrote a conclusion to this story, or rather an announcement: a new phoenix does arise from the ashes of the Phoenix and Turtle Dove.

From the sweet fire of perfumed wood, Another princely Phoenix upright stood: Whose feathers purified did yield more light, Than her late burned mother out of sight, And in her heart rests a perpetual love, Sprung from the bosom of the Turtle-Dove. Long may the new uprising bird increase, Some humors and some motions to release, And thus to all I offer my devotion. Hoping that gentle minds accept my motion. Finis. R.C. [p. 142]

Chester offers devotion "to all" – the Turtle Dove, the new "princely Phoenix," and its "late burned mother," the Phoenix. The problem here is that if Chester is allegorically pledging "devotion" to Queen Elizabeth, then he is also pledging devotion to her lover and her child/successor. The reader here must be informed that the traditional phoenix legend has nothing do to with acquiring a mate – it is simply a beautiful rare bird of myth that renews itself every 500 years by self-immolation. Turtle doves are symbolic for loving mates. The Turtle Dove's importance to the Phoenix-Queen Elizabeth is also stressed in the title – he is "Love's Martyr." The Phoenix's "Love" martyred or sacrificed himself by jumping with her on the pyre to produce their child, "Another princely Phoenix." Queen Elizabeth had been specifically called a "princely Phoenix" ten years previously in funeral verses about Sir Christopher Hatton, one of her privy councilors.

And with our Queen that princely Phenix rare, whose like on earth hath seldom times been seen ... 22

With this clear symbolism, there can be no doubt that Chester and company believed that the queen bore a child. John Marston described this child in *Diverse Poetical Essays* as alive and "grown unto maturity," "wondrous," and "perfection." Shakespeare, conversely, described the Phoenix ("Beauty"), the Turtle Dove ("Truth"), and their child ("Rarity"), as "cinders" lying in an "urn." They are described with the princely term, "grace."

Beauty, Truth, and Rarity,

88

Grace in all simplicity, Here enclosed, in cinders lie ...

To this urn let those repair, That are either true or fair, For these dead Birds, sigh a prayer. ["Threnos"]

Reference to the living queen as dead, or that she had a grown child, would be treasonous – yet no one involved in the publication was prosecuted. As mentioned above, this book came out in the same year as the Essex Rebellion, which was prompted by, among other issues, the succession question. The earls of Essex and Southampton were convicted of high treason, and sentenced to execution, to be "hanged, bowelled, and quartered." To publish Love's Martyr at this time with its political overtones was strangely reckless. Some believe that Love's Martyr inspired a bill "specifically to prohibit the writing or publishing of books" about the succession that was drafted (but not passed) in late 1601. The citation is from the Calendar of State Papers dated "October? 1601":

The preamble to a bill in Parliament, to prohibit the writing and publishing of books about the title to the Crown of this realm, and the authority of the government thereof, subjects being thus lead into false errors and traitorous attempts against the Queen, into private factions, unlawful bonds &c.²⁵

The political sensitivity of *Love's Martyr* could explain why pages from the 1601 edition were repackaged with a new title page in 1611. The title was changed to *The Annuals of Great Britain* and no author's (or "translator's") name was given. The repackaging also suggests that the 1601 edition was suppressed. Alexander Grosart was the first to link Queen Elizabeth with Chester's Phoenix. In 1878, he wrote: "The fact that Elizabeth was living when *Love's Martyr* was published fills me indeed with astonishment at the author's audacity in so publishing." Shakespeare's poems in this work provide weighty clues for interpreting his sonnets, which will be discussed in Chapter 16, along with the identity of the Turtle Dove.

Conclusion

In his book, *Love's Martyr*, Robert Chester surely identified the main character, the Phoenix, as Elizabeth I, the then-reigning queen. Chester and the other contributors of this "allegorical shadow," including Shakespeare, betrayed their belief that she had a child by her lover, the Turtle Dove, who was the "Martyr" of the title. They were evidently urging the queen to acknowledge her grown child, "Another princely *Phoenix*," allegory that could be perceived

as treasonous, especially in the wake of the Essex Rebellion. For Shakespeare, it was his second offense in one year (his play, Richard II, was performed on the eve of the revolt, and was sponsored by Essex's supporters). That those involved with Love's Martyr were never arrested implies that the work had a powerful protector, possibly the great author himself. (Curiously, four years after Love's Martyr was published, contributors Marston, Chapman and Jonson were arrested for writing the play, Eastward Ho.) Two centuries passed before critics began analyzing Shakespeare's poems in Love's Martyr. Today it is rarely noted how they emerged at such a perilous time in history, or that the book contained such dangerous political allegory. Keeping Shakespeare's poems out of this context perpetuates their mystery.

THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM (1598-1599)

The Passionate Pilgrim is a hornet's nest of problems for the Shakespeare professor that he is yet to master. This small volume is a collection of twenty poems with the name "W. Shakespeare" on the title page. Only fragments of The Passionate Pilgrim's first edition survive; its date is reckoned at late 1598 or the same year as the second edition, 1599. Scholars unanimously agree that the text was pirated. Why it was titled The Passionate Pilgrim is unknown. The book may have been publisher William Jaggard's attempt to fulfill public demand for Shakespeare's "sugar'd sonnets circulated among his private friends" that Francis Meres had mentioned in Palladis Tamia, or Wit's Treasury (1598). Jaggard somehow acquired two Shakespeare sonnets (slightly different versions of sonnets 138 and 144 in Thomas Thorpe's 1609 edition), and placed them as the first and second poems of the collection. (Although Jaggard did not include the word "sonnet" on the title page, it did occur on a second title page, placed after the fourteenth piece: SONNETS To Sundry Notes of Music.) Three additional pieces (nos. 3, 5, 16) were excerpts from Act 4 of Shakespeare's Love's Labour's Lost, which was also printed in 1598. A total of five pieces, therefore, were unquestionably by Shakespeare. But attribution to Shakespeare for the rest of the collection has become confused and doubted because of the inclusion of pieces supposedly by other poets. Numbers 8 and 20 were published in Richard Barnfield's The Encomion of Lady Pecunia: or The Praise of Money (1598); No. 11 appeared in Bartholomew Griffin's Fidessa (1596); and No. 19, "Live with Me and Be My Love," was later attributed to Christopher Marlowe. None of these writers were credited in The Passionate Pilgrim. Since the quality of the remaining eleven poems is considered unequal to Shakespeare, the professor has classified their authorship as anonymous even though they were never credited to, or claimed by, anyone else.

The eleven "orphan" poems of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, nos. 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12-15, 17 and 18, were long ago dismissed by scholars as works of Shakespeare even though they contain resemblances to his other works. Three of the orphan poems are about Venus and Adonis (nos. 4, 6, 9) and could be regarded as early sketches for Shakespeare's more mature and lengthy poem on the same subject. Orphan No. 6 puts Cytherea (Venus) and Adonis in a setting very similar to a painting of Venus and Adonis described in Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* (1.2.48-53).²⁷ Orphan No. 6 has the best claim to Shakespeare's authorship, wrote C.H. Hobday, for reasons of vocabulary, subject matter and imagery.²⁸ Orphan No. 4 also has verbal links to *Taming of the Shrew*, wrote Hobday. Orphan No. 10 resembles Shakespeare's Sonnet 54, and Orphan No. 14 echoes lines in *Romeo and Juliet* (3.5.43-47).²⁹ Six of the orphan poems (nos. 7, 10, 13, 14, 15, 18) were written in stanzas of six lines, the same format that Shakespeare had used for *Venus and Adonis*.

"Too early" dating of some orphan poems could be behind the experts' denial that they are Shakespeare's compositions. It was noted in the New Variorum edition of Shakespeare's poems that a line in Orphan No. 7 resembled one in Robert Greene's Mamillia (1583) and Perimedes the Blacksmith (1588),30 and a line in Orphan No. 13 resembled one in Greene's Alcida (1588).31 Orphan No. 12, "Crabbed age and youth," was most likely the same one printed as a ballad, now lost, in 1591.32 Orphan No. 18, "When as thine eye hath chose the dame," appeared in the personal notebook of Anne Cornwallis, which contained transcriptions of poems dating to the 1580s and earlier - a time period outside the traditional dating of any Shakespeare work. Now located at the Folger-Shakespeare Library, the notebook (called the Cornwallis-Lysons Manuscript) gets little attention from scholars, yet it contains the earliest handwritten transcription of a work attributed to Shakespeare. The Cornwallis version of Orphan No. 18 is quite different than - and superior to - that printed in The Passionate Pilgrim, noted Charles Wisner Barrell, so the poem was not merely copied from the anthology. Had it been so, surely the writer would have ascribed Shakespeare's name to it, but the piece is uncredited.33 Other manuscript transcriptions of the piece exist, attesting to its popularity. The notebook's owner, according to Arthur Marotti, was the daughter of Sir William Cornwallis, "a man involved in both Elizabethan and Jacobean courtly society" who "hosted visits by Queen Elizabeth on several occasions..."34 It is not surprising then that a good portion of the 34 pieces in the Cornwallis notebook were compositions by courtier poets, including Richard Edwards, Sir Edward Dyer, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Ralegh, Sir William Cordell and Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. That Shakespeare's anonymous piece was among those of courtier poets written by the 1580s or earlier, and in a volume owned by the daughter of a courtier, is hardly the

scenario the Shakespeare professor would envision for the earliest manuscript version of a work attributed to Shakespeare. Another connection between Shakespeare and Orphan No. 18 is the fact that its subject matter – one man's advice to another for success with women – mirrors Canto 47 in Willobie His Avisa (1594), a satire that was pointedly directed at Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton (Chapter 14).

Shakespeare's High Social Status

For his third edition of *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1612), publisher William Jaggard added poems from Thomas Heywood's *Troia Britanica*, a work that Jaggard had issued in 1609. These extra pages doubled the size of the previous edition of *The Passionate Pilgrim* but Jaggard neglected to credit Heywood. Outraged by this and other grievances, Heywood immediately protested with a letter printed in his *An Apology for Actors* (1612) expressing his fear that "the world" would think that he had stolen pieces by Shakespeare. Heywood wrote that his poems were printed

in a less volume, in the name of another, which may put the world in opinion I might steal them from him; and he to do himself right, hath since published them in his own name: but as I must ...

The "less volume" was *The Passionate Pilgrim* "in the name of" William Shakespeare. Heywood believed that people would regard the enlarged third edition of *The Passionate Pilgrim* as Shakespeare's attempt to reclaim stolen property contained in *Troia Britanica*. Jaggard responded to Heywood's complaint by replacing the title page of the remaining copies with one that had omitted Shakespeare's name. What caused Heywood's angst and why did he seemingly care more about Shakespeare's feelings than his own? It is true that Heywood was a Shakespeare imitator (in 1608 he wrote a play titled, *The Rape of Lucrece*), but he apparently feared more than a charge of plagiarism. The answer may be contained in Heywood's claim in the same letter that "the Author" (Shakespeare) was "much offended" with Jaggard. Below is Heywood's passage with brackets providing the identities and subjects behind the confusing usage of pronouns (entire letter in Appendix F):

but as I must acknowledge my lines [in *Troia Britanica*] not worthy his [the Earl of Worcester's] patronage, under whom [Worcester] he [Jaggard] hath published them [Heywood's lines in *Troia Britanica*], so the Author [Shakespeare] I know much offended with M. *Jaggard* (that altogether unknown to him) presumed to make so bold with his name [for citing Shakespeare as author of *The Passionate Pilgrim*]. These, and the like dishonesties I know you [printer Nicholas Okes] to be clear of ...

What has escaped the notice of every interpreter of this passage is the fact that Heywood's *Troia Britanica* was dedicated to and patronized by Edward Somerset, 4th Earl of Worcester, and that Heywood was discretely referring to him to make a point about Jaggard. With this understanding, one can make sense of the passage: Heywood was comparing his own boldness of including the Earl of Worcester's name in the dedication to his "unworthy" *Troia Britanica* with Jaggard's boldness of putting Shakespeare's name to *The Passionate Pilgrim*. But the difference between them was that Heywood's permission to use Worcester's name was implicit because Worcester had paid Jaggard for the book's printing ("his patronage"). This was not the case with Shakespeare. Heywood's comments can be translated like this:

Jaggard published *The Passionate Pilgrim* in Shakespeare's name without his knowledge, and I know that Shakespeare was much offended with Jaggard for presuming to make so bold with his name. Contrast this with another book published by Jaggard, my *Troia Britanica*: in the preface, I made bold with the Earl of Worcester's name by dedicating the work to him. While I acknowledge the work was unworthy of the Earl of Worcester, the dedication was made with his knowledge, because Jaggard printed it under Worcester's patronage. Jaggard is dishonest.

Presuming to make bold with one's name implies a person of high social status, like the Earl of Worcester. Heywood, therefore, was apparently placing Shakespeare and the Earl of Worcester on a similar social footing. By doing so, Heywood was adding weight to his complaint against Jaggard, but he cautiously avoided naming Worcester, Shakespeare or even the title of the controversial work. Altogether this explains why Heywood was so concerned that others would think him guilty of stealing from Shakespeare - because the property in question was a nobleman's. Heywood's statement also demonstrates that it was apparently well known in the London literary set that Jaggard had "much offended" the great author with The Passionate Pilgrim, even though the record shows that he did not openly complain or take legal action. The lapse of thirteen years between the second and third editions of The Passionate Pilgrim implies that the great author had personally confronted Jaggard or had paid him to stop printing the work. The great author had to have been an influential person to get this result; and his death no later than 1609 probably emboldened Jaggard to print a third edition (1612).

Jaggard suffered no consequences for the 1598-99 editions, although on October 23, 1600, he and Ralph Blore were fined and nearly imprisoned for printing a pamphlet by Sir Anthony Sherley "without license and contrary to order ..." Thomas Judson, printer of the first two editions of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, experienced some trouble after the work was released. His name

was among those fourteen printers specifically warned on June 4, 1599 about issuing books forbidden by the Archbishop of Canterbury.³⁶ The inclusion of his name was probably due to his partial printing of the "treasonous" The First Part of the Life and Reign of King Henry the Fourth by John Hayward earlier that year, but Judson's involvement in the unauthorized editions of The Passionate Pilgrim may have been a contributing factor. On February 4, 1600, Judson signed a statement with the Stationers' Company that ended his printing career.³⁷ Richard Field, the Shakespeare-approved printer of Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece, was also among those specifically warned by the Archbishop. Why Field's name was on this list, a printer whose only recorded offense with the Stationers' Company had occurred eleven years earlier, 38 is mysterious. Only fifteen days before the list was posted, the Bishop of London (Richard Bancroft) had personally approved a religious work for Field's press.³⁹ Interestingly, Field had collaborated with Jaggard on a book in early 1598 (The True Perfection of Cut Works). Perhaps Field had supplied Jaggard with a few Shakespeare pieces and was found out; Field was certainly in contact with the great author during his printings of Venus and Adonis and Lucrece.

Who Stole from Whom?

Although The Passionate Pilgrim was an unauthorized publication, it does not mean that the eleven "orphan" poems it contained were not penned by Shakespeare. Scholars have deemed them orphans due to William Jaggard's uncredited inclusion of poems by Richard Barnfield, Bartholomew Griffin and Christopher Marlowe, but these author attributions are not as solid as asserted. Perhaps scholars should try a different approach in analyzing The Passionate Pilgrim - that Jaggard knew exactly whose work he was printing and that most of the text was truly Shakespeare's. It seems unlikely that the great author would get so upset with Jaggard for printing a mere two sonnets - the three other confirmed Shakespeare pieces were printed in the 1598 edition of Love's Labour's Lost. Beginning with Barnfield, the two verses in The Passionate Pilgrim (nos. 8 and 20) that first appeared in his Lady Pecunia (published by John Jaggard in 1598), were not part of the main work - they were placed in a separate section with a new title page, Poems: In Diverse Humors. Barnfield's name did not appear on this title page, leaving open the possibility that some of the nine pieces it contained were not of his composition. A poem in this section that included one of the earliest praises of Shakespeare, "A Remembrance of Some English Poets," was followed by what would become No. 20 of The Passionate Pilgrim ("As it fell upon a day"). Number 20 was reprinted in the anthology, England's Helicon, in 1600, and was attributed to

"Ignoto" (i.e., unknown); two other poems in England's Helicon, however, were correctly credited to Barnfield (No. 8 of The Passionate Pilgrim was not featured in England's Helicon). England's Helicon would have been the perfect vehicle for Barnfield to reassert his authorship of both nos. 8 and 20; instead, England's Helicon seemed to confirm Shakespeare's authorship of No. 20 by titling the poem, "Another of the Same Shepherd's," referring to the piece that immediately preceded it, "My flocks feed not," which was No. 17 of The Passionate Pilgrim (No. 17, one of the eleven "orphan" poems, was first printed in Thomas Weelkes's Madrigals to 3, 4, 5 and 6 Voices in 1597 and without signature). And this poem was immediately preceded by No. 16 of The Passionate Pilgrim ("On a day, alack the day," from Love's Labour's Lost) and was correctly assigned to "W. Shakespeare." So nos. 16, 17 and 20 of The Passionate Pilgrim appeared in a cluster in England's Helicon, perhaps so placed to give the impression that they were all by the same author. In 1605, William Jaggard printed a new edition of Lady Pecunia without Poems: In Diverse Humors, constituting another lost opportunity for both author and publisher to correct the supposed misattributions. The poem from this section that had praised Shakespeare and other writers, however, was retained ("A Remembrance of Some English Poets"). Barnfield never published again.

England's Helicon, which postdated The Passionate Pilgrim, is the sole contemporary source for crediting Christopher Marlowe with the very famous lyric, "Live with Me and Be My Love," No. 19 of The Passionate Pilgrim. The text in England's Helicon was more complete than that printed by William Jaggard (the actual title was "Come Live with Me and Be My Love"). Scholars have unanimously accepted the anthology's credit of the piece to Marlowe even though at least five of its author attributions have been proven incorrect. England's Helicon titled the piece, "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love." Interestingly, the only other piece ascribed to "The Passionate Shepherd" in the anthology is an excerpt from Love's Labour's Lost, which was properly credited to "W. Shakespeare" (No. 16 of The Passionate Pilgrim). Perhaps the "Passionate" epithet was an intentional reference to The Passionate Pilgrim. Another clue tying "Live With Me" to Shakespeare occurs in Merry Wives of Windsor, in which a character sings a few lines from this song. Marlowe also made use of this song for two speeches in Tamburlaine (parts one and two), and used one line in The Jew of Malta. 40 Marlowe borrowed heavily from Shakespeare (as shown in Appendix A), and songs in Marlowe's plays are scarce, if not non-existent, but are plentiful in Shakespeare's plays. With no other contemporary source affirming Marlowe's authorship of "Live with Me," Jaggard's prior claim for Shakespeare cannot be ignored.

Scholars have long believed that William Jaggard stole Bartholomew Griffin's "Sonnet 3" from Fidessa, More Chaste Than Kind (1596) for inclusion

in *The Passionate Pilgrim* as No. 11. The two poems share ten lines but four are completely different. Scholars assume that both versions are by Griffin, but this is doubtful knowing that his work was full of borrowed material. In her study of *Fidessa*, "source-hunter" Janet G. Scott concluded that Griffin had plagiarized lines from the sonnets of Sir Philip Sidney, Thomas Watson, Edmund Spenser and Samuel Daniel. Griffin's "Sonnet 15" in *Fidessa* also resembled a passage about sleep in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (2.2.37-40). Griffin admitted in his preface to *Fidessa* that he was a "young beginner" and that *Fidessa* was "the first fruit of any my writings." If No. 11 of *The Passionate Pilgrim* was Shakespeare's original composition, as Jaggard apparently believed, then it is very likely that Griffin had seen it previously in manuscript and borrowed it for *Fidessa*. To make his Shakespeare theft less apparent, Griffin may have replaced four lines with those of his own composition. Griffin never published again.

Conclusion

The Passionate Pilgrim gets little attention by the Shakespeare professor because he believes that Shakespeare only authored five of the twenty poems. But a cursory examination of the other fifteen suggests that the majority of the work was indeed penned by Shakespeare, that some pieces had circulated in manuscript in the 1580s, and that his admirers were making transcriptions of them and echoing his lines in their own works. (Even the title of the second section, "Sonnets to Sundry Notes of Music," was seemingly echoed in "Sundry sweet Sonnets," the title of the second section of Thomas Lodge's poetry work, Scylla's Metamorphosis, in 1589.) The eleven "orphan" poems of the collection - which the Shakespeare professor has classified as of unknown authorship - are a sampling of the great author's early verses, which would explain their not-quite-Shakespearean quality. The evidence that four poems were written by other writers is dubious. The two poems supposedly authored by Richard Barnfield, nos. 8 and 20, were never reclaimed for him, although there was ample opportunity to do so. The poem supposedly written by neophyte poet Bartholomew Griffin (No. 11), first printed in his Fidessa, was more than likely Shakespeare's original poem that Griffin borrowed and altered so it would be less noticeable. And there is only a 50-50 chance that the famous song, "Live With Me and Be My Love" (No. 19), was really penned by Christopher Marlowe. That the majority of poems in The Passionate Pilgrim were indeed of Shakespeare's composition would explain the great author's ire at publisher William Jaggard for printing his poetry without his authority. Thomas Heywood's letter of complaint about Jaggard indirectly revealed that "the author" of The Passionate Pilgrim was a man of high rank. Those of high rank were protective of their names, especially in regard to printing verses. Although the name that Jaggard had abused was only a pseudonym, evidently the literary world knew exactly whom it represented. The Jaggard affair shows that the great author would not openly protest the piracy of his work because it would expose his identity as Shakespeare, and it also shows that he had enough clout to privately influence Jaggard to keep the work out of print for over a decade. This picture is at odds with the experts' belief that the great author was an untitled person who started writing circa 1590 and strictly for profit. With this scenario, there would be no reason for the Stratford Man to be offended by publication of his poetry or usage of his name - rather he would be pleased to take some of the profits. Based upon the Stratford Man's propensity to sue, had he really been "much offended" by Jaggard, he would have undoubtedly seen him in the law courts. Other poetry by Shakespeare, his sonnets and A Lover's Complaint, both written in the first person, provided autobiographical clues indicative of the author's nobility. And it appears that Shakespeare's involvement with Love's Martyr, a work that almost baldly commented on the royal succession, had shielded all contributors from government prosecution. Perhaps Shakespeare's sonnets would be more solvable, and his other puzzle-poems not so puzzling, if scholars would take these facts into account.

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PART II

The Stratford Man as Shakespeare, Lifetime: The Professor's Evidence



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CHAPTER 5

The "Stratford Man": The Faith-based Favorite

EVIDENCE FOR THE Stratford Man's case as the great author during his lifetime (1564-1616) and evidence after he died must be distinguished by the reader. The Shakespeare professor's best evidence is the latter, and is primarily from one source, the First Folio, the subject of Chapter 8. For evidence linking the Stratford Man with the great author during his lifetime, the documentary record is completely blank. There is no "smoking gun" evidence, but the professor has what he regards as proof: three items that have nothing to do with writing. They only suggest that the Stratford Man was an actor and confirm that he was a theater shareholder. Please take note that the Stratford Man, his family, and his descendants never claimed he was the great author (or actor) "William Shakespeare." Even the Stratford Man's neighbors took no notice of him in this regard. No fact during his lifetime confirms he was educated or had any interest in education, writing or literature. In the Stratford Man's detailed will there is no mention of books (not even those by Shakespeare) or literary manuscripts (many Shakespeare plays were unpublished when he died, such as Julius Caesar and The Taming of the Shrew). When the Stratford Man passed away in 1616, no one publicly or privately mentioned that the great author had died, a silence that remained unbroken until 1620.

The first documentary record of the Stratford Man in London, the theater center, occurred when he was 28 years old. On May 22, 1592, "Willelmus Shackspere" loaned £7 to John Clayton; by 1600, the loan was still unpaid, so Shackspere took Clayton to court to recover it. The Shakespeare professor usually ignores this lawsuit or denies that his Shakespeare was involved because, if he were, then the first trace of his London presence would be as a moneylender, not as an actor or writer. The professor prefers to focus upon the other "fact" of 1592, an allusion to an actor described as an "upstart Crow" in the book, Greene's Groats-worth of Wit (the subject of chapters 6 and 7). Even though he will admit that the Stratford Man was in London in 1592, the Shakespeare professor would rather believe that Clayton got his loan from another man named William Shackspere who lived in Bedfordshire. He will

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never be able to prove this, so the fact of the Clayton loan cannot be simply ignored. Lending money was in the Stratford Man's family: his father, John, made loans and was accused of usury from 1570 to 1576.² The next documented fact of the Stratford Man in London is the Shakespeare professor's Proof No. 1, which also seems to confirm that he was Clayton's moneylender.

Proof No. 1: The Stratford Man as Actor-Member of the Lord Chamberlain's Men (1595)

PROOF: A document dated March 15, 1595 regarding payment for two play performances by the Lord Chamberlain's Men for the queen's Christmastime entertainments. Authorized by the queen's Privy Council, her treasurer recorded a payment of £20 to

William Kempe William Shakespeare & Richard Burbage servants to the Lord Chamberlain upon the council's warrant dated at Whitehall 15 March 1594 [1595] for two several comedies or interludes shewed by them before her Majesty in Christmas time last past viz. upon St. Stephen's Day and Innocents Day ...³

William Shakespeare, presumably the Stratford Man, is named in the document as a "servant" to the Lord Chamberlain along with two actor-members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, an acting troupe formed in June 1594. The Shakespeare professor claims that the Stratford Man was also an actor-member of this company, but it is questionable.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE: None. There is no other evidence that "Shakespeare" the man was associated with the Lord Chamberlain's Men during its nineyear existence. "Shakespeare" was not on the initial list of members when this company was formed; this is also true for actor Richard Burbage, but there are records of him acting as early as 1591, contemporary praise of his talent, and knowledge of the roles he played. There is no evidence that the Stratford Man performed for the Lord Chamberlain's Men, or for any other acting company, prior to this document. The treasurer's account books from 1597 to 1616 (1602 is missing) mention actors Heminges, Burbage, Cowley, Bryan and Pope, but William Shakespeare's name is consistently absent. The Lord Chamberlain's Men performed at least ten Shakespeare plays but there is no evidence that Shakespeare wrote them specifically for this company. Other acting companies performed Shakespeare's plays, including the Earl of Pembroke's Men, the Earl of Derby's Men, and the Earl of Sussex's Men. As noted in Chapter 1, Shakespeare's name was not even mentioned by the authorities after a controversial performance of his Richard II by the Lord Chamberlain's Men.

REALITY: The 1595 document – the second surviving document of the Stratford Man's presence in London – is as one of the receivers of a payment. It follows neatly upon the first reference to him in London, as Clayton's moneylender in 1592. A logical conclusion based upon the documentary record only is that the "William Shakespeare" in the 1595 document served the Lord Chamberlain's Men as a financier, loaning money to the company to cover expenses for these particular performances and was getting back his investment. Someone had to front a substantial sum for the company because the royal household did not pay for these performances for three months; the bill was £20 for two performances, so the productions must have been lavish. It is fact that "Willelmus Shackspere" was a moneylender as early as 1592. Documentary evidence shows that financing and investing was a constant theme of the Stratford Man's life, not performing or writing. His service to the Lord Chamberlain was for moneylending and nothing more.

The treasurer's document is crucial to the professor's case for the Stratford Man as the great author because it shows him in association with an acting company in December 1594. If he is an actor, then he must be a writer. This logic has been accepted without corroborating evidence. Thomas W. Baldwin had an unbiased view of the treasurer's payment: "It merely shows that these three were the members deputed to receive the pay for the company. They may or may not themselves have acted in the play." One document alone associates "William Shakespeare" with the Lord Chamberlain's Men, presumably as an actor but it is irrelevant because acting is not writing.

Proof No. 2: The Stratford Man as Actor-Member of the King's Men (1603)

PROOF: A license for The King's Men acting company, issued on May 19, 1603, under the patronage of the new king, James I. William Shakespeare's name appears among those of eight known actors. The new company embraced the same members (with additions) of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, which became defunct after Queen Elizabeth's death.

Know ye that We of our special grace, certain knowledge, & mere motion have licensed and authorized and by these presents do license and authorize these our Servants Lawrence Fletcher, William Shakespeare, Richard Burbage, Augustyne Phillips, John Hemings, Henrie Condell, William Sly, Robert Armyn, Richard Cowly, and the rest of their Associates freely to use and exercise the Art and faculty of playing Comedies, Tragedies, histories, Interludes, morals, pastorals, Stage plays, and Such others like as they have already studied or hereafter shall use or study, aswell for the recreation of our loving Subjects, as for our Solace and pleasure when we shall think good to see them, during our pleasure ... ⁵

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SUPPORTING EVIDENCE: None. The name Shakespeare never occurs again in any documentary record associated with the King's Men in an acting capacity during the Stratford Man's lifetime. On March 15, 1604, "William Shakespeare" and other King's Men "players" were authorized to receive red cloth, presumably to make garments to be worn during King James's procession through London; it was not for an acting assignment. But it is unlikely that these players took part in the procession because there was no mention of it in contemporary accounts. An expert at the Public Record Office (now the National Archives) believed that the cloth was "probably no more than the customary gift to men connected with the royal service."

REALITY: There is no evidence that Lawrence Fletcher, the first person named on the 1603 license, was active in the King's Men.7 There is also no evidence that "William Shakespeare" was active in it either. The documentary record shows that from late March to late May 1604 the Stratford Man was busy selling malt and managing his property in Stratford-upon-Avon.8 Did the king allow him a leave of absence to deal with his personal business? It was about a three-day journey by horseback between Stratford-upon-Avon and London. Two records of payment to the King's Men for acting performances have survived and neither mentions Shakespeare: (1) December 2, 1603, the King's Men were paid £30 for a performance (the piece unnamed) before King James at Wilton House (the seat of the Earl of Pembroke);9 John Heminges alone was named. (2) August 9-27, 1604, the treasurer of the King's chamber paid King's Men members Augustine Phillips, John Heminges and "ten of their fellows" for their attendance at Somerset House during the visit of a foreign dignitary. 10 During the Christmas season of 1604-05, seven performances of Shakespeare's plays were given before the king and his court; no mention was made of Shakespeare's presence. The same absence of "Shakespeare" occurred during the winter of 1612-13, when several Shakespeare plays were performed during the celebration of Princess Elizabeth's engagement. These royal performances were an outstanding honor for the great author and all occurred while the Stratford Man was still alive. A clue in the wording of the King's Men license could explain these awkward absences: "... to use and exercise the art and faculty of playing Comedies, tragedies ... " Faculty can be defined as "pecuniary ability, means, resources" (OED). As the Stratford Man's previous records in London concerned lending money and receiving a payment for performances, his role as a member of the King's Men may have been as their banker or financier. The Stratford Man's physical presence, therefore, would not have been necessary and would explain his post-1603 business activities in Stratford-upon-Avon. Based upon documentary evidence, this explanation is more plausible than his being an actor in this company – but even if he did act for this company, being an actor does not prove one is a writer.

Proof No. 3: The Stratford Man as a Theater Shareholder

Three separate documents confirm the Stratford Man owned a share in the Globe Theater, and one that he owned a share in the Blackfriars Theater. The original ownership papers have not survived, but are referred to in legal documents dated 1615, 11 1619, 12 and 1635. 13 The Stratford Man, therefore, had a share in the King's Men acting company, and shares in two theaters in which the company acted.

A. The Globe Theater Share: All three documents detail the initial investors of the Globe Theater in February 1599. The investors comprised three parties: brothers Cuthbert and Richard Burbage; Nicholas Brend (the landowner); and William Shakespeare, John Heminges, Augustine Phillips, and Thomas Pope. In the 1635 document, Cuthbert Burbage said that he and his brother

joined those deserving men, Shakspere, Hemings, Condall, Philips and others partners in the profits of that they call the House \dots ¹⁴

"Shakspere" had clearly maintained his ties with members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men after jointly receiving a payment for two of their performances in 1595.

B. The Blackfriars Theater Share: The 1615 document confirms that "William Shakespeare" was a partner in the lease of the Blackfriars Theater, purchased in August 1608. The document names the original investors:

Ricardo Burbadge prefato Johanni Hemynges & quibusdam Willelmo Shakespeare Cuthberto Burbadge Henrico Condell Thomae Evans de Londonia praedicta generosis ... ¹⁵

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE: In 1613, the Blackfriars Gatehouse, a property located about 600 feet from the Blackfriars Theater, was purchased by "William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, Gent.," John Heminges, and two others, from "Henry Walker, minstrel." This document confirms that the Stratford Man was the same person who invested in the Globe and Blackfriars theaters. Interestingly, his share in the Gatehouse property was listed in his will, but not the Blackfriars Theater share (his Globe share was also not listed in his will, but the theater had burned down in 1613).

REALITY: Although these documents clearly prove the Stratford Man's theater involvement, they fail to prove that the Stratford Man was a writer - in fact, one of them implies that he was not the great author. The 1635 document was Cuthbert Burbage's answer to a petition to the Lord Chamberlain, the ruling authority for theatrical matters. Burbage explained his right to own contested theater shares. The Lord Chamberlain at this time was Philip Herbert, 4th Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, who was one of the dedicatees of the First Folio edition of Shakespeare's plays in 1623. The relevant point is that Burbage referred to "Shakspeare" as an original Globe Theater investor in this document, and that "Shakspeare" was one of the "men players" 17 placed at the Blackfriars Theater after the 1608 lease was signed, but Burbage did not mention him as a playwright. He did not mention that "Shakspeare" was the object of one of the greatest literary tributes in history, the First Folio, dedicated to the same Philip Herbert. Surely Burbage would have called attention to this important and complimentary association if "Shakspeare" were the great author.

Little-Known and Damning Documents

The Shakespeare professor's proofs that the Stratford Man was the great author during his lifetime fail to do so. They neither prove nor suggest that he was a writer. They do, however, prove beyond reasonable doubt that he was involved in the theater and that he was associated with actors. Tangible proof that he actually acted, however, is lacking. There is other evidence that the experts will cite to support their case, but it again only suggests that he was an actor. In his will, the Stratford Man bequeathed to his "fellows" John Heminges, Richard Burbage, and Henry Condell 26 shillings "to buy them rings."18 All three men were the Stratford Man's colleagues in the King's Men acting company, and his co-partners in two theaters; Richard Burbage was named with the Stratford Man as a receiver of a payment for the Lord Chamberlain's Men. In another will, King's Men actor and Globe theater shareholder, Augustine Phillips, bequeathed 30 shillings each to his "fellows" William Shakespeare, Henry Condell and Christopher Beeston in 1605 (he bequeathed 20 shillings each to five other King's Men actors). Shakespeare is again listed among actors but in a non-acting capacity. There is also the 18th century transcription of a 1602 document naming "Shakespeare" among those who were improperly granted a coat of arms. The document has a sketch of the Stratford Shakespeare's coat of arms, and underneath it, written in a different hand is the phrase, "Shakspear § Player by Garter." 19 The grant was issued to the Stratford Man's father in 1596, so why would the son's name and supposed profession be on this document? Some consider the phrase as

an addition made by a modern hand, but forgery or not, all this document could prove is that the Stratford Man was a "player." He was not mentioned as a writer or as a person of credit. The year before this document was written, "Shakespeare" was declared in print as among the "best and chiefest of our modern writers" in *Love's Martyr*.

Other documentary evidence about the Stratford Man during his lifetime is indirectly revealing. The Stratford Man was called as a witness in a lawsuit between Stephen Belott and Christopher Mountjoy, and was deposed in London on May 11, 1612. The signed deposition of "William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon in the county of Warwick gentleman" still survives. The Stratford Man testified that, in 1604, while he lodged at the Mountjoy home in London, he had encouraged Stephen Belott to marry Mountjoy's daughter. The marriage took place, but after eight years, Belott claimed that Mountjoy never fulfilled his promise of providing a dowry, etc. By 1612, multiple editions of Shakespeare's poems and plays had been printed and the great author was well known for his literary achievements. The Stratford Man's deposition, however, gives not the slightest hint of his supposed literary or acting career. Humphrey Fludd, another witness deposed for this case, identified himself on his deposition as "one of his Majesty's Trumpeters," 20 whereas the Stratford Man on his deposition only identified himself as a gentleman. The Stratford Man did not refer to himself as one "of his Majesty's players" or "of the King's Men." The Stratford Man's role in furthering the Belott-Mountjoy marriage was mentioned in the depositions of other witnesses, but they did not associate him with writing or acting. Thus, late in his alleged brilliant writing career, the Stratford Man and the others who testified gave no indication that he was the famous and esteemed writer, William Shakespeare. Another witness in this case was George Wilkins, identified in his deposition as a victualer, a keeper of a restaurant or tavern; Belott and his wife once lodged at his establishment. An occasional writer, Wilkins, it is believed, based his novel, The Painful Adventures of Pericles, Prince of Tyre (1608), upon Shakespeare's play, Pericles, Prince of Tyre. By way of the Belott connection, Wilkins may have even met the Stratford Man, yet this express admirer of Shakespeare never recorded it.

More insight about the Stratford Man is contained in a document issued by a London law court in November 1596:

Be it known that William Wayte craves sureties of the peace against William Shakspere, Francis Langley, Dorothy Soer wife of John Soer, and Anne Lee, for fear of death, and so forth. ²¹

The Stratford Man, Francis Langley and two women had evidently threatened bodily harm to William Wayte. Court orders of this nature required "the

posting of bonds by the defendants as assurances that they would keep the peace for a specified period."²² The Stratford Man's association with Langley, a moneylender and the owner of the Swan Theater, is telling. The Stratford Man was loaning money as early as 1592, and after this complaint purchased shares in two theaters. It appears that the Stratford Man was following Langley's lead. Langley was neither an actor nor a playwright.

Conclusion

Documentary evidence during the Stratford Man's lifetime identifies him as a seller of grain and stone. It identifies the Stratford Man as a moneylender. It identifies the Stratford Man as a landowner, a husband and a father. It identifies the Stratford Man as a matchmaker and even a bully. It identifies the Stratford Man as a theater investor and an associate or member of two acting companies. But no documentary evidence during his lifetime identifies the Stratford Man as a writer, an educated man, or the author of the Shakespeare works. The most notable actions of the Stratford Man in London in the documentary record involved lending money (1592), receiving payment for an acting company (1595), theater investing (1599, 1608), and becoming a charter member of the King's Men acting company (1603). Excluding a name similarity, the Shakespeare professor's evidence for the Stratford Man as the great author during his lifetime consists of a mere leap of faith: he was an actor and a theater shareholder, ergo, he was a writer. The reader should keep this in mind wading through the sea of conjecture that comprises most Shakespeare biographies, which Mark Twain likened to a reconstructed Brontosaur: "nine bones and six hundred barrels of plaster of paris." The experts' best evidence for the Stratford Man occurs years after he had died. But they have one more "proof" - just as insufficient as the others - that has become so crucial to their case that the following two chapters are needed to debunk it.

CHAPTER 6

The "upstart Crow" and the Stratford Man: No Relation

The Professor's Final Proof for the Stratford Man

as Shakespeare During His Lifetime

THE INVENTION OF the Stratford Man's early theatrical career by the Shakespeare professor hinges entirely upon one short passage from a 1592 book. It is perhaps his most important proof of all because it puts an end to those long, painfully blank, "lost years" of the Stratford Man, and establishes an approximate starting point for his supposed acting and writing career. This passage is the bridge between them, so it must be analyzed in depth to prove that, when carefully read, and read in context, it has nothing to do with either the Stratford Man or with "Shakespeare" personally. Even the Shakespeare professor would admit that its exact meaning is unclear, yet he is steadfast in his belief that the Stratford Man was the subject of an attack by writer Robert Greene in Greene's Groats-worth of Wit. (A groat was a coin worth four pence.) The work was published at Greene's "dying request," according to the title page, which was granted: Greene, age 32, died on September 3, 1592 and his book was registered 17 days later. Groats-worth was a novel that contained much of Greene's life story (via the character Roberto), but at the conclusion, Greene added a letter of advice in his own voice to three playwright friends (full text in Appendix B). This is where the passage in question is located. Much of the letter is a diatribe against actors. Greene says that although actors were "beholden" to him, they had "forsaken" him. He singles out one actor, whom he calls the "upstart Crow," for his friends to beware of:

Yes, trust them not: For there is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his Tiger's heart wrapp'd in a Player's hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Johannes factotum*, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a country. O that I might entreat... [original italics]

The experts have entertained various interpretations of this passage, but there is one point upon which they all agree: the Stratford Man was the "upstart Crow." Greene's comment, in their opinion, constitutes evidence of the Stratford Man's involvement in the London theater scene in 1592. Here is their reasoning. Point 1: "Tiger's heart wrapp'd in a player's hide" paraphrases a line later attributed to Shakespeare, "Oh tiger's heart wrapp'd in a woman's hide!" (Henry VI-Part 3, 1.4.137). Point 2: "Shake-scene" is a pun on "Shakespeare." Ergo, Shake-scene is Shakespeare, i.e., the Stratford Man. This interpretation is in complete defiance with the documentary record: there is zero evidence the Stratford Man was an actor or playwright in 1592 or before.

The experts usually view the Upstart Crow passage as Greene jealous of an actor who was succeeding in the writing profession, but the passage takes on an entirely different cast when put into its proper context. Greene was ill and dying when he wrote the letter; he was deeply repentant for his immoral behavior and wanted to his friends to heed his advice. Previously an atheist, Greene advised one of them to believe in God, that he was vengeful. He advised another to tone down his satire, which could create enemies, and advised them all to curb their vices. In equally serious terms, Greene warned his writer friends about the Upstart Crow. Shakespeare's line, "Oh tiger's heart wrapp'd in a woman's hidel," was a vicious description of Queen Margaret said by her distraught prisoner, the Duke of York. She had been gloating about her victory and then waved at him a handkerchief dipped in the blood of his murdered teenage son. The "tiger's heart" line was included in York's reaction. By replacing the word "woman's" with "Player's," Greene betrayed his opinion of the Upstart Crow, that he was equally as savage and cold-hearted. And by describing the Upstart Crow as a tiger in player's clothing, like a wolf in sheep's clothing, Greene was saying that he was deceitful. Greene had depended upon the Upstart Crow and was betrayed, and believed he would be ultimately responsible for his death. Greene was warning his friends that the Upstart Crow could ruin their lives, too - this was not jealousy.

Greene also wrote that actors, and therefore, the Upstart Crow, will steal writers' ideas ("admired inventions"), are usurers, and would prove to be "unkind" nurses. In the passage below, Greene purposely used the plural to make his attack on the Upstart Crow less pointed.

O that I might entreat your rare wits to be employed in more profitable courses: & let those Apes [actors] imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaint them with your admired inventions. I know the best husband of you all will never prove an Usurer, and the kindest of them all will never prove a kind nurse: yet whilst you may, seek you better Masters; for it is pity men of such rare wits [writers], should be subject to the pleasure of such rude grooms.

Greene's advice to his writer friends, "whilst you may, seek you better masters," is an extremely important line in the letter and one that the Shakespeare professor never seems to notice. Greene was railing against an actor who was also Greene's *employer or superior*. Prone to jumping to conclusions, even the Shakespeare professor would not place the Stratford Man as a theatrical boss so early in his supposed career. All of Greene's insults about actors applied to this specific actor-master, or *actor-manager*. Greene repeats this point in the final paragraph.

... and when they [actors] soothe you with terms of Mastership, remember Robert Greene, whom they have often so flattered, perishes now for want of comfort ... Trust not then (I beseech ye) to such weak stays: for they are as changeable in mind, as in many attires.

Besides blaming the Upstart Crow for his misery and impending death, Greene was urging his writer friends not to work for him. It is implied then that some or all of them were already doing so. Greene wrote that the Upstart Crow was "beautified with our feathers" – "our" could include the beautiful lines of Greene and the writers he was addressing. Greene's description of the Upstart Crow must have been enough for his friends to know exactly who was meant – otherwise, what would be the point of the warning? Greene was making serious accusations about the Upstart Crow, so he had to be discreet – it is very unlikely, therefore, that he would have supplied even one syllable of the Upstart Crow's real name or would have parodied a line that he had written.

Upstart Crow-Player-Ant

Robert Greene's revelation about the Upstart Crow actor being his employer is further supported only a few pages before the letter to his writer friends. Greene's character, Roberto, is a down-on-his-luck scholar who encounters a surprisingly well-dressed "Player" who tells him that he will "be well paid" for "making plays." The Player admits to humble origins, then brags about the £200 worth of playing apparel he owns and that he is wealthy enough to "build a windmill" at his own expense. The Player practically defines the word upstart – one who has newly or suddenly risen in position or importance" and "a parvenu" (OED). The Player also brags that he "thunder'd on the stage," and that he wrote morality plays and dialogue for puppets. Similarly, the Upstart Crow is an actor-writer who "in his own conceit" considers himself the best scene-shaker or stealer ("Shake-scene"), and was Greene's "master" or boss. Greene's "Player" of the previous pages and the "upstart Crow," also called "Player" ("Tiger's heart wrapp'd in a Player's hide"), are

one and the same. The Shakespeare professor consistently fails to link the two probably because the Player was Roberto's employer.

Immediately following Greene's letter to his friends was his version of the parable, "The Ant and the Grasshopper," which he applied to his own situation. The pleasure-seeking Grasshopper chastised the Ant for his labors and his thrift. When winter storms came, the Grasshopper "went for succor to the Ant his old acquaintance," who turned him out. "Foodless, helpless and strengthless," the Grasshopper "died comfortless without remedy. Like him, like myself." There is no question that the Player, the Upstart Crow, and the Ant represented one person, who in composite can be described as follows: a successful actor who once was a humble country player; a former writer of puppet shows and morality plays who was now writing plays, some with stolen ideas from Greene; an employer of playwrights (including Greene). He is a bombastic actor ("bombast out a blank verse") who dominates scenes ("Shake-scene"), had forsaken Greene (like the Ant forsook the Grasshopper), and was so heartless that Greene blamed him for "perishing." He is well dressed and rich, and is a jack-of-all-trades ("Johannes factotum"). The Upstart Crow-Player-Ant is not newly arrived on the literary scene - the Shakespeare professor's interpretation - he is newly rich and in a position of power.

Robert Greene's insulting picture of the Upstart Crow-Player-Ant and warning about his devious character makes it unlikely that Greene would make an obvious pun upon this person's real name. To accept this reasoning is to accept that the Upstart Crow was not Shakespeare.

 \dots and being an absolute $\mbox{\it Johannes factotum}$, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a country.

But Greene was definitely punning upon the name "Shakespeare" with "Shake-scene" because of the usage of Shakespeare's "tiger's heart" line. The word "only" in "the only Shake-scene in a country" implies that there was another "Shake-scene," the original one – otherwise the Upstart Crow would not fancifully single himself out as one ("in his own conceit"). It is implied that there was another Shake-scene, one whose reputation was well established before the Upstart Crow started writing dramas. This original, of course, was Shakespeare, so Greene's Upstart Crow conceitedly thought of himself as another Shakespeare — that is, the writer — in 1592. As explained in Chapter 3, Thomas Nashe's reference to "English Seneca" and "whole Hamlets" in Menaphon is evidence that Shakespeare's Hamlet had already been written by 1589. Hamlet was one of Shakespeare's masterpieces, so he was hardly a new and upcoming writer in 1592. Greene's Upstart Crow was not Shakespeare,

he just fancied himself another great writer or scene-shaker — one who could "shake a stage" with terrific plays, as Ben Jonson praised the great author in the First Folio. But Greene also used the word "Shake-scene" literally, which further ties the Upstart Crow with Roberto's employer, the Player, who said he "thunder'd on the stage." Besides "jack of all trades," "Johannes factotum" can mean "a person of boundless conceit who thinks himself able to do anything however much beyond the reach of real abilities" (OED). Greene's Upstart Crow conceitedly thought of himself as good a writer as Greene and his friends, and even supposed himself another Shakespeare.

The Stratford Man was not the Upstart Crow. There is no evidence that he was an actor in 1592, and no evidence that he employed Greene or anyone else to write plays at this time. There is no evidence that Greene bore a grudge against the Stratford Man to inspire such a cruel portrayal, or evidence that the Stratford Man bore a grudge against Greene to reject his appeal for help. To discover the Upstart Crow's true identity, one must simply ask, who employed Greene in 1592?

The Real Upstart Crow: Edward Alleyn (1566-1626)

Actor Edward Alleyn's case as the identity behind Robert Greene's Upstart Crow-Player-Ant is strongly supported by his biography and contemporary remarks. The Upstart Crow had to be an actor-manager, one in a superior position to employ writers. Greene's plays, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, and Orlando Furioso, were performed by the Lord Strange's Men, one of the acting companies with which Alleyn performed; there were four performances at the Rose Theater from February to May 1592. That year, Alleyn and his company had joined forces with the owner of the Rose Theater, Philip Henslowe (Alleyn also married Henslowe's stepdaughter that year). The DNB noted that "it would appear that he and Alleyn ran the theatre as a shared partnership." This would mean that actor Alleyn was also a theater boss in 1592. But Alleyn was already deeply involved in the business side of acting by January 1589, when he and his brother, also an actor, purchased "playing apparel, playbooks, instruments, and other commodities." Presumably they were investing in their company, the Lord Admiral's Men. Alleyn was already a leading actor of this company by circa 1587, when he performed with them the title role of Tamburlaine the Great by Christopher Marlowe. It was an enormous

By 1592, the year *Groats-worth* was written, Alleyn was wealthy, famous, a box-office draw, and in a position of power. He was such a superstar that the title page of *A Knack to Know a Knave* (a play performed in 1592 but first published in 1594) included the unprecedented phrase, "as it hath sundry times

been played by ED. ALLEN and his Company," Neither the acting company, nor author of the play, was named. Fourteen performances of "harry the vi." by the Lord Strange's Men were recorded during the first half of 1592.² Part three of Shakespeare's *Henry VI* contained the famous "tiger's heart" line; it is possible, therefore, that Alleyn had played the Duke of York's role and recited this very line. Although unnamed, the three playwright friends Greene addressed in his letter are usually identified today as Christopher Marlowe, George Peele, and Thomas Nashe. Marlowe and Peele wrote plays for Alleyn's company before *Groats-worth* — so Greene's warning to them, "whilst you may, seek you better Masters," was especially suggestive of Alleyn.

The Upstart Crow actor also wrote plays, and Greene, by implication, had accused him of stealing his play ideas. A.D. Wraight, who believed that Alleyn was the Upstart Crow, gave evidence that he wrote plays. He was paid for *Tambercam*, as noted in Henslowe's diary, and received payments for ten other plays.³ Most believe that Alleyn was the agent to pay the writers of these now lost plays, but as none of the titles were ever attributed to anyone else, Alleyn's authorship cannot be dismissed. Other actors wrote plays, so it is not unlikely that he did so too. At least one scholar has noted the similarity of plot between the anonymous play, *Fair Em: the Miller's Daughter of Manchester*, and Greene's play, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. Greene specifically insulted *Fair Em*'s author in the preface to his book, *Farewell to Folly*, printed in 1591, the year before he died:

And he that cannot write true English without the help of Clerks of parish Churches, will needs make himself the father of interludes. O 'tis a jolly matter when a man hath a familiar style and can indite [write] a whole year and never be beholding to art? but to bring Scripture to prove anything he says, and kill it dead with the text in a trifling subject of love, I tell you is no small piece of cunning. As for example two lovers on the stage arguing one another of unkindness, his Mistress runs over him with this canonical sentence, "A man's conscience is a thousand witnesses," and her knight again excuseth himself with that saying of the Apostle, "Love covereth the multitude of sins." I think this was but simple abusing of the Scripture. [quotation marks added]

Greene's two quotations were paraphrased lines from Fair Em.⁴ Greene called these lines "blasphemous rhetoric" and their writer a "dunce" and a "witless cockscomb." Wraight argued that Alleyn wrote Fair Em, and that Greene revealed this in Groats-worth: the Player told Roberto he could build a wind-mill, which is the setting for one scene in Fair Em.⁵ Greene had also put down Tamburlaine the Great in the same preface, referring to the recently printed version as "unsavory papers"; Tamburlaine was Alleyn's most famous role,

another indication that he was targeted.⁶ Some "men" stole Greene's material, wrote R.B. in *Greene's Funerals* (1594):

Nay more the men, that so Eclips'd his fame: Purloined his Plumes, can they deny the same? [Sonnet 9, lines 5-6]

Alleyn and Bombast

Greene's Upstart Crow was a bombastic actor ("supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you"), and Edward Alleyn was an actor of bombastic roles. Bombast is "inflated or turgid language" (OED). Such was the signature style of Christopher Marlowe, and his Tamburlaine the Great could be called the epitome of bombastic plays; Alleyn, as noted above, was its star. Alleyn and Marlowe teamed up to produce a sequel soon after its debut, and they continued to produce similar plays that focused upon one egocentric, larger-than-life character, like Dr. Faustus and The Jew of Malta. Tamburlaine was a shepherd who transforms himself into a lusty, boasting conqueror bent on world domination. In the excerpts below, Tamburlaine has just captured the Turkish emperor, Bajazet, and has put him in a cage. Referring to Bajazet, he then tells a servant, "Bring out my footstool." Bajazet implores his god to poison Tamburlaine, who responds:

TAMBURLAINE

... But villain! thou that wishest this to me, Fall prostrate on the low disdainful earth, And be the footstool of great Tamburlaine, That I may rise to my royal throne.

BAJAZET

First shalt thou rip my bowels with thy sword, And sacrifice my soul to death and hell, Before I yield to such slavery.

TAMBURLAINE

Base villain, vassal, slave to Tamburlaine! Unworthy to embrace or touch the ground, That bears the honor of my royal weight; Stoop, villain, stoop! – Stoop! for so he bids That may command thee piecemeal to be torn, Or scattered like the lofty cedar trees Struck with the voice of thundering Jupiter.

BAJAZE*

When as I look down to the damned fiends, Fiends look on me; and thou dread god of hell With ebon scepter strike this hateful earth, And make it swallow both of us at once. [Tamburlaine the Great-Part 1, 4.2]

In *Tamburlaine*'s sequel, the title character has conquered more Middle Eastern kings. In Act 4, Scene 4 he uses them to draw his chariot, "with bits in their mouths." Tamburlaine shouts these lines at them:

SHAKESPEARE SUPPRESSED

Holla, ye pampered Jades of Asia! What, can ye draw but twenty miles a day, And have so proud a chariot at your heels, And such a Coachman as great Tamburlaine ...

Shakespeare parodied these lines in the mouth of Pistol in *Henry IV-Part 2* (2.4.178):

Shall packhorses, And hollow pamper'd jades of Asia, Which cannot go but thirty mile a day, Compare with Caesars, and with Cannibals, And Trojan Greeks?

"The pervading sins of Tamburlaine," wrote the $19^{\rm th}$ century critic, Francis Cunningham,

are so glaring and manifest that he who travels express may read them, but there can be no doubt that it was by virtue of these sins that the plays became so marvelously popular. The bombast and ranting which so grate upon our ears or provoke us to laughter, were in the days of Elizabeth absolutely essential to the conventional idea of an Oriental conqueror.⁷

Marlowe's bombastic language in *Tamburlaine* can be excused, wrote Cunningham, because it was a stereotypical portrayal of an "Oriental conqueror." This may have been partly true, but some of Marlowe's fellow writers panned the play. Thomas Nashe wrote a letter in the preface of Robert Greene's *Menaphon* in which he praised Greene and complained about writers who were imitating the popular bombastic plays, i.e., *Tamburlaine*.8 But Nashe placed the greatest blame for this trend upon the writers' "idiot art-masters," those who paid them.

But herein I cannot so fully bequeath them [writers] to folly, as their idiot art-masters, that intrude themselves to our ears as the alchemists of eloquence; who (mounted on the stage of arrogance) think to outbrave better pens with the swelling bombast of a bragging blank verse.

Nashe also described the art-masters as actors ("mounted on the stage of arrogance"). Nashe said that writers were tailoring their works with bombastic verses to please the actor-masters. He characterized this writing as "drumming decasyllabon" ("verse that calls attention to itself and panders to the groundlings," says O.B. Hardison, Jr.). The biggest promoter of bombastic plays during this period was actor Edward Alleyn – he even later called himself "the fustian king." The similarity of Nashe's line, "swelling bombast of a bragging blank verse," and Greene's "bombast out a blank verse" in *Groats-worth*, and the fact that both were describing an actor-master suggests they were blasting the same person, i.e., Alleyn. The wording was so close to Greene's lines in *Groats-worth* that it is no wonder that Nashe was accused of penning *Groats-worth* soon after its release. Thomas Brabine repeated Nashe's sentiments in *Menaphon* in the same preface:

Come forth you wits [writers] that vaunt the pomp of speech, And strive to thunder from a Stage-man's throat: View Menaphon a note beyond your reach; Whose sight will make your drumming descant dote: Players avaunt [away], you know not to delight; Welcome sweet Shepherd [Greene]; worth a Scholar's sight.

To paraphrase Brabine: "Players, go away! Stop encouraging writers to compose loud, pompous, speech for you." Brabine anticipates Greene's Player in *Groats-worth*, who once "thundered on the stage," with the line, "and strive to thunder from a Stage-Man's throat."

Alleyn and Greene

In June 1592, Alleyn and his company took a country tour while the plague was infecting London. At this point, Greene had supplied Alleyn's company with at least two plays that were repeatedly performed. Greene made it very plain in the Ant and the Grasshopper parable that he had asked someone, the Ant, for help, and that he was rejected, which left Grasshopper-Greene "foodless, helpless and strengthless." Greene died in September 1592. Note that Ant and Alleyn share the same initial just like Grasshopper and Greene, perhaps identity clues. Writer Gabriel Harvey referred to Greene as "grasshopper" in print soon after Greene's death. 11 If Alleyn was the Upstart Crow-Ant, then why did he refuse to help Greene? One reason could be Greene's double dealing. Greene first sold his play, *Orlando Furioso*, to the Queen's Men, and sold it again to Alleyn's company circa 1591-92. The repercussion of the double sale is not known, but Alleyn did play the title role in February 1592 (an original manuscript survives, now at Dulwich College, of Orlando's role with Alleyn's annotations). Jay Hoster, who also believed that Alleyn

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was the Upstart Crow, surmised that the double sale of *Orlando Furioso* had caused the rift between Alleyn and Greene.¹²

Greene, however, was guilty of other offenses against Alleyn. Before *Groatsworth*, Greene had slammed Alleyn and *Tamburlaine*, his most famous play, at least four times in print. As noted above, Greene referred to the printed edition of *Tamburlaine* as "unsavory papers" and had insulted the writer of *Fair Em*, who was quite possibly Alleyn. Greene belittled *Tamburlaine* in *Perimedes the Blacksmith* (1588); he paraphrased Marlowe's line, "his looks do menace heaven and dare the gods" (1.2):

I have had it in derision for that <u>I could not make my verses jet upon the stage</u> in tragical buskins, every word filling the mouth like the faburden [legend] of Bow Bell, <u>daring God out of heaven</u> with that atheist Tamburlan.

The "verses" that Greene could not make "jet upon the stage" were probably those he wrote in *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (c. 1587), a play that tried to rival *Tamburlaine*, but apparently had failed at the box office. Greene took a shot at Alleyn in his *Never Too Late* (1590). Writer-orator Cicero censures actor Roscius for his mistaken conceit: that the applause an actor gets from his audience is really a reaction to good writing.

Why Roscius, art thou proud with <u>Aesop's Crow</u>, being prank'd with the glory of others feathers? of thyself thou canst say nothing, and if <u>the Cobbler hath taught thee to say Ave Caesar</u>, disdain not thy tutor, because thou pratest in a King's chamber: what sentence thou utterest on the stage, flows from the censure of our wits, and what sentence or conceit of the invention the people applaud for excellent, that comes from the secrets of our knowledge. <u>I grant your action</u>, though it be a kind of mechanical labor; yet well done 'tis worthy of praise: but you worthless, if for so small a toy you wax proud.

The "Cobbler" in this quote was Marlowe, who was the son of a shoemaker. Actor Roscius would then be Edward Alleyn – it was the "glory" of Marlowe's dramas, especially *Tamburlaine*, which had catapulted him to stardom. Greene was reminding Alleyn that his success was owed to Marlowe, but he granted him that his "action" on stage was "worthy of praise." Alleyn was especially noted for his action on stage. Thomas Nashe wrote that he outdid the historical Roscius "in action": "Not Roscius nor *Aesop*, those Tragedians admired before Christ was born, could ever perform more in action than famous *Ned Allen*." Greene's "Aesop's Crow," who wore the feathers of other birds, strutting them proudly as if his own, is reminiscent of Greene's "upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers" in *Groats-worth*. In both cases,

Greene was evidently alluding to Alleyn. Greene's history of mocking Alleyn and *Tamburlaine* in print, and his double-dealing, was perhaps just cause for Alleyn to reject Greene in his time of need. Greene retaliated with his most detailed, and final, attack in *Groats-worth*.

The Upstart Crow and Alleyn in Contemporary Literature

In his early days, the Upstart Crow-Player said he was a poor country actor who carried his "playing fardel a footback," meaning he traveled by foot, carrying his acting material. He described some of his roles:

I am as famous for <u>Delphrigus</u>, and the <u>King of the Fairies</u>, as ever was any of my time. The twelve labors of Hercules have I terribly thundered on the stage, and played three scenes of <u>the devil</u> in the Highway to Heaven ...

As a teenager, Alleyn was a member of the Earl of Worcester's Men, a playing company that primarily toured the country. The Upstart Crow-Player was also a "country author":

I can serve to make a pretty speech, for I was a <u>country author</u>, passing at a moral, for 'twas I that penned the Moral of man's wit, and the Dialogue of <u>Dives</u> and for seven years space was absolute Interpreter to the puppets.

Thomas Nashe used similar words in his prefatory letter in Greene's *Menaphon* (1589). Nashe mentioned country actors who "carried their fardels on footback," "the King of Fairies," and "Delphrigus."

Sundry other sweet Gentlemen I know that have vaunted their pens in private devices, and tricked up a company of taffeta fools with their feathers, whose beauty if our Poets had not peaked with the supply of their periwigs, they might have anticked it [played clowns] until this time up and down the country with the King of Fairies, and dined every day at the pease porridge ordinaire [a cheap inn] with Delphrigus. But Tolosa [Toulouse] hath forgot that it was sometime sacked, and beggars that ever they carried their fardels on footback:

Nashe said that poets (which would include Greene) have "tricked up" the play material of acting companies; without the writer's beautiful "feathers" – their writing – the players would be clowns touring the country and staying at cheap inns. Nashe's letter had also put down "idiot art masters" who encouraged bombastic writing. Greene's Upstart Crow-Player, a country actor who played Delphrigus and the King of Fairies and who once carried

his "playing fardel a footback," and Nashe's country actors who forgot they once "carried their fardels on footback" and who might have played the same roles were clearly describing the same person with a similar story. Nashe's passage continues with the mention of a certain actor, "Roscius," which many commentators believe alluded to Alleyn.

... fardels on footback: and in truth no marvel, when as the deserved reputation of one Roscius, is of force to enrich a rabble of counterfeits [writers imitating the fashion of bombastic plays]; yet let subjects [the writers] for all their insolence, dedicate a De profundis every morning to the preservation of their Caesar [Roscius], lest their increasing indignities return them ere long to their juggling to mediocrity, and they bewail in weeping blanks the wane of their Monarchy.

Roscius-Alleyn "enriches" the writers of bombastic plays, and they pray for "the preservation of their Caesar," i.e., Roscius-Alleyn. Referring to Alleyn as a Caesar, a leader, means that he was paying writers for bombastic-style plays as early as 1589. These writers "have made Art bankrupt of her ornaments," wrote Nashe; but despite his contempt for this type of writing, he said that Alleyn's reputation for good acting was "deserved."

The allusion to actors who once carried "fardels on footback" appeared again in the play, *The Return from Parnassus-Part 2* (ca. 1601-02), in lines that had unmistakably ridiculed Alleyn. In the passage below, scholars Studioso and Philomusos have abandoned their writing careers, thinking it better to become fiddlers than be in the pay of "glorious vagabonds," i.e., the actors.

Better it is 'mongst fiddlers to be chief,
Than at [a] player's trencher [wooden plate] beg relief.
But is't not strange these mimic apes [actors] should prize
Unhappy Scholars at a hireling rate?
Vile world, that lifts them up to high degree,
And treads us down in groveling misery.
England affords those glorious vagabonds,
That carried erst [once] their fardels on their backs,
Coursers [horses] to ride on through the gazing streets,
Sooping [sweeping] it in their glaring Satin suits,
And Pages to attend their masterships:
With mouthing words that better wits have framed
They purchase lands, and now Esquires are named.

PHILOMUSOS
Whate'er they seem being even at the best,
They are but sporting <u>fortune's</u> scornful jest.

STUDIOSO
So merry <u>fortune's</u> wont [apt] from rags to take
Some ragged groom, and him a gallant make.

PHILOMUSOS
The world and fortune's play'd on us [scholar-poets] too long.

STUDIOSO Now to the world we fiddle must a song. [lines 1916-1934]

The puffed-up actors wear expensive clothes, have servants, and purchase land while they pay scholars a pittance to write plays for them. The final few lines of this passage repeated the word "fortune," a direct allusion to Alleyn and the theater he had recently built named The Fortune. He also had a large share in the Bear Garden (where bear-baiting took place), and was a wealthy landowner. The Player in *Groats-worth* had boasted he could build a wind-mill. Another allusion to Alleyn in *Parnassus* connects him with the Upstart Crow-Player in *Groats-worth*. The poor scholar-poet Ingenioso says,

It's fine when that Puppet-player Fortune must put such a Birchenlane post in so good a suit, such an Ass in so good a fortune. [lines 1687-89]

The Upstart Crow, as the Player, said he wrote for pupper shows. The two instances of "fortune" alluded to Alleyn's theater.

The play, Histrio-mastix, or the Player Whipp'd, which included a satire on actors, dropped similar clues about Edward Alleyn that also identifies him as Greene's Upstart Crow-Player. Written circa 1589 (see Chapter 3), a main character is Post-Haste, the actor-manager of Sir Oliver Owlet's players. Post-Haste fancies himself as a poet who can perform "extempore" - a word he says twice in the play. His comedy is titled, The Devil and Dives, which is described by a lord in the audience as having "most ugly lines," and is "lame stuff indeed." This portrait of an actor-manager who brags about his ability to perform "extempore" and who wrote The Devil and Dives specifically describes the Player of Groats-worth who "penned" the "Dialogue of Dives," played the devil in another play, and spoke in "plain rhyme extempore" which was so bad that Roberto cut him off. When Sir Oliver Owlet's players are forced into the army, a soldier's remark implies that Post-Haste is Alleyn. Commenting upon how slowly the actors march, the soldier says to one of them, presumably Post-Haste, that he cannot believe that one who once "would rend and tear the Cat /Upon a Stage" marches now "like a drown'd rat." He tells him to "look up and play the Tamburlaine, you rogue you" (Act 5, lines 241-43).

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6. THE "UPSTART CROW" AND THE STRATFORD MAN: NO RELATION

Several contemporary references to Tamburlaine indicate that Alleyn, who was very tall, acted the title role with gusto and noise, apropos to a sceneshaker or "Shake-scene." Three examples:

SHAKESPEARE SUPPRESSED

Rampum scrampum, mount tufty Tamburlaine! What rattling thunderclap breaks from his lips? [John Marston, Antonio and Mellida, 1599, Induction]

Dost stamp, mad Tamburlaine, dost stamp? Thou thinkst thou hast mortar under thy feet, dost? [T. Dekker, Satiro-mastix, 1601, 4.2.210]

[Re men that "speak all they can"]: And though his language differ from the vulgar somewhat, it shall not fly from all humanity, with the Tamer-lanes, and Tamer-chams of the late age, which had nothing in them but the scenical strutting, and furious vociferation, to warrant them to the ignorant gapers.

[Ben Jonson, Timber: or Discoveries, 1641, p. 100]

Elizabethans considered Tamburlaine as synonymous with "noise and violence," wrote Andrew Gurr. 14 One notable example described "Turkish Tamburlaine" on stage:

> The stalking steps of his great personage, Graced with huff-cap [blustering] terms, and thund'ring threats, That his poor hearers' hair quite upright sets. Such soon, as some brave-minded hungry youth, Sees fitly frame to his wide-strained mouth. He vaunts his voice upon an hired stage, With high-set steps, and princely carriage: Now sooping inside robes of Royalty, That erst [once] did scrub in lousy brokery. There if he can with terms Italianate, Big-sounding sentences, and words of state, Fair patch me up his pure lambic verse, He ravishes the gazing Scaffolders: [Joseph Hall, Virgidemiarum, 1597, lines 8-20]

Rend and tear the cat, rattling thunderclap, stamping, stalking steps, scenical strutting and furious vociferation, thundering threats, high-set steps, etc., all describe how Tamburlaine was acted, thus Alleyn's acting style. Through the mouth of Hamlet, Shakespeare was evidently denigrating it:

> Speak the speech I pray you as I pronounc'd it to you, trippingly on the tongue, but if you mouth it as many of our Players do, I had as lief [soon] the town crier spoke my lines, nor do not saw the air too much with your hand thus, but use all gently, for in the very torrent tempest, and as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must

acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness, O. it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow [a wigged actor] tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings ...

O, there be Players that I have seen play, and heard others prais'd, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that neither having th'accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, Pagan, nor man, have so strutted & bellowed, that I have thought some of Nature's Journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. [Hamlet, 3.2.1-11, 30-37]

In Thomas Middleton's story, The Ant and the Nightingale, or Father Hubburd's Tales (1604), the ant is about to relate his adventures to an audience of other ants and a bird. Middleton describes the ant as a stalking actor:

> the ant began to stalk like a three-quarter sharer, and was not afraid to tell tales ...

As "stalking" was descriptive of Alleyn's acting style, it appears that Middleton had associated his ant with Alleyn, doubtless recalling the Ant in Groatsworth that had refused Grasshopper-Greene's plea for help.

Alleyn in Jonson's Works

Ben Jonson also made jabs at Edward Alleyn through the character Histrio in his play, Poetaster (1601). Histrio ("actor" in Latin) passes by Captain Tucca, who calls him back for insults with another "stalking" reference.

> ... do you hear, you player, rogue, stalker, come back here; no respect to men of worship, you slave! what, you are proud, you rascal, are you proud, ha? you grow rich, do you, and purchase, you two-penny tear-mouth? you have FORTUNE ...

> come, we must have you turn fiddler again, slave, get a base viol at your back, and march in a tawny coat, with one sleeve, to Goose-

what, do you laugh, owlglass! [jester or buffoon] [3.1]

Jonson's Histrio is a "stalking" actor and sometime musician who is now rich and proud. Actor Alleyn was rich, a musician, and owned the Fortune Theater. Captain Tucca tells Histrio to "cherish" the poetaster, Crispinus, who is standing next to him.

Go, he pens high, lofty, in a new stalking strain, bigger than half

the rhymers in the town again: he was born to fill thy mouth, Minotaurus, he was, he will teach thee to tear and rand. Rascal, to him, cherish his muse, go ...

Although scholars usually associate Crispinus with John Marston, Captain Tucca's description of a writer who "pens high, lofty, in a new stalking strain" particularly applied to Christopher Marlowe (then deceased), whom Alleyn certainly cherished.

... he shall write for thee, slave! If he pen for thee once, thou shalt not need to travel with thy pumps full of gravel any more, after a blind jade and a hamper, and stalk upon boards and barrel heads to an old crack'd trumpet. [3.1]

Jonson's phrase, "jade and a hamper," parodied Marlowe's famous line in *Tamburlaine*, "Holla, ye pampered jades of Asia!" Jonson also associated Alleyn with Post-Haste in *Histrio-mastix*. Besides the character's name being Histrio, the phrase, "pumps full of gravel," echoes the line in the players' song, "Besides we that travel, with pumps full of gravel..." (Act 2, line 251). "Owlglass" suggests Post-Haste's acting company, Sir Oliver Owlet's Men. Captain Tucca said that Histrio was accused of being a usurer and a pimp. Alleyn was a moneylender, and some of the buildings he owned were formerly used as brothels.¹⁵

Jonson's later epigram, "On Poet-Ape," very much describes Greene's Upstart Crow-Player. "Ape" is another word for actor. The actor also writes ("poet"), but Jonson has little regard for his writing, calling it "the frippery of wit." Poet-Ape could also mean one who "apes" poets, implying he really is not one, like "poetaster." The Poet-Ape is also a "bold thief" of writers' works, he "makes each man's wit his own"; Greene implied that the Upstart Crow stole ideas for his plays. The Poet-Ape, like the Upstart Crow-Player, "brokered" or bought plays, and is wealthy.

Poor Poet-Ape, that would be thought our chief, Whose works are ev'n the frippery of wit, From brokage [brokerage] is become so bold a thief As we, the robbed, leave rage, and pity it. At first he made low shifts, would pick and glean, Buy the reversion of old plays; now grown To a little wealth and credit in the scene, He takes up all, makes each man's wit his own; And, told of this, he slights it: Tut, such crimes The sluggish gaping auditor devours; He marks not whose 'twas first; and after-times May judge it to be his as well as ours. Fool, as if half-eyes will not know a fleece

From locks of wool, or shreds from the whole piece! [*Epigrams*, No. 56, 1616]

Jonson's line about the "sluggish gaping auditor," the Poet-Ape's audience, resembles the description of *Tamburlaine*'s audience of "ignorant gapers" that he wrote about in his *Discoveries* (see previous excerpt). Jonson's epigram contained words of clothing – "frippery" (used clothing shop), "fleece," and "locks of wool." At least four records (dated 1589 to 1591) show that Alleyn purchased playing apparel, some of it used. ¹⁶ The Upstart Crow-Player bragged that he owned £200 worth of play clothes.

Conclusion

It is pure speculation that the "upstart" actor-writer ridiculed by Robert Greene in his Groats-worth of Wit was the Stratford Man, i.e., the professor's Shakespeare. But there is ample evidence in biography and in several contemporary allusions that the Upstart Crow was the successful and nouveau riche actor, Edward Alleyn. The character Roberto, Greene's real-life counterpart, had encountered a player in the story only pages before Greene's letter warning his friends against the Upstart Crow; this player employed him to write plays. In real life, actor Alleyn's company paid Greene for plays. Greene described the Upstart Crow in savage terms, likening him to the cold-hearted Queen Margaret, indifferent to the murder of an innocent teenager (the Shakespeare phrase). It is fact that Greene was ill and living in abject poverty at the time that Alleyn's company had left London for a country tour. As Alleyn was the "actor-master" of the playing company that employed Greene, it is not unlikely that Greene had appealed to Alleyn for a loan or help before his tour and was rejected, leaving him alone to "perish." Greene implied this in the parable of the Ant and the Grasshopper: Ant-Alleyn refused to save Grasshopper-Greene in a time of crisis. Besides blaming him for his coming death, Greene accused the Upstart Crow of stealing his ideas for plays and using them in his own. There is evidence that suggests Alleyn also wrote plays. It was Greene's "dying request" to have Groats-worth published - probably to avenge himself of Alleyn.

Greene's plain testimony that the Upstart Crow was Greene's "master" or boss, also related in the main story (the Player employed Roberto), instantly disqualifies the Stratford Man as the Upstart Crow. Greene's usage of the word bombast specifically ties the Upstart Crow to Alleyn, who acted in several of Christopher Marlowe's bombastic plays. The title character of Marlowe's play, *Tamburlaine*, was Alleyn's most celebrated role. "Shake-scene" describes Alleyn's loud, stalking and stamping acting style. Greene's constant put down of Alleyn and *Tamburlaine* in print before *Groats-worth* is all the

more reason to believe that Alleyn was the Upstart Crow. Greene's passage in *Groats-worth* also indirectly gave information about Shakespeare. If Alleyn regarded himself as another "Shake-scene," then Shakespeare, the original "Shake-scene," was already a well-established playwright in 1592 – he was not a neophyte.

The Upstart Crow was not the Stratford Man, and not Shakespeare, but was the upstart actor, Edward Alleyn. The loss of this crucial point in the Stratford Man's biography delays the first evidence of his theater involvement to 1595, with the treasurer's payment; the Stratford Man was then 30 years old. The Shakespeare professor's contortion of Greene's lines to suit the Stratford Man does not stop with Greene. He does the same thing with Henry Chettle's lines in his *Kind-heart's Dream*, as explained in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7

Upstart Crow Uproar, and a Few Hostile Witnesses

ACTOR EDWARD ALLEYN as the real Upstart Crow in Robert Greene's Groats-worth of Wit - not Shakespeare - completely ruins the foundation of the professor's invented early theatrical career for the Stratford Man. Greene's attack on the Upstart Crow in Groats-worth had evidently caused an uproar, forcing its editor, Henry Chettle, to make a public apology. This apology, which included complimentary remarks to the Upstart Crow, therefore, was not meant for Shakespeare or the Stratford Man, but for Edward Alleyn. Chettle placed the apology in the preface to his novel, Kind-heart's Dream, three months after Groats-worth's release. He also included a strong denial that either he or Thomas Nashe had actually penned the work. This reaction confirms that the Upstart Crow had to have been someone powerful enough at the time to inspire the apology and denials. But there were other negative reactions to Greene's work. Chettle wrote in Kind-heart's preface that "one or two" of the playwright friends Greene had addressed in his advice letter were offended by it and had tried to put the blame upon him for its contents. Christopher Marlowe, George Peele, and Thomas Nashe are usually identified as the writers addressed in Greene's letter. Chettle claimed that he was not acquainted with the offended writers, one of whom he cared never to be. In the same line, he mentioned "the other," someone with whom he was acquainted and to whom he wished to apologize, defend and praise as an honest, upright dealer and a gracefully amusing writer. Greene made these points in the reverse sense in his attack of the Upstart Crow. Chettle's "the other," therefore, must have been Edward Alleyn.

With neither of them that take offense was I acquainted, and with one of them I care not if I never be: The other, whom at that time I did not so much spare, as since I wish I had ...

that I did not, I am as sorry, as if the original fault had been my fault, because myself have seen his demeanor no less civil than he excellent in the quality he professes: Besides, diverse of worship [titled people] have reported, his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious [amusing] grace in writing, that approves [proves] his Art. [Preface, Kind-heart's Dream by Henry Chettle]

"Quality" was a word often used to describe the acting profession. Greene's portrait of Alleyn must have been so obvious and damaging that Chettle as the editor of Groats-worth was compelled to explain himself. The reason why "one or two" playwrights were offended by Greene's letter then becomes plain: two of them, Marlowe and Peele, had been writing for Alleyn's company, and probably feared recrimination. They would not have wanted powerful Alleyn to think they had sympathized with Greene or would follow his advice. Marlowe would have been especially offended by Greene's remark that he was an atheist, and this allegation against Marlowe may have been the reason Chettle did not care to meet him (the following year, Marlowe was interrogated on several charges, including atheism). The third writer, Nashe, by implication was not offended by Greene's words, most likely because he agreed with his opinion of Upstart Crow-Alleyn. Nashe, in his preface to Greene's Menaphon, had attacked "idiot art masters" like Alleyn who were making "Art bankrupt of her ornaments." These previously published statements may be the reason why Nashe was accused of writing Groats-worth, but he immediately took action to counter this charge. In the second issue of Pierce Penniless, Nashe inserted lines in his letter to the printer denying his authorship of Groats-worth, calling the work "a scald trivial lying pamphlet."

Other news I am advertised of, that a scald trivial lying pamphlet, called Greene's Groatsworth of Wit, is given out to be of my doing. God never have care of my soul, but utterly renounce me, if the least word or syllable in it proceeded from my pen, or if I were any way privy to the writing or printing of it.

Nashe also supplied an alibi in the same letter: "the fear of infection detained me with my lord in the country." The plague hit London during the summer of 1592, Robert Greene's last months alive, and the likely time he penned the advice letter in *Groats-worth*. But at this exact time, Nashe was "detained" by serving a "lord" in the countryside. (Fortunately for Nashe, the first issue of *Pierce Penniless* contained praise of Alleyn, labeled in the margin, "The Due Commendation of Ned Alleyn.") A few months after *Groats-worth*'s release, Nashe published *Strange News*, in which he again complimented Alleyn in a line about poet Edmund Spenser:

His [Spenser's] very name (as that of Ned Allen on the common stage) was able to make an ill matter good.

In Strange News, Nashe had also replied to Gabriel Harvey's statements in Four Letters and Certain Sonnets, Especially Touching Robert Greene (1592) that Greene had died in poverty. Harvey, Greene's literary adversary, claimed that he had visited Greene's lodging and spoke with his landlady immediately after his death. Nashe accused Harvey of lying about Greene's destitution, an odd point of disagreement.

For the lousy circumstance of his poverty before his death ... it cannot be but thou liest, learned Gabriel. [Strange News, 1592]

Nashe's evidence that Greene did not die poverty-stricken was that he owned some expensive clothing at his death. Alden Brooks theorized that Nashe wanted to give the impression that Greene did not die in penury to cover for the Upstart Crow – that he did not cause, directly or indirectly, Greene's death. In his *Four Letters*, Harvey also mentioned Greene's advice letter in *Groats-worth*, and considered the Upstart Crow more honest than Greene.

Greene, vile Greene, wouldst thou were'st half so honest, as the worst of the four whom thou upbraidest; or half so learned, as the unlearnedst of the three. Thank other for thy borrowed and filched plumes of some little italianated bravery, and what remaineth but flat impudence and gross detraction, the proper ornaments of thy sweet utterance?

Here Harvey writes that Greene was not even half as honest as the worst of the four he had "upbraided" in *Groats-worth* – the worst meaning the Upstart Crow; he also writes that Greene's learning was far less than the three writers he had addressed. Then Harvey mentions "other," the Upstart Crow. "Thank other for thy borrowed and filched plumes." Harvey here confirms that the Upstart Crow had stolen Greene's ideas, using Greene's exact imagery. Chettle also termed the Upstart Crow as "other" in the *Kind-heart*'s preface in which he had made his apology.

Henry Chettle's title, *Kind-heart's Dream*, refers to the dream of the character, Mr. Kind-heart. He had encountered five ghosts, one of whom was Robert Greene's, and described him as follows:

He was of singular pleasance the very supporter, and to no man's disgrace be this intended, the only Comedian of a vulgar writer in this country.

Alden Brooks observed that "comedian" in this passage is defined as a writer of comedies, as Greene was never an actor.² To paraphrase Chettle, Greene was the "supporter" or supplier of comedic plays for a "vulgar writer in this

country." The "vulgar writer" for whom Greene wrote comedies was his employer, Edward Alleyn. Chettle says he does not mean "vulgar writer" as a "disgrace" or insult, but as a fact that Alleyn wrote entertainments specifically for simple folks. "In this country" also reflects Greene's line, "the only Shakescene in a country." Greene's ghost also wrote a letter to "Pierce Penniless," referring to Thomas Nashe by one of his book titles. Referring to his "last labors," meaning Groats-worth, Greene's ghost wrote, "But for my poverty, methinks wisdom would have bridled that invective" - a specific reference to his attack on the Upstart Crow. Greene's complaint about the Upstart Crow was spurred by his poverty, not by literary jealousy, as the Shakespeare professor views it - this, of course, being the opinion of Chettle, the one who was entrusted with Greene's manuscript. Chettle knew that Groatsworth would be controversial: the Stationers' Register noted that the book was entered "upon the peril of Henry Chettle."3 Chettle must have wanted to fulfill Greene's desire for revenge against Alleyn. But when Groats-worth offended several people, including "diverse of worship" in Alleyn's defense, Chettle had to make amends. And he probably did not expect that he and Nashe would be accused of writing Groats-worth. Like Nashe, Chettle was an aspiring playwright and it is likely that both feared blacklisting by Alleyn's company. Chettle explained in his apology letter that he had copied Greene's manuscript in his own hand for legibility purposes only.

To be brief I writ it over, and as near as I could, followed the copy, only in that letter I put something out, but in the whole book not a word in, for I protest it was all *Greene's*, not mine nor *Master Nashe's*, as some unjustly have affirmed.

In the final paragraph of his letter, Chettle again clears Nashe and himself of the *Groats-worth* authorship:

... to purge Master Nashe of that he did not, as to justify what I did, and withal to confirm what M. Greene did:

In conclusion, it can be stated without qualification that Edward Alleyn was the Upstart Crow in Greene's *Groats-worth*, the famous and influential actor-producer of the Elizabethan-Jacobean eras. Greene's invective about Upstart Crow-Alleyn caused trouble for all involved. The work's editor, Henry Chettle, apologized to Upstart Crow-Alleyn in the prefatory letter to his novel, *Kind-heart's Dream*. Chettle wrote that he should have been more discrete about Upstart Crow-Alleyn, that he knew him to be honest, and complimented his acting and writing. Chettle also denied the charge that either he or Thomas Nashe had actually penned *Groats-worth*. Nashe immediately

denounced *Groats-worth* in one work, and praised Alleyn *by name* in another work, indirectly revealing his identity as the Upstart Crow. Surely, only an important and powerful person in the theater like Alleyn would have inspired such reactions. The entire contents of the letters of Greene and Chettle are rarely analyzed or reproduced in full – only the relevant sentences are excised and interpreted in isolation. The Shakespeare professor is forced to spin and invent facts so they will agree with the Stratford Man's life, and to ignore other facts and contemporary references that do not – the *Groats-worth* and *Kind-heart* controversies are perhaps the most extreme examples.

A Few Hostile Witnesses

The Shakespeare professor has long relied upon the testimonies of Robert Greene and Henry Chettle to support his fantasy history of the Stratford Man. Yet, with only a little examination, they have proven to be hostile witnesses. But what about those people who directly knew the Stratford Man or his family and were literate? Several such witnesses are available but the experts consistently avoid them because they too would prove hostile to the Stratford Man's case as Shakespeare – none of them ever connected him with the well-known playwright. Ramon Jiménez, author of "Ten Eyewitnesses Who Saw Nothing," identified several Stratford Man eyewitnesses who left literary remains. A few of Jiménez's eyewitnesses, and his findings about them, are featured below.

William Camden (1551-1623)

Historian and antiquarian William Camden published a book about English history, language and culture titled, Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain (completed by June 1603, published 1605). Shakespeare's name appeared in Camden's list of eleven modern English poets "whom succeeding ages may justly admire" (in the chapter titled, "Poems"). Two years later, Camden printed his Britannia (1607), a tome in Latin describing England's counties and towns and their notable residents; it was his sixth edition, and was much enlarged and updated. In the paragraphs about Stratford-upon-Avon (p. 426), there was no mention that it was Shakespeare's hometown. In the section about Kent, however, it was written that Sir Philip Sidney, another of Camden's admired poets in Remains, had a home there. Camden did not mention the Stratford Man's death in his Annals of 1616, a work comprised of seven thousand words.⁵ His death was not noted in Camden's personal diary, but the deaths of actor Richard Burbage and poet-playwright Samuel Daniel were noted (both died in 1619). Yet this was the same William Camden, who, along with William Dethick, had approved a change to the coat

of arms of John Shakspere, the Stratford Man's father, in 1599. Furthermore, a complaint was directed at Camden and Dethick in 1602 for approving twenty-three coats of arms, including John Shakspere's. 6 Although Camden revered the poet, Shakespeare, researched the town of Stratford-upon-Avon, and was certainly cognizant of the Stratford Man's father, he never connected the great author with the Shaksperes of Stratford-upon-Avon.

SHAKESPEARE SUPPRESSED

Michael Drayton (1563-1631)

Poet and playwright Michael Drayton was born and raised in Warwickshire, the same county as the Stratford Man. He wrote plays for the London stage in the late 1590s, the same time the professor believes the Stratford Man was writing the Shakespeare plays. Like Camden, Drayton wrote a book that included histories of English counties, but in verse (Poly-Olbion). Drayton described men of note in these counties, but left out Shakespeare in the Warwickshire section. Other English poets, however, did warrant mention in his book, which was published in 1612, when Shakespeare's literary reputation was well established. Drayton was a patient of Dr. John Hall, the Stratford Man's son-in-law. Dr. Hall was the doctor of the wealthy Rainsford family, who lived in Clifford Chambers, only a few miles from Stratford-upon-Avon. Drayton was a friend of the Rainsfords, and during a thirty year period, was a visitor or guest at their home. Yet Drayton's only comment about Shakespeare in his considerable oeuvre was that he was a good comedian and nothing more; and he wrote it over ten years after the Stratford Man's death.

Thomas Greene (d. 1640)

Thomas Greene was the town clerk of Stratford-upon-Avon for over ten years and a London solicitor for the Stratford Corporation. He was an intimate friend of the Stratford Man and his wife, and named his two children, William and Anne, after them. Greene and his family actually lived in the Stratford Man's home for several months (1609-10). Greene mentioned his "cousin" Shakespeare in his diary and letters, but never in the context of literature or the theater. He also failed to note the Stratford Man's death in his diary. Greene was a published poet, and contributed a Shakespearean sonnet to Michael Drayton's work, The Barons' Wars (1603).

Dr. John Hall (1575-1635)

Dr. John Hall married the Stratford Man's daughter, Susanna, in 1607, and the couple eventually settled in Stratford-upon-Avon. Hall was educated at Cambridge University (M.A., 1597), knew the French language, and it is believed

he studied medicine in Europe. Hall recorded his patients' treatments and noted their personal attributes. Hall described patient Michael Drayton as "an excellent poet." Patient Thomas Holyoak compiled a Latin-English dicrionary, noted Dr. Hall. Another patient was John Trap, a schoolmaster at the Stratford-upon-Avon grammar school; Dr. Hall characterized him as remarkably pious and learned, "second to none." It is completely perplexing (even unconscionable!) that Hall had failed to scribble even one line acknowledging his father-in-law as the illustrious author in his patient records. Dr. Hall, described on the printed edition of these records as "very famous" in two counties, was apparently more famous in them than his father-in-law, the Stratford Man.

Dr. James Cooke (1614-1694)

While stationed at Stratford-upon-Avon as an army doctor in 1649, Dr. James Cooke visited Susanna Hall, the Stratford Man's daughter. Dr. Cooke had been acquainted with her late husband, Dr. Hall, and wondered if he had left behind any books or papers. Mrs. Hall showed him two books handwritten in Latin that turned out to be her husband's medical casebooks. Mrs. Hall accepted his offer to buy them. Dr. Cooke subsequently translated them into English and printed them. Ramon Jiménez wrote:

> In his introduction to the book, Cooke described his conversation with Susanna, during which neither of them referred to her supposedly famous father, nor to any books or manuscripts that might have belonged to him. In fact, from Dr. Cooke's report of the meeting, neither Susanna Shakespeare nor the Doctor himself was aware of any literary activity by the William Shakespeare who had lived in the very house they were standing in.7

It seems that no one other than Dr. Cooke was interested to meet the daughter of the Stratford Man, but his interest was with her husband, not with her father. Mrs. Hall was willing to sell her husband's unpublished manuscripts, but there is no record of her selling any unpublished play manuscripts supposedly written by her late father.8 Mrs. Hall died shortly after Dr. Cooke's visit; her daughter, Elizabeth Hall (later Lady Bernard), was the last surviving descendant of the Stratford Man. She lived until 1670, and apparently no one took notice that she was the granddaughter of the great author. In 1655, Shakespeare was described as "The incomparable master of our English poetry" on the title page of The Rape of Lucrece, and Shakespeare's Folio was published for the third time in 1663-1664. The Stratford Man's other daughter, Judith Quiney, lived until 1662, having survived her three children. Mrs. Quiney was illiterate - how could the Stratford Man, supposedly the great author, have allowed it? Shakespeare's heroines were literate and well spoken, and he wrote that ignorance is "the curse of God" and knowledge "the wing wherewith we fly to heaven" (*Henry VI-Part 2*, 4.7.77-78). The Stratford Man's younger sister, Joan Hart, died in 1646; her son, Thomas, lived until 1661, and owned the house later known as the Shakespeare birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke (1554-1628)

Fulke Greville was born in Beauchamp Court, less than ten miles from Stratford-upon-Avon. Greville served on a commission that reported recusants, those who refused to attend services of the Church of England. The Stratford Man's father was one of nine recusants listed on his September 1592 report, so there is no doubt that Greville was acquainted with the "Shakspere" name in Stratford-upon-Avon. From 1606 until his death in 1628, Greville held the position of Recorder of Warwick and Stratford-upon-Avon. The recorder had legal knowledge and was appointed by the mayor and aldermen to "record" or keep aware of their court proceedings. Greville was also a poet and playwright and was personally acquainted with many writers, including Ben Jonson and George Chapman – Shakespeare's co-contributors to *Love's Martyr*. But despite Greville's involvement with literature and literati, none of his many surviving letters connect the celebrated poet and playwright Shakespeare with the Stratford Man.

Conclusion

Three more literate eyewitnesses who failed to connect the Stratford Man with the great author could be added to the list above. William Kemp, the actor who was named along with "William Shakespeare" and Richard Burbage to receive a payment for performance in 1595, published a pamphlet in 1600; it included an allusion to *Macbeth* (Appendix A, No. 87). Actor Robert Armin and "William Shakespeare" were both associated with the Lord Chamberlain's Men, and were founding members of the King's Men; a line in one of Armin's plays apparently alluded to *King Lear* (Appendix A, No. 29). George Wilkins, a writer who admired Shakespeare's *Pericles*, was deposed, along with the Stratford Man, for the Belott-Mountjoy case. None of these three writers – two of them actors with some knowledge of Shakespeare's plays – left behind memories of having known the great author.

Each of the first seven chapters of *Shakespeare Suppressed* casts serious doubt that the Stratford Man was the great author, Shakespeare. Chapter 1 demonstrated that "William Shakespeare," a famous obscure writer, was consistently absent in records where he should have been; this absence, and an often

hyphenated surname descriptive of spear shaking, a well-used expression during the period, inspires the sensible conclusion that this name was someone's alias. Chapter 2 detailed the compromised condition of early Shakespeare play texts, and several occasions of stopping and seizing of presses involving Shakespeare's works, both points explainable if printers were issuing unauthorized or pirated editions. This evidence suggests that the great author was someone of high rank and influence prevented by custom to publish with his own name, and one who did not wish to broadcast his theater involvement, even with his alias, because it would be socially degrading. Chapter 3 exposed the experts' inability to specifically date or order the Shakespeare plays yet ample evidence is there to help them. For example, there are twelve "too early" allusions to Shakespeare's mature tragedy, Hamlet, two as early as circa 1588. Accepting them would not only upset but explode the orthodox dating of the complete plays. More evidence suggests that Shakespeare's plays were initially royal court entertainments in the 1560s to 1580s that were later revised and moved to the public theater. Chapter 4 revealed what has been plainly in view for all: in his sonnets and in his poem, A Lover's Complaint, Shakespeare gave first-person testimony that he was a nobleman-courtier. Shakespeare contributed verses to Love's Martyr, a political allegory about the succession, a very dangerous topic at the time of publication; it could be that his high status at court exempted him (and others) from prosecution. Poet John Heywood attested to the great author's pique at William Jaggard for the unauthorized issue of his verses in The Passionate Pilgrim, and for being "bold" with his name. Despite this, the great author never took legal action a course the Stratford Man favored to resolve his issues - presumably because doing so would cause his own exposure as the person behind the alias, Shakespeare. Chapter 5 supplied the raw data of the Stratford Man's case for the Shakespeare authorship during his lifetime. All it amounts to is an association or membership with two acting companies and theater investing but not one piece of evidence during his lifetime proves he was a writer. Chapters 6 and 7 provided a chain of evidence about the Upstart Crow that squarely identifies him as actor Edward Alleyn, not the Stratford Man, thus shattering the Shakespeare professor's "rock bed" reality that he was a working actor-writer in 1592. The elimination of this point puts the Stratford Man's first documented association with the theater at 1595, when he was 30 years old. Chapter 7 spotlighted Ramon Jiménez's report of those acquainted with the Stratford Man or his family who left behind written material - none of these "eyewitnesses" even hinted that the Stratford Man was the great author. Each of these chapters can stand on its own to unravel the pretty myth of the Stratford Man, but in unison, his case crumbles to dust. The Shakespeare expert, however, did not start the idea that the Stratford Man was the great author, he

merely embellished upon the disinformation and meager scraps deliberately planted in the First Folio and Shakspeare monument, the two pillars supporting the foundation of the Stratford Man myth.

PART III

The Stratford Man as Shakespeare, *Posthumous*: The Professor's Evidence



CHAPTER 8

The First Folio Fraud

ONE OF THE greatest events in literary history was the publication of Mr William Shakespeare's Histories Comedies and Tragedies in 1623. Today called the "First Folio," the book contained thirty-six Shakespeare plays, twenty of which had never been printed. It was reissued nine years later, and two times after that. The first sixteen pages of the Folio - the preface - are extremely important to the Shakespeare professor because they contain his best evidence for the Stratford Man as the great author, so much so that had the First Folio never been published, few or none would have connected the great author with the Stratford Man. These preliminary pages, therefore, merit close and careful examination - what is said and what is not said. Prior to the First Folio, the great author's person was undefined. "William Shakespeare" was only a name on title pages of his printed works or a name noted by literary critics regarding his works. This fostered the belief among some that the name was a pseudonym, and it seems that the First Folio preface tried to dispel that notion and to fill the personality void. William Shakespeare emerges in the opening pages as a person born with that name and a hint at his origins. He was a natural genius, the fellow of actors, and strictly a man of the theater. The "news" that he was dead was also given, but when or how long ago this had occurred was not given. There was no reason to suspect the book. It had all the trappings of being official: noble patronage (the earls of Pembroke and Montgomery), tributes by people who supposedly knew Shakespeare, and the author's portrait. Twenty new Shakespeare plays appeared along with sixteen previously issued ones. But there is something odd about the preface, and it is not just the strange face put forward as the great author's. Many of the statements made in the preface text are false and contradictory, and much information is left out. The main messages of the preface, as defined below, fostered the illusion that the Stratford Man was the great author, but at the same time, Ben Jonson's prefatory contributions seemed to undermine them. Readers should review the transcription of the Folio's preface in Appendix G for better understanding of the following analysis.

Messages of the Preface

"'William Shakespeare' is the author's real name, and he is a gentleman."

The enormous portrait of a man beneath the title screams to the reader this message: "William Shakespeare is not someone's pen name, he was born with that name, and is thus pictured." The size of the image was unprecedented, covering over half the large page. The large collar worn by the sitter gives the impression of an English gentleman. Even if the reader never ventured beyond the title page, these two points would get conveyed. In this official-looking book, any previously held notion that "William Shakespeare" was someone's pen name would get quashed, upon a first glance.

"William Shakespeare is dead"

After the title page, John Heminges and Henry Condell, noted as Shakespearean actors further into the preface, officially convey the news that William Shakespeare is dead. It can be described as news because only two indifferent remarks preceded it in print: Shakespeare's name was listed among other famous dead poets in a verse by John Taylor in *The Praise of Hempseed* (1620), and printer Thomas Walkley noted in his edition of Shakespeare's *Othello* (1621) that "the Author" was dead.

"Actors Heminges and Condell are Shakespeare's friends and fellows and they produced this book"

Heminges and Condell also wrote that they "collected" the great author's plays and were now acting as their "guardians... only to keep the memory of so worthy a Friend, and Fellow alive, as was our Shakespeare..." The description of Shakespeare as the "friend and fellow" of the actors implies that they had similar social status. In the letter addressed "To the great variety of readers," Heminges and Condell implore the reader to buy the book, implying that it was their own enterprise and were desperate to get their money back.

"William Shakespeare was a 'natural' genius"

Heminges and Condell commented upon the great author's writing habits in their letter to the reader, the very first published. They said he wrote effortlessly, that nearly perfect lines just flowed out of his hand.

... he was a happy imitator of Nature ... His mind and his hand went together: And what he thought, he uttered with that easiness, that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers.

"William Shakespeare was great and was associated with Avon"

The next two pages contain Ben Jonson's superb and oft-quoted elegy to the great author. Shakespeare's writings are "such, /As neither Man, nor Muse, can praise too much," wrote Jonson, declaring him "Soul of the Age!" Jonson said Shakespeare's talent outshined that of his contemporaries and that of the ancients. In this elegy, Jonson coined the now famous phrase, "Sweet Swan of *Avon*!" Poets were called swans, and Avon is the name of several rivers in England, so this poet Shakespeare presumably lived near a river Avon. It was the first association of Shakespeare with Avon made in print.

"William Shakespeare has a tomb, and a monument in Stratford"

Following Jonson's elegy are poems lamenting Shakespeare's death written by Hugh Holland, James Mabbe and Leonard Digges. The poem by Digges contains the most important line in the entire Folio preface:

Shake-speare, at length thy pious fellows give The world thy Works: thy Works, by which, out-live Thy Tomb, thy name must, when that stone is rent, And time dissolves thy Stratford moniment, Here we alive shall view thee still.

For the first time in print the great author is associated with "Stratford," where his monument is located, and presumably his tomb. England at the time had at least a dozen towns named Stratford and it was very unlikely that the contemporary reader would have thought of the small town of Stratford-upon-Avon had Jonson not written "Sweet Swan of Avon!" on a previous page. This clue about "Stratford" was placed far into the preface, as if not to draw too much attention.

"William Shakespeare was an actor and a man of the theater"

The Folio preface emphasized that Shakespeare was a man of the theater – an actor and a dramatist. Hugh Holland called Shakespeare a "Famous Scenic Poet" in his tribute, and that he has gone to Death's dressing room ("Death's public tiring-house" – "tiring" was short for "attiring"). James Mabbe's tribute offered a similar acting metaphor, that Shakespeare went "From the World's-Stage, to the Grave's-Tiring-room." The Folio's preface also featured a list of "Principal Actors" in Shakespeare's plays, with Shakespeare's name heading it. This was another piece of news hitherto unknown about the great author, i.e., that he acted in his own plays. Prior to the Folio, most Shakespeare commentary was directed at his popular poems. The Folio's neglect

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of Shakespeare's poetical accomplishment, noted Patrick Cheney, "skews the historical record." Leonard Digges addressed this very point about Shakespeare in a poem printed seventeen years after the Folio was released: "First, that he was a Poet none would doubt."

Unsaid in the First Folio's Preface

The information given in the preliminary pages of the First Folio does not satisfy. It lacks a biography of the great author or more personal information. No birth date or year is given. No death date or year is given or how long he had been dead. No account of where he was born or had died. No account of his career. No mention that he was a member of the Lord Chamberlain's Men or the King's Men acting companies, even though letters in the preface were signed by members of both. (This is also true for the title pages of Shakespeare's printed poems and plays. Actor and poet William Barksted, for example, had described himself as "one of the servants of his Majesty's Revels" on the 1610 title page of his poem, Hiren: or the Fair Greek, and actor Robert Armin had described himself as "servant to the King's most excellent Majesty" on the 1609 title page of his play, The History of the Two Maids of More-clack.) No mention of the great author's family. Unlike Ben Jonson's collected works, there was no attempt in the Folio to date the Shakespeare plays or give their order of composition. Of the sixteen pages of the preface, five are blank - surely there was enough room for more information. The reader may be surprised to learn that nothing in the Folio preface directly ties the great author to the Stratford Man. The phrase, "Stratford-upon-Avon," does not exist in it. "Stratford" and "Avon" are words on separate pages in verses composed by different people. Robert Brazil observed that the Stratford Man's coat of arms, which appears on his monument, did not appear in the Folio.3

Folio Contradictions

The Folio's preface contains contradictions, unverified information, and outright lies. They start on the first page of the Folio's preface, where Ben Jonson advises the reader to ignore the author's portrait on the opposite page, and end on the preface's final page, where Shakespeare is listed among the principal actors in his plays. And there is much in between. Jonson's verses contradicted much of the information in the Folio's preface, and in one instance, he seemingly responds to Heminges and Condell's statement about "the ill fortune" of having to seek patrons for Shakespeare's book: he wrote that Shakespeare was "above the ill fortune of them..." Jonson metaphorically contradicted Leonard Digges, who referred to Shakespeare's tomb and

a "Stratford moniment" in his preface poem; Jonson said to Shakespeare, "Thou art a moniment, without a tomb ..." More Folio contradictions, and lies, follow.

Portrait engraving by Martin Droeshout does not depict the great author

On the left side of the title page, a spot often reserved for an author's portrait, is Jonson's verse addressed "To the Reader." It comments upon the huge image, supposedly of the great author, on the page opposite. Jonson tells the reader: "Look /Not on his Picture, but his Book." To paraphrase, the true portrait of the great author is reflected in the plays ("his Book"), so please ignore the supplied image. Jonson repeats this thought in his elegy: "Look how the father's face /Lives in his issue..." Leah Marcus described Jonson's poem, with the large type and high position on the page, as "vying for the reader's attention" in competition with the portrait's direct gaze at the reader.⁴

Acclaimed poets were often pictured with laurel wreaths or bays on their heads, but such was not the case with Droeshout's image of Shakespeare. Hugh Holland and Leonard Digges, however, envisioned Shakespeare with such adornments in their Folio verses:

That corp's, that coffin now bestick those bays, Which crown'd him Poet first, then Poet's King.

and

Shake-speare, thou can'st never die. But crown'd with Laurel, live eternally.

J.L. Nevinson observed that Droeshout could have portrayed Shakespeare as a poet, as a dramatist, or as an actor, but "the image of a gentleman author" won out.⁵ It was probably chosen to match the Stratford Man's status of gentleman. The sitter's clothing, however, dated 1610 to 1613,⁶ was not in sync with the Stratford Man's age at that time – the sitter looks younger than 46 to 49. This is admittedly a minor point, but it is a major point that the face in the Droeshout engraving does not resemble the effigy's face of "Shakspeare" on the monument in Stratford-upon-Avon. (For years, scholars have wished to exhume the Stratford Man's body to see if there was an actual likeness to the Droeshout engraving or the monument's effigy.) Such details may have been purposely conflicting or carelessly overlooked. The most important point of all, however, is that Droeshout's engraving was a *posthumous* rendition, and one that was not endorsed by Jonson. This raises the question of why it was used at all when it could have been easily changed or improved.

Martin Droeshout's engraving has received mostly negative criticism over the centuries. The figure has an oversized and wooden forehead, and a head out of proportion with the body. From where the likeness derived is unknown. W.W. Greg wrote, "It is not pleasing and has little technical merit." Arthur Hind, in a study of 16th and 17th century prints, called it "lifeless in expression." It appears that a deliberately ugly or grotesque image, and an unclean face (the grizzled mustache and beard), was supplied so it would not inspire worship. But there could have been another objective: to depict the great author as a "rare and accomplished monster, or miracle of nature..." Jonson added this phrase to the 1616 version of his comedy, *Every Man In His Humor*, in a dialogue addressed to Master Stephen, a character that apparently lampooned the Stratford Man (see Chapter 12):

let the idea of what you are be portrayed in your face, that men may read in your physiognomy, here within this place is to be seen the true, rare, and accomplished monster, or miracle of nature, which is all one. [1.2, original italics]

Master Stephen was a "gull" bent on becoming, or being perceived as, a gentleman. The great author presented as a monster, a freak of nature, was perhaps the only way that the public or posterity would accept such a grand literary achievement coming from someone with the Stratford Man's blank educational background. Alongside this "gentleman-monster" depiction may have been one more message. The double lines under the ear and the "bad hair" could be perceived as a figure wearing a mask – most apropos, as pen names are also masks.

Great author's plays are not "trifles"

In their Folio preface letters, John Heminges and Henry Condell described the great author's plays as "trifles" three times within two lines, and wrote that they expected readers to "censure" or criticize the plays. Ben Jonson's stellar praise of Shakespeare's art, that it was greater than that of his contemporaries and that of the ancients, made the two actors look like cretins. Jonson was so concerned about how the great author should be praised that he devoted the first sixteen lines about it in his Folio elegy, which is paraphrased below.

I won't envy your name, Shakespeare, although I have much envy for your book and fame; for I confess that neither man nor muse can praise your writings too much. It's true, in all men's collected opinion. But envy and collected opinion are not the ways I mean to praise you. These ways foster silly ignorant comments that are mere echoes of what others say. They foster blind affection that

never advances the truth [i.e., the extent of Shakespeare's achievement]. They foster the crafty malice of those who pretend to praise with the intent to ruin, like an infamous bawd or whore who praises a proper lady – what could hurt her more? But Shakespeare, you are proof against them, and above the ill fortune of them, or the need. I, therefore, will begin.

"William Shakespeare" was not the real name of the great author, and he was born into gentility

Ben Jonson punned on Shakespeare's name twice in his elegy: "Shake a stage" and "shake a lance," the latter an acknowledgement of the descriptive action of the pen name, i.e., spear shaking. The hyphen was applied in five of nineteen occurrences of "Shakespeare" in the Folio's preface. Jonson twice used the phrase, "gentle Shakespeare," in his Folio verses. During this era, the first definition of "gentle" was not "nice," but a well-born person – someone born into the gentry or nobility, which was not the Stratford Man's case.

Great author was not simply a natural genius

Heminges and Condell wrote that Shakespeare's art flowed so naturally from his hands that he barely blotted the paper, as if he were a medium performing automatic writing. Ben Jonson was not so naive, explaining that the great author crafted his talent with hard work.

Yet must I not give Nature all: Thy Art,
My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part.
For though the Poets matter, Nature be,
His Art doth give the fashion. And, that he
Who casts to write a living line, must sweat,
(such as thine are) and strike the second heat
Upon the Muses' anvil: turn the same,
(And himself with it) that he thinks to frame;
Or for the laurel, he may gain a scorn,
For a good Poet's made, as well as born.
And such wert thou. Look how the father's face
Lives in his issue, even so, the race
Of Shakespeare's mind, and manners brightly shines
In his well turned, and true-filed lines:

Like an ironworker, Shakespeare kept "striking" the anvil, or revising, until he produced perfect lines, "sweating" in the process, something like today's expression, "I percent inspiration, 99 percent perspiration." Heminges and Condell would reverse those figures, that the great author's achievement was merely a "miracle of nature." There is evidence that the natural genius idea was conceived circa 1615, while Jonson was preparing a collection of his own

works. It is contained in a manuscript of verses written by "F.B." that was addressed to Jonson.9

... here I would let slip
(If I had any in me) scholarship,
And from all Learning keep these lines as clear
as Shakespeare's best are, which our heirs [posterity] shall hear
Preachers [professors] apt to their auditors [students/public] to show
how far sometimes a mortal man may go
by the dim light of Nature, 'tis to me
an help to write of nothing;

"F.B." undoubtedly represented Jonson's dramatist friend, Francis Beaumont, who died in March 1616. In his verse, Beaumont said that Shakespeare's "best" lines are "clear" or free of learning, which implies that Shakespeare had less clear lines that were *full of learning*. He predicted that posterity ("our heirs") will have professors ("preachers") citing Shakespeare as an example to their students ("auditors") of how an uneducated man ("the dim light of Nature") can achieve literary greatness. Beaumont was either psychic or he knew, along with Jonson, that the myth of Shakespeare as a natural uneducated genius was planned as early as circa 1615, well before the Stratford Man's death. Proclaiming someone's talent as "natural" halts explanations of how one attains greatness. The Stratford Man's case as the great author would be otherwise untenable. This notion agrees with the apparent depiction of the great author by Droeshout as a freak of nature, a monster.

Folio Lies

LIE: The First Folio's texts derive from the great author's original manuscripts

Vaunted on the title page, vaunted by Heminges and Condell in their letter to the readers, and vaunted on the final page of the preface is the claim that the First Folio contains the great author's perfect play texts. This statement is patently false. Several plays contained in the Folio are reprints of flawed quarto editions. There is some good copy too, but there are errors everywhere. The assertion of "true original copy" is one of the biggest lies of the Folio preface. Leah Marcus noted the odd pairing of words: "How can something be both an original and a copy?" Sir George Greenwood showed how Heminges and Condell contradicted themselves about the origin of the play texts: each of their preface letters stated that they took the role of "guardian" of the "orphan" Shakespeare plays, implying that the great author's originals had been entrusted to them for publication. Yet in these same letters they also stated that they "collected" the plays. 11 Greenwood also noted that although

Heminges and Condell were left a small bequest in the Stratford Man's will, nothing in the will hints that he intended them to be his literary executors. 12

Another lie, as advertised on page 16 of the Folio's preface, is that the Folio contained "all" of Shakespeare's "Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies." *Pericles* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* were left out, although the latter could be excused because half of the play was written by John Fletcher.

LIE: Edward Blount was one of the First Folio's printers

At the bottom of the Folio's title page is the line: "Printed by Isaac Jaggard, and Ed. Blount." Blount was a prominent publisher and bookseller, but never a printer. The Jaggard house printed the Folio. The "and" in this phrase is usually assumed as a misprint for "for."

LIE: John Heminges and Henry Condell wrote their two Folio preface letters

Scholars have suspected for over two centuries that both letters signed by Heminges and Condell in the Folio preface were actually written by Ben Jonson. The dedication letter to the brother earls of Pembroke and Montgomery contained language and images taken from the classical writers Pliny and Horace. Heminges and Condell were neither writers nor scholars (after retiring from the stage, we know that Condell worked as a grocer). Jonson was a classical scholar. There are direct parallels between three passages by Horace and Pliny (one from a dedication letter), and one passage in Heminges and Condell's dedication letter.

Hold out your <u>hands</u>, palms turned to the sky, when the New moon is up, my <u>country</u>-bred Phidyle; Treat well the Lares [household gods]: bring <u>incense</u>, this year's Corn and your greediest pig to please them. ...

Pure, empty <u>hands</u> touch altars as closely as Those heaping dear-bought offerings. Simple gifts Soothe angry household <u>gods</u>: the poor man's Salt that will spit in the fire and plain meal. [Odes by Horace, Book III, No. 23, stanzas 1 and 4]¹³

and

Country people and many nations offer milk to their gods; and they who have not incense obtain their requests with only meal and salt; nor was it imputed to any as a fault to worship the gods in whatever way they could.

[Natural History by Pliny, dedication letter to Emperor Vespasian] 14

Compare all three passages above with the Folio's dedication letter to the Herbert brothers by Heminges and Condell:

<u>Country hands</u> reach forth <u>milk</u>, cream, fruits, or what they have: <u>and many Nations</u> (we have heard) that had not gums & <u>incense</u>, <u>obtained their requests with</u> a leavened Cake. It was no <u>fault to</u> approach their <u>Gods</u>, <u>by what means they could</u>: And the most, though meanest, of things are made more precious, when they are dedicated to Temples.

Heminges and Condell's second letter, "To the great Variety of Readers," is a pastiche of phrases found in several of Jonson's works that are too many for coincidence. Below are five Jonson excerpts, two of which are taken from letters to the reader, which resemble lines in Heminges and Condell's letter, "To the great Variety of Readers." ¹⁵

To the reader in ordinary

The muses forbid that I should restrain your meddling, whom I see already busy with the title, and tricking over the leaves: it is your own. I departed with my right, when I let it first abroad; [Jonson, Cataline His Conspiracy, 1611]

and

It is further agreed, that every person here have his or their freewill of censure, to like or dislike at their own charge, the author having now departed with his right: it shall be lawful for any man to judge his six-pen'worth, his twelve-pen'worth, so to his eighteenpence, two shillings, half a crown, to the value of his place; provided always his place get not above his wit ... as also, that he be fixed and settled in his censure, and what he approves or not approves today, he will do the same tomorrow; and if tomorrow, the next day, and so the next week, if need be, and not to be brought about by any that sits on the bench with him, though they indict and arraign plays daily. [Jonson, Induction, Bartholomew Fair, 1614; first published 1631]

and

To My Bookseller:

Thou that mak'st gain thy end, and wisely well <u>Call'st a book</u> good or bad, as it doth sell ... [Jonson, *Epigrams*, No. 3, 1616]

and

Suffrages in Parliament <u>are numbered</u>, not <u>weigh'd</u>: nor can it be otherwise in those public Councils, where nothing is so unequal, as the equality: for there, <u>how odd soever</u> men's <u>brains</u>, or <u>wisdoms</u> are, their power is always even, and <u>the same</u>.

[Jonson, Timber, or Discoveries, p. 95, 1641]

and

The Dedication, To the Reader.

If thou be such [i.e., someone who can read], I make thee my Patron, and dedicate the Piece to thee: If not so much, would I had been at the charge of thy better literature. Howsoever, if thou canst but spell ... [Jonson, *The New Inn., or the Light Heart,* 1628]¹⁶

Now compare the above five Jonson excerpts with the following Folio letter to the reader signed by Heminges and Condell:

To the great Variety of Readers.

From the most able [i.e., able to read], to him that <u>can but spell</u>. There you <u>are number'd</u>. We had rather you were <u>weigh'd</u>. Well! It is now public, & you will stand for your privileges we know: to read, and <u>censure</u>. Do so, but buy it first. That doth best commend <u>a book</u>, the <u>stationer says</u>. Then, <u>how odd soever</u> your <u>brains</u> be, or your <u>wisdoms</u>, make your license <u>the same</u>, and spare not. <u>Judge your six-pen'orth</u>, your shillings worth, your five shillings worth at a time, <u>or higher</u>, so you rise to the just rates, and welcome. But, whatever you do, buy. <u>Censure</u> will not drive a Trade, or make the Jack go. And though you be a Magistrate of wit, and <u>sit on the Stage</u> at *Black-friars*, or the *Cock-pit*, <u>to arraign Plays daily</u>, know, these plays have had their trial already ...

It had been a thing, we confess, worthy to have been wished, that the Author himself had liv'd to have set forth, and overseen his own writings; But since it hath been ordain'd otherwise, and he by death departed from that right, we pray you do not envy his Friends, the office of their care, and pain, to have collected & publish'd them ...

Jonson's Timber, or Discoveries (p. 98) contained a passage about Shakespeare:

<u>He was</u> (indeed) honest, and of an open and free <u>nature</u>; had an excellent fantasy, brave notions, and <u>gentle expressions</u>;

Now read Heminges and Condell's letter "To the great Variety of Readers" about Shakespeare:

Who, as he was a happy imitator of Nature, was a most gentle expresser of it.

Scholars are well aware that Jonson borrowed extensively from his own works and from the works of others, increasing the likelihood that he composed Heminges and Condell's letters. For example, read Jonson's verse opposite the Droeshout engraving:

To the Reader.

This Figure, that thou here seest put,

It was for gentle Shakespeare <u>cut</u>; Wherein the Graver had <u>a strife</u> <u>with Nature</u>, to out-do <u>the life</u>:
O, could he but have drawn his wit As well <u>in brass</u>, as he hath hit His <u>face</u>, the Print would then <u>surpass</u> All, that was ever writ <u>in brass</u>.
But, since he cannot, Reader, look Not on his Picture, but his Book.

The theme of Jonson's poem, and the lines, "Wherein the Graver had a strife /with Nature, to outdo the life," were borrowed and paraphrased from lines in Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* (1593):

Nature that made thee, with herself at strife [line 11] Look, when a painter would surpass the life [line 289] His art with Nature's workmanship at strife [line 291]

Jonson may have even lifted a few words from Thomas Heywood's An Apology for Actors (1612), which had expressed the same idea. 17

The visage is not better <u>cut in brass</u>

Nor can the Carver so express the <u>face</u>
As doth the Poet's Pen whose arts <u>surpass</u>,
To give men's lives and virtues their due grace.

Heminges and Condell's comment that the previous editions of Shakespeare's plays were "maimed, and deformed" echoed a comment by publisher Thomas Walkley. In 1622, Walkley referred to the previous edition of Philaster as "maimed and deformed." 18 Even Heminges and Condell's description of Shakespeare as their "Friend, & Fellow" may have been inspired by a line in the play, The Return to Parnassus-Part 2 (circa 1601-02): the line, "our fellow Shakespeare," was repeated twice by the character, "Kempe," the then-deceased comic actor. 19 This play and the Folio's preface both depicted "ignorant" actors discussing Shakespeare. Parnassus may have also contained the first application of the word "master" to Shakespeare in a literary work. (The 1608 quarto edition of King Lear is possibly the first instance that "Mr Shakespeare" appeared on a title page.)20 More phrases in the Folio's preface were evidently borrowed from the dedication letter to Archaio-ploutos, a book printed by William Jaggard in 1619. Addressed to the Earl and Countess of Montgomery, the dedication letter opened, "To the most Noble and Twinlike pair..." Roger Stritmatter first noticed the similar address used in the Folio's dedication to the same Earl of Montgomery and his brother, the Earl

of Pembroke: "To the Most Noble and Incomparable Pair of Bretheren."²¹ Leah Scragg also found many points of resemblance between Heminges and Condell's dedication letter and one written by Folio publisher Edward Blount in his 1598 edition of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*.²²

LIE: When alive, the great author received the "favor" of the earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, and he was their "servant"

Absolutely no evidence supports the above statements contained in the dedication letter signed by Heminges and Condell. It is on record that Pembroke's Men performed some Shakespeare plays, but the patron of that acting troupe was the second Earl of Pembroke, not the third. The only person who could claim to be Shakespeare's patron was the Earl of Southampton, to whom the great author dedicated two poems – these poems, and Southampton's name, were left out of the Folio. As mentioned above, the Folio emphasized that Shakespeare was a working man of the theater.

LIE: "William Shakespeare" was a "principal actor" in his own plays

One page of the Folio preface lists "principal actors" of the Shakespeare plays. "William Shakespeare" heads the list, his name placed above the celebrated actor, Richard Burbage. There is simply no evidence that "William Shakespeare" was a principal actor in any play. Ben Jonson listed "William Shakespeare" as an actor in two of his plays (Works) published shortly after the Stratford Man had died. It is posthumous evidence only that "Shakespeare" acted in the plays of Shakespeare and Jonson, and in both cases, Jonson supplied the "evidence." This Folio "lie" was one of the few not contradicted by Jonson, perhaps because the great author did publicly act in his own plays, making himself "a motley to the view," as he had expressed in Sonnet 110. The scandal that it would have caused to someone of his high status would have made open credit impossible.

LIE: Jonson "beloved" Shakespeare

Jonson titled his famous elegy to Shakespeare, "To the memory of my beloved, The Author, Mr. William Shakespeare: And what he hath left us." Jonson never wrote about his "beloved" before the First Folio. A section of Jonson's folio, Works (1616), is comprised of 133 epigrams, four of which praised writers John Donne, Sir Henry Goodyere and Josuah Sylvester; Jonson's "beloved" Shakespeare was left out. The Stratford Man died in April 1616, and it is believed that Works was printed in the summer of 1616 – plenty of time for Jonson to include a Shakespeare tribute and the perfect occasion to do so.

In 1618, Jonson "censured" several "English Poets" including Shakespeare, in his conversation with William Drummond: "Shakspeer wanted [lacked] art..." Drummond recalled that Jonson also censured Shakespeare for getting it wrong about a shipwreck occurring in Bohemia. After the Folio was published, Jonson called Shakespeare's play, Pericles, "a moldy tale" in his play, The New Inn, or The Light Heart, written in 1628. In his posthumously published Timber, or Discoveries, Jonson seemingly responded to Heminges and Condell's statement that the great author never blotted a line.

My answer hath been, would he had blotted a thousand. Which they [the actors] thought a malevolent speech. [p. 97]

In the same work, after declaring he "lov'd the man, and do honor his memory (on this side Idolatry) as much as any," Jonson in essence said Shakespeare talked too much. The paragraph ends with a backhanded compliment: "But he redeemed his vices, with his virtues. There was ever more in him to be praised, than to be pardoned" (p. 98). Outside of Jonson's high tribute to Shakespeare in his Folio elegy, the reader may now judge how sincerely Jonson "beloved" Shakespeare.

LIE: Shakespeare had limited knowledge of classical languages

And though thou hadst small Latin, and less Greek.
From thence to honor thee, I would not seek
For names; but call forth thund'ring Aeschylus,
Euripides, and Sophocles to us
Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead [Seneca],
To life again, to hear thy buskin tread [ref. to tragedy],
And shake a stage: Or, when thy socks were on [ref. to comedy],
Leave thee alone, for the comparison
Of all, that insolent Greece, or haughty Rome
sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.
Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show,
To whom all Scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time!

The traditional interpretation for Ben Jonson's elegy line, "And though thou hadst small *Latin*, and less *Greek*," is that the great author had little knowledge of these languages. Yet this cannot be true because many Shakespeare works display considerable knowledge of both. Shakespeare invented many words based upon Greek and Latin roots. ²⁴ His works are filled with allusions to the works of classical writers, and sometimes he paraphrased their lines. In some cases Shakespeare alluded to or borrowed from a classical work before it had been translated into English. For example, Shakespeare was "indebted"

to the Latin play by Plautus, *Menechami*, for his play, *The Comedy of Errors*, ²⁵ yet the experts believe that Shakespeare wrote his play a few years before the first printed English translation in 1595. Charles C. Hower wrote a paper illuminating the true meaning of several Shakespeare lines by applying Latin etymology to the English words. ²⁶ Shakespeare's knowledge of Latin, therefore, was more than "small." Jonson, whose classical reading was extensive, certainly knew this, so what did he mean by his elegy phrase? "Even if" is a valid interpretation of "though." Using this definition, the line would mean, "Even if Shakespeare had small Latin and less Greek," and Jonson would be correctly assessing the great author's knowledge. Yet the Shakespeare professor defends the traditional interpretation, and is perhaps relieved by it, because the Stratford Man's acquisition of Latin at the Stratford grammar school would have been limited (and Greek, not at all), had he in fact attended.

Immediately before the line in question, Jonson said that Shakespeare outshined his contemporaries (John Lyly, Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlowe). Immediately after it, Jonson listed six classical dramatists (Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, et al) to "honor" Shakespeare. But Jonson said he did not wish to only drop names, he wished to "call forth" these classical dramatists "to us" (Jonson and Shakespeare), and "to life again," so they could witness and "hear" Shakespeare's tragedies and comedies. Jonson said that Shakespeare's works would "triumph" in "the comparison." Presumably Jonson wanted the classical poets to materialize so Shakespeare could hear these dramatists favorably critique his plays - "even if" Shakespeare's understanding of Greek and Latin were limited. Perhaps Jonson had intended the "small Latin, and less Greek" line to be ambiguous, adding to the idea that the great author was a "natural" unlearned genius. Jonson's contemporary, H. Ramsay, questioned Jonson's elegy line in Jonsonus Virbius: or, The Memory of Ben (1638). Ramsay wrote that Jonson had a good command of Latin, "That which your Shakespeare scarce could understand?" Jonson did not originate the "small Latin, and less Greek" line, he borrowed it from the Italian critic, Antonio Minturno, in his L'Arte Poetica (1564). In the context of dramatic writing, Minturno wrote about some of his contemporaries who did not properly appreciate the ancients.

For that reason there are some, who by chance know little of Latin and even less of Greek, who in Tragedy place Seneca, barely known by the Latin writers, before Euripides and Sophocles, who are considered by all to be the princes of Tragic poetry. ²⁷

Jonson also borrowed from Minturno the names of Sophocles, Euripides and Seneca for his Shakespeare elegy.

Conclusion

The great author's persona first emerged from the preface of the First Folio in 1623. "William Shakespeare" was the great author's born name; he was a gentleman, an actor, a dramatist, a natural genius, and was associated with the place names Avon and Stratford. Some of this information is contradicted within the same pages. This can be explained if the entire preface were geared to two different audiences: the knowing and the unknowing. The knowing audience comprised both those who knew that the great author was a nobleman using a pen name and those who were acquainted with William Shakspere of Stratford-upon-Avon. The Stratford Man could not be openly identified as the great author because many knew it was not true and they could publicly question this identity change and spoil the intention of those who contrived this preface. The unknowing audience, the majority, would make the connection between the great author and Stratford-upon-Avon without question.

Substantial evidence shows that Ben Jonson actually wrote the letters of actors John Heminges and Henry Condell, a "fraud" that taints the entire preface. Jonson styled the letters as he believed actors would write, i.e., ignorantly, for authenticity. They were presented as incapable of recognizing the greatness of Shakespeare's plays by repeatedly calling them "trifles," thus the nonsense lines urging the reader to buy, fearing they would never get their money back. If this was a legitimate concern, then why did they not include Shakespeare's proven top sellers, the poems, Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece? His role as poet was instead overlooked. The overemphasis on buying - an entire paragraph - is almost comic and evidently without example. Jonson in his own voice sneers at these actors, and was perhaps trying to distinguish himself from them because at one time he did act. It is unlikely that Heminges and Condell asked Jonson to write their letters because they were so unflattering. And Jonson seemed to use them as scapegoats for the Folio's textual errors, most likely caused from not having the great author's original texts. Meanwhile the Folio's title page put forth the lie that the text was based upon the author's "True Original Copies." The idea that Heminges and Condell were the great author's "friends and fellows," and the Folio their production, was a red herring to help throw the great author's literary identity onto the Stratford Man. It also diverted attention away from the person most responsible for the entire Folio production, the Earl of Pembroke, the subject of the next chapter.

The Shakespeare professor is well aware of Jonson's voice in Heminges and Condell's letters but is reluctant to admit he wrote them because of the implications. If they were fraudulently written, then the veracity of the entire preface is questionable, including Droeshout's image of "Shakespeare." And this

preface, in conjunction with the Shakspeare monument in Stratford-upon-Avon, is the professor's best "evidence" that the Stratford Man wrote Shakespeare! The Folio preface was specifically tailored to give the impression that the Stratford Man, a gentleman, was Shakespeare without directly saying so. It was ultimately left to the readers to connect the dots, which they eventually did. Heminges and Condell were chosen as front men because they were colleagues of the Stratford Man in the King's Men acting company, and in other business. Droeshout's engraving of Shakespeare was probably an invented image. The preface was designed to suggest that the Stratford Man was the great author, not to blatantly show it. The image was unadorned and imperfect, even deformed, presumably meant to deter public idolization of the Stratford Man, who was the wrong man. This must have been intentional, as none of the other portraits by Droeshout have sitters with faces looking so wooden or artificial. Jonson left posterity the key to understanding Droeshout's bizarre image in lines added to the 1616 edition of Every Man In His Humor: the great author is to be depicted as a "rare, and accomplished monster, or miracle of nature..." Apparently, Jonson believed that the only way the general public and posterity would swallow the idea of the Stratford Man as the great author would be to present him as a freak of nature, a "monster." It is fact that the Stratford Man held the status of gentleman, thus Droeshout's depiction of a gentleman-monster rather than the usual depiction of accomplished poet-dramatists - wearing or holding bay leaves. Readers today are so familiar with Droeshout's image that it may be difficult to see it like this, but one must remember that Jonson composed most of the Folio preface, and that plans for the identity switch were afoot before the Stratford Man had died (Beaumont's verses to Jonson). Droeshout's face of Shakespeare was proof enough to convince the masses that the great author was a man born with the name William Shakespeare who was the fellow of actors. But for those who were truly interested in the great author and his works, Jonson provided the voice of truth: the great author is masked, and to discover his true identity, read "his Book" carefully. Below is a summary of the Folio's true and false messages.

The Truth: Ben Jonson in His Own Voice

"Shakespeare" is the greatest dramatic genius ever born, cannot be praised too highly, and "what he hath left us" is something extraordinary. This fact is recognized by the learned and the unlearned. His memory will stay alive so long as his works remain in print. Although certainly inspired with a gift, "Shakespeare" worked hard at his craft, constantly revising. His works "delighted" Queen Elizabeth and her successor, King James. "Shakespeare"

was of "gentle" birth, and some noted his dramatic talent with the intent of damaging his reputation/high status. "Shakespeare" is a descriptive pen name ("shake a Lance"). The given "figure" on the title page is not his true image – his works reveal himself best. Shakespeare is "a moniment, without a tomb," i.e., Shakespeare represents a body of writing (one definition of "moniment"), not a human being. (Jonson's reference to Avon in his elegy was not necessarily Stratford-upon-Avon; many towns in England include the word "Avon." Jonson may have been purposely ambiguous on this point, like he was with the line, "small *Latin*, and less *Greek*.")

The False: Jonson in the Voice of John Heminges and Henry Condell

Because Shakespeare died without making arrangements for his own writings, we (Heminges and Condell) have taken it upon ourselves to collect and publish his plays. Despite the "ill fortune" of this task, we do it gladly for our fellow. We hope the earls of Pembroke and Montgomery will patronize this work because they favored Shakespeare, the man and his plays. He was their servant. Unlike previously stolen and false editions of the plays, this book contains Shakespeare's true lines, directly taken from his own clean papers. He was a natural writer, churning out perfect lines as soon as he thought of them. Any errors in the text are due to our limited abilities. It is outside of "our province" to praise these "trifles," so just buy the book. We advise you to read the plays "again, and again ... to understand him." If you need more understanding about Shakespeare, "we leave you to other of his Friends," who "can be your guides." ("Friends" James Mabbe, Hugh Holland and Leonard Digges only informed the reader that Shakespeare was dead and had a "Stratford moniment." The best understanding, therefore, comes from "friend" Jonson, the voice of truth.)

Martin Droeshout's Portrait of Shakespeare

Here is the image of the writer, Mr. William Shakespeare. He was actually born with that name. He was a gentleman. He was a rare miracle of nature. He was ugly. Do not worship him. If you're a little skeptical that this image is authentic, you may be right: it could just be a mask covering the identity of the real author.

CHAPTER 9

A Pembroke and Jonson Production

THE LIES AND contradictions contained in the First Folio's preface - and the compelling evidence that Ben Jonson actually wrote the letters signed by John Heminges and Henry Condell - completely discredits it. Outside of Heminges and Condell's signatures, there is no evidence that these two actors initiated the project, paid for it, or were involved with it in any way. Unwilling to see any foul play, the Shakespeare professor apparently likes the idea that Shakespeare's old acting chums spent the time and money to save his "orphans," the plays, from oblivion. It was a matter of fellow actors helping a fellow actor. Their preface letters claim that the Folio was their "enterprise" and twice it was stated that they "publish'd them," meaning the plays, but even this was contradicted by information on the Folio's back page, "Printed at the Charges of W. Jaggard, Ed. Blount, I. Smithweeke, and W. Aspley, 1623." Since the preface was designed to mislead, it follows that the title and back pages were also purposely confusing. Even W.W. Greg thought that the wording, "printed at the charges of," was "rather unusual." Scholars usually view Edward Blount, William Jaggard, and his son, Isaac, as the main Folio investors, with smaller shares owned by William Aspley and John Smethwick (who at the time owned the rights to previous editions of a few Shakespeare plays). These shares were real. When Isaac Jaggard died in 1627, his widow assigned "her part" of the Folio to Thomas Cotes, who printed the Second Folio in 1632 (William Jaggard had died in 1623).² Blount assigned his Folio share to Robert Allot in 1630, and Smethwick and Aspley retained their shares for the Second Folio.3 But did these five actually put up the money to make the Folio happen?

The First Folio was a very expensive production. It comprised 907 large pages printed on better quality paper and it took a long time to print. Exactly how many copies of the Folio were made is not known, but Peter Blayney, the most cited expert on its production, considered 750 total copies a reasonable number – 500 would not be cost effective and 1,200 would be too risky.⁴ (The closest example of a production of this type was Jonson's folio of plays

and poems, published in 1616; presumably, it was not a big seller since it took twenty-four years to be reprinted.) Blayney's estimated cost of 6 shillings and 8 pence per unit to produce (materials plus labor of compositors and pressmen)5 would put the investment of 750 copies at £250 - an enormous sum during that period. The per-unit cost is based upon the fairly solid evidence that the Folio sold in the bookstore for 15 shillings unbound, and 20 shillings bound (equivalent to £1),6 and working backward. But this supposed per unit cost for the publisher does not include or even consider pre-production costs: editing and preparing the copy for the compositors, those who set the type for press (as many as nine different compositors were employed on the project). Compositors or typesetters are not editors. Twenty plays in the Folio had never been in print, so they would certainly need editing. The texts of previously issued plays were also used, but they contain enough differences with the Folio's text for one to conclude that they too had been edited for inclusion. Editing and proofreading was evidently performed, therefore, on all thirty-six plays. Several very literate people must have been employed to complete this colossal task.

Unfortunately, records about the Folio's production have not survived. Scholars have reached no consensus as to the identities of the editors, but most would say that Heminges and Condell did not or could not perform the task. If these actors truly considered the Shakespeare plays as "trifles," as repeatedly said in their Folio letters, if they were incapable of recognizing their greatness, then they would not have been capable of preparing them for press. The choice of Leonard Digges, James Mabbe and Hugh Holland as eulogists of Shakespeare in the Folio's preface was peculiar - none of them were associated with the theater or with Shakespeare. They were, however, highly educated men who would have been well qualified to edit Shakespeare's plays. Assuming that this was the case, remuneration for each editor can only be guessed at - perhaps something similar to a schoolmaster's annual salary, approximately £20.7 Ben Jonson must be included among the editors because of his dominating hand in the preface. ("Some of the character-descriptions are suspiciously Jonsonian," wrote T. J. B. Spencer, about the cast lists of a few plays in the Folio.)8 The portrait engraving on the title page was also an extra expense. Even more potential costs lay in acquiring the rights to previously published Shakespeare plays, or usage fees, some of which were used in the Folio. And what about the rights to the unpublished plays - would not the great author's family have had an interest? They were not even mentioned in the Folio. Even a conservative addition of £90 to Blayney's estimate to account for some of these "hidden" costs would total £340; the per-unit price for 750 copies, therefore, would have been 9 shillings and 1 pence, well above Blayney's estimate of 6 shillings and 8 pence. Blayney believed that the publishers sold the Folio to booksellers for 10 shillings, which would have been the legal limit if the cheapest version in the bookstores sold for 15 shillings. The point of this brief cost analysis is to show that the Folio was not a moneymaking venture – it was a barely break-even proposition. Blayney described the Folio as "by far the most expensive playbook that had ever been offered to the English public." A huge outlay and a big risk for a very small profit, if any, is hardly an attractive proposition for investors. One must assume, therefore, that a substantial portion of the Folio, if not the entire project, was funded by its dedicatees, the earls of Pembroke and Montgomery.

Pembroke the True Engineer of the First Folio

Dedication letters in books were usually addressed to those likely to sponsor them, and the First Folio was dedicated to William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, and his brother, Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery. Their role as patrons of the work has never been challenged, but the possibility that they initiated the Folio project or influenced its production remains unexplored despite evidence that strongly suggests it. All persons named in the Folio preface were connected to Pembroke, to his protégé, Ben Jonson, or to Montgomery. Pembroke was one of the wealthiest men in England and over one hundred books were dedicated to him. 10 His father patronized a company of actors (Pembroke's Men) that had performed at least five Shakespeare plays. Besides Jonson, Pembroke patronized dramatists Philip Massinger, Thomas Nashe and George Chapman. He hailed from a literary family. His mother, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, was a respected scholar and writer; her brother was the celebrated poet, Sir Philip Sidney. Pembroke's mistress, Lady Mary Wroth, was a writer of drama, fiction and sonnets; she bore him two illegitimate children.¹¹ Pembroke, a poet himself, certainly had the literary interest and the money to take on the big project of a Shakespeare play collection. He also had the political power. One of Pembroke's ardent ambitions was to obtain the office of Lord Chamberlain. Under the jurisdiction of this office was the Master of the Revels, who controlled dramatic performance and publication. Pembroke sought this office for several years. One court insider wrote in a January 1614 letter that if Lord Knolles was next appointed to the post of Lord Chamberlain, it

would be too great a distaste to the earl of Pembroke, who looks duly for it when it falls and if he should fail, would think his long service and diligent waiting ill rewarded. 12

The Duke of Somerset was awarded the position that year. Six months later, however, Somerset fell into disgrace when his wife was implicated in the

murder of Sir Thomas Overbury. Pembroke replaced him in late December 1615, and he was determined to stay there. During Pembroke's eleven-year tenure, King James tried four times to lure him out of this office by offering him others, but four times Pembroke refused. One condition he always held to was that his brother, Montgomery, should succeed him in this office (the new king, Charles I, acceded to this condition upon the fifth offer, so in 1626, Pembroke became the Lord Steward and his brother, the Lord Chamberlain).

Knowing the Earl of Pembroke's background, it may appear surprising that, after he obtained the office of Lord Chamberlain, individual publication of Shakespeare's plays stopped. The years 1616 to 1618 were blank in this regard. Meanwhile, plays by other writers were issued during this period without incident. A breach of Pembroke's unofficial policy, however, occurred in 1619, when Thomas Pavier and William Jaggard printed ten Shakespeare plays (some apocryphal) in an apparent attempt to create a first collected edition. Pembroke took action. He sent a letter to the Stationers' Company with a directive that was summarized in their register on May 3, 1619:

Upon a letter from the right honorable the Lord Chamberlain. It is thought fit & so ordered that no plays that his Majesty's players do play shall be printed without consent of some of them. 13

As Pembroke ultimately controlled the plays and players as Lord Chamberlain, the above passage could also mean no printing without *his* consent. The directive resulted in no further Shakespeare play editions for another two years, but not for other dramatists, proving again Pembroke's bias against Shakespeare. Only three of Pavier and Jaggard's ten Shakespeare play editions had the current year on the title pages – five editions displayed earlier false dates, and two had no date. Two editions had false imprints. Evidently, Pavier and Jaggard had printed only three plays before the 1619 directive – all with the current year on the title pages, and then they covertly defied the order by putting false information on the title pages to give the impression that these editions were old stock. The fakery was especially odd because Pavier held the rights to about half of these plays, ¹⁴ making it unlikely that he was trying to deceive the King's Men acting company or other publishers. Clearly, it was Pembroke's order that he was trying to evade.

Thomas Pavier and William Jaggard were never prosecuted for their postdirective scheme – on the contrary, they seemed to have prospered after the incident. Within five weeks of Pembroke's directive, Pavier was elected as one of the assistants of the Stationers' Company (June 14, 1619), allowing him to sit on the governing board; it was his first promotion within the company in seven years. In 1622, Pavier was elected underwarden, giving him power to authorize entries in the registers. ¹⁵ Pavier never again printed a Shakespeare play. The Jaggard printing house also benefited immediately: Archaio-Ploutos in 1619 and Boccaccio's The Decameron, registered on March 20, 1620, were books dedicated to Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery, the probable sponsor. 16 The First Folio would be the third Jaggard house commission by a Herbert, and its final Shakespeare publication. Considering the benefits that Pavier and Jaggard each received soon after Pembroke's directive, one can surmise that Pembroke privately negotiated with them in return for their cooperation of not printing Shakespeare's plays outside of his authority. To award the Jaggard house with the Folio commission would be otherwise unconscionable: Jaggard's two illicit issues of The Passionate Pilgrim in 1598-1599 had incurred the great author's personal contempt for being "so bold with his name," and fully aware of the offense it had caused, Jaggard printed it a third time in 1612. Pembroke was not trying to protect the players and their supposed "property," the Shakespeare plays, with his 1619 directive - he was protecting a plan involving Shakespeare that he wished to enact as soon as he became the Lord Chamberlain. As explained in Chapter 8, Francis Beaumont and Ben Jonson evidently knew about this plan before the Stratford Man's death in April 1616, which invalidates Heminges and Condell's "testimony" in their Folio letter of doing a favor to their late colleague. If Pembroke's "diligent waiting" for the office of Lord Chamberlain was primarily to realize this plan, then it was conceived before 1614, or as shown below, as early as 1609.

Shakespeare Play Blackout

The Earl of Pembroke's evident desire to ban individual Shakespeare quarto editions fulfills a prediction made in 1609 about "grand possessors" wanting to do the same thing. Someone calling himself "A never writer" gave "a warning" to readers in the first edition of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* (1609, second issue) of a coming shortage of published Shakespeare plays:

And believe this, that when he is gone, and his comedies out of sale, you will scramble for them, and set up a new English Inquisition. Take this for a warning, and at the peril of your pleasure's loss, and Judgment's, refuse not, nor like this the less, for not being sullied, with the smoky breath of the multitude; but thank fortune for the 'scape it hath made amongst you. Since by the grand possessors wills I believe you should have pray'd for them [i.e., printed editions of the plays] rather than been pray'd [i.e., urged to buy them].

According to this anonymous writer, *Troilus and Cressida* "escaped" the "grand possessors" of the Shakespeare plays, for which readers should "thank fortune," implying that the great author was no longer the possessor of his own works in 1609 (entire text in Appendix D). Other evidence, as covered

in chapters 4 and 15, suggests that the great author was dead by 1609. Some critics would assert that the phrase, "when he is gone," in the *Troilus* preface letter proves Shakespeare was still alive in 1609, but this line could also mean, "when the printing of Shakespeare's plays ceases" or "when his plays are sold out in bookstores." In an otherwise complimentary letter about the great author's works, "when he is gone" would be a rude way of saying "after his death" had he still been alive.

Scholars speculate about the identity of the "grand possessors." Some think they were the King's Men acting company, but it is unlikely that actors would be termed "grand," and there is no evidence that they owned the Shakespeare plays. The printers and publishers who registered Shakespeare's plays with the Stationers' Company also did not own them; they were registering their versions of the plays, their pirated versions, and it was these versions that they held the rights to. It was these versions that they were allowed to transfer or sell to others, but they did not own the Shakespeare plays. If the great author were dead in 1609, then it follows that his family members would be the possessors or owners of his plays. Legally, a possessor is one "who takes, occupies, or holds something without necessarily having ownership, or as distinguished from the owner" (OED). "Grand" implies that they were highly placed. Early printed texts of Shakespeare's plays were imperfect or incomplete, as related in Chapter 2; the escaped Troilus and Cressida quarto was no exception, so evidently the grand possessors did not possess the great author's original play manuscripts. They would have possessed, however, the right or the "wills" (the word used in the quote) to publish, or not to publish, the Shakespeare plays. But even so, they still would not have had the authority to stop such publication - only the Lord Chamberlain or the king's privy council could do that. Considering the fact that Pembroke was later responsible for doing this very thing as soon as he obtained the power to do so as Lord Chamberlain, an office for which he "diligently waited"; considering the fact that his nobility would qualify him as "grand"; and considering the fact that Shakespeare's First Folio was dedicated to Pembroke, Pembroke can be confidently identified as one of the grand possessors. As shown throughout this book, the great author was an aristocrat, which increases the possibility that the noble Herbert family were his relations. As the Lord Chamberlain, Pembroke would not allow publication of individual Shakespeare plays, but he did allow the First Folio. The First Folio, therefore, was published with his "will," with his full cooperation. These factors, Pembroke's wealth, and his ties to the Folio preface contributors, as explained at the end of this chapter, make it highly probable that he was the true Folio initiator and financial backer. But there is other indirect evidence of Pembroke's involvement behind the scenes.

The Revels Office and Folio Production

When the presses began to roll for the Folio is not known, but its completion was initially expected to occur by October 1622. We know this because the Folio was advertised in a book fair catalog listing books expected for release between April and October 1622.17 But as it happened, the Folio would not be completed until November 1623. Obviously, something delayed the production, and those who have studied the forensics of the Folio, including Charlton Hinman, have acknowledged that a major interruption most likely occurred in 1622. The delay was not due to technical reasons, as Jaggard's two presses operated continuously throughout that year printing other books. There were two other Jaggard-printed books advertised in the aforesaid catalog with an expected issue date of 1622. One of them, Discovery of Errors, was printed as scheduled. The other, Andre Favyn's Theater of Honour, had "1623" on the title page, but was registered on October 23, 1622, meaning it was already completed or near completion. Two books printed by Jaggard in 1622, however, were evidently not scheduled for publication that year: Description of Leicestershire and Christian Dictionary. Since the Folio delay was not technology-related, then the problem must have been related to the text, causing Jaggard to move projects of his other clients ahead of it (i.e., those two unscheduled ones), shelving it until they were completed. Among Hinman's conjectures are the following:18

- First Folio printing began late 1621 or early 1622
- Folio quires A to E were finished by the end of March 1622
- When the printing began for Folio Quire F is uncertain; there was
 possibly a time interval between the printing of quires E and F
 (bibliographically, quires A to E differ substantially from all other
 quires in the book)
- A "major interruption" occurred in Folio printing sometime before October 1622, but the length of the interruption is indeterminable
- Folio printing definitely resumed by October 1622, with a brief interruption in December 1622
- Folio printing was constant from early 1623 to completion in late 1623

While the Folio printing was going well, in early 1622, notice was probably given to the printer of the book fair catalog that the Folio would be finished by October 1622. But then something interrupted these plans, which ultimately resulted in the completion time of November 1623. The Folio was *not listed* in the book fair catalog announcing books to be issued between September 1622 and April 1623, and neither was it listed in the same catalog

for publication between April and October 1623. The first sign of confidence that the Folio was nearing completion was its reappearance in the book fair catalog for titles expected during October 1623 to April 1624, the period when it did get released.

The cause of the 1622 interruptions in the Folio's printing may never be known, but they were serious enough to delay the original release date by one year. It is significant, therefore, that at the exact time of the first possible delay, at the end of March 1622, there was a changeover in the Revels Office. The Revels master, Sir George Buc, had gone mad, and Sir John Astley had taken his place. On March 30, 1622, it was reported in a letter:

Poor Sir George Buck master of the Revels is in his old age fallen stark mad, and his place executed by Sir John Ashley [sic] that had the reversion. ¹⁹

On April 12, Buc was officially declared "insane," and on May 16, his relatives were told to surrender his office. He died on October 31, 1622. During the reign of James I, the Revels Office, which was under the jurisdiction of the Lord Chamberlain, licensed and censored plays for performance and for publication. The supposed interruption in the Folio's printing coinciding with this changeover suggests that Buc was involved with its production. If so, then Pembroke may have arranged for each newly printed Shakespeare play from Jaggard's press to go directly to Buc in the Revels Office to expedite the approval process. Otherwise, had the printed book been given as a whole to the Revels Office, it would have taken a very long time to approve. When Astley took over the Revels Office, there was probably a backlog of plays awaiting approval due to Buc's illness; it is possible that Pembroke ordered Jaggard to stop the Folio's printing until Astley caught up. As late as 1620, Buc was in full control of his mental faculties, because that year "the duke of Buckingham listed [Buc] as one of the scholars best qualified to compose an English Academy" (DNB). On October 6, 1621, however, Buc authorized Thomas Walkley to publish Shakespeare's play, Othello, which was inconsistent with the evident ban of Shakespeare dramatic publication by Pembroke, his superior. Buc may have already been senile at that time, or he may have been influenced by an event that occurred on the day before the Othello permission. On October 5, 1621, Ben Jonson was granted "next in line," i.e., the reversion, for the Revels mastership after Sir John Astley, who held the reversion after Buc. The king raised Jonson's annuity from £66 to £200 at this time, and there were rumors of his getting a knighthood. Perhaps Buc felt that he would soon be replaced and retaliated. Astley may have also feared Jonson's promotion and made a special effort to have his right to succeed Buc verified. When it was officially confirmed on March 29, 1622, Astley replaced

the mad Buc. Astley held the mastership of the Revels until July 24, 1623, when he mysteriously leased it to Pembroke's kinsman, Henry Herbert, for £150 per year. (Officially, Astley was still the Revels master because it was a life term.) King James knighted Herbert two weeks later, at Pembroke's estate, Wilton House. One scholar considered it a "buyout" that was "engineered" by Pembroke. In my opinion, Pembroke arranged the buyout because he wanted no complications with the licensing of the First Folio, which at this time was about four months shy of completion. The Folio's sixteen-page preface, which was evidently the last portion to get printed, contained false and misleading information about Shakespeare. Pembroke needed someone he could trust to approve the work for publication quietly and without question. Astley had been granted the reversion to the Revels Office in 1612 by Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, who was the Lord Chamberlain at the time. The Howards were Pembroke's political rivals.

Sir George Buc's approval of Thomas Walkley's quarto of *Othello*, printed in 1622, evidently caused a small explosion of three more Shakespeare play editions that year (*Richard III*, *Henry IV-Part 1* and *The Troublesome Reign of King John*, which was ascribed to "W. Shakespeare"). The Earl of Pembroke had effectively curtailed Shakespeare dramatic publication for six years (1616 to 1621) excepting those plays issued by Pavier and Jaggard in 1619. On March 3, 1623, Pembroke issued a new order to the Stationers' Company:

This day a letter from my Lord Chamberlain was openly read to all the master printers concerning the licensing of plays &c. by Sir John Ashley [sic]. ²¹

The letter does not survive, but one can determine its contents by the results: no individual Shakespeare play was openly published between 1623 and 1628, yet at least twelve plays by other writers were printed during this period (one of them, The Bondman, 1624, was dedicated to the Earl of Montgomery by author Philip Massinger). Shakespeare's plays were targeted again, with two exceptions: the fourth quarto editions of Romeo and Juliet and Hamlet, both published by John Smethwick and both printed with no date on the title pages. Careful analysis of the paper stock and watermarks by R. Carter Hailey showed "with a high degree of probability" that Romeo and Juliet was printed in 1623, and that Hamlet could be "demonstrably" dated to 1625.22 As Pembroke's 1619 order to the Stationers' Company was evidently aimed at Pavier and Jaggard's issue of Shakespeare quartos, it follows that the 1623 order was given for the same reason. Smethwick must have printed Romeo and Juliet (Quarto 4) in early 1623, taking a precaution that he may have learned from Pavier and Jaggard - leaving the date off the title page - but was still found out, resulting in Pembroke's March 3rd order to the Stationers' Company.

(Interestingly, Smethwick's edition was issued with two different title pages: one crediting the play to "W. Shakespeare" and one without the author's credit.) There is no evidence that Smethwick was disciplined for this action, but Smethwick did own the rights to *Romeo and Juliet* (Quarto 3, 1609) and *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598) – these particular editions were used in the Folio. Smethwick waited two years after the Folio's release to issue *Hamlet*; this text was not the one used in the Folio.

In August 1626, the Earl of Montgomery became the Lord Chamberlain. An apparent loosening of his brother's Shakespeare policy had occurred in 1629 with one quarto edition of *Richard III* released. Pembroke's health was worsening that same year, and he died on April 10, 1630. Perhaps not coincidently, the year 1630 saw three Shakespeare quartos in print: *Merry Wives of Windsor, Pericles* and *Othello*. In 1631, Smethwick published, *with* dates, quarto editions of *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Taming of the Shrew*. Between 1629 and 1639, sixteen editions of individual Shakespeare plays were published. The tight control of Shakespeare play issuance during the years 1616 to 1629 coincides with the appointment of Pembroke to the office of Lord Chamberlain, and a loosening of this control after he died.

The Pembroke-Jonson Connection

Ben Jonson's involvement with the First Folio preface is undisputed, as well as his close alliance to the Earl of Pembroke. "From 1603 to his death in 1630," wrote Pembroke's biographer, Brian O'Farrell, "Pembroke gave employment and protection at court to Jonson, showing his discernment for true talent."23 While imprisoned in 1605 as one of the writers of the play, Eastward Ho, Jonson appealed to Pembroke and the Earl of Montgomery (and others) for assistance. He was released. In 1611, Jonson dedicated his play, Cataline His Conspiracy, to Pembroke, and in 1616, two sections of his collected works. Jonson's biographer, David Riggs, noted that all complimentary references to the Howards, Pembroke's political rivals, which were contained in some of Jonson's works, were "carefully expunged" for his folio edition, and concluded that the "ascendancy of Pembroke and his circle is an important motif in [Jonson's] folio as a whole."24 Dick Taylor observed that "Jonson experienced his best years as a composer of masques under Pembroke's lord chamberlainship," and he "indicated his gratitude by working in salutes to Pembroke in Christmas his Masque, 1616, and in For the Honour of Wales, 1618."25 Within two months of Pembroke's appointment to this office, Jonson was given a royal grant of 100 marks (about £66) for life. 26 Jonson told William Drummond in 1618 that he was receiving £20 annually from Pembroke expressly to buy books. Pembroke wrote a letter to Oxford University

delegates (May 1619) recommending Jonson for an honorary degree, which was granted.

Ben Jonson's Works (1616) was the first collection of English dramas printed in England. It was also the first time that dramas appeared in large foliosized pages, which were usually reserved for the Bible or important reference works. Shakespeare's First Folio evidently was much influenced by Jonson's folio, with a similar amount of pages, actor lists and prefatory tributes. It was probably Jonson's touch to apply the word "works" in reference to the plays on the Folio preface page listing Shakespearean actors. Bibliographic evidence indicates that the printing of Jonson's folio was completed in the summer of 1616.27 and Riggs believed that Jonson "tinkered" with the text "until the very last minute."28 Jonson may have added the name, "William Shakespeare," to the cast lists of his plays, Sejanus, and Every Man In His Humor, after the Stratford Man's death; they were the first published details about Shakespeare's acting career. More new information followed in the First Folio, that Shakespeare acted in his own plays. As Jonson's hand is detectable in much of the Folio's preface, and as he was beholden to Pembroke, one can conclude that Jonson was employed by Pembroke to transform the image of the great author from a nobleman using a pen name into a commoner named William Shakespeare, a working actor-playwright whose "fellows" were actors Heminges and Condell. Pembroke apparently wanted to control the public image of Shakespeare and it was a long time in planning. It would not be surprising if Pembroke had agreed to fund Jonson's folio in return for helping with his own project, the collected Shakespeare plays. Jonson was probably one of the Folio editors. The little-known biographies of others named in the Folio's preface (Edward Blount, James Mabbe, Leonard Digges, Hugh Holland, Martin Droeshout) uncovers their ties to the the Herbert brothers, Jonson, or to all three.

First Folio Contributors

Edward Blount: The First Folio's co-publisher, Edward Blount, was errone-ously listed as on its title page as printer. Blount's first connection with Shake-speare occurred in 1601 as the publisher of *Love's Martyr*, which featured two new Shakespeare poems, as well as one by Ben Jonson. In May 1608, Blount registered Shakespeare's plays, *Pericles* and *Anthony and Cleopatra*, but he did not publish them. In the previous year (1607), Blount dedicated a translation to the brother earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, stating in the dedication letter that he was "humbly devoted" to them (*Ars Aulica, or the Courtier's Art* by Lorenzo Ducci). Since it is likely that Pembroke was one of the grand possessors of Shakespeare's plays, Blount may have kept these plays out of

print at his request (if so, then it is another indication that the great author was dead by this time, i.e., May 1608). In 1609, a different publisher issued *Pericles*, and its corrupt condition suggests it was a pirated copy; *Anthony and Cleopatra* debuted in the Folio.

Blount had no known ties with Heminges and Condell, but he did have ties with others involved in the Folio's production. Blount published Ben Jonson's play, Sejanus His Fall (1605), which included a prefatory a poem by Hugh Holland. Blount's edition of John Florio's New World of Words (1611) contained a Latin anagram by James Mabbe. In 1622, Blount published Gerardo, The Unfortunate Spaniard, a translated work by Leonard Digges that was dedicated to Pembroke and Montgomery, and in 1622-23 Blount published The Rogue, a translated work by Mabbe, with preface contributions by Digges and Jonson. Blount's edition of Edward Dering's Works (1614) was partially printed by William Jaggard.²⁹ William Aspley, who was listed on the Folio's back page as a financial contributor, co-published three books with Blount prior to the Folio; in 1600, Aspley also published two Shakespeare plays (Much Ado About Nothing and Henry VI-Part 2), and was one of the booksellers of SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS (1609).

Blount was known for active involvement in his book projects. In 1620, Blount issued at least three books, but in 1621, he evidently issued none. In 1622, the year of presumed delays in the Folio's printing, Blount issued five books. In 1623, when Folio printing resumed at a continuous pace, Blount published only one title besides the Folio. As his other publishing activity fit neatly with the Folio's printing schedule, Blount may have served as editor or chief editor of the sixteen Shakespeare plays that he registered (with Isaac Jaggard) on November 8, 1623 for the Folio publication. He may have given his full attention to the Folio during 1621 and 1623 and brought in friends Digges and Mabbe to help. (Since Blount already held the rights to Pericles, its exclusion from the Folio is interesting.) Blount's publications often included his personal letter to the reader, but this was not the case with the Folio. A notable example is contained in Blount's issue of Six Court Comedies (1632), a collection of plays by the then late dramatist, John Lyly. After the Folio, Blount did not publish another book for four years; in his early 60s, he evidently was beginning to retire. William Aspley, in his early 50s, stopped publishing for a seven-year period after the Folio.

Leonard Digges: Digges contributed one poem to Shakespeare in the First Folio preface. Digges was a classical scholar noted for his Latin and Spanish translations. He held a bachelor's and master's degree at Oxford University. The year before the Folio was published, Digges dedicated his translation of a Spanish novel to the earls of Pembroke and Montgomery (*Gerardo, the Unfor-*

tunate Spaniard) with Edward Blount as publisher. Blount also issued Digges's Latin translation of Claudian's Rape of Proserpine (1617), and they were life-long friends. Digges was also friends with James Mabbe, and contributed a poem to Mabbe's translation, The Rogue (1623), as did Ben Jonson. Thus Digges had direct connections with the brother earls, Jonson, Mabbe and Blount just before the Folio was published. Although he had no known connections with Heminges and Condell, Digges did have an indirect connection with the Stratford Man: his stepfather, Thomas Russell, was the overseer of the Stratford Man's will. Outside of this fact, there is no known intersection between Digges and the Stratford Man, or "William Shakespeare," before the Folio was published. It is very likely that Blount brought in his friend Digges to the Folio project as one of the editors.

Hugh Holland: Holland was a minor poet known today mostly for his sonnet about Shakespeare in the First Folio preface. Holland probably wrote it at the request of his friend, Ben Jonson (Holland's sonnet and the second page of Jonson's elegy face each other in the Folio). In 1603, Jonson contributed a twelve-page ode for Holland's book, *Pancharis*. Holland likewise contributed a poem in the preface of Jonson's play, *Sejanus His Fall* (1605), published by Edward Blount; Holland's poem was reprinted in Jonson's *Works* (1616), which included dedications to the Earl of Pembroke. In 1604, Holland and Jonson both supplied commendatory verses for Thomas Wright's *Passions of the Mind in General*. Holland earned a degree at Cambridge University and has no known connection with John Heminges and Henry Condell, or with Shakespeare. It is very likely he was one of the Folio editors who was brought in by friend Jonson.

James Mabbe: Mabbe is unquestionably the "I.M." who contributed one poem to Shakespeare in the First Folio preface. Mabbe's lines in *The Rogue*,

a poor kind of comedian that acts his part upon the stage of this world ... when the play is done (which cannot be long) he must presently enter into the tiring house [dressing room] of the grave

resemble lines written by I.M. in the Folio's preface:

We wondered (Shake-speare) that thou went'st so soon From the World's Stage, to the Grave's 'Tiring-room.

The Rogue was Mabbe's English translation of a Spanish work, which Edward Blount published in 1622-23; it contained prefatory pieces by Leonard Digges and Ben Jonson. Mabbe was an Oxford University graduate. He was associ-

ated with Blount as early as 1611, as a contributor to Blount's publication, *New World of Words*, by John Florio. Blount mentioned Mabbe in some of his surviving letters: in one of them, dated May 30, 1623, Blount called Mabbe "his good friend" and discussed a possible journey with him to Brussels. Mabbe's book, *Christian Policy*, was published by Blount in 1632. Mabbe was associated with Digges as early as circa 1613, when Digges scribbled a remark about him (and also Shakespeare) on a book of sonnets by Lope de Vega. Mabbe has no known connection with Heminges and Condell, or with Shakespeare. He very likely served as one of the Folio editors, along side his friends Blount and Digges.

William and Isaac Jaggard: Father and son printers of the First Folio. William Jaggard's first intersection with Shakespeare occurred in 1598-99 when he published two unauthorized editions of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, and another edition in 1612. In 1619, when Jaggard and Thomas Pavier issued several Shakespeare plays, Lord Chamberlain Pembroke stopped them. In the same year, and the next, the Jaggard house printed two books that were dedicated to Pembroke's brother, the Earl of Montgomery (*Archaio-Ploutos*, *The Decameron*), and a third book in 1623, the First Folio. Favor given to the Jaggards by Pembroke and Montgomery may have been made in exchange for their ceasing to publish Shakespeare outside of their authority. The evidence shows that the Jaggards' interest in the Folio was purely business related. The Jaggards had no hesitation in moving forward two other book projects in 1622, the year that the Folio's printing was delayed, and did not resume the Folio production until these other books were completed. William Jaggard died shortly before the Folio was released.

John Heminges and Henry Condell: Actor-members of the King's Men who signed the First Folio's dedication letter and letter to readers. Lord Chamberlain Pembroke had authority over their acting company. Heminges and Condell performed in Ben Jonson's plays. Since Jonson almost certainly wrote their preface letters in the Folio, their direct involvement in the book's production is doubtful. It is likely that Pembroke compensated them for the use of their signatures, perhaps explaining their mutual retirement from the stage at the time of the Folio's release (although about ten years apart in age). These letters fostered the illusion that they initiated and produced the Folio. The Stratford Man definitely knew Heminges and Condell: he was a member of the King's Men, and they all owned shares in the Globe and Blackfriars theaters. The Stratford Man also left them bequests in his will. Heminges was the Stratford Man's partner in purchasing the Blackfriars gatehouse property.

Martin Droeshout: The engraver of the Folio's image of Shakespeare. There was a controversy as to which Martin Droeshout did the engraving: the Elder, known as a painter, or his nephew, the Younger. Recent evidence by June Schlueter has confirmed that the Younger Droeshout made the Shakespeare portrait.³¹ He was twenty-one at the time and apparently inexperienced – no engraving was credited to him before the Folio was published. How did the Younger Droeshout get the Folio commission? Mary Edmond found two documents that associated the Elder Droeshout with the painter, Marcus Gheeraerts.³² The Earl of Montgomery, who had a keen interest in paintings, was portrayed by Gheeraerts.³³ Gheeraerts, therefore, may have been the link between Droeshout and the Folio commission. A portrait engraving of Montgomery (Plate 10), rendered by Simon de Passe (circa 1620), somewhat resembles Droeshout's Shakespeare, sharing heads disproportionate with bodies and plate-like collars, and perhaps served as Droeshout's model.

It is especially significant that Droeshout, who showed limited ability with his engraved portrait of Shakespeare, made portrait engravings of two members of King James's inner circle: James, 2nd Marquess of Hamilton (Plate 18), and George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. Hamilton and Buckingham were the king's privy councilors, as was Pembroke. The Hamilton engraving is dated 1623. The undated Buckingham engraving mimics the composition and setting of the Hamilton, and has the same signature ("Martin D. sculpsit"), making it likely that the two were made at the same time. Both the Buckingham and the Hamilton portraits have faces much more natural, or passably human, than the Shakespeare face, yet all three were rendered at approximately the same time. This comparison lends itself to the idea that the Shakespeare portrait was intentionally "monstrous" looking. Christiaan Schuckman discovered that during the period of 1632 to 1635, Droeshout immigrated to Spain. He continued his engraving career, but interestingly, for those works signed with his full name (several were signed with his initials), he had altered his surname to "Droeswood."34 In 1632, the Second Folio was published, which would have renewed public interest in Droeshout's portrait of Shakespeare - perhaps he was hiding from this association. The only instance that Droeshout signed an engraving with his actual name in full was the most famous one of all, that of Shakespeare.

Conclusion

The nice story believed by the Shakespeare professor that Shakespeare's acting friends produced the First Folio in his honor, perhaps backed by eager investors, is just that: a nice story. Historical evidence in every aspect points to the Earl of Pembroke as the one who initiated and funded the book, with Ben

Jonson as the designer of the misleading Folio preface. For several years, Pembroke sought the position of Lord Chamberlain, which controlled dramatic performances and publication through the Revels Office. When Pembroke finally achieved this position, individual issues of Shakespeare's plays ceased, and he personally halted breaches in this unofficial policy. At about the same time that a new master was installed in the Revels Office, Folio printing was delayed, suggesting that the Revels Office was directly involved with its production. To expedite the approval process of the twenty new Shakespeare plays featured in the Folio, it appears that Pembroke had arranged for each play to be sent to the Revels Office as soon as it was printed. The mental breakdown of the Revels master, Sir George Buc, may have created a backlog of plays for approval, and perhaps caused Pembroke to order a temporary stay in the printing of the Folio plays. Pembroke had attempted to maneuver his protégé, Jonson, into the office as the next master, but failed. Buc's successor, Sir John Astley, eventually "leased" the office to Pembroke's kinsman, Sir Henry Herbert, for reasons still unknown. The changeover occurred about four months before the Folio's release. Pembroke probably wanted a Revels master that he could count on to rubber stamp the First Folio with its false prefatory material.

The history surrounding the Folio's production weakens the long-running assumption that the members of Lord Chamberlain's Men and King's Men acting companies owned Shakespeare's plays; if they had control of them, then why did they allow Thomas Walkley to print Othello at about the same time that they were planning to print it themselves in the Folio? Walkley's edition of Othello differed substantially from that used in the Folio, so it is certain that the players did not lend him their copy to print. And why would the players also allow John Smethwick to print the fourth edition of Romeo and Juliet at a time when its appearance in the Folio was nearing? Did not John Heminges and Henry Condell implore readers to buy the Folio, presumably to get their investment back? Why did Smethwick even bother to print Romeo and Juliet separately when he was one of the supposed Folio investors? By doing so, he was in competition with himself. Smethwick printed a quarto edition of Hamlet in 1625 without a date on the title page, which was unusual; he may have believed that it was still "unallowed" to openly publish a Shakespeare play, even after the Folio's release. If this was true, then the reason for Pembroke's halting of individually printed Shakespeare plays was not merely because the Folio's release was imminent. Leonard Digges, Hugh Holland and James Mabbe were unlikely choices as eulogists of Shakespeare in a book of his plays: all were university men who were minor poets, not playwrights. But their involvement with the Folio is not surprising since they had ties with

the Herbert brothers, Jonson, or Edward Blount. These highly educated men most likely prepared and edited the Folio play texts for publication.

The hitherto unknown engraver, Martin Droeshout the Younger, may have obtained the commission to engrave (and probably invent) Shakespeare's portrait from the Earl of Montgomery via Marcus Gheeraerts, who had painted the earl's portrait. Droeshout's career as a portrait engraver essentially began with the Folio publication, and although his effort was far from commendable, he nevertheless engraved the portraits of two of the king's privy councilors, and in the same year that the Folio was released. The Earl of Pembroke, also a privy councilor, undoubtedly arranged these commissions. A quick comparison of Droeshout's image of Shakespeare with the more life-like image of the Marquess of Hamilton, rendered in 1623, almost proves that the Shakespeare image was intentionally unflattering. The Jaggards did not print the Folio's title page, and it is believed that it and the prefatory material were printed last. Some of the Folio contributors, therefore, may not have known about Droeshout's false image of Shakespeare. Blount performed the role of publisher for the Folio under the direction of Pembroke but was not allowed to draw attention to himself with a letter to the reader, his usual practice. He was credited on the Folio's title page as printer, but this error was purposeful. The Folio preface was meant give the impression that Heminges and Condell, the actual acquaintances or "fellows" of the Stratford Man, were the Folio publishers, so Blount could not be openly named in this capacity. Indeed, Pembroke similarly hid behind the mask of the players in his 1619 directive. For his efforts, Blount was rewarded with half the publishing rights to sixteen Shakespeare plays (the Jaggards held the other half). Pembroke almost certainly was one of the grand possessors who intended to ban individual issues of Shakespeare's plays, as stated in a prefatory letter to Troilus and Cressida. This presents a slight contradiction with his authorization of a collected edition of Shakespeare's plays. Pembroke apparently did not want control of the plays per se, he wanted control of the public's image of the great author. If it was Pembroke's express intention, money and connections that produced the Folio, then it was also due to Pembroke that the myth of the Stratford Man as the great author was created and imposed upon the public. Pembroke did not want independent publishers to reveal the great author's identity before he could get out the "official" image planned for unveiling in the Folio. Evidently, it was something he wanted to do since 1609. Why was this important to him for so long? This is the crux of the Shakespeare authorship question, and an attempt to decipher his reason will be covered in chapters 16 and 17.

CHAPTER 10

The Stratford Monument: Ruse and Reincarnation

THE ENTIRE FIRST Folio preface was a deliberate fraud upon the public, meant to give the impression that the great author was the Stratford Man. The Earl of Pembroke and Ben Jonson were responsible. But the deception was a two-pronged affair, involving not only the Folio preface, but also a monument in Stratford-upon-Avon. The two most important lines in the Folio preface, both addressed to the great author, were: (1) "when that stone is rent,/ And Time dissolves thy Stratford Moniment" (by Leonard Digges), and (2) "Sweet Swan of Avon!" (by Jonson). Taken together, these lines suggested that Stratford-upon-Avon was the location of a monument to the great author. Although this place name does not exist in the Folio's preface, a monument to "Shakspeare" in the Holy Trinity Church of Stratford-upon-Avon did and does exist. These three elements initiated and cemented the idea that this church was the great author's resting place. The Stratford monument, therefore, requires an equally close examination as the Folio's preface.

The Early Stratford Pilgrim

If one were living in late 1623, read Digges's prefatory poem in the First Folio, and were inspired to visit the "Stratford moniment" to Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon, what would one find there? The earliest image of the monument is a July 1634 drawing by Sir William Dugdale; a more detailed version appeared as an engraving in his book, *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656). Using Dugdale's book as our guide, and not what is currently in place, the early Stratford pilgrim would find two objects: a monument to "Shakspeare" on the wall in the chancel area, and an unidentified gravestone with only a curse written upon it on the chancel floor. The expectations of the Stratford pilgrim would be fulfilled, at least partly. There was a monument, but the effigy it contained did not resemble Shakespeare's image in the Folio, and it lacked any symbol of writing or literature, like a pen or a book; the effigy figure held a sack. The monument's inscription identified the deceased man

as "Shakspeare," not "William Shakespeare," and did not openly characterize him as a poet or playwright. For the grave, the pilgrim would not know which one was Shakespeare's because it did not include his name – there was only a curse. Church personnel must have informed Dugdale which one it was because he featured it in his book.

The monument's inscription (see Plate 11) gives no information about the deceased other than the Stratford Man's death date (today appearing in tiny letters and numbers squeezed in the bottom right corner). The inscription wastes valuable space with these redundancies: the observer is to "read if thou canst," two references that "Shakspeare" is dead, and that his name is on the tomb. The last point is not strictly true – the monument has a name on it, but the tombstone does not. The last two lines on the monument contain the words "writ," "art" and "wit," which suggest a writer, but the overall meaning of these lines is unclear. The English lines do not suggest the deceased was a poet, only the Latin ones, which translate as:

Judgment of Pylos, genius of Socrates, art of Maro The earth encloses. The people grieve. Olympus possesses.

The monument observer would have to be a very literate person to catch the poetry reference. Who else would know that Maro was the cognomen or surname name of the Roman classical poet known as Virgil? Or that Shakspeare's "judgment" was here being compared with King Nestor of Pylos, a minor character in Homer's Iliad and Odyssey? Why not openly name Nestor and Virgil?² Is the Latin inscription supposed to describe Shakespeare? Many have pointed out that Nestor, Socrates and Virgil were inappropriate comparisons. Nestor and Socrates were not writers, and although Virgil was a poet, Shakespeare's "art" was far more influenced by Ovid. Socrates and Shakespeare were geniuses, but that is about all they had in common. Yes, one could say Shakespeare imparted good "judgment" and wisdom in his works, but why would the inscriptionist compare him to King Nestor - a mythological, not an historical, figure? (For example, John Parkhurst's Latin epitaph to the poet, Sir Thomas Wyatt, named "Pylo" among other figures of classical mythology that mourned Wyatt's passing without mixing in any historical figures.)3 As noticed by Diana Price, the statement that "Shakspeare" was "possessed" by Mount Olympus, home of the Greek gods, was odd because poets were traditionally associated with Mount Parnassus.4 Finally, as the historical record shows, "the people" did not "grieve" or mourn Shakespeare's death until after the Folio's official announcement seven years after the Stratford Man had died.

The inscription on the Shakspeare monument contradicts itself about the location of the deceased's body. The second Latin line says the earth enclosed him, implying he was buried. The fourth and fifth English lines say that "death hath placed /within this monument Shakspeare," i.e., he was interred there. Where was "Shakspeare" buried, in the monument or under the gravestone? This confusion had to have been intentional. To understand why, one must return to the Folio preface, and Jonson's elegy lines:

My Shakespeare, rise; I will not lodge thee by Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie A little further, to make thee a room: Thou art a moniment, without a tomb ...

Jonson was referring to William Basse's poem (circa 1622) that called for Shakespeare to be buried in Westminster Abbey alongside the other great English writers, Spenser, Chaucer and Beaumont. Basse had asked these dead poets to move a bit closer together to make room for Shakespeare:

Renowned Spenser lie a thought more nigh To learned Chaucer, and rare Beaumont lie A little nearer Spenser, to make room For Shakespeare in your threefold, fourfold tomb. To lodge all four in one bed make a shift ...

Ionson believed Basse's idea was needless because Shakespeare was "a moniment" without a tomb. The official Folio position, therefore, was that the great author's remains should not be moved to Westminster Abbey. The confusion as to where the remains of "Shakspeare" were actually located and the curse on the Stratford Man's gravestone were contrived to prevent this reburial because the Stratford Man was not the great author. 5 Neither the monument nor the gravestone inscriptions make overt tribute to a poet and give no information other than a death date. These inscriptions were seemingly written with two goals: hint that the Stratford Man was the great author, but prevent his reburial in the sacred abbey. It seems that the writer of the monument's inscription wanted to refer to Shakspeare as a poet but he did so in the most oblique way, comparing him to a Latin poet that would only be discernible to a Latinist. (Perhaps Virgil was purposely named because of the belief that Virgil sometimes used a pen name.)6 And although praising Shakspeare with figures of classical Rome and Greece, it seems the inscriptionist purposely chose ones that had little or no association with or influence upon Shakespeare. The English inscription does not honor a poet, playwright

or actor, it only makes an obscure reference to "all that he hath writ" which "leaves living art but page to serve his wit." Contrast the inscription on the Shakspeare monument with that of poet Edmund Spenser in Westminster Abbey, erected in 1620 by Lady Anne Clifford:

Here Lies (Expecting the Second Coming of Our Saviour Christ Jesus) the Body of Edmond Spencer The Prince of Poets in His Time Whose Divine Spirit Needs No Other Witness Than the Works Which He Left Behind Him. He was Born in London in The Year 1553 and Died in the Year 1598.

Adding to the strangeness of the Shakspeare monument's inscription, the curse on his gravestone was completely unusual. Philip Schwyzer, in his *Archaeologies of English Renaissance Literature*, observed how scholars take it for granted that cursed tombstones were "commonplace" at that time; "Nowhere, however, are such remarks accompanied by examples of contemporary epitaphs closely resembling Shakespeare's." The adjoining plots, like that of the Stratford Man's wife, had the full name of the deceased.

Here lieth interred the body of Anne wife of William Shakespeare who departed this life the 6th day of August: 1623 being of the age of 67 years.

These three English lines on her gravestone were followed by six Latin ones, which, according to Edgar Fripp, alluded to the biblical books of Matthew and Mark.⁸ Notably lacking in her inscription was a reference to her husband as a famous poet, or inclusion of an apt Shakespeare phrase.

Some evidence points to Ben Jonson as the writer of the Shakspeare monument's inscription. Jonson's play, *Poetaster* (1601), featured the poet Virgil as a character (also called Maro in the play), and Virgil was the only poetry reference in the monument's inscription. Some scholars have noted that Jonson's tribute to Virgil in the play could double as a tribute to Shakespeare.⁹

That which he hath writ Is with such judgment labor'd, and distill'd Through all the needful uses of our lives, That could a man remember but his lines, He should not touch at any serious point, But he might breathe his spirit out of him. [5.1]

Jonson's apparent association of Virgil with Shakespeare was unique among the literati. Edmund Spenser was regarded as the English Virgil among his contemporaries, such as Thomas Nashe and Charles Fitzgeffrey. ¹⁰ Jonson's line, "That which he hath writ," recalls the monument's line, "all that he

hath writ." Jonson lauded Virgil's "judgment" in his play, just like Shak-speare's judgment was lauded in the monument's inscription. *Poetaster* also echoed a few Shakespeare phrases and apparently lampooned the Stratford Man (Chapter 12). Jonson's frequent borrowing of Shakespeare may have also extended to the monument's inscription with the phrase, "living art," which occurs in *Love's Labour's Lost* (1.1.19). (Jonson also used the phrase "living line" in his Folio elegy to Shakespeare.) Another point of intersection between Jonson and the monument's inscription, as noted by Charles Isaac Elton, is the coupling of Nature with Shakespeare. Jonson wrote in his Folio elegy to Shakespeare that "Nature herself was proud of his designs, /And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines!" The monument's inscription states, "Shakspeare with whom /Quick nature died." If this evidence is enough to conclude that Jonson wrote the Shakspeare monument's inscription, then one must also conclude that it and the Folio preface were contrived together.

The Inscriptions, and Shakspeare's Monument Originally John's?

Our hypothetical Stratford pilgrim only saw what was in the church in 1634. The earliest record of the Shakspeare monument and gravestone inscriptions are possibly those contained in one copy of the First Folio, now at the Folger-Shakespeare Library (No. 26). Appearing on its back page are three "epitaphs" to Shakespeare in handwriting that is dated circa 1625. All three epitaphs were written very close to each other on the upper half of the page (Plate 13). The first one, titled, "An epitaph of Mr William Shakspeare," contains the six familiar monument lines beginning with "Stay passenger ..." The anonymous writer, however, neglected to record the four Latin lines (two lines above the English ones, and two below them). The second epitaph of the three is titled, "Another upon the same," and is otherwise unknown:

Here Shakespeare lies whom none but Death could Shake and here shall lie till judgment all awake; when the last trumpet doth unclose his eyes the wittiest poet in the world shall rise. ¹² [modern spelling]

The third epitaph on the page, titled "An Epitaph (upon his Tomb stone incised)," is the curse on the gravestone. Since the Shakspeare monument and gravestone inscriptions were not yet in print, the circa 1625 writer must have visited the church very soon after the Folio was issued, and evidently saw on the monument not one inscription, but two separate ones. The epitaphs handwritten in Folio 26 have received little notice by scholars, and they have not considered the possibility that the unique second epitaph was originally part of the monument's inscription.

John Weever also visited the church and transcribed the Shakspeare epitaphs. He did so in preparation of his book of epitaphs, published in 1631 (although, interestingly, he did not include them). The year that Weever jotted them down is unknown, but it was certainly before 1631. His monument inscription is similar to today's, including the Latin lines; he did not, however, record the second epitaph noted by the circa 1625 writer. William Dugdale made the third surviving transcription of the Shakspeare epitaphs. In his 1634 drawing, Dugdale recorded the first two words of the Latin lines on the monument, and later printed the full monument and gravestone inscriptions in his 1656 book; they resemble what is there today. If the unique second epitaph to Shakespeare actually appeared on the monument's tablet, it would mean that originally the tablet identified the Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon as "the wittiest poet in the world," but soon after it was wiped out, and the poetry reference buried in an added Latin line. Also wiped out was the cryptic prediction that "the wittiest poet in the world shall rise" when people's judgment is awakened, implying that the public was wrong about Shakespeare's identity, and that one day they will be corrected. The word "judgment" was evidently retained for the next incarnation of the inscription.

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Weever and the circa 1625 writer recorded the Shakespeare inscriptions for their personal use. Dugdale's versions, the first in print, were for the public record. Although today's inscriptions are essentially the same as Dugdale's, there are several differences in spelling and format, and one word change: "the tombe" in Dugdale, and "this Tombe" today. Dugdale's inscriptions showed upper and lower case letters, but today's inscriptions are comprised of capital letters, both small and large; Dugdale's inscriptions showed some usage of u for v, but today's inscriptions use v in every case of u and v; Dugdale's inscriptions showed no usage of thorns - a "y" to represent "th" - but today's inscriptions have two thorns on the monument and three on the tombstone. Dugdale did use thorns and all capital letters for other monument inscriptions in the same book. 13 Dugdale's inscription showed one abbreviation on the monument, "wth in" for "within," but today's monument inscription fully spells out "with in." Some words in today's monument inscription have two letters squeezed together to save space, which Dugdale's inscription did not show. Dugdale's rendering of the word "Shakspeare" on the monument was in a larger font size than the other words, and today's monument has "Shakspeare" in a font size consistent with the other words. Today's inscription has three misspelled words (Ganst, Plast, Sieh), unlike Dugdale's version. There are enough differences between the two texts to suggest that the monument and tombstone inscriptions were recut after Dugdale recorded them. But Dugdale's version differs substantially from the circa 1625 version, which

JOHN WEEVER, BEFORE 16313

Judcio Pilum, Genio Socratem, Arte Maronem Terra tegit, populus maeret, Olympus habet.

Quick Nature dy'd whose name doth deck his Tombe Read if thou Canst whome envious death hath plac't Within this Monument, Shakespeare with whome ob. Ano doi. 1616 aetat. 53. 24 die April. far more then cost, sith all F hee hath writt Leaves living Art but page to serve his witt Stay passenger, why goest thou by so fast

read if thou Canst, whom enuious death hath plact

Stay passenger why go'st thou by so fast

Heere Shakespeare lyes whome none but death could shake quick nature dy'd; whose name doth deck this toombe within this monument: Shakespeare: with whom far more then cost; sith all that hee hath writt and heere shall ly till iudgement all awake; leaues liueing art but Page vnto his witt.

when the last trumpet doth vnclose his eyes the wittiest poet in the world shall rise.2 Good frend for Jesus sake forbeare To digg the dust enclosed heare

Blest bee f man that spares these stones And curst bee hee that moves my bones.

but Cur'sd bee hee that mooues these bones.

blest bee the man that pau'd these stones

Good ffriend for Iesus sake forbeare

GRAVESTONE

To digg the dust inclosed heere

Shakspeare monument and gravestone inscriptions, transcribed circa 1625 and before 1631.

- 1. Excerpts from full transcription by Joseph Egert which appears on Plate 13.
- d epitaph on the monument is my conjecture.
- 3. Society of Antiquaries, SAL MS. 128, Folio 375b, based on complete transcription by Nina Green, © 2009

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OBIT ANO DO'1616. ÆTATIS - 53, DIE 23 AP.

TO SERVE HIS

ART, BVT PAGE,

TODAY

Terra tegit, populus maret, olympus habet,
Stay passenger why goest thou by soe fast,
Read, if thou can'st whom envious death hath plac't
wth in this monument Shakspeare with whome
Quick nature dyed, whose name doth deck the tombe
Far more then cost, sith all that he hath writ
Leaues living art but page to serue his witt.

QVICK NATVRE DIDE WHOSE NAME, DOTH DECK Y TOMBE,

MONVMENT SHAKSPEARE: WITH

THIS

WI'H IN

COST: SIEH ALL, Y HE HAR

BAR MORE, THEN

WHOM ENVIOUS DEATH HATH

MÆRET,

POPVLVS

Obijt A° Dni, 1616 act. 53, die 23 Apri:

FORBEARE SED THES SAKE CLOA IESVS E H FOR DV MAN FREND BE DIGG BLESE GOOD T 0

BONES

MY

MOVES

H

BE

AND

To digg the dust inclosed here Blest be the man that spares these stones And curst be he that moues my bones

Good freind for Iesus sake forbeare

GRAVESTONE

Shakspeare monument and gravestone inscriptions, as printed in Dugdale's 1656 book, and today's (see plates 11-12).

suggests that Dugdale's version was not the original. But the circa 1625 version was evidently not the original either.

Dugdale's early drawing and later engraving of the monument's effigy clearly showed a man clutching a sack - something light but firm enough to hold its shape. Richard J. Kennedy's article, "The Woolpack Man," gives strong evidence that the monument's effigy actually depicted John Shakspere, the Stratford Man's father. He died in 1601. Father John traded in wool, so the sack would be a woolsack. Noticeable in Dugdale's drawing and engraving are leopard heads atop the monument's columns on both sides of the effigy. As revealed by Kennedy, the coat of arms for the town of Stratford-upon-Avon featured three leopard heads. It would be right and proper for John Shakspere to have a monument decorated with the town's symbols, observed Kennedy, because he was a former chief bailiff; his son William held no town office. 14 Furthermore, the Stratford Man did not make a provision in his will for a monument to himself; he "committed his body to the earth ... "15 In late 1622, major work was performed in the chancel area of the church, where the Shakspeare monument and grave are located. A bill dated January 10, 1623, described the work as follows, performed about ten months before the Folio's release:

Paid the painters for painting the Chancel 20s., Samuel Scriven for glazing the Chancel 20s., to the same glazier 6s. 8d., George Burgess for mending the Chancel walls, 3s.4d., the same for digging two load of stone, 8d., to Hemmings for 7 strike of lime 4s. 8d., Nicholas Tybbotts for 9 strike of hairs 3s. 16

"Mending the Chancel walls," "digging two load of stone," and purchasing materials for cement ("lime and hair," OED) could describe replacement of a monument tablet and gravestone. Perhaps it was John Shakspere's monument tablet, and his son William's gravestone, both with typical funerary inscriptions, that got replaced. Putting only the surname, "Shakspeare," on the monument would suggest either John or William, and for those looking for a monument to a writer Shakespeare, the words "writ" and "wit" would suffice. There never was a monument to William, the Stratford Man – the monument of his father John was evidently reassigned to him.

Fraud upon Fraud upon Fraud

The Stratford monument and the First Folio preface constituted a fraud upon a fraud, one reinforcing the other, but another fraud occurred later that had no connection to Pembroke or Jonson but had unwittingly played into their designs. As shown by Dugdale, the original monument effigy did not depict

in 1891.17

SHAKESPEARE SUPPRESSED

a writer, pen and paper in either hand both resting upon a cushion, like today's monument - the original effigy clutched a woolsack against its chest.

The effigy reincarnated at some point, but besides that and the format of the

inscription, it was not the only change made to the monument. Comparing

Dugdale's view of the monument with today's monument, one can discern

at least thirteen differences with the effigy and the frame and structure that

encased it. For example, the aforementioned leopard heads on top of the

pillars have disappeared in today's monument. The two angels or boys in

the early image sat directly on the ledge, dangled their legs over it, and were

situated a good space away from the coat of arms; today the angels sit on

mounds, their feet resting on them, and they sit closer to the coat of arms.

Originally, the angels held an hourglass and a spade, but today's angels hold an inverted torch and a spade. A skull was added at the base of the right angel. The stained glass windows that surround the monument today were installed

The numerous differences between the first documented image of the Shakspeare monument (by Dugdale) and today's monument indicate that

the monument proper was changed and the effigy redesigned to show a writer rather than a wool trader. Not surprisingly, Dugdale's engraving of the Shakspeare monument is completely rejected by the Shakespeare professor for the

simple reason that it does not agree with today's monument. This circular reasoning flies in the face of the documentary record. After 1634, repairs and "beautifications" were made to the Shakspeare monument, effigy or chancel area of the church in 1649, 1691, 1748, 1790, 1793, 1800, 1835 and 1861.18 In 1746 it was reported that the Shakspeare monument was "through length

of years and other accidents become much impaired and decayed."19 Money

was raised "for repairing and beautifying" it in 1748. These repairs did not

last long: in 1814 the effigy was reported by Britton to be "in a decayed and

dangerous state."20 Funds were raised for the repair (£5,000) and carried out

in 1835. The Shakespeare scholar, Edmund Malone, arranged for the effigy to be whitewashed in 1793, and in 1861 the white paint was removed and the

original colors were restored.21 The effigy was taken down on several occa-

sions, not only for repair but to have casts made from which reproductions could be made. It is undeniable, therefore, that the Shakspeare monument

To defend the authenticity of today's monument, the Shakespeare professor usually denigrates Dugdale's artistic discernment, but this is hard to do knowing his history. Dugdale was a highly respected historian and antiquarian who wrote several important books. The Antiquities of Warwickshire, which

contains the engraving of the Shakspeare monument, is considered Dugdale's masterpiece. Four years after he drew the Shakspeare monument, Dugdale

and its effigy have been tampered with or repaired over the centuries.

DUGDALE'S SHAKSPEARE MONUMENT (1634 AND 1656) **FODAY'S SHAKSPEARE MONUMENT**

center box on ledge above effigy angels situated close to

angels sit upon mounds on the ledge, legs bent

right angel holds inverted torch, other hand rests on skull

left angel holds shovel, other hand rests on mound

effigy's face has upturned mustache and goatee effigy's hands and elbows rest on cushion EFFIGY

effigy's torso is perpendicular to cushion

columns: immediately above capitals are four layers of molding that stretch across the monument effigy's hands hold pen and paper STRUCTURAL DETAILS

brackets at monument's base are rectangular the monument's base layer is even

side "triangles" on either side of arch: top line almost even with top of capitals arch is one long curve with coffers

effigy's hands do not hold pen and paper

side "triangles" on either side of arch: top line extends higher than capitals side

angels sit directly on ledge, and dangle legs over it (no mounds)

angels situated on far edges of ledge above effigy

angel on right holds hourglass, the other hand rests on leg (no skull)

left angel holds shovel, other hand rests on leg

effigy's hands press a woolsack against chest area; effigy's elbows are akimbo, and do not touch woolsack effigy's face has long drooping mustache and full beard

effigy's torso and woolsack are parallel

columns: immediately above capitals are leopards' heads (no

arch curve joins horizontal lines, like bowler hat; no coffers molding layers)

the monument's base layer ungulates

Substantive differences between today's Shakspeare Monument and Dugdale's original drawing and engraving (see plates 14-15)

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was appointed to a paid position in the College of Heralds in London. Later he was appointed Garter king of arms, a very distinguished position, and was knighted. And he was commissioned by an officer of King Charles I to record monuments and epitaphs of London churches, including Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral. It is fact that Dugdale visited the Shakspeare monument in person, and to get the full inscription right, he had to have gone very close to make out the tiny letters and numbers of the death date. As Kennedy noted in his article, "Dugdale was never wrong regarding the chief feature of any of the hundreds of monuments he sketched." Dugdale's book was reissued in 1730, with corrections made by Dr. William Thomas. The section on Stratford-upon-Avon was updated and three pages were added, but the monument's engraving was left untouched. There is no plausible reason why Dugdale would invent the numerous details that differ with today's monument, especially the leopard heads. How could he mistake a short, upturned mustache with a long drooping mustache? Or mistake a torch for an hourglass? Dugdale acknowledged in his book that the Shakspeare monument was to a poet, yet how could he have neglected to insert the pen and paper that turned up on later illustrations of it? Dugdale simply got all these details wrong, says the Shakespeare expert, despite the long history of repairs to the monument and effigy, and despite the absence of documentary proof that Dugdale got it wrong in 1634.

Mustache and Goatee: Keys to the Monument Mystery

When did the extensive changes occur to the monument and effigy that Dugdale had recorded in 1634, and why? The changes were evident by 1721, the date of George Vertue's engraving of it. But whatever the reconstructed effigy face had looked like, Vertue rejected it. Vertue instead inserted the face of the newly discovered Chandos Portrait of Shakespeare in his engraving (later featured in Alexander Pope's edition of the Shakespeare plays, 1723-25). Vertue had engraved the Chandos Portrait two years before, a man with a downturned mustache, full beard, and an earring. A different Shakspeare effigy was certainly in place by 1691, when Gerard Langbaine the Younger wrote that the effigy was "leaning upon a Cushion."22 Dugdale's figure did not lean upon anything; his hands were holding a woolsack. The date of the monument and effigy redesign can be pushed back even further based upon the effigy's facial hair. Dugdale's effigy showed a man wearing a long drooping mustache and full beard. Today's effigy is of a man with a short upturned mustache and a neatly trimmed and pointed goatee. The mustache is one solid line across the lip that curls up at the ends with a shaved space between it and the nostril. These two mustache and beard depictions are completely different. Putting

aside Dugdale's competence, one can easily date production of the face in today's effigy: a time when the upturned mustache and goatee were in fashion. This style was not in fashion in England during the Stratford Man's lifetime; he died in 1616, but this style started to emerge circa 1623. Several English portraits from 1625 to 1650 show variations of this combination, which King Charles I wore circa 1630 until his execution in January 1649. The fashion in England waned after 1650.

M.H. Spielmann published three separate articles between 1907 and 1924 (one in Encyclopedia Britannica) in which he noted that repair to the Stratford monument was recorded in 1649. Although he did not identify the document, Spielmann wrote, "In 1649 ... the bust was, as it was called, 're-beautified.""23 The vestry books of the Stratford-upon-Avon parish confirm that work was done in the chancel area of the church during this time. On November 3, 1648, it was agreed to raise £30 "for the present repairs of the chancel," and on December 15, 1648, £24 and 8 shillings was raised "considered of the decays of the chancel..."24 More money "for and towards the repair of the chancel" was needed by June 28, 1650, and another £24 was raised. 25 Between 1634 and 1699, only the years 1648 to 1650 recorded money raised for repair in the chancel area, and it was the only time that the upturned mustache and goatee were in fashion. The probable year of the effigy's first transformation, therefore, is 1649 to 1650, with subsequent repairs and replacements (noted in 1748, etc.) staying fairly close to this second version. Supporting evidence for the effigy's reincarnation in 1649 to 1650 is located immediately to the right of it, also on the wall. It is a funeral monument of Judith Combe and her fiancé, Richard Combe, both depicted in effigy (Plate 17). Judith died before their wedding day, on August 17, 1649; Richard erected the monument in her memory. The Combe monument was signed by sculptor Thomas Stanton of Holborn (London area). 26 If the Shakspeare effigy and monument needed to be remade circa 1649, then church funds were available and a funerary sculptor known. Although the Combe monument is larger than the Shakspeare monument, they do have similar design elements.

Dugdale recorded the man with the woolsack, drooping mustache and full beard in 1634 for his book, but it did not get published until 1656. In his "Woolpack Man" article, Richard Kennedy cited Dugdale's dedication letter "To My Honored Friends, the Gentry of Warwickshire," which opens:

That all things perish by Age and time, or some unhappy accidents, is a thing not to be denied; the consideration whereof, hath not a little incited me to the undertaking of this present work.

In the third paragraph, Dugdale wrote that he was proud to chronicle the tombs of the county's ancestors,

... in some sort preserving those Monuments from that fate, which *Time*, if not contingent mischief, might expose them to.

Dugdale's express purpose for this work was to preserve Warwickshire's monuments for the record despite what time, accident, and mischief could do to them. Kennedy suggested that Dugdale had the Shakspeare monument in mind, which, if true, would be more evidence that it had been already changed by 1656. Dugdale certainly revisited the church in 1649 or thereafter: on the same page of his 1634 drawing of the Shakspeare monument were the tombstone inscriptions of the Stratford Man's daughter, Susanna Hall, and her husband, Dr. John Hall.²⁷ Dr. Hall died in 1635, and Mrs. Hall in 1649. More supporting evidence that the monument and effigy redesign had already occurred when Dugdale's book was published can be seen in an engraving of Shakespeare's face by William Faithorne in the 1655 edition of The Rape of Lucrece (Plate 21). It resembled the Droeshout engraving with slight changes: a more distinctly formed mustache, one that was shaven beneath the nostril and had upturned ends. It appears that Faithorne incorporated some features of the new effigy face with Droeshout's engraving. The earliest record of today's effigy face is a painting of the monument by John Hall, who was commissioned to "beautify and repair" the monument in 1748. Unfortunately, the circumstances of its discovery by James Halliwell-Phillips are suspicious and it could be a forgery. Another early record is a drawing of the monument by Josiah Boydell that was made into an engraving by J. Neagle for Boydell's Folio Edition of Shakespeare (1802). The very latest limit for the effigy's change in face, therefore, is 1802. That radical changes to the effigy face had occurred during the 18th century is unlikely because the Chandos Portrait with downturned mustache was that century's dominate image of Shakespeare. The Chandos face was the model used for the face of a Shakespeare statue installed in Westminster Abbey (1741). The same is true for the marble statue by Louis-Francois Roubiliac dated 1758 (commissioned by actor David Garrick), and almost every portrait discovered in the 18th century claimed for Shakespeare depicted a man with a downturned mustache.

In July 1634, Dugdale's drawing of the Shakspeare monument showed it was in fairly good condition. Two months later, Lt. Hammond reported in a private manuscript that he saw a "neat monument" to "Shakespeere" during his visit to Stratford-upon-Avon, also implying good condition.

A neat Monument of that famous English Poet, Mr. William Shakespeere; who was born here. ²⁸

But fifteen years later, the monument got "re-beautified." The only significant event to occur in Stratford-upon-Avon between 1634 and 1649 was the

English civil war. During the years 1642 to 1646, the town suffered much damage. It was the site of a major battle. The town hall was bombed and the Clopton Bridge was destroyed. Soldiers looted private homes, and documents listing citizen claims for damages still survive. The church was used to house soldiers of both the Royalist and Parliamentary forces. Although the church's exterior did not get damaged, apparently the interior did, creating the need for repairs, as noted above. The entire Shakspeare monument must have been damaged or even destroyed, and such an important monument to the town would eventually have to be repaired or remade. The overall design was fairly close to the original, but some details may have been lost or simply redesigned by the new maker. Another reason for changes to the original monument, especially to the effigy, was perhaps because it was too easy to miss. Tourists eager to visit the Stratford-upon-Avon church to see the monument mentioned in the First Folio may have overlooked the effigy of a wool tradesman identified as "Shakspeare" and not "William Shakespeare." Perhaps the church's personnel were tired of having to direct the tourists, so when the effigy fell into disrepair, something practical was done: refashion it to depict a writer, pen in hand.

Conclusion

Using the First Folio preface and the Shakspeare monument, the 3rd Earl of Pembroke and Ben Jonson evidently pulled off the most successful identity fraud in history. Inclusion of the words "Avon" and "Stratford moniment" in the Folio tributes to the great author planted his origins in Stratford-upon-Avon, a town unrelated to him, but was the hometown of businessman William Shakspere. Already existing in the town church was a monument to John Shakspere, the Stratford Man's father, whose effigy depicted him as a member of the wool trade. To make the Folio reference applicable, the only necessary change to his monument would be a new inscription. The unsuspecting majority took the bait: less than seven years after the Folio's publication the Stratford Man myth was in place. When effects of the English civil war damaged or destroyed the original monument and effigy of the wool dealer, the town replaced it with one more appropriate to a poet, and by doing so, cemented Stratford-upon-Avon's association with the great author. The replacement occurred in 1649 or 1650. The creator of the new effigy face depicted a man sporting a neatly trimmed and upturned mustache and goatee, a fashion contemporaneous to the time but not in fashion during Shakespeare's time. The Shakespeare professor turns a blind eye to the obvious changes that were made not only to the effigy, but also to the monument as a whole, and to the fact that outside of it and the Folio, nothing ties the

Stratford Man to the great author. Independently, these two pieces of posthumous "evidence" prove nothing. Had the phrase, "Stratford moniment," not been in the Folio preface, no one would have mistaken the "Shakspeare" monument in Stratford-upon-Avon with the great author because it depicted a wool tradesman. Had the Shakspeare monument not existed, few or none would have associated the great author with Stratford-upon-Avon because that exact place name was not given in the Folio, and many towns in England contained the word "Stratford" (Stratford-at-Bowe and Stratford Langthorne, for example, are towns very near to London). One theory to explain Pembroke and Jonson's use of Stratford-upon-Avon as a decoy will be discussed in chapters 16 and 17.

SHAKESPEARE SUPPRESSED

Conjectured Incarnations of the Stratford Monument and Tomb

The First Incarnation (circa 1601)

John Shakspere died in September 1601, and circa this time a monument was erected with his full name inscribed upon it in the Stratford-upon-Avon church. As his business was the wool trade (later reports said he was a butcher and glove maker, presumably of sheep and sheepskin), John Shakspere's effigy depicted him holding a woolsack. One clue as to when his monument was erected occurs in Ben Jonson's play, Every Man Out of His Humor. The character, Sogliardo, which evidently lampooned the Stratford Man, was advised to "build" a tomb in his lifetime.

SOGLIARDO

... and I'll have a tomb, now I think on't; 'tis but so much charges.

CARLO BUFFONE

Best build it in your lifetime then, your heirs may hap to forget it

SOGLIARDO

Nay, I mean so, I'll not trust to them. [2.1]

The play was written in 1599, two years before John Shakspere had died. Was Jonson mimicking his funeral arrangements? Jonson certainly was aware of the Shakspere coat of arms and motto, which he had mocked in the same play. Richard Brathwait (Remains After Death, 1618) claimed that John Combe (d. 1614), the Stratford Man's neighbor, had built his own tomb during his lifetime - perhaps John Shakspere had inspired him. Combe used the same funerary sculptor, "Garat Johnson," according to Sir William Dugdale. There were two Garat Johnsons. The elder founded a sculpture workshop in Southwark, and he described himself as a tombmaker in his will (DNB). It is

not known if his son, Garrat Johnson the younger, was a sculptor; the record only shows that he made part of fountain, and his birth and death dates are unknown (DNB). If the elder Johnson, who died in 1612, made the monument, then it was certainly John Shakspere's monument because his son William died in 1616. The Shakspeare monument may have been based upon that of William Aubrey (d. 1595), in St. Paul's Cathedral, London (Plate 16). After his death in 1616, the Stratford Man was buried within the chancel section of the church under a gravestone that most likely had his full name and usual information.

The Second Incarnation (late 1622)

The Earl of Pembroke and Ben Jonson used John Shakspere's existing monument to suggest that his son, William, was the great author. The monument's inscription tablet was replaced in late 1622, while the Folio was being printed; the effigy of wool trader, John, was unaltered. The Stratford Man's original gravestone was also dug up and replaced with one without his name and with a curse. The unnamed gravestone, and the new line on the monument inscription, "plac't within this monument Shakspeare," encouraged confusion as to the location of the Stratford Man's body. This helped to ensure that his remains would not be mistaken with those of the great author and removed for enshrinement in Westminster Abbey. The fact that Richard Brathwait's epitaph book of 1618 did not note the great author's supposed monument in the Stratford-upon-Avon church, or the unusual cursed gravestone, but did note Combe's monument nearby them, supports the notion that John Shakspere's monument inscription, and the Stratford Man's gravestone, were replaced after that date. If the two epitaphs recorded circa 1625 were both present on the monument, then Dugdale had recorded the third version of the inscription.

The Third Incarnation (1649-1650)

Soldiers and others taking shelter in the Stratford-upon-Avon church during the English civil war probably caused the destruction of the chancel area, and thus John Shakspere's monument and effigy. After the war, funds were raised, and in 1649-50 the monument was remade and the effigy was completely redesigned to identify the deceased man as a writer. This was meant to accommodate the increasing amount of Shakespeare admirers visiting the church after the publication of the First and Second Folios. The new effigy face sported an upturned mustache with goatee, still au courant at that time. The new monument may have been crafted by Thomas Stanton, the London sculptor of the monument to Judith Combe (d. 1649), located on the same wall and only a few feet away from the Shakspeare monument. The Combe and Shakspeare monuments contain similarities with that of William Aubrey in St. Paul's Cathedral (Plate 16). Despite later tampering and subsequent repairs, the monument proper and effigy remained essentially faithful to the second version, with slight changes made to the effigy's facial expression – from "a silly, smiling thing" described by artist Thomas Gainsborough in 1769 (evident in R.B. Wheler's 1806 engraving of the monument),²⁹ to today's vacant stare.

CHAPTER 11

Folio Feedback

WITH THE SPECTACULAR issuance of the First Folio in late 1623, one would think that an overflow of commentary would erupt from those who could read for the first time Shakespeare's Anthony and Cleopatra, Julius Caesar, Macbeth and seventeen other plays, but the literary world's response was practically mute. It is true that the tome was very expensive – in today's money, it would be priced at over \$200, with an estimated "affordability" factor of \$2,900¹ – but it sold very well. The only other comparable edition in content, size, and number of pages was Ben Jonson's folio of plays and poems in 1616; a second edition was printed 24 years later. Shakespeare's Second Folio was printed after only nine years, and two more times after that. But despite the Folio's popularity, one decade would pass before the first printed remark about it appeared, and it was not complimentary. The Folio was in its second edition when William Prynne criticized the quality of paper it contained – that it was too good:

*Some Play-books since I first undertook this subject, are grown from *Quarto* into *Folio*: which yet bear so good a price and sale, that I cannot but with grief relate it, they are now (e) new-printed in far better paper than most Octavo or Quarto *Bibles*, which hardly find such yent as they:

[margin] *Ben-Johnson's, Shackspeer's, and others. (e) Shackspeer's Plays are printed in the best Crown paper, far better than most Bibles.

[Histrio-mastix. The Player's Scourge, 1633]

William Habington, in the following year, suggested that Prynne drink "a plenteous glass" of wine to encourage him to salute rather than criticize Shakespeare, but he did not mention the Folio:

Of this wine should *Prynne*Drink but a plenteous glass, he would begin
A health to *Shakespeare*'s ghost. [*Castara*, 1634]

The next printed mention of the Folio occurred six years later, in a joke book:

One asked another what Shakespeare's works were worth, all being bound together. He answered, not a farthing. Not worth a farthing! said he; why so? He answered that his plays were worth a great deal of money, but he never heard, that his works were worth anything at all. [R. Chamberlain, Conceits, Clinches, Flashes... (1639)]

The Folio's sales success, contrasted by near silence about it, reflects what the great author experienced in his lifetime: his works were popular and revered, but his personality was ghost-like. The Folio elicited one poetic tribute, perhaps the only, shortly after its release. It is contained in a personal notebook known as the Salisbury Manuscript. The short verse praises Heminges and Condell for performing "noble strains" and for uncovering treasure "raised from the wombs of Earth" that was "manifold" times richer than "gold." For these actors, it could only mean the twenty hitherto unpublished Shakespeare plays. The unidentified writer of this poem did not know "how much" his "good friends" "merited by" the Folio publication.

To my good friends Mr John Hemings and Henry Condall

To you that Jointly with undaunted pains vouchsafed to Chant to us these noble strains, how much you merit by it is not said, but you have pleased the living, loved the dead, Raised from the wombs of Earth a Richer mine than Cortez Could with all his Castilian Associates, they did but dig for gold, But you for Treasure much more manifold.²

Despite the lack of printed notice of the Folio, the Shakespeare plays experienced such renewed popularity after its release that the King's Men acting company apparently attempted to stop competitors from performing them. In 1627, John Heminges gave £5 to the Revels Master, Sir Henry Herbert, in the company's behalf "to forbid" the Red Bull Theater from "playing of Shakespeare's plays." This was an odd request coming from one who signed a letter in the Folio urging readers to buy it.

Early Anti-Stratfordians?

The notion that the Stratford Man was the great author was first acknowledged in print seven years after the Folio's release in *Banquet of Jests* (1630). Stratford-upon-Avon was noted as "a town most remarkable for the birth of famous William Shakespeare..." But the Folio's huge face of a man named "Master William Shakespeare" did not quell entirely the belief that the name

was an alias. In 1628, Thomas Vicars added a phrase about Shakespeare in an updated third edition of his *Cheinagogia*, a rhetoric book written in Latin. Vicars mentioned Charles Butler's list of great poets, which included Geoffrey Chaucer, Edmund Spenser, Michael Drayton and George Withers. Vicars wished to add more names to the list, including

... that well-known poet who takes his name from the shaking of a spear ... [translation by Prof. Dana Sutton] 4

Shakespeare was only identified by description, not by name, yet Vicars listed the full names of the other admired poets. Fred Schurink translated the line as "that famous poet who takes his name from shaking and spear." Vicars evidently believed that the great author was not born with the name Shakespeare, he "takes" or chooses it, as one would take or choose a pen name or a stage name. A year before the Folio's release, Henry Peacham, Jr. printed a list of the greatest Elizabethan poets in The Compleat Gentleman (1622); he did not include Shakespeare. Peacham issued two enlarged editions of his work after the Folio's release, in 1626 and 1627, noted Peter Dickson, but Shakespeare's name was still not included (Peacham lived until 1643).6 Yet Peacham, or his father, Henry Peacham, Sr., had sketched a scene from Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus (now located at Longleat House), presumably indicating some family admiration. Another updated work, Robert Burton's The Anatomy of Melancholy, fourth edition (1632), featured revised opening pages resembling those in the First Folio:7 Burton's portrait was on the title page and opposite it were verses that commented upon it:

> Now last of all to fill a place, Presented is the Author's face; And in that habit which he wears, His image to the world appears. His mind no art can well express, That by his writings you may guess. It was not pride, nor yet vainglory, (Though others do it commonly)

Made him do this: if you must know, The Printer would needs have it so. Then do not frown or scoff at it, Deride not, or detract a whit.

For surely as thou dost by him, He will do the same again.

Then look upon't, behold and see, As thou likest it, so it likes thee.

And I for it will stand in view, Thine to command, Reader, Adieu. Burton said that no art (pictorial) can express the mind, so "deride not" his portrait image; one should "guess" or judge him by his "writings." Ben Jonson's verse opposite the Folio's title page had conveyed a similar message about Droeshout's engraving of Shakespeare. What is even more interesting is that Burton retained usage of his pseudonym, "Democritus Junior," and featured it beneath his portrait. By imitating the Folio, Burton may have been trying to hint that "William Shakespeare" was also a pen name. Burton's line

about his image, "do not frown or scoff at it," could also reflect the reaction

that Folio readers had to Droeshout's unflattering image.

Hundreds of epitaphs of "eminent persons" were reproduced in the 1631 book, Ancient Funeral Monuments. Comprising over 800 pages, the book did not mention the Shakspeare monument or grave in Stratford-upon-Avon. Yet the author, John Weever (d. 1632), was aware of them because he copied both of their inscriptions in his private notebook, which still survives. Next to them he wrote, "Will[ia]m Shakespeare the famous poet." Weever's decision to exclude Shakespeare's epitaph from his book suggests that he later doubted the great author's association with Stratford-upon-Avon. Weever certainly admired Shakespeare: he had printed an epigram of high praise to him in 1599,9 and his epitaph book featured an anonymous verse ("a Memento for Mortality") that lifted a line from Hamlet (5.1.183).10 In 1638, author William Davenant advised poets not to visit "the banks of Avon" to honor Shakespeare. Davenant wrote that Nature had a sickened appearance there; the flowers hang their heads and the trees are stunted and create darkness. The "piteous" Avon river wept so much it is no longer a river but a "shallow brook," wrote Davenant.

In Remembrance of Master William Shakespeare. Ode.

Beware (delighted Poets!) when you sing To welcome nature in the early Spring; Your num'rous Feet not tread The Banks of Avon; for each Flower (As it ne'er knew a Sun or Shower) Hangs there, the pensive head.

Each Tree, whose thick and spreading growth hath made Rather a Night beneath the Boughs, than Shade, (Unwilling now to grow) Looks like the Plume a captive wears, Whose rifled *Falls* are steep'd i'th tears Which from his last rage flow

The piteous River wept itself away Long since (Alas!) to such a swift decay That, reach the Map, and look If you a River there can spy, And for a River your mock'd Eye Will find a shallow Brook. [Madagascar, 1638]

Although this poem was only about "The Banks of Avon," Davenant implied that the town of Stratford-upon-Avon had something to be guilty of.

In 1638, Richard Brome made an intriguing link between Shakespeare and an English earl in his play, *The Antipodes*. Brome's character, Lord Letoy, raves about his players:

... These lads can act the Emperors' lives all over And Shakespeare's Chronicled histories, to boot. And were that *Caesar*, or that English Earl, That loved a Play and Players so well, now living, I would not be out-vied in my delight [1.5]

Brome, a disciple of Ben Jonson, was describing a real English earl who was known in his lifetime as "Caesar." This had to be the 17th Earl of Oxford, who was described as "a second Caesar, to the view of all that know him" by Anthony Munday, in his novel, *Zelauto* (1580). Munday was Oxford's secretary, and dedicated the work to him. Oxford was a playwright who maintained two acting troupes. Shakespeare had impersonated Caesar in real life, according to Jonson in his then unpublished *Timber, or Discoveries*. Shakespeare, he wrote, jestingly answered someone "in the person of Caesar." Brome's play was influenced by Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and "fantastic lord" Letoy in many ways resembles Oxford.¹¹

In 1639, Thomas Bancroft's epigram to Shakespeare emphasized that the name was descriptive, another hint that it was a pen name:

Thou hast so us'd thy *Pen*, (or *shook thy Speare*) That Poets startle, nor thy wit come near. [No. 119, *Two Books of Epigrams and Epitaphs*]

First Folio Mocked

In 1640, John Benson published the small volume, POEMS: WRITTEN BY WIL. SHAKE-SPEARE. Gent. It included the first reprint of Thomas Thorpe's 1609 text of the sonnets (all but eight) and A Lover's Complaint. The 1612 edition of The Passionate Pilgrim and Shakespeare's two poems in Love's Martyr were also included. Benson's edition would be the only text of the sonnets available for another seventy years, but it was important for another reason: it contained the first direct criticism of the First Folio's preface by questioning Shakespeare's identity. Opposite the title page was Shakespeare's portrait by William Marshall, an altered version of the Droeshout engraving (Plate 20).

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It looks like a spotlight has been aimed at the face. Beneath this image is a poem that opens with a question: "This shadow is renowned Shakespear's?" Using excerpts and paraphrases of lines in Jonson's elegy to Shakespeare in the Folio, Droeshout's engraving was mocked:

This Shadow is renowned Shakespear's? Soul of th'age. The applause? delight? the wonder of the Stage. Nature herself, was proud of his designs And joy'd to wear the dressing of his lines; The learned will Confess, his works are such, As neither man, nor Muse, can praise too much. Forever live thy fame, the world to tell, Thy like, no age, shall ever parallel.

Marshall's engraving resembles a portrait of Ben Jonson by Robert Vaughn (Plate 8) featured in the 1640 reprint of Jonson's *Works*. Both images depicted the author wearing a cloak over one shoulder, and holding or wearing gloves and bay leaves, the latter a symbol of poetic achievement notably absent in Droeshout's image. It seems that Benson chose this image to evoke Jonson's presence and to challenge him: "Droeshout's engraving really represents the great author?" The Jonson challenge continues in this edition's preface with the poem, "Upon Master William Shakespeare, the Deceased author, and his Poems," written by Folio contributor Leonard Digges. But Digges's verse was not about Shakespeare's poetry, it was about Shakespeare's plays, and statements made in the Folio's preface. Digges opened his Shakespeare tribute by throwing a dart at Jonson: "Poets are born not made," a direct response to Jonson's Folio elegy line, "For a good poet's made, as well as born." Digges then recanted the usage of the word "works" in his Folio poem to describe Shakespeare's plays:

... I will not say Reader his Works for to contrive a play: To him 'twas none ...

Digges had used "works" twice in his Folio poem.

Shake-speare, at length thy pious fellows give The world thy Works: thy Works, by which, out-live Thy tomb, thy name must when that stone is rent, And time dissolves thy Stratford Moniment ...

Digges may have been ridiculing Jonson, as others had, for titling his collected edition of drama and poems, *Works*. But considering Jonson's fondness for that word, Digges's rejection of it may have been a clue that Jonson had

altered his Folio poem – it was this poem that contained the crucial phrase, "Stratford moniment." Digges may also have been insisting that Shakespeare did not work, that he did not write plays to make a living, Jonson did write plays and masques for his living. Digges continued his carping of Jonson in this poem by writing that Shakespeare's plays outshined Jonson's (Cataline was "tedious" and Sejanus "irksome") and that audiences much preferred watching Iago, Othello, Falstaff and other Shakespeare characters. Digges also directly referred to the Folio with the phrase, "this whole Book."

Next Nature only helped him, for look through This whole Book, thou shalt find he doth not borrow, One phrase from Greeks, nor Latins imitate, Nor once from vulgar Languages Translate, Nor Plagiari-like from others glean, Nor begs he from each witty friend a Scene To piece his Acts with, all that he doth write, Is pure his own, plot, language exquisite ...

By listing things that Shakespeare *did not do* to write his plays, such as plagiarize, Digges seemed to imply that Jonson *did* do these things. Going out of his way to criticize Jonson and to contradict his signed poem in the Folio preface, Digges apparently was renouncing it. Digges wrote the poem between 1630 and 1634, ¹² but it was published posthumously. Digges died in 1635, and Jonson in 1637.

Why would Benson feature a poem covering three pages that so openly denigrated Ben Jonson? That same year (1640), Benson published one volume containing three Jonson works. 13 Although Benson evidently respected Jonson, he may have objected to his part in the First Folio. Benson used the then-deceased Digges as a vehicle to vent his criticism in his edition of Shakespeare's poetry. Benson added insult to injury by including in this edition the poem by William Basse that Jonson had censured in his Folio elegy. Basse had asked Spenser, Chaucer and Beaumont, all buried in Westminster Abbey, to move a little closer to "make room" for Shakespeare. Jonson had belittled the idea, declaring Shakespeare is "alive still, while thy book doth live." Benson inserted one poem that ridiculed Jonson, and another that Jonson had ridiculed. In Benson's edition, Basse's poem was titled "On the death of William Shakespeare, who died in April, Anno Dom. 1616," which accorded with the Stratford Man's death date. It is the only clue in Benson's book linking the great author to the Stratford Man, and it was placed in the back pages of the first section. Benson must have added this title because it did not accompany Basse's verse in its first printed form (Poems, by J.D., 1633); there it was titled, "Epitaph on Shakespeare." Following Basse's piece in Benson's edition

was the anonymously written verse, "Elegy on the Death of that Famous Writer and Actor, M. William Shakspeare," a title that reinforced the idea promoted in Jonson's collected works, and afterward in Shakespeare's, that he was a working actor. No other personal information about the great author was given in Benson's edition - not the word Stratford, not the word Avon. Although Benson questioned the Folio's image of the great author, he took the establishment line with the Stratford Man. Benson's edition was printed by Thomas and Richard Cotes, the printers of the Second Folio (1632); perhaps they related inside information to Benson about Shakespeare and the First Folio's production. Benson's bold question about the authenticity of the Folio's image of Shakespeare was not the only unusual statement printed about Shakespeare in 1640. The anonymously written book, Wit's Recreations, acknowledged the silence surrounding Shakespeare.

SHAKESPEARE SUPPRESSED

To Mr. William Shake-spear.

Shake-speare we must be silent in thy praise, 'Cause our encomiums will but blast thy Bays, Which envy could not, that thou didst do well; Let thine own histories prove thy Chronicle. [No. 25]

The writer seems to be saying that by giving praise ("encomiums") to the great author, his garland of "bays" (a prize for excellence) would get blasted off his head. Praising the great author would somehow compromise him. But the anonymous writer is praising Shakespeare, and not silently - he is doing so in print. This contradiction is best explained if "Shake-speare" is a pen name - the great author is not being praised with his real name. The passage also printed the name twice with a hyphen. Evidently, public praise or commentary of Shakespeare was discouraged, even as late as 1640, after two editions of the Folio. This statement suggests there was something personally or politically troubling about Shakespeare that chilled discussion by fans and critics alike. The Wit's Recreations writer ends by saying Shakespeare's works ("histories") will prove his life ("chronicle"), or who he really is, which repeats Jonson's message in the Folio:

> ... Reader, look Not on his picture, but his book.

Although printed allusions to Shakespeare's plays continued after 1640, comments that directly or indirectly questioned the image of Shakespeare, as given in the Folio's preface, ended. The rise of Puritanism in politics, which caused the closing of the theaters from 1642 to 1660, evidently stopped them.

Conclusion

Considering the magnitude of its importance, with the print debut of so many dramatic masterpieces, the First Folio of 1623 was publicly received with an eerie and suspicious silence. Although the Folio fostered the impression that the great author was born with the name William Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon, there were signs that members of the literary world were rejecting its both subtle and screaming propaganda. One admirer of Shakespeare declined to print the Shakspeare monument and gravestone inscriptions in his epitaph book, and another insinuated that Stratford-upon-Avon was guilty of something that poets in particular should "beware" of. The idea that "Shakespeare" was someone's alias endured, and a playwright who was close with Ben Jonson evidently believed that Shakespeare was the 17th Earl of Oxford. In 1640, John Benson questioned the veracity of Droeshout's engraving of Shakespeare in print and for doing so can be rightly called the father of the Shakespeare authorship question. Benson's edition also included a poem that insulted Ben Jonson, whose material dominated the Folio's preface. Leonard Digges, another Folio contributor, wrote this poem. Also in 1640, the hush about Shakespeare was openly addressed: a poem printed in Wit's Recreations said that praising Shakespeare was discouraged, and that only by reading his works will the public really know him. And what did the literary world have to say about the Stratford Man? The next two chapters will explore this question.