

"Small Latine and Lesse Greeke"

Anatomy of a Misquotation (Part 1: Setting the Stage)

by Roger Stritmatter

As every English literature undergraduate knows, on the testimony of the bard's friend and colleague Ben Jonson in the 1623 *First Folio*, William Shakespeare had "small Latin and less Greek." Indeed, the idea of a bard barely schooled in the classics, at least by 16th century standards, is not only consistent with the established postulates of Shakespearean biography but is reinforced by copious early testimony to the essentially *sui generis* character of Shakespeare's literary achievement, as well as his much-celebrated disassociation from the real world of Elizabethan and Jacobean society.

I am being ironic, of course – this paper was originally written for presentation at a 2014 University of Massachusetts Conference on Shakespeare and Translation, sponsored by the Department of Comparative Literature and the University of Massachusetts Renaissance Center. Since a truly informed discussion of Jonson's *Folio* encomium requires a significant effort at historical contextualization, what originated in a 45-minute presentation at the 2014 Umass Conference will here be presented in two articles, the first of which appears in this issue of *The Oxfordian*.

The belief that Jonson's "small Latin" clause represents an accurate assessment of the educational basis for the works is an unfortunate legacy of traditional beliefs about Shakespeare and a linchpin of the orthodox biographical tradition. While there is no record of Shakespeare's university attendance, which would presumably have involved advanced studies in languages, rhetoric, theology, and philosophy, we are reliably assured that Shakespeare must have attended the Stratford grammar school, where, according to this theory, he obtained a sufficient preparation for the minimal educational attainments manifested in the plays and narrative poems published under his name. As T.W. Baldwin explains in his exemplary Stratfordian account *William Shakespeare's Small Latine and Lesse Greeke*, by the standards of the age, "a 'learned grammarian' as was Shakspeare had indeed 'small Latin and less Greek' . . . the standard against which Jonson places Shakspeare's attainments is the highest of which he had knowledge" (I: 3) . . . "Though he had small Latin and less Greek, yet Jonson would call forth the greatest Latin and Greek tragedians to do him honor" (I: 2). It is therefore unsurprising – so goes the paradigmatic reasoning of Shakespeare orthodoxy

– that so little evidence can be found in the works themselves to substantiate anything beyond the most superficial knowledge of classical literature, among other subjects of human inquiry. Perhaps worst of all, as we shall see, the dogma embodied in the misinterpretation of Jonson’s words ignores the larger context of their utterance, abstracting them without justification from the larger rhetorical context of Jonson’s entire poem as well as from the larger political context of London in 1623.

We should be careful, on the other hand, to not oversimplify the Stratfordian position on this question of Shakespeare’s classical preparation. Over the years, at least a few well-informed scholars have wrestled seriously with the question of classical influences in the plays, and many are aware of the extensive evidence for the influence of at least some classical sources on Shakespeare. Nor is there any need here to dispute in any detail the popular but poorly-grounded belief that the Shakespearean works embody knowledge of the classical tradition no greater than that readily obtainable in a few brief years by a young genius attending Stratford Grammar. Abundant scholarship – see, for example, many relevant citations in Walker (2002), Showerman (2011), or Burrow (2013) – now suggests that Leonard Digges, writing circa 1622-1635, was either woefully mistaken or – a more interesting proposition – was being cheekily ironic for some private reason when he claimed that the bard

doth not borrow

One phrase from the Greeks, nor Latins imitate,
Nor once from the vulgar languages translate.¹

On the contrary, that Shakespeare had some Latin is generally now accepted by those who have studied the evidence. However, even so perceptive a scholar as Burrow, in

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a book titled *Shakespeare & Classical Antiquity* (Oxford, 2013), includes chapters on Virgil, Ovid, Roman comedy, Seneca, and Plutarch, but none on Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, or Aristotle. Orthodox scholars, it seems, are becoming accustomed to acknowledging the Latin or Chaucerian influences in Shakespeare, but are still anxious about a bard who also read Aeschylus and *Beowulf*. Compared to knowledge of Latin, a reading knowledge of classical Greek or Anglo-Saxon was a much rarer thing in Elizabethan England.

If, as I believe, Digges was spoofing his naïve readers, he was also following a tradition long since established by Milton (in 1632) and originating in the authority or misconstruction of Jonson's *First Folio* statements. Jonson's encomium "To the memory of my beloved, the Author, Mr. William Shakespeare, and what he hath left us," therefore, is the rock and foundation of the popular modern image of the bard as an unlettered miracle of homespun English genius. Did Jonson really say that Shakespeare had small Latin and less Greek? If not, how could he have been misunderstood to that effect, for so long and by such distinguished scholars? To gain a more plausible understanding of Jonson's statement, and possibly the motives underwriting the larger cult of the natural bard, let us first consider the historical context in which Jonson's *Folio* encomium was composed. In view of the abundant contrary evidence, we shall see that the widespread, unexamined view that Jonson intended readers to understand a Shakespeare with literally "small Latin and Lesse Greek" is an unjustified relic of the Stratfordian paradigm, one which has not only played a significant role in shaping orthodoxy's response to the authorship question, but has handicapped serious study of the many and pervasive Greek as well as Latin literary influences in the works.

The 1623 Shakespeare Folio, In Context

Most Shakespeare scholars probably do not know that the 1623 *First Folio* appeared in print at the climax of the most serious constitutional crisis – the so-called Spanish Marriage crisis – in the twenty-one year reign of James I. One who has written provocatively about the significance of the crisis is Anabelle Patterson, who asserts "there is no more striking exhibit of the conditions influencing the conventions of political discourse than the political struggle around the Spanish Marriage." No other event, in Patterson's estimation, more profoundly influenced the manner in which "the unwritten rules and contracts evolved, [were] broken, and relearned throughout the century" or the manner in which the "formulae of protected speech and privileged genres, of equivocations shared by authors and authorities" (83) were tested and reshaped. The failure of orthodox scholars to more fully contextualize the *Folio* from a historical point of view, especially in view of Patterson's emphasis on the period as providing a "striking exhibit" illustrating the negotiation between authors and censors to produce published literature, is truly remarkable. Although this phobia of

acknowledging the connection between the Folio and the Marriage crisis has started to diminish in recent years – primarily due to the influence of scholars such as Peter Dickson, who, starting in the late 1990s, have forcefully called attention to the implications of the timing between the two events – the intimate relationship between the Folio and the Marriage crisis remains out of focus in the critical literature.

As Jacobean historian Thomas Cogswell recounts, the “tense atmosphere” of London in 1622-1623 – precisely during the months the Folio was being printed – reveals “a nation on the verge of rebellion” (50) over the ominous geopolitical question of whether Prince Charles (1600-1649), then heir to the Stuart throne, should follow his father’s plan for him and marry the Spanish infanta Maria Anna, sister of the new King Phillip IV, who at sixteen was already reputed to be a great court beauty. On one side were English and international Catholics as well as the Jacobean crown, delighted at the thought of increasing their influence through a union between the Spanish and English monarchies. In 1622, after nearly twenty years of careful planning and preparation, James looked forward to achieving his ambition of brokering an international and interfaith peace that would resolve the bitter struggle between the two faiths through the time-honored ploy of dynastic marriage. If successful, he would not only succeed in achieving international peace and ecumenism by tying his house to the Hapsburgs, he would also enrich England’s coffers with a dowry of legendary proportions, sometimes estimated at as much as 500,000 English pounds.

On the other side was the great mass of English Protestants, led by a coalition of “patriot” Earls and spurred on by many outspoken voices – from the pulpits, in the parliament, and even on the stages and in the streets. These were not only loyal to the Protestant cause on the continent, but fearful of the threat of counter-reformation at home should the marriage occur. In Robert Cross’s account, “Europe’s most powerful Protestant and Catholic states [were on] the brink of a political alliance virtually unprecedented in the post-Reformation period” (“Pretense” 563). In February 1623, the heir apparent Charles Stuart and George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham departed in secret for Spain to pursue the match. Both in England and in Spain, the trip became the “news story of the century,” with “few relations . . . published in Spain between March and September 1623 on any other topic” (Ettinghausen 4).

Ironically, Shakespeare scholars have typically overlooked the explanatory richness of this historical event for contextualizing the Folio’s design and contemporaneous significance. Despite the salient fact that the months during which the Folio was being printed (April 1622 - Nov. 1623) constituted the apogee of this long brewing crisis within the Stuart state, studies of the Folio’s publication characteristically turn a blind eye to this contemporary context. Instead the Folio is conceived – as it was at the Folger Library’s historic 2014 Conference on “Shakespeare and the Problem of Biography” – as an isolated, disinterested, purely “literary” project, a “ghost in the machine,” abstracted from its historical genesis and motivating political context, not

to mention alienated from a believable author. One recent and welcome exception to this avoidance is Emma Smith's otherwise fastidiously orthodox 2015 study, which acknowledges by fitful starts, but far more candidly than Stratfordians have typically done in the past, certain key elements of the many connections between the Folio and the marriage crisis. Those familiar with the scholarly literature in its larger context will recognize that this belated interest in the possible relevance of the marriage crisis is a result of the work of Peter Dickson and others who have not, unfortunately, made it into the footnotes of Smith's book.

Smith's acknowledgment of some connection between the Folio and the marriage crisis, however, is an afterthought in a critical tradition that has already deified the object of its reverence by turning him into a sociological abstraction, constituting, "one of the central cultural expressions of England's own transition from the aristocratic regime of the Stuarts to the commercial empire presided over by the Hanoverians" (Dobson 8). In short, the Folio's "complicity in the humanist enterprise" during the 1620s, to use Leah Marcus' revealing phrase (41), laid the epistemic foundation for the appropriation of Shakespeare as a national icon in subsequent centuries.

Folio Paratexts and Puzzles

A paratext is any element of a literary publication or imprint that serves to introduce the main body of a work. This includes not only obvious elements like title pages, with or without images, epigrams, author names, or other elements, but also – very often in early modern practice – dedicatory poems and essays, justifications, acknowledgments of patrons, and – after about 1600 in England, sometimes, engravings of the author. Paratexts are important ways of understanding how authors, editors or publishers want readers to understand a work; they allow a kind of shaping of the reception of the work. Paratexts are thus – to borrow with modification the language of Anabel Patterson – "entry codes," one function of which is to negotiate the entry of a literary text of controversial status into the public sphere.

Given the controversial circumstances of these texts, early modern scholars also know that paratexts are not intended to be read only at face value. They very frequently include claims, justified in their authors' minds by the social exigencies of production (such as the risk of alienating or angering opponents with sufficient political power to impede publication or retaliate in print or otherwise), that do not necessarily represent the complete or sincere beliefs of their authors. On the contrary, Patterson emphasizes, "disclaimers of topical intention are not to be trusted, and are more likely to be entry codes to precisely that kind of reading they protest against" (65). Just as often, they reveal literary secrets to discerning readers, while at the same time distracting many casual readers with indirection. In light of these considerations, let us examine more closely some of the Folio paratexts.

Before the skeptical reader even arrives at Jonson's eighty-line encomium to Shakespeare, the problem of authorship is already evident in the Folio's Delphic title and preliminaries, which Charlton Ogburn aptly characterizes as "a masterpiece of equivocation" (236) (Figure 1).

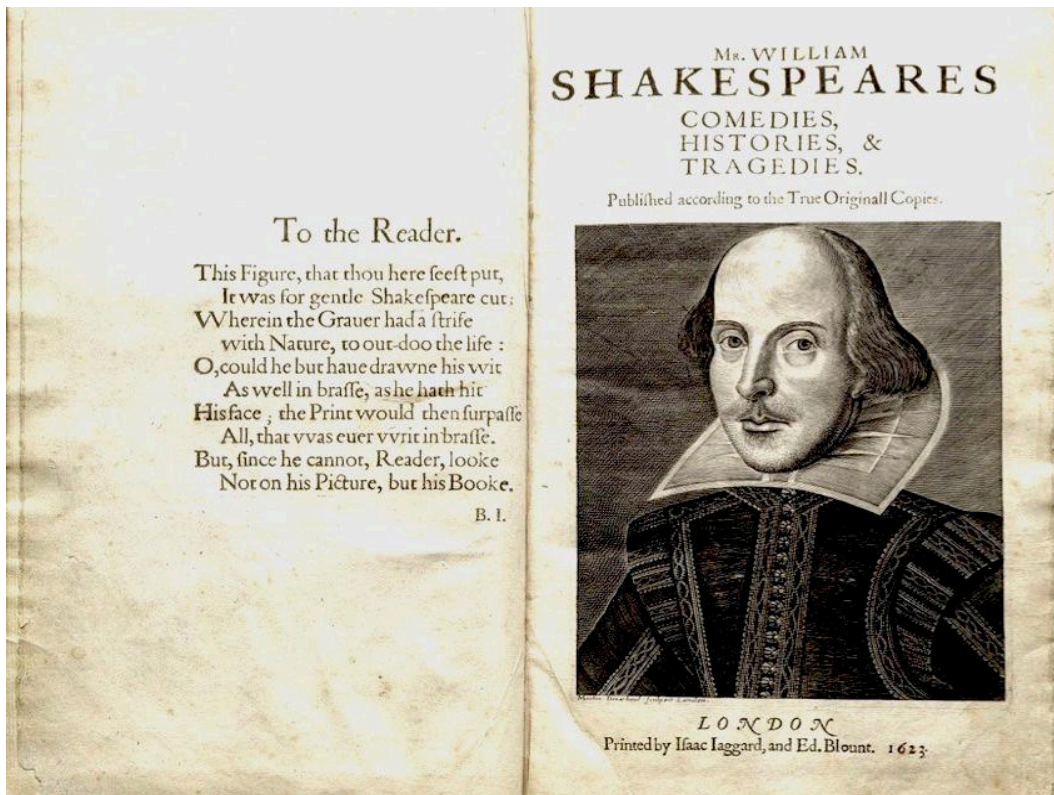


Figure 1. The Droeshout engraving on the title page and Jonson's facing epigram: a "masterpiece of equivocation."

Long a source of anxiety for discerning readers, the Martin Droeshout Folio engraving (Figure 1) is accompanied by a ten-line epigram, signed "B.I." for "Ben Jonson." The engraving appears even more bizarre when compared to Droeshout's other work,² which graphically illustrates the Anglo-Dutch artist's masterful command over perspective, shading, and all the other conventions of the engraver's art (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Martin Droeshout's engraving for the title page of Montaigne's *Essays* (1632) (Hind 225a)

Lacking the trimming oval and ornamentation customarily used in engravings of authors in early modern books (Figure 3), Droeshout's Shakespeare presents "a slightly unfinished look . . . [offering] no particularizing details – only the raw directness of the image, as if to say that in this case no artifice is necessary: this is the Man Himself" (Marcus 18).



Figure 3. Samuel Daniel title page engraving (1609) illustrates the Jacobean norm and contrasts vividly with the spare “iconoclasm” of Droeshout’s 1623 engraving. Image courtesy lib.unc.edu.

As Ogburn effectively summarizes, even many Stratfordians have found the Droeshout an embarrassment if not an abomination. Over the decades, many – including art historians such as Gainsborough and Shakespeare scholars, including Ivor Brown, J. Dover Wilson, J.C. Squire, and Samuel Schoenbaum – have lamented Droeshout’s “pudding faced” effigy, prefixed to one of the most important books ever published. A head preternaturally suspended a few inches off two left shoulders and rising to a hydrocephalous, conspicuously bald forehead, a dark mask-like line running down the left side of the face, two strangely unfocused right eyes calling forth the intervention of the modern neuroanatomist, and a chin “quaintly suggestive of an unduly deferred razor” – all contribute to an effect which has led many to concur with Sir George Greenwood that the engraving embodies “a peculiar expression of sheepish oafishness which is irresistibly comic” (36).

More recently, literary historians such as Marcus have criticized the focus on the engraving, arguing instead that scholars should consider how the entire ensemble of Folio paratexts contributes to what she terms the “iconoclastic” effect of the whole. Greenwood and others prematurely “blame the picture for a broader discomfort arising out of the endlessly circulating interplay among all elements of the title page – the portrait, the words above, the poem” (20). Jonson’s epigram (Figure 1), Marcus notes, “undermines the visual power of the portrait by insisting on it as something constructed and ‘put’ there” (18), activating by intent a latent conflict, in which competing elements vie for the reader’s attention (19).

With its almost sardonic emphasis on the artificial character of the engraving (“which thou here seest put”), and its explicit warning, “look not on his picture but his book” – Jonson’s ten-line epigram, as juxtaposed to the Folio, is “in the precise sense of the term, iconoclastic” (19) – that is to say, it literally attacks the credibility of the portrait it effects to accompany. It even – so says the orthodox Marcus! – sets “the reader off on a treasure hunt for the author” (19) – who, Jonson alleges, will be found not in the engraving, but inside his own book.

“Iconoclasm” is a key term for comprehensively describing the design theme of the Folio paratexts. Marcus helps us to focus on how the various elements set the Shakespeare Folio apart from other books, cultivating a deliberately dissonant effect designed to clue the sensitive reader to the work’s underlying literary deceit. Compared to more typical prefatory materials of the period, the “Protestant,” “rhetorically turbulent” Folio assumes a very particular social ethos, mirroring the conflict over the Spanish Marriage through the dissonance of its claims. In short, the Folio’s design may be understood as symptomatic of the document’s historical genesis during the Spanish Marriage crisis years of 1621-1624, as well as the underlying motive of the falsity of its superficial claims about authorship.

Form, as we might expect given the costs and risks of the production, follows function. The book’s introduction reflects a social landscape marked by “rhetorical turbulence,” a rising social tension over questions of religious and national identity, punctuated by frequent outbreaks of iconoclastic emotion warring with censorious suppression. I mean to argue, in other words, that the antecedents of the mythologizing process by which Shakespeare (as Dobson shows) was transformed into a national icon over the course of the next two centuries are already apparent, on close inspection, in the decontextualizing effects of the Folio’s paratexts, and the consequent misreading of the document’s place in history. By “decontextualizing,” I mean the way in which the Folio seeks to elevate the author – mainly through Jonson’s 180 line encomium (to be considered in detail in the second part of this article) – to the mythic and universal, establishing him as “not of an age, but for all time.” But despite such ideological appeals to timeless universality, the Folio’s design – including Jonson’s “small Latin and Less Greek” clause – cannot reasonably be separated

from the larger circumstances of the Spanish Marriage proposal, not only because its rhetorical posture reflects the iconoclastic mood of England prevailing during the months it was designed and printed, but also because almost all of those involved in its production were directly or indirectly involved in the tumultuous politics of the Spanish match.

The Spanish Marriage Crisis & the First Folio

Accounts of the Folio's publication rarely mention the marriage crisis, and books and articles treating it almost never mention the Folio, even though the Folio is dedicated to the Lord Chamberlain (1615-1630), 3rd Earl of Pembroke, William Herbert, and his brother Philip, Earl of Montgomery. These two were the most senior and influential members of the coalition of patriot Protestant earls, who spearheaded the opposition to the Spanish union in the Privy Council and in parliament. These two sons of Mary Sidney also threw active support behind populist opposition to the match, expressed in pamphlets, sermons, and stage plays. In 1624 Pembroke went so far as to become a prime sponsor of the most conspicuous theatrical opposition to the marriage, Thomas Middleton's controversial allegory, *A Game at Chess*, and even intervened on behalf of its actors imprisoned by the crown (Patterson 82).

Emerging from the confluence of the dramatic international events of 1622-23, "when throats were full of Anti-Spanish rhetoric and the cry for war [against Spain] resounded in parliament" (Dickson, "Epistle" 2), the Folio, patronized by Pembroke and Montgomery, was clearly intended as a major political statement, and was interpreted, as Dickson shows, by the Stuart crown as a direct challenge to its pro-Spanish policies. In promoting the Shakespearean works through their association with the Folio, and likely financial patronage of the book's publication, Dickson argues, the patriot earls sought to redefine English national identity and ideals in the context of the constitutional crisis over the Spanish marriage proposal. This very conscious political agenda of the Folio is indicated by the fact that even orthodox Shakespeareans such as Emma Smith are now starting to acknowledge that the Folio's "closing play depicts plucky Britain both beating and paying tribute to an imperial power (the final conciliation with Rome which ends *Cymbeline*)," adding that "it has been suggested that [the order of the plays in the Folio] was deliberately organized to coincide with, and to echo, an anticipated successful conclusion to the Spanish match negotiations" (Smith 82).

Smith's footnote for this statement is to Gary Taylor's dubiously titled "Making Meaning Marketing Shakespeare 1623," published in Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel's *From Performance to Print in Shakespeare's England*, by Palgrave Macmillan, in 2006. Make of it what you will, but seven years before Taylor published this argument, my article, "Publish We This Peace: A Note on the Design of the Shakespeare First Folio and the Spanish Marriage Crisis," had appeared in the *Shakespeare Oxford*

Society Newsletter (Fall 1998), written in response to Dickson's case for the relevance of the Spanish marriage to the Folio publication. Apparently Dr. Taylor and Dr. Smith missed both Dickson's articles and my articles (and now, since 2011, Dickson's book) in their literature surveys.

The crisis of 1621-24 had been long in coming. For almost twenty years, James had dreamed of securing a peaceful balance of powers on the continent by marrying one of his children into the house of Hapsburg. By the time of the *First Folio*, however, this longstanding scheme had been complicated by two recent dramatic developments. One was the loss of Protestant control over the Palatinate (present day south-west Germany) by James' daughter Elizabeth and her husband Fredrick, the elector Palatine and de facto leader of the Protestant cause in central Europe, early in what was to become the Thirty Years' War between two religious factions battling to control the strategic territories of central Europe. After their humiliating defeat at the battle of White Mountain in November, 1620, Fredrick and Elizabeth appeared to be fighting a lost cause.

In June, 1621, after much importuning, James had commissioned Horatio Vere, the elder cousin of Henry, the 18th Earl of Oxford, to lead a small English contingent to fight on Fredrick and Elizabeth's behalf. But it proved too little, too late. By October 1621, the couple, much to the dismay of the English Protestant faction, had ignominiously become dispossessed refugees in The Hague. To English Protestants, the King's reluctance to intervene on behalf of his own daughter and son-in-law to prevent the loss of the Palatinate in 1620 was a terrible omen of the increasing domination of pro-Catholic elements at court, chief among them the notorious favorite George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham (1592-1628) and the widely despised Spanish ambassador Gondomar. The other event forcing James' hand and inspiring international gossip was the apparently precipitous decision in February 1623 of Prince Charles and Villiers to embark for Madrid to court the Infanta *in propriae personae* (that is, without lawyers). In the colorful account documented by Robert Cross ("Pretense"), the two young power-brokers departed "complete with fake beards and false names." Overnight the episode became a cause célèbre in Spain and among English Catholics, and a scandal among Protestants loyal to Fredrick and Elizabeth's cause.

In England the leaders of the backlash against the marriage plan – both in parliament and the streets – included Southampton, Oxford, Pembroke, Montgomery, and Derby. In other words, the son, two sons-in-law, and the brother of a son-in law, of the 17th Earl of Oxford, were all among the most vocal and influential opponents of the marriage in the months leading up to the Folio release in the fall of 1623. The solidarity of this group was reinforced by close ties of political alliance and consanguinity. As the sons of the literary Mary Sidney, sister of the Protestant hero Sir Philip Sidney, the Herbert brothers had inherited the mantle of leadership of the Protestant

cause in England. The ties among the members of this group were reinforced through marriage. As early as 1597, Pembroke had been betrothed to Bridget Vere, and while that marriage never transpired, Pembroke's younger brother Montgomery in 1605 married Bridget's sister Susan.

The significance of the Susan Vere-Herbert marriage may best be appreciated by considering that the 18th Earl's elder cousins, Horatio (1576-1635) and Francis (1560-1609), in turn, had for decades been the two chief military strategists for the English forces fighting on behalf of the Protestant cause in the Rhineland and the Low Countries. The Vere-Herbert axis thus constituted the vital core of English support for the Protestant cause on the continent. By 1621 the King's reticence to help protect his daughter Elizabeth and her beleaguered husband, the Elector Palatine Fredrick, from the advancing counter-reformation armies was becoming a national crisis. In January of the same year the 18th Earl of Oxford obtained a royal warrant to join his cousin's force fighting in the Palatinate. But long before then, as early as 1600, the Earl's cousin Francis was winning a name for himself in the battle for Ostend in the Low Countries, a fight memorialized by Hamlet as that

little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
(4.4.17-18)

And yet, in the shadow of the proposed Spanish marriage, these puny military efforts were unlikely to yield a victory for the Protestant side. In the internal English conflict over the Spanish match, Protestants launched a different, more subtle front. At Pembroke's behest, his associate and one-time chaplain Thomas Scott (c. 1580-1626), "the most virulently anti-Spanish pamphleteer" of the period (Patterson 82), emerged as "one of the earliest and most forceful opponents of the match" (Cogswell 50). From 1620 to 1625, Scott authored as many as two dozen pamphlets, most of them contesting the Stuart policy towards Spain or otherwise promoting the Protestant cause both in Europe and England. His anonymous *Vox Populi, Neues from Spayne, translated according to the Spanish coppie, Which may serve to forwarne both England and the United Provinces how far to trust to Spanish pretences*, originally published in the Low Countries in 1620, against the looming backdrop of the Palatinate's defeat by the Catholic League, appears to have provoked James' December 1620 "Proclamation against Licentious Speech in Matters of State" (Clegg 186), which outlawed voicing opposition to the Spanish match. Scott's pamphlet depends heavily on fictional conspiratorial conversations between Spanish functionaries like ambassador Gondomar and their crown supporters such as the Earl of Buckingham. Betrayed by his publisher under pressure from the Jacobean state, Scott fled to the Low Countries to avoid prosecution, but Pembroke's support for his chaplain did not visibly waver.

Opposing the match meant that Scott and the other patriots paid a political price

and even, in some cases, risked their lives in defense of English independence and liberty of conscience. Pembroke's most outspoken allies in the opposition were the Earls of Oxford and Southampton, and in July 1621 both men, along with John Sandys, were arrested for politicking against the marriage. Perhaps the two most radical members of the group, Oxford and Southampton were, by this time, very close allies. In the early 1590's Southampton – the dedicatee of the two Shakespeare narrative poems (*Venus and Adonis* in 1593, *Lucrece* in 1594) and, according to many, "fair youth" of the Sonnets – had been engaged to marry the third Vere daughter, Elizabeth, although she instead married William Stanley, the 6th Earl of Derby. Now the enduring relationship between the Southampton and the Oxford earldoms lived on through the friendship between the "two most noble Henries" as emblemized in the copper plate engraving of them circa 1624 (Figure 4).



Figure 4. The "two most noble Henries," the "patriot" Earls of Oxford (left) and Southampton (right), circa 1624. The date represents the historical present of the image. The engraving itself, apparently a copy of a lost original, dates to the mid-17th century.

Even more than Southampton, the 18th Earl of Oxford seemed destined to be a thorn in James' side over the issue of the marriage proposal. After an inflammatory speech in parliament opposing the marriage in July, he was held in The Tower for five months until December 30, 1621. In the interim, the House of Commons issued a "protestation" affirming freedom of speech and conscience as "the ancient and undoubted Birthright and inheritance of the Subjects of England" (Patterson 85). The outraged King made a dramatic show of ripping up the protestation with his own hands. After Oxford's release at the end of December, Buckingham conspired to keep him away from court, and for three months he was farmed out to the powerless post, far from the court, of Vice-Admiral of the English fleet protecting the channel.

Pembroke's chaplain Scott, returned across the channel from the Low Countries, on March 20, 1622, to the abbey church of Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk – said to have been the meeting place for the Magna Carta barons in 1214. There, Scott delivered his assize sermon critiquing the crown policy promoting the Spanish match and the persecution of Oxford, who had by then been released from the tower. Published in 1623 under the title *Vox Dei: Injustice Cast and Condemned*, the sermon is dedicated to Pembroke and subscribed "your Honours most deuoted seruant and Chaplaine" (A3v).

Within days of Scott's provocative March 20 sermon – sometime in early April – the 18th Earl³ was returned to custody by the irate monarchy, and this time he was held for eighteen months and not released until December 30 1623, only weeks after the first sales of the Folio. In a May 16, 1622 letter to the Spanish King, discovered by Peter Dickson, Gondomar, who in 1618 had successfully convinced James to execute Sir Walter Raleigh, conveys his express wish for a repeat performance, this time with Oxford's head on the chopping block. Inveighing against Oxford as "an extremely malicious person [who] has followers," and who was "bad mouthing the king and me," Gondomar goes on to take credit for the jailing, and confesses to "a strong desire to cut off [Oxford's] head" (cited in Boyle 4).

Following shortly on the folio publication, Pembroke's chaplain Scott published *Vox Regis*, a work substantially devoted to justifying his earlier use in *Vox Populi* of fictional techniques of propaganda. In Scott's rhetorical arsenal is the traditional license of the theatre, which allows him to insist that "Kings are content in plays and masques to be admonished of diverse things" (Ev).⁴

Questioning the Role of Heminges and Condell

In light of these events, it is interesting to note that since Hinman's 1963 study of the *First Folio* production schedule, it has generally been acknowledged that the book's printing did not start until spring of 1622. While Peter Dickson, among

others, has proposed that there is a connection between the Folio as a project and the events of the Spanish marriage crisis, even Dickson may have underestimated the closeness of the connection from the literary historian's point of view. Looking more closely at the Folio preliminaries can help us to better understand the close fit between the book and its historical context. These include not only the Droeshout engraving and Jonson's accompanying ten line epigram "To the Reader," signed B.I., which ends "Looke/Not on his Picture, but his Booke," but also dedicatory verses by Hugh Holland, Leonard Digges, and I.[ames] M.[abbe]. Dedicatory epistles to Pembroke and his brother Montgomery – the latter the brother-in-law of the jailed Oxford – and the other epistle "To the great variety of readers," are subscribed by Heminges and Condell, actors in the King's Men.

Even though the epistles are "signed" by Heminges and Condell, an impressively durable scholarly tradition, originating in the early 19th century and receiving significant affirmation by post-Stratfordians such as Whalen (2011), has emphasized the evidence for Jonson's authorship of at least parts of the two epistles. Among the early doubters was George Steevens – often considered the most erudite of all 18th century editors – who noted that the preface to the players "had much of the manner of Ben Jonson" and that Heminges and Condell were "themselves wholly unused to composition" (in Malone 663). After comparing several pages of passages showing the closeness between the wording of the epistles and Jonson's other works, Steevens deduced that "from these numerous and marked coincidences, it is, I think, manifest that every word of the first half of this address to the [general] reader, which is signed with the names of John Heminges and Henry Condell, was written by Ben Jonson" and that Jonson's hand "may be clearly, though not uniformly, traced in the second part only" (as cited in Greenwood, 1921, 12-13). The orthodox Felix Schelling agreed that "neither Heminges nor Condell was a writer, and such a book ought to be properly introduced. In such a juncture there could be no choice. The best book of the hour demanded sponsorship by the greatest contemporary men of letters. Ben Jonson..." (in Greenwood 1921, 16).

The fact that Greenwood's opinion is anticipated by the otherwise entirely orthodox Schelling is a mark of the brittleness of the Stratfordian assumption that the Folio can and should be taken at face value as evidence in the authorship question. Given that no other specimens of writing by either Heminges or Condell survive, Malone may have been overly generous in his supposition that the two actors had "thrown on paper, in the best manner they could, some introductory paragraphs" which Jonson, "not approving . . . cured by a total erasure" (Malone 674). Greenwood seems on more secure ground in suggesting that "whether these worthies did anything more than lend their names for the occasion may well be doubted" (264). This idea is neither new, nor implausible, nor without foundation. Indeed it already seems to be the implication of contemporaneous satiric verses, circa. 1623, surviving in a manuscript from the Salisbury family of Lleweni, Wales:

To my good freands Mr John Hemings & Henry Condall

To yowe that Joyntly with vndaunted paynes
 Vowtsafed to Chawnte to us these noble Straynes,
 How mutch yowe merryt it is not sedd
 Butt yowe haue pleased the lyving, loved the deadd,
 Raysede from the wombe of Earth a Richer myne
 Then Curteys Cowlde with all his Castelyne.
 Associates, they dydd but dig for Gowlde,
 But yowe for treasure mutch more manifollde.

(Campbell and Quinn 735)

The performative emphasis – Heminges and Condell chant the epistles, they do not compose or write them – along with the sly emphasis on the unspoken merit of the deed and contrast between the successful services of Heminges and Condell, which have achieved what “courtesy...with all his Castelyne” could not – give point to the poem’s ironic tone. A *Castellany*, says the *OED*, is “[*It., Sp.*]...the office or the jurisdiction of a castellan; the Lordship of a castle, or the district belonging to a castle.”⁵ The idea that Heminges and Condell are trading in manuscript materials belonging to the “jurisdiction of a castle” suggests that the writer conceives that the unpublished Folio manuscripts, alleged to originate with Heminges and Condell, were actually supplied by such aristocratic “grand possessors”⁶ as Pembroke and Montgomery. The verses, in other words, satirize the use of Heminges and Condell’s names in the volume, implicating them in having lent their names to effect the Folio’s less-than-entirely-honest publication.

Like so much else about the circumstances of the Folio, the significance of the practice of placing the names “Heminges” and “Condell” on the prefaces apparently written by Jonson⁷ has successfully mystified many. In his recent biography of Jonson, Ian Donaldson justly remarks that “the stamp of Jonson’s authority is clearly apparent in the 1623 Folio” (371), but he goes on to assert as a fact that the volume “was edited by the two surviving members of the original company of the Lord Chamberlain’s Men established in 1594” (370). This unexamined view was also endorsed by Emma Smith in 2015, who blithely refers (107-109) to Heminges and Condell as the authors of the epistles.

Enter Pembroke, Montgomery, and Derby

Instead of leading an exploration of the deeper layers of interconnectivity between the Folio and the circumstances of its production, orthodox *First Folio* scholars like Taylor and Smith borrow ideas from Oxfordians without attribution, while promoting a “just so” story of Folio manuscript acquisition that is supported only by the dubious claims of the Heminges and Condell epistles and maintained only at the

cost of perpetuating unfortunate misconceptions about alternative and more plausible scenarios. This theory of provenance, as well as the notion of Heminges and Condell as the editors, is based on the circular evidence of the epistles' own testimony and is contradicted, moreover, by impressive evidence suggesting a contrary scenario, in which the publishers acquired the manuscripts for the unpublished plays from Pembroke and his associates. Not only was Pembroke, starting in 1615, Lord Chamberlain of the Royal household and therefore the senior theatrical official in England with full authority over the King's Men and their archives, he was also the one who had on May 3, 1619 by formal decree prohibited the unauthorized publication of plays in the archive (Chambers I, 136). That orthodox scholars are skating on very thin ice in continuing to perpetuate the Heminges and Condell story of manuscript provenance is further indicated by the 1609 epistle to *Troilus and Cressida*, in which the Shakespeare manuscripts are said to be in the hands of the "grand possessors" – also labeled "grand censors." When we add to this the knowledge that in 1619 the publisher, William Jaggard, it would appear, appealed to members of the Pembroke faction in *Archaio-ploutos* (see analysis below) for manuscripts, it is easy to see that an impressive pattern of facts confirms that the unpublished manuscripts were in the possession of de Vere's descendants and in-laws, and not in any archives controlled by Heminges and Condell. All in all, the account given in the Folio epistle appears to be a public fiction designed to distract notice from the critical role played by the aristocratic patrons of the project in supplying necessary manuscripts – and, no doubt, finances – for the printing. This may also explain the Folio's need for the publisher's colophon (Figure 5) which rather uncharacteristically⁸ insists that the book was printed "at the charges of" the members of the syndicate.

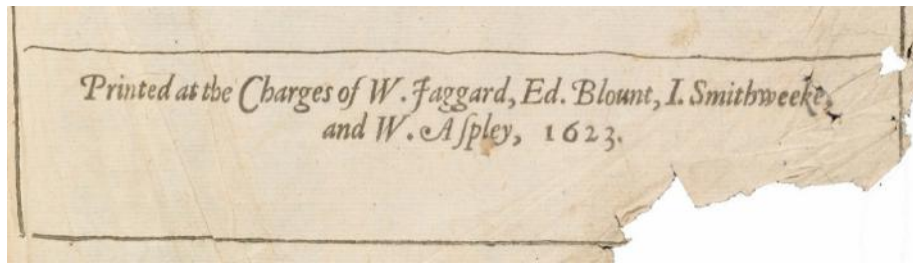


Figure 5. Colophon of 1623 Shakespeare Folio.

By normal Jacobean standards, publishing a book of this size with such prominent dedications to two wealthy arts patrons, at least one of whom had by that time acquired a lifetime of experience patronizing and protecting the theatre and the arts more generally, and was reputed the richest man in England, without any subsidy from the patrons, borders so closely on the preposterous as to recall the habitual reliance of leading Shakespeare biographers on magic formulae like "let us imagine that . . ." (Greenblatt 23). This might explain why Smith must labor so mightily to assure

her readers that “nobody has suggested that the Herberts gave the book any financial subsidy” (109-110), thereby deflecting attention from the clear inference to be drawn from the paratexts that Pembroke and Montgomery would have followed the usual custom of at least partially underwriting the production of a book dedicated to them. (The only evidence against this is the colophon declaration, which Smith does not reproduce or discuss). On the contrary, in Smith’s imaginative and richly metaphorical scenario, of the sort Stratfordians so much enjoy, “this book needed to stand on its own two feet in the literary marketplace of St. Paul’s Churchyard” (110).

The usual failure to acknowledge the central role that Pembroke and Montgomery (and their allies and relatives in the noble houses of Oxford, Southampton, and Derby) play in the marriage crisis⁹ is especially curious given Pembroke’s long and well-documented role as the most powerful protector of the liberty of the stage in Jacobean England and prominent opponent of the Spanish marriage. Emma Smith, while mentioning both the patrons and the context of the marriage crisis, never draws the connection that Pembroke was the most powerful opponent of the match in England during the months the *Folio* was being printed, and she equivocates or even stonewalls over such key questions such as the actual role of Heminges and Condell in the book’s production or the significance of Pembroke’s and Montgomery’s patronage. It is as if the *First Folio* publication and the Spanish Marriage crisis, although happening at the same moment in history in the same place – and to a significant degree involving the same cast of historical agents – have been isolated in separate and distinct boxes, each studied by a different set of scholars and written about for a different audience or even, as in Smith’s book, together in one book but somehow still not as parts of a plausible historical narrative of causes and effects.

For many decades the reluctance of Shakespeare scholars to more closely consider the historical context of the *Folio*’s production, as Dickson suggests, was closely tied to longstanding and deeply held British amnesia over a phase of Jacobean history that many Protestants looked back to with an uneasy sense of national shame. Yet this disassociation of the *Folio* project, including Jonson’s encomium, from the unfolding international politics of the period 1620-24 can be accomplished only by careful avoidance of abundant sociological, historical, and semiotic connections, as evidenced in multiple interlocking relationships among key players in the publication drama including Pembroke, the Lord Chamberlain.

Pembroke, his brother Montgomery, and his in-laws, including his brother-in-law the 18th Earl of Oxford, were all vigorous supporters of the Protestant cause of King James’ daughter Elizabeth and her husband Frederick of Bohemia, for whose wedding in 1613, *The Tempest* had been performed at Whitehall (Stritmatter and Kositsky 2011). Their dismay at the loss of the Palatinate in 1620-21 and King James’ denunciations of Parliament, compounded by the increasingly despotic power of Buckingham and the Spanish ambassador Gondomar at court, and the destabilizing impact

of Charles' Madrid escapade were, by the spring of 1622, driving the patriot faction to ever more desperate oppositional measures to avert what they saw as the disastrous threat of counter-reformation. To them, James' abandonment of his daughter and her husband was also a betrayal of Horatio Vere and his deceased comrade Francis Vere, the "Fighting Veres," who had by then been leading the Protestant cause in the lowlands for over two decades (Markham 1888).

Some alliances at court were strained or dashed by the controversy, and others confirmed by it. By the summer of 1621 it was rumored that Ben Jonson, who from 1616 to 1619 had been considered a confidante of the Stuart clique, was no longer welcome at court, and was instead reconsolidating his old alliances with Pembroke's faction. In June, 1621, Henry de Vere (the 18th Earl of Oxford), Henry Wriothesley (the 3rd Earl of Southampton), and John Sandys were all arrested for fomenting opposition to the Spanish match in Parliament and the House of Lords. Oxford would not be released until December 30, six months later, and he would be back in jail for a longer stay before the crisis began to unwind in 1623. It is important to emphasize that only in fall of 1621, following the first arrest of the 18th Earl of Oxford, for his vocal opposition to the match and the seizure of the upper Palatinate by Spanish forces, is there clear evidence of Pembroke's resolve to proceed with the Folio project, even though other evidence would suggest that the publishers wanted to print two years earlier.¹⁰ On October 5, Pembroke awarded Jonson with the reversion¹¹ of the post of Master of the Revels, a position Jonson had long coveted. Simultaneously, it was rumored (Ogburn 222)¹² that his annual crown pension would be increased from 100 marks to 200 pounds, a three-fold increase that could only have been justified on the basis of Jonson's performance of some extraordinary service such as the design and editorship of the Folio.

The emergence of a new Shakespeare publisher in the fall of 1621 indicates that Pembroke was not the only "grand possessor" with a publication agenda. Thomas Walkley, having been only in 1618 made a freeman of the Stationer's Guild at a time when no other Shakespeare plays had appeared in print for the past thirteen years, and in violation of Pembroke's May 1619 edict against any further unauthorized publication of the plays from the King's Men repertoire – registered and swiftly published a quarto of *Othello* (Figure 6).

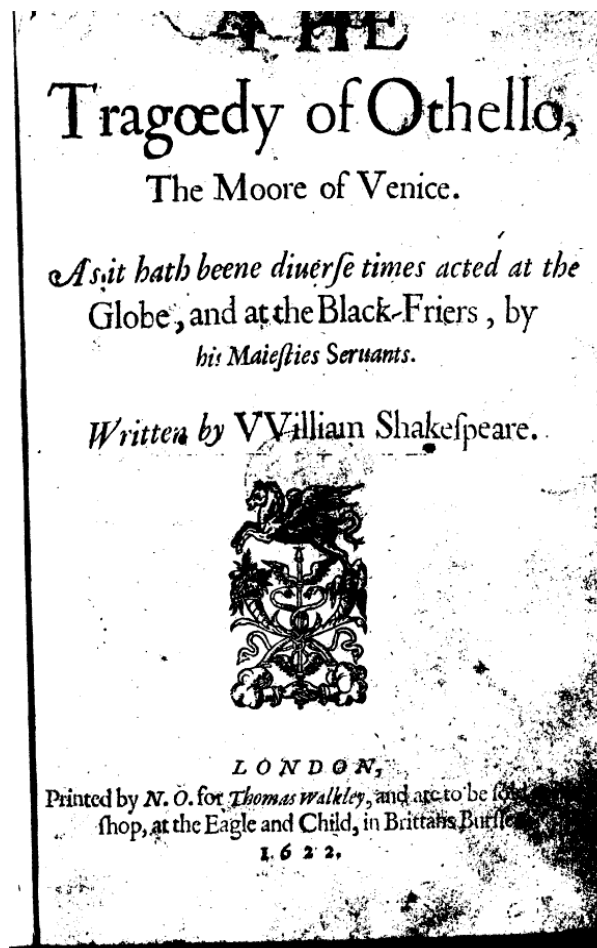


Figure 6. Title page of Walkley's 1622 quarto of *Othello*, "to be sold [at his] shop, at the Eagle and Child" – i.e., as named after the heraldic insignia of the Earls of Derby.

Remarkably – although the exact connection between the two events seems not to have been adequately delineated – this registration occurred on Oct. 6, only one day after Pembroke had granted the reversion of the Mastership of the Revels to Jonson. The list of Walkley's publications between his 1618 induction into the Stationer's Company and the publication of *Othello* in 1622 – assembled by Peter Dickson (161) – confirms the suspicion of a connection between these two events, for nothing is more obvious about Walkley's career than his total reliance on, and dedication to, the Earldom of Derby. His bookshop "at the Eagle and Child," as first identified by Harry Morris (in 1963), took its name from the heraldic devices of the Earls of Derby. As Leo Daugherty explains, the Stanleys of Lathom were "invariably associated, not just in Britain, but in all the courts of Europe, with Ganymede and the Ganymedean Eagle" (49). The conspicuous reference to the Eagle and Child shop on the

1622 *Othello* quarto as well as on other publications by Walkley, suggest a desire to advertise a close association between the printer and the Derby earldom (Dickson, “Derby Connection”). As the house printer of the Earl, Walkley not only sported the Derby arms on his shop and his title pages, but also specialized in publishing works with a direct association to the family’s interests, including the sermons of John Everard (1619, 1622, and 1623), Derby’s controversial Chaplain.

With Thomas Scott, Everard was leading the charge from the pulpit against the Spanish marriage. Unlike Scott, he was not a moderate Anglican, but a theological radical. A colleague and correspondent with Robert Fludd, Everard inherited manuscripts from Nicholas Hill, the materialist translator of Democritus once reported to have served the 17th Earl of Oxford. He was widely condemned during and after his life for allegedly endorsing a range of heresies, including Anabaptism. Over a period of five years, between October 12, 1618, when he registered and then published Everard’s *Arriereban*, and 1623, when he published his *Bellonea’s Embrion*, Walkley became the primary publisher of Everard’s work, publishing also in the interim, in February 1622, Everard’s *Sermons*. Between September and December 1621 – less than a month before the registration of *Othello* – Everard was jailed for speaking out against the Spanish marriage. Was the arrest provoked by Derby’s decision to publish *Othello*?

If so, we must wonder why a “grand possessor” such as the Earl of Derby would wish to authorize a publication of *Othello* in the fall of 1621, if the Folio project was already at that time contemplated and under preparation? The answer seems to lie in the pointed political implications *Othello* would have had for the average English reader in 1621. In this immediate context, the play, having been withheld from publication for nearly two decades and suddenly appearing in print on the eve of the Marriage crisis, could only have been read as an attack on King James as a despotic abuser. As Dickson explains this circumstance:

Although the drama is set in Italy, the supreme villain . . . bears a Spanish name, ‘Iago.’ Iago is the diminutive short form for the name Diego or James, as we see in Santiago, meaning Saint Diego or St. James, the patron saint of Spain. There was already a widespread public perception that the devious Machiavellian Spanish Ambassador Gondomar (Diego Sarmiento de Cauca) had played on King James’ lust for a large dowry and lured him into pursuing this Spanish Match against his better judgment. And since the King and Gondomar sometimes referred to themselves affectionately as the “two Diegos,” there was an implicit but unmistakable political critique of the Spanish marriage and the King’s general policy of détente toward Madrid in having the villain in *Othello* bear the name “Iago.” (156)

Very likely, moreover, the Derby sponsorship of the publication of *Othello* signals the existence of a division among the patriot earls themselves over how to proceed with

such delicate matters as, for example, using one of the plays as a direct intervention in the marriage controversy – something very different from, and far more political than publishing the entire works in one volume. George Buc, having approved the Walkley-Derby plan to print the topically explosive play, was swiftly retired by Pembroke, the Lord Chamberlain. If their respective chaplains are any indication, Pembroke and Derby were united in their opposition to the Spanish marriage, but held markedly distinct positions on other matters of policy and religion, including exactly how to oppose the marriage, with Derby being by far the more radical, if the theology and reputations of their respective chaplains is any indication. In 1621, while Pembroke was carefully laying the foundations for the Folio, Derby fired a warning shot across the bow of the ship of state, warning James of the danger of taking the Protestant loyal opposition for granted.

Publishers, Poets and Translators

If, as Justice John Paul Stevens has suggested, Shakespeare as we have him is the result of an “imaginative conspiracy,” then the shape of the conspiracy is evident in the names, backgrounds, associations, and literary production, of those most intimately connected with the Folio. Closely examining the Folio’s immediate historical context, it becomes difficult to ignore the decisive implications of this wider fact pattern: not only the Folio’s patrons, but at least three of the four contributors of its dedicatory poems – Ben Jonson, James Mabbe, and Leonard Digges – were major players in the 1621-24 outpouring of publications which commented, directly or indirectly, on the marriage crisis. Digges and Mabbe (pronounced *maybe*) were both prominent Hispanists and translators, who had apparently travelled together in Spain during the early years of the Jacobean reign. In 1622 they were both capitalizing on the Spanish vogue that was sweeping the nation and shaping an emerging market for the torrent of Spain-related plays, pamphlets, and translations that has left such an indubitable mark in the record of the period.

One of the strongest links connecting the contributors to the Folio paratexts is the interlocking directorate of their involvement in translations of literary classics from Spanish to English. Remarkably, in 1622 both Digges and Mabbe – the latter described by P.E. Russell as the “first English Hispanist” – both published major translations, *The Rogue* (Figure 7A) and *Gerardo, the Unfortunate Spaniard* (Figure 7B), of Spanish picaresque novels, and both are intricately connected to the Folio project in literary ways that have gone largely unexplained by orthodox scholars.

Digges’s translation of Gonzalo de Céspedes y Meneses’ novel *Varia fortuna de soldado Píndaro*, appearing under the title of *Gerardo, The Unfortunate Spaniard*, also shows signs of its origin in the same milieu, and is pointedly dedicated to Pembroke and Montgomery (Figure 7).

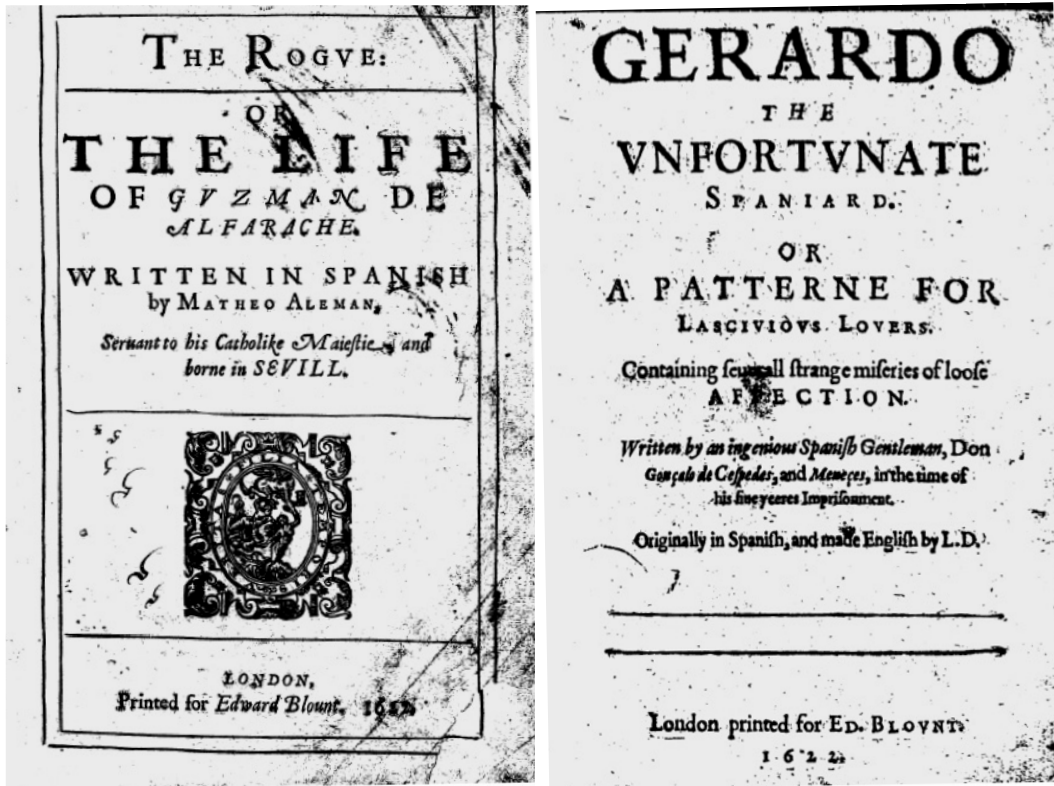


Figure 7. Two translations from the Spanish, both published by Edward Blount in 1622, both by contributors of dedicatory poems to the 1623 Shakespeare First Folio.

Digges was the younger son of the astronomer Thomas Digges and brother of the diplomat Sir Dudley Digges, whose initials appear along with Leonard's in the book's dedication to Pembroke and Montgomery (Figure 8). This translator group also had direct ties to the Folio publishers. As well as being friends of the Digges family, Mabbe's family had also intermarried with the Jaggards. In 1597, Mabbe's sister Elizabeth had married John Jaggard, the elder brother of the printer William.

Beneath the dedication, emphasizing the volume's political character, are printed the initials of both the translator Leonard, and his brother the diplomat and M.P. Dudley Digges (1583-1639). Both Jonson and Leonard Digges, moreover, contributed prefatory verses to Mabbe's *Rogue*. Underscoring the connections tying these international events, then transpiring on the world stage, to the Shakespeare Folio production syndicate and to these picaresque translations, Folio syndicate member Edward Blount published both volumes by Digges and Mabbe (Figure 7).

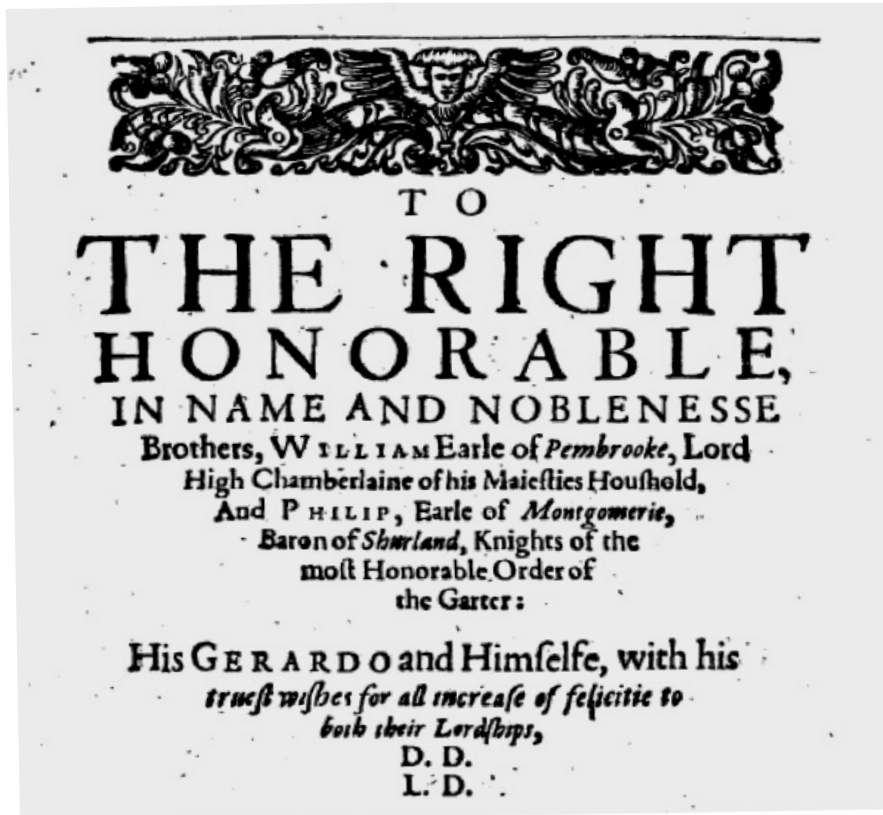


Figure 8. Dedication of Digges' translation *Gerardo* to First Folio patrons *Pembroke* and *Montgomery*, with the initials of his brother, the diplomat and *Pembroke* confidante, *Dudley Digges*.

Known primarily for his numerous literary publications – among them Lyly's 1632 collected works, Jonson's *Sejanus*, works by William Camden, Samuel Daniel, and Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr*, in which the "Phoenix and the Turtle" by "William Shake-Speare" first appeared – Blount's Protestant sympathies, like those of *Pembroke*, are well documented. Cervantes editor Anthony G. Lo Ré, for example, has observed Blount's characteristic habit, in his translation of Cervantes, of omitting passages with a strong Catholic flavor, a practice which Lo Ré contrasts with that followed by Cervantes' Catholic translator Shelton.

Although the publishers and patrons of the Folio project, with sympathizers like the house of *Derby*, were distinctively Protestant in their orientation, the authors of the dedicatory verses (and presumptive editors of the work) display a contrasting, more Catholic profile. Jonson himself, a conscientious Catholic since at least 1605, had been swept up and jailed in the hysteria around the Guy Fawkes 'Gunpowder' attack on Parliament. As a law-abiding Catholic, he detested spies, and may have been

privity to inside information that implicated the Cecil government in the conspiracy, i.e., that significant inducement was offered by government agents to encourage the conspirators to undertake ever-bolder, more precarious and foolish enterprises to give voice to their complaints. Even James Shapiro has dared to think the crisis was in part manufactured by the same government that later prosecuted some of the conspirators.¹³

Together with the Catholic wit, translator and internationalist Hugh Holland, who was a close friend of Jonson's, these Folio editors constituted a group of travelers and translators with strong tendencies towards the conscientious Catholicism of Sir John Strangeway, the Master of the King's Bedchamber to whom Mabbe dedicated his 1622 translation of *The Rogue: or the Life of Guzman de Alfarache*. Mabbe published his pseudonymous translation of the picaresque novel of Matheo Aleman under the name "Don Diego Puede-Ser" (i.e., "Sir Maybe").

Mabbe was a graduate of Magdalen College in Oxford, one of the founders of "English Hispanism" (Fernández, 1) with a long life of Catholic ecumenism. His 1632 translation of Fray Jaun de Santa Maria's *República y policía Cristiana* introduced English readers to the philosophy of governance of Phillip III's theological advisor and confessor to his daughter, doña Maria. Surveying this range of agents directly involved in the production of the Folio as well as those on the scene at one remove, it seems safe to conclude that this group cannot be distinguished on the basis of a particular religious affiliation, but rather seems to represent a broad humanist spectrum of "comparative literature" translators, involving not only strong Protestants like Pembroke or his chaplain Scott, but also "constitutional" Catholics and Catholic sympathizers like Sir John Strangeway, Hugh Holland, Jonson, or Mabbe.

In the months leading up to the publishing of the *First Folio*, the two "noble bretheren" Pembroke and Montgomery, were among those underwriting the translations of Mabbe and Digges, who in turn contributed poems to the *First Folio* and may reasonably be identified as part of the work's editorial team (such as it was), working under the direction of Jonson (who may have joined the publication team only in the final months).

Lacking a unified religious perspective, the group that created the *First Folio* was one formed by an aesthetic aspiration: they were internationalists, sharing an appreciation of literature and great arts that was fundamentally humanist and broadly ecumenical. If they were opposed to the Spanish marriage, this did not mean they were narrowly anti-Spanish; they were opposed to politico-religious tyranny in all forms. The Catholic wing of the group had already enlisted the financial and emotional backing of the Protestant wing to help introduce to English readers books on subjects still banned in Spain by the Inquisition. They were not anti-Spanish. They were anti-imperialists who supported Spanish literature and literary dissidents. To them, "Shakespeare" was a kind of English Cervantes. Thus, while the Folio included a definite,

intentional, and ultimately unmistakable dimension of resistance to the Spanish marriage, those involved in its production were simultaneously introducing the English reading public to some of the greatest masterpieces of Spanish literature.

Bestow, How and Where You List

According to the publishing schedule established in his classic bibliographic study, Charlton Hinman determines that the *First Folio* printing started in or around March/April, 1622, and was completed in approximately nineteen months, by around November 1623. Pembroke had apparently been laying the groundwork for the Folio publication at least since October 1621, when the Upper Palatinate was seized by Catholic troops and Elizabeth and Fredrick took refuge in The Hague.

Originally projected to appear in fall of 1622, the *First Folio* was delayed, perhaps by the hectic 1621-22 printing schedules of the Blount and Jaggard firms, but just as likely by the lack of a final commitment from the cautious Pembroke himself. That the Jaggard firm had itself been preparing for the Folio for at least two years is evident by the remarkable but still poorly understood events of 1619. Early in the year, it seems, Jaggard with the cooperation of Thomas Pavier issued a series of ten oversized Shakespearean and pseudo-Shakespearean quartos,¹⁴ including *Pericles*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *King Lear*, 2 and 3 *Henry VI*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Henry V*. For poorly understood reasons, several plays in the series (*Merchant*, 1600; *Lear*, 1608; *Henry V*, 1608; *Dream*, 1600) were falsely backdated, but William J. Neidig showed by scrupulous bibliographical method in 1910 that the entire series, including the falsely backdated issues, was printed by the Pavier-Jaggard syndicate in 1619. The March 31, 1621 death of Phillip III of Spain had accelerated plans for the Spanish match, and both Southampton and the 18th Earl of Oxford, against the backdrop of these fast-moving events, were also jailed that summer. Oxford's second jailing, as Dickson has emphasized ("Epistle," 2; "Washington Researcher," 2), was closely synchronized with the printing of the Folio, suggesting the very great probability that it was this circumstance that led Pembroke and his allies to finally approve the project. Evidence confirming this delay is a Nov. 1622 advertisement for the Folio (Figure 9A and B), printed for the Frankfurt book fair nearly a year before the book actually became available for sale.

While the exact relation of the Pavier series to the 1623 Folio remains disputed, the impressive sequence of events connecting the Jaggard firm to the Herbert brothers and foreshadowing the Folio publication in the years immediately preceding the crisis, does assume renewed significance in light of the idea that the publishers were jockeying for the patronage and consent of the Pembroke faction to advance the printing. On May 3, 1619, Pembroke, apparently in response to the Pavier series – so Peter Dickson among others plausibly argues – issued an injunction against the

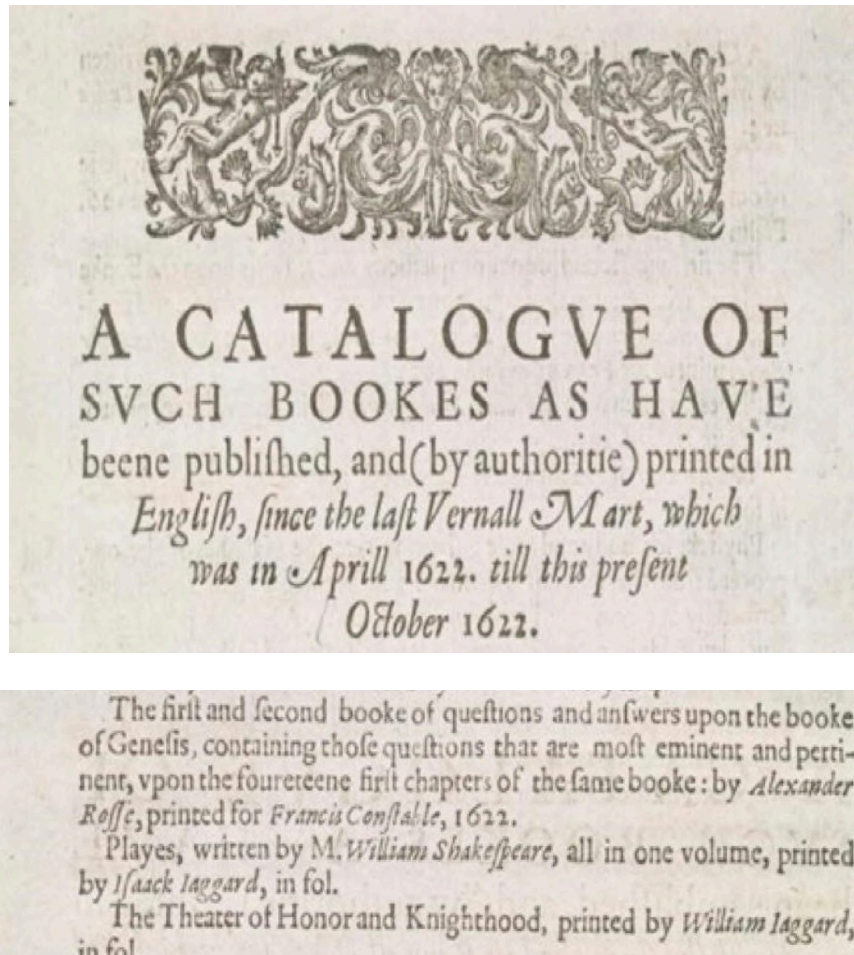


Figure 9. 1622 Frankfurt Book Sale Advertiser showing First Folio (Ashm.1057(14), signature D4 recto and verso excerpts). Images courtesy the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, under creative commons license via Shakespeare Documented.

further publication of plays owned by the King's Men. Although the original text of the decree along with its exact terms is missing, a similar letter, dated 1637 and signed by Philip Herbert, who had assumed position of Lord Chamberlain on his brother's death in 1626, records that the 1619 decree had taken order "for the stay of any further impression of any of the playes or interludes of his majesties servants without their consents" (Chambers, I, 136). For whatever reasons, Pembroke was unready in early 1619 to move the project on his own accord. Prompting from the publishers was, however, forthcoming before the end of the year in the form of a dedication to the "most noble and twin-like paire....sir Phillip Herbert" and

“the truly virtuous and Noble Countesse his Wife, the lady Susan, Daughter to the right Honourable Edward Vere, Earl of Oxenford” in Thomas Milles’ *Archaio-ploutos* (Figure 10).

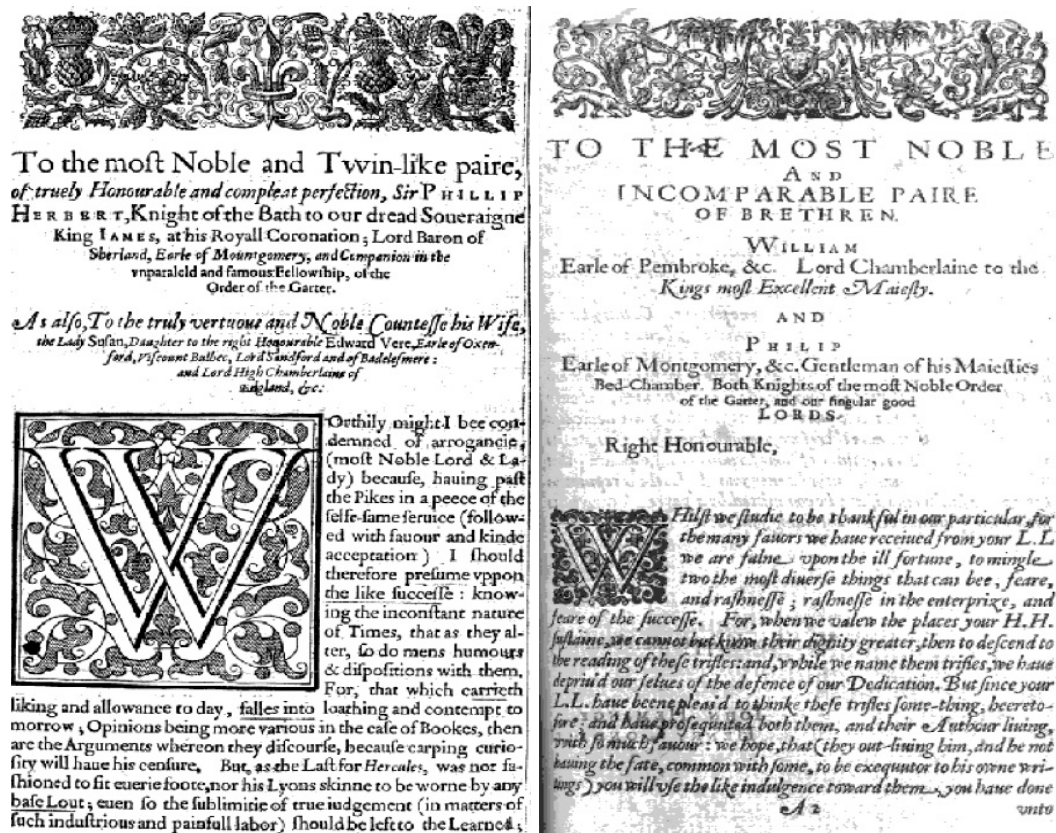


Figure 10. The dedication page to *Archaio-ploutos* (left) is imitated by that of the *Shakespeare First Folio* (right), 1623.

The unsigned dedication, not only invites Montgomery and his wife to enjoy the “Orchard [which] stands wide open to welcome you, richly abounding in the fairest Frutages: not to feed the eye only, but likewise to refresh the Heart,” – but it also solicits the earl and his countess to “plucke where, and while you please, and to bestow how, and when you list: because *they are all yours*, and whosoever else shall taste of them, do enioy such freedome but by your favor” (emphasis added).

Especially in the wake of Jaggard’s abortive quarto series and Pembroke’s May 3, 1619 edict, the appeal to “bestow how, and when you list” – seems difficult to regard as anything but the publisher’s overt request not only for Pembroke’s approval of the project, but a supplication for missing manuscript materials as well.

As Charlton Ogburn plausibly suggests, “Pembroke, with Buc’s cooperation, was

clamping down on the traffic in Shakespeare's plays, anticipating publication of an authorized edition of the whole collection" (218).

The 1619 dedication's layout and design evidently foreshadow the pattern followed four years later in the Folio printing (Figure 10). As suggested in a previous article, "Bestow How, and When you List" (Stritmatter 2016), the similarity of both design and language between the 1619 and 1623 dedications "are striking enough to constitute a clearly deliberate creative allusion, employing both visual elements of design and linguistic clues to connect the Shakespeare volume to *Archaio-ploutos*" (91).¹⁵ It is almost as if the Jaggard syndicate is laying a trail of breadcrumbs connecting the 1623 Folio backwards to the 1619 request to Susan Vere to supply manuscript materials for it. In the first publication, Montgomery and his wife Susan Vere are styled "the most noble and twin-like pair." In the Folio, the "most noble and incomparable brethren" are Montgomery and his elder brother, Pembroke.¹⁶ The lines directly concerning Oxford, and the preponderance of words addressed to his daughter, "Lady Susan," suggest that Jaggard was pitching to secure the manuscripts to publish Shakespeare's *First Folio*.

Such a theory, it will be seen in the next article, is amply echoed in Ben Jonson's *First Folio* encomium to the author:

To the memory of my beloued

THE AVTHOR

MR. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE:

AND

What he hath left vs.

Notes

1. The volume in which these lines appears, John Benson's spurious edition of *Poems: Written By Wil. Shake-speare. Gent.* (London: Tho. Cotes for John Benson, 1640, STC 22344), prints page after page of classical mythographic poetry, much of it not by Shakespeare but by John Heywood. Per Benson's introduction the volume also purports to contain "such gentle strains as shall recreate and not perplexe your braine, no intricate or cloudy stuffe to puzzell intellect, but perfect eloquence" (2v). Prominent in the collection, moreover, are Shakespeare Sonnets 153 and 154, long known to represent translations or variations on an epigram by Marianus, originally published in the Greek Planudean anthology in 1494, although also extant during the 16th century in variations in Latin, Italian, and other vernaculars. The relevance of these two poems to the question of the author's familiarity with Greek sources is said by Hyder Rollins to have provoked "almost endless discussion." In what appears to be the most thorough study extant, Hutton determined that "Shakespeare is closer to the Greek epigram than he is to [the Latin translations of Marianus]," adding that "his management of the theme [whatever that means] suggests that he did not draw immediately on the [Greek] epigram" (in Rollins 394).
2. Whether the artist is the Martin Droeshout the younger (1601-1650) or his uncle (c. 1565- c. 1642) has been disputed, with Spielmann, Schoenbaum (1977), the *DNB* and most authorities traditionally supporting the younger, but the 2004 new *DNB* claiming the artist is the uncle. It is clear, however, that no orthodox consensus exists on this topic, with Shuckman (1991) and Schlueter (2007), to cite only two recent orthodox scholars, supporting the older tradition that the artist was the younger man, while both the assembled scholars writing in Smith et al. (2016) and Smith herself steer clear of any serious discussion of the question, with Smith nevertheless pausing long enough to attribute a falsely oversimplified logic to those endorsing the younger man as the artist (2015, 8, 122-124). Schlueter's detailed study, not cited by Smith, cross-examines studies by Edmond (1991) and Schuckman (1991), who took opposite sides on the question, before eventually siding with Schuckman's view that the younger man is the engraver. She admits that in the beginning "I was hoping I would be able to confirm Edmond's argument for the elder Martin," but concludes by definitely supporting the contrary position and believes that "it is likely that any further new evidence will only strengthen the conclusion that the signature on the 1623 engraving of Shakespeare belongs to the twenty-two year old Martin Droeshout" (242). Apparently Smith et al. did not get the memo.
3. Arrested with Oxford were the 3rd Earl of Southampton, Henry Wriothesley, Sir

Edwin Sandys, and John Selden.

4. “Might I not borrow a Spanish name or two to grace this Comedie (of the Spanish marriage) with stately actors? Or must they onely be reserved for Kingly tragedies?” (BV, p. 10).
5. The adjectival form used in the poem does not have a separate *OED* entry.
6. On this term, see the discussion below regarding the 1609 preface to *Troilus and Cressida*.
7. For a reasonable but ultimately unpersuasive alternative hypothesis see Scragg, who argues that while Jonson wrote the second epistle to the readers in general, Edward Blount wrote the first one to Pembroke and Montgomery.
8. If anyone knows of a similar statement on a colophon from this period I would be intrigued to learn of it. To my considerable but by no means comprehensive knowledge this type of wording is unusual if not unprecedented.
9. For a suggestive exception to this general rule, see Samson’s study on the politics of translation in 1623 – which, unfortunately, does little more than to draw some attention to the intriguing temporal coincidence between the Folio and the marriage crisis (106).
10. See, for example, Stritmatter, “Bestow” and the *Archaio-ploutos* discussion below.
11. *OED* 2b “the right to succession of an office or place of emolument, after the death or retirement of the holder.”
12. According to Riggs (271), erroneously.
13. *The Year of Lear*, 101-103.
14. In addition to the eight authentic Shakespeare plays, the series included *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (correctly dated 1619) and *Sir John Oldcastle* (backdated 1600), both attributed to Shakespeare.
15. Although the argument was first developed in Stritmatter (1998), the cited wording was added to a revised version of the case only published in 2016. See reference list for details of both publications.
16. Many scholars are today still confused about the timeline for the printing of the Folio and continue to perpetuate the anachronistic view of a much earlier start date for the printing. Jonathan Bate, for example, in his “more detailed account” for the “General Introduction” to *The RSC Shakespeare: Complete Works*, as recently as 2007 baldly asserts that “materials were gathered and printing began in 1621” (https://www.rsc.org.uk/downloads/case_for_the_folio.pdf).

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