

BEYOND MACBETH:

SHAKESPEARE COLLECTIONS IN SCOTLAND





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Introduction

William Shakespeare is the best known writer in the world. He is generally held not only to be the greatest playwright but also the greatest writer in the English language. His plays have rarely been out of the repertory since their earliest production in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and have been available to readers in an astonishing range of printed editions for most of that time too. His characters and words have long been a part of common consciousness: phrases such as 'star-crossed lovers' and the 'mind's eye' have become part of the fabric of the English language, and figures such as Hamlet have been taken to represent aspects of a general or universal human condition. Yet Shakespeare does not mean exactly the same things to all those who encounter his work, and he did not achieve his elevated status overnight. While some have extolled his exceptional genius, and seen him as effortlessly transcending the social and material world inhabited by the rest of us, others have been all too aware of the broad range of activities and processes – including performing, printing, reading and writing – that have made him the extraordinarily dense cultural presence that he is today. There are many different versions or aspects of this story – in this exhibition we highlight the sometimes overlooked testimony provided by world-class collections of Shakespearean material held by the National Library of Scotland and the University of Edinburgh library.

THE MAKING OF SHAKESPEARE



In his elegy on Yeats W. H. Auden described how the poet 'became his admirers', and this is true of Shakespeare too: he has been made and remade time and time over by those who have found themselves captivated, moved and moulded by his work and fame. Each generation and century has had its Shakespeare or Shakespeares, and sought to find itself in the mirror of his work. And within this process there have been different currents and sometimes acute conflicts, and the force of his presence has generated some peculiar outcomes – the unwarranted controversy over the authorship of the plays, which first emerged in the nineteenth century and shows no sign of fading away in the age of internet conspiracy theories, is eloquent if puzzling testimony to this.

In this exhibition we highlight the ways in which Shakespeare came to be who he is today through the activities and personalities of some of the people who have read, studied and collected his plays over the past 400 years, from Shakespeare's own lifetime to the present day. They have been inspired by his words to write their own works, to discover as much as they could about Shakespeare's life, times and writings, and to share their discoveries with the world. Our central figures have all contributed to bringing these extraordinarily rich collections of Shakespeareana to Scotland, and to the two major Scottish institutions where they are now housed. So in focusing on these figures and their activities we have sought to reflect, too, on the position that Shakespeare has held, and holds today, in Scottish culture.

Who was William Shakespeare?

Shakespeare was born the son of a glove-maker in the small English town of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564. By 1592 he was writing and acting in plays in London. His comedies, histories and tragedies delighted ordinary playgoers and were performed at court for Elizabeth I and James VI and I. Shakespeare himself invested in the Globe Theatre, home of his own acting company, but he gradually stopped writing plays and may have retired altogether to Stratford, where his wife and children had always lived. He died in 1616, seven years before his actor friends published the collection of 36 of his plays now called the First Folio.

From stage to page

Many of the plays that were performed on the London stage during Shakespeare's lifetime only had a few performances, were never printed, and are now lost and

forgotten. Some plays were published as playbooks – small, cheap books sold at the many bookstalls in the churchyard of St Paul's Cathedral. Playbooks were printed in a format called 'quarto' (i.e. made up of gatherings of four leaves of paper, produced by folding a large sheet twice). An individual quarto was an ephemeral item no more substantial than a modern magazine, which would have been sold as a set of loose sheets, or with the gatherings stitched together, perhaps in paper wrappers. Some owners would have given their playbooks more durable leather or vellum bindings; some assembled volumes of several playbooks bound together.

Early editions of Shakespeare's plays in this format are known simply as 'quartos'. No original manuscripts of the plays in the Shakespearean canon survive, bar three pages believed to be in Shakespeare's hand in the collaboration *Sir Thomas More*. The first printed editions therefore have a special importance as the first witnesses of these texts, which can cause excitement to beat even in the gravest scholar's heart: as the great bibliographer A.W. Pollard wrote of the first quarto of *Richard II*, 'these colons and commas take us straight into the room in which *Richard II* was written and we look over Shakespeare's shoulder as he penned it' (*Shakespeare's Fight with the Pirates*, 1920).

Shakespeare quartos collected over the centuries, preserved in spite of their original flimsy condition, are at the heart of this exhibition. Not all of Shakespeare's plays appeared in these quarto editions. Some of his greatest and best-loved plays such as *Twelfth Night* and *Macbeth* would be lost to us if his friends had not collected them into the First Folio.

TREASURES, TRIBUTES AND REMAINS



The First Folio and Macbeth

The First Folio marks the first appearance of *Macbeth* in print. Published in 1623, it is the first complete edition of Shakespeare's works, though it does exclude one play, *Pericles*, at least partially written by Shakespeare and published under his name during his lifetime. This copy, now one of the treasures of the National Library, has been in Scotland for at least 225 years. It was presented to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1784 by a Miss Clarke of Dunbar – its earlier history is unknown. The Antiquaries donated the book to NLS in 1949.

'The Scottish play' is the traditional way of referring to *Macbeth*, because of the old theatrical superstition that to say the play's name aloud is to bring bad luck. But the play really did have its roots in Scotland. Macbeth reigned as King of Scots between 1034 and 1057. Shakespeare's source for the story, Ralph Holinshed, relied on the Scots historians Hector Boece and Andrew Wyntoun. This play about kingship dates from the early years of the reign of James VI as King of England, and is very much a Jacobean text: the story of the descent of the Stewart dynasty from Banquo is woven into the drama, and it reflects the new King's interests in witchcraft and topical concerns and alarms aroused by the Gunpowder plot of November 1605. It has been convincingly argued that the play was probably performed at court for James VI and I. The surviving text, which is actually rather short for a Shakespearean play, incorporates material by the prolific playwright Thomas Middleton, a possible collaborator on *Measure for Measure* and *Timon of Athens*, and bears discernible traces of production at the indoor Blackfriars theatre that Shakespeare's company, the King's Men, began to use as their winter home only in 1609.

Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies. Published according to the True Originall Copies (London, 1623).

NLS F.7.e.20, open at the first page of *Macbeth*, p.131.

Scott's Shakespeare

A statue of Shakespeare once presided over the library of Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford. It is based on the funerary monument near Shakespeare's tomb in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon, which was made soon after the poet's death. Scott was described as 'the Shakespeare of novel writers' for many reasons – his use of history, his

talent for creating a gallery of memorable, sympathetic characters, his skill at weaving enthralling stories about them. A great admirer of Shakespeare, he quoted him constantly in his own novels.

He commissioned this statue after a pilgrimage to 'the tomb of the mighty wizard', as he called Shakespeare. Scott created his own Shakespeare, bringing him to life as a character in his novel *Kenilworth*, set during the reign of Elizabeth I. His image of the historical Shakespeare was highly influential, as was the idea which began with 'the Scottish Shakespeare' that the heirs of Shakespeare were now to be found as much among novelists as among poets and playwrights.

Statue of Shakespeare, attributed to George Bullock.
Loaned by The Abbotsford Trust.

Shakespeare over Edinburgh

This statue of Shakespeare once graced the pediment of Edinburgh's Theatre Royal. The Theatre occupied the centre of Shakespeare Square, at the eastern end of Princes Street, from the 1760s to the 1850s. The statue is made of Coade stone, a popular form of artificial stone invented in the late eighteenth century. It was acquired by the owner, John Jackson, in the 1780s, along with accompanying figures of tragedy and comedy, and it is included in a 1790 list of debts owed by Jackson to a range of creditors, where it is described as 'never used'. Early nineteenth century illustrations, however, show it in the lofty position from which it was eventually removed when the Theatre was remodelled in 1830. It was finally acquired by the advocate and writer Henry Cockburn for the garden of Bonaly Tower, his house at the edge of Edinburgh. It has remained there ever since.

Photograph of Coade stone statue of Shakespeare, now at Bonaly Tower, Edinburgh.

Shakespeare in the 17th century

Shakespeare enjoyed great success as a playwright, but it would surprise many of his contemporaries to know that he is now considered such a great author. Indeed, the term 'playwright' is an early modern coinage meant to stress the likeness between this sort of work and the mechanical labour of other 'wrights' or craftsmen. Writers such as Ben Jonson enjoyed a higher reputation among vernacular authors of the day, with his carefully named *Works* appearing in 1616. To call plays 'works' was to stress their claim to moral seriousness, and Jonson's presumption was the occasion of protest from some. Shakespeare himself does not seem to have taken the same care to present his plays as serious literature, worthy of consideration and respect alongside the classical authors who made up the humanist literary canon. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that he was indifferent to their circulation as texts to be read, and printed copies of his plays found a wide readership.

William Drummond was one of these early readers. The evidence of what Drummond read, what books he owned, and the poetry he wrote himself give us a rare glimpse of how someone in Shakespeare's own lifetime responded to him. Drummond read Shakespeare's poems and plays for pleasure; Shakespeare's language and phrasing is echoed in some of Drummond's own poems. But he did not think Shakespeare was a better writer than his favourite authors such as Sir Philip Sidney and his own friend and fellow-Scot Sir William Alexander.

Who was William Drummond?

William Drummond was born in 1585 into an ancient Scottish family, at Hawthornden Castle, south of Edinburgh. Drummond's uncle, the poet William Fowler, was secretary to Queen Anne, wife of James VI.

King James, himself a poet, presided over a flourishing Scots literary culture at his court. He, Fowler, and other court poets formed a group called the 'Castalian Band'. It is most likely through these writers that Drummond was introduced to the great Petrarchan tradition of European love poetry. As a poet, he saw himself as part of this tradition. But this was also a golden age for English poetry, which influenced Drummond as much as the French, Italian and Scottish authors he also loved. His own poetry was written in English rather than Scots, although it was published in Edinburgh.

Drummond may have seen masques and plays performed at court or elsewhere, but Edinburgh had no public theatres as London did. Drummond read English plays, and wrote a pageant for the entrance of Charles I to Edinburgh in 1633, but he was more interested in poetry than in drama. He also wrote a *History of Scotland*, published after his death in 1649.

Drummond and London

William Drummond first visited London in 1606, en route to continental Europe. He was one of many young men who came from Scotland to London in the years after King James had ascended the English throne, but he does not seem to have been one of those who desired to seek their fortunes in England or at the royal court. A second visit in 1610 was cut short by his father's death, and he returned to Scotland where he made a life for himself as laird of the family estate.

Drummond could well have attended performances of Shakespeare's plays in London during his visits of 1606 and 1610. He certainly bought and read them, as can be seen from the Shakespeare quartos mentioned in the lists he made of books he had read, and in the echoes of Shakespeare's works in his own poetry and writing. He became friends with other English authors, including Ben Jonson, who visited him at Hawthornden in 1618-19.

Drummond's library

Drummond had a substantial library for a 17th-century Scottish gentleman – he owned over 1400 books. In 1626 he made the first of several gifts of books to the library of 'King James's College,' as the young University of Edinburgh, where he had been educated himself, was then known. Playbooks at this time were not considered to be serious literature – Sir Thomas Bodley banned them from his library in Oxford in 1612. Drummond's essay 'On Libraries' shows that he thought every kind of book had a place in a library; echoing the arboreal metaphors of Jonson, among others, he said that 'Libraries are as Forrests, in which not only tall Cedars and Oaks are to be found, but Bushes too and dwarfish Shrubs, and as in Apothecaries Shops all sorts of Drugs are permitted to be, so may all sorts of Books be in a Library.'

It is thanks to the library which accepted Drummond's gift, playbooks included, that the Shakespeare quartos that he owned survive today.

1-2. Poetic Scotland

King James VI set the tone in Scotland for the writing and publishing of poetry as a respectable pursuit for his educated court. His first collection of poems, modestly titled *Essayes of a Prentise* (that is, 'attempts of an apprentice'), was published the year before William Drummond was born.

One of the copies of James' poems now held at NLS was owned by Henry Carey, Baron Hunsdon (1526-96). This copy, bound in vellum painted orange and lettered 'H. Lord Hundson', may have been a presentation copy for Hundson from the Scottish court: a copy with similar binding lettered 'W. Lord Burghley' is now in the Folger Library. As a politician, Hunsdon was something of an ally for James VI at the English court in the years when he was seeking to establish definitively his right to succeed the childless Queen Elizabeth. He was also the Lord Chamberlain, responsible for licensing plays, and patron of Shakespeare's own acting company in the later 1590s. According to the theory first suggested by A.L. Rowse, the nobleman and the playwright also shared a mistress, the poet Emilia Lanier. Because of these connections, one real and one conjectured, this is the one book in the exhibition which we can speculate could possibly have been in contact with Shakespeare himself.

James VI and I, The Essayes of a Prentise, in the Divine art of Poesie (Edinburgh, 1584).

EUL DE.2.47, open at 'A columne of 18 lynes serving for a Preface to the Tragedie ensuing'. sig. G2v-3.

NLS Bdg.s.741, displaying the front cover.

3. Introducing Arcadia

Arcadia, a prose romance, is 'the most excellent Work that, in my Judgment, hath been written in any Language that I understand'. This was the opinion of Drummond's great friend and fellow-writer Sir William Alexander, Earl of Stirling – an opinion Drummond shared. With its witty, poetic heroes and heroines, pastoral setting, and meandering stories, *Arcadia* set a pattern for romantic comedy whose echoes can be found in Shakespeare's plays; it also provided the source for the Gloucester sub-plot of *King Lear*. The Edinburgh edition, published when Drummond was a teenager, may have been his introduction to Sir Philip Sidney (1556-1584), the most influential English writer of his day, and to the flourishing Elizabethan literary scene.

Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* (Edinburgh, 1599). NLS F.5.d.17, open at the title page

4. Poetry of the Scottish court

Alexander Montgomerie (c.1550-1598) was chosen by James VI as his laureate, chief of the group of court poets known as the Castalian Band, in the 1580s. *The Cherrie and the Slae*, treating Drummond's favourite themes of religion and romantic love, became one of the most popular Scots poems of the early modern period.

William Drummond was interested in the Scottish writers of his day as well as in his English contemporaries. He included a manuscript of Montgomerie's poetry in his donation to the University library, and he kept the poetry of his uncle William Fowler with his own papers. The Ker Manuscript is the unique witness to some of Montgomerie's most brilliant lyrics, providing another eloquent example of the benefits to posterity of Drummond's concern to place 'all sorts of books' in a library.

Alexander Montgomerie, *The cherrie and the slae*.

Composed into Scottis meeter (Edinburgh, 1597).

NLS H.29.b.40, open at sig. B2v-3.

5. The sonnet vogue

Sir Philip Sidney started a vogue for love sonnets in the early 1590s: one of the many poets who followed him into the genre was Edmund Spenser, better known for his epic poem *The Faerie Queene*. Drummond's enthusiasm for this kind of poetry is evident from the books he collected and from the poems he wrote himself, although by this time the genre was seen as somewhat old-fashioned.

Edmund Spenser, *Amoretti and Epithalamion* (London, 1595). EUL De.2/1.51, open at Sonnets LIIII-LV, sig. E1v-2.

6. Astrophel and Stella

In *Astrophel and Stella*, a witty, melancholic and slightly self-obsessed young man recounts his love for the beautiful and chaste Stella. With this sonnet sequence, as with *Arcadia*, Philip Sidney set a template for how many of his contemporaries wrote about love – in the words of Thomas Nashe in his preface to the first edition, 'the tragicomedy of love ... performed by starlight'.

Given his great admiration for Sidney, this manuscript copy of *Astrophel and Stella* must have been one of Drummond's most prized possessions. It is not in Sidney's handwriting, but was copied from his original manuscript, probably by Sir Edward Dymoke. Today it survives in an incomplete state, but it does include an elaborately-penned title page added by Drummond himself. The manuscript may well have been given by Dymoke to William Fowler when the two men were travelling in Italy together at the beginning of the 1590s, and been inherited by Drummond on Fowler's death in 1612.

Philip Sidney, *Astrophel and Stella*.
EUL De.5.96, open at 'Sonnet 1', fol.5.

7. Drummond reading Shakespeare: marking the text

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Shakespeare satirizes the follies of young men in love. Drummond's copy shows us a rare example of how an early reader responded to the play – and unsurprisingly he homed in on its sonnets, marking them with numbers on the pages of his playbook. Today the sonnet scene is usually played as comedy, with the actors reciting the poems in a florid and hyperbolic fashion, as if such sonneteering were a mark of romantic over-enthusiasm. Taken in isolation, however, there is nothing necessarily ridiculous or parodic about these lines, and Drummond could well have read them as sincere love poetry.

William Shakespeare, *A pleasant conceited comedie called, Loues labors lost* (London, 1598). The First Quarto. EUL De.3.74, open at sig.E2v-3.

8-9. Drummond the sonneteer

As a poet, William Drummond is generally held to be the leading Scottish writer of his time. He wrote religious poetry, epigrams, and verses which were inscribed on tombs and recited at royal visits. But he also wrote love sonnets in the tradition of Petrarch, Fowler and Sidney, and is one of the first people to mention reading Shakespeare's sonnets on their publication in 1609. Drummond's sonnets were published in his first collected *Poems*, printed by the Edinburgh bookseller Ando Hart in 1616. His autograph manuscripts and other papers are now the property of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, and have been on deposit at the National Library of Scotland since 1934.

William Drummond, [Miscellany volume.]
NLS MS.2062, open at Drummond's holograph draft of the sonnet 'My teares may well...' fol. 7.
William Drummond, *Poems* (Edinburgh, 1616).
NLS H.29.a.14, open at the printed version of the sonnet 'My teares may well...', sig. D1v-2.

10. Shakespearean gossip

Drummond formed friendships with several English poets. One was Shakespeare's fellow playwright Ben Jonson, who stayed with Drummond during a visit he made on foot to Edinburgh in the summer of 1618, and corresponded with him after his departure in January

1619. This manuscript, copied from Drummond's lost original by the antiquary Sir Robert Sibbald, is the fullest surviving record of their conversations. Jonson appears to have offered some pithy criticisms of his contemporaries, including Shakespeare, of whom he said not only that he 'wanted art' but that his plays contained some inaccuracies and absurdities. While this candour scandalised some of Shakespeare's later admirers, Jonson's observations as captured by Drummond here should be seen alongside the elaborate praise of his friend that Jonson wrote for the First Folio.

William Drummond, 'Informations be Ben Johnston to W.D. when he came to Scotland upon foot 1619'.
NLS Adv.MS.33.3.19, open at fol.25v-26.

11. A friend to Drummond and Shakespeare

Drummond's reading lists show that he read many other plays besides Shakespeare's – a 'list of comedies' he compiled contains fifty-seven titles from the contemporary English stage. One of the few plays he presented to Edinburgh University Library was *Volpone*, by Ben Jonson. Jonson took care to present himself as an author in the classical mould. With his name dominating the title page, a dedication to Oxford and Cambridge, and Latin commendatory poems praising the author, this playbook offers a strong contrast with the style and format of the early editions of Shakespeare's plays.

Ben Jonson, *Volpone* (London, 1607).
EUL De.2.75, open at the title page.

12. A masque in manuscript

Masques were elaborate entertainments, often performed by courtiers in front of the king. Drummond's library contained a manuscript copy of a masque created for the London wedding of Jean, daughter of the third Lord Drummond to Robert Ker, Lord Roxborough, in February 1614, which was performed before King James as part of the festivities. The manuscript is for the most part a neat, scribal copy with some interpolations by the author, Samuel Daniel, who inscribed the dedicatory sonnet to the new Lady Roxborough himself. The last couplet depends on this for its effect: 'Which that the world from me may understand,/ Here, Madame I subscribe it with my hand', and then the poet's signature.

Masques were seen as more sophisticated than the plays performed at playhouses like the Globe. Drummond read and collected both – and could have preferred this kind of drama, which is similar to the entertainments he wrote himself.

Samuel Daniel, *Hymen's Triumph*.

EUL De.3.69, open at Daniel's holograph dedicatory sonnet, fol. 2.

13. Romeo and Juliet – author unknown?

Shakespeare's name did not appear on the title page of the second quarto of *Romeo and Juliet* – many published plays of the period did not record authorship. William Drummond, however, clearly knew this play was Shakespeare's, and identified him by writing an abbreviated form of his name, 'Wil. Sha.', beneath the title. He also wrote 'M. Drummond' in his distinctive block capitals in the top right-hand corner of the same page (the 'M' stands for the Latin 'Magister' or its English equivalent 'Master').

It is not surprising, given his literary tastes, that the two Shakespeare plays which Drummond presented to the University of Edinburgh Library are plays which clearly show the influence of Sidney's kind of romantic love. Romeo, like Astrophel, shares the lines of a sonnet with his beloved and stands beneath her window to speak to her at night.

William Shakespeare, *The most excellent and lamentable tragedie, of Romeo and Juliet* (London, 1599). The Second Quarto. EUL De.3.73, open at the title page.

14. Drummond reading Shakespeare: book lists

Lists of William Drummond's 'books red be me' ('books read by me') survive for the years 1606-1614. In this list for 1606, he notes three plays by Shakespeare – *Romeo and Juliet*, *Love's Labours Lost*, and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, as well as his poem *The Rape of Lucrece*, and two collections containing poems by Shakespeare, *The Passionate Pilgrim* and *Love's Martyr*. From these titles, it seems that in 1606 Drummond read Shakespeare primarily

as a love poet, not as an author of great dramas.

William Drummond, [Commonplace book.] NLS MS.2059, open at fol.362.

15. Drummond's gift to the University

In 1626, Drummond presented a substantial proportion of his library to the University of Edinburgh, and the university published a catalogue of that donation a year later. Among the classical, historical, rhetorical and Scottish books is *Romeo and Juliet* – catalogued under 'Romeo'. It may be that someone other than Drummond compiled this catalogue, and saw that the book did not name its author, but was not familiar enough with Shakespeare's plays to recognise that the 'Wil. Sha.' Drummond had inscribed on its titlepage was the Shakespeare identified as the author of *Love's Labour's Lost* on the catalogue's next page.

Auctarium Bibliothecae Edinburgenae, sive Catalogus Librorum quos Gulielmus Drummondus ab Hawthornden Bibliothecae D.D.Q. Anno. 1627. (Edinburgh, 1627). EUL De.3.73, open at page 32.

16. An Early Scottish Owner

William Drummond was not the only 17th-century Scot who was reading Shakespeare's plays. The inscription in an early modern hand on the title page of this edition of *Henry IV Part 1* reads 'R. Lyndesy' – an alternative spelling of the Scottish surname 'Lindsay'. Another 17th-century Scottish reader heavily annotated his copy of the First Folio, now at Meisei University in Japan.

William Shakespeare, *The historie of Henry the fourth* (London, 1632). EUL De.6.7, open at the title page.

THE BUTE COLLECTION:
ARISTOCRATIC PATRONS
& COLLECTORS,
1689–1814

SECOND NIGHT.

THEATRE CANONGATE,
THIS EVENING,

Being 15th DECEMBER 1756,

A CONCERT OF MUSIC.

After which will be presented (*gratis*)

The NEW TRAGEDY

DOUGLAS.

Taken from an Ancient SCOTTS STORY,

AND

Writ by a GENTLEMAN of SCOTLAND.

The Principal PARTS to be performed

By Mr. DIGGES;

Mr. LOVE,

Mr. HEYMAN,

Mr. YOUNGER,

Mrs. HOPKINS,

And Mrs. WARD.

Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century

Shakespeare's plays were performed and read throughout the eighteenth century, but people's ideas about him were transformed during that time. At the beginning of the century, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was one of the few critics who saw him as equal to those writers who kept the rules of classical drama. But his reputation rose, and the mid-century 'Shakespeare Jubilee' raised him to the status of England's national bard. By the end of the century collectors like the Bute family paid large amounts of money for highly-prized early quarto editions of his plays.

The 18th century saw Scots, too, elevate Shakespeare to the pinnacle of drama in English. Writers such as James Boswell praised 'our immortal Bard', a 'Scots editor' produced a new edition of the plays in 1753, and audiences enjoyed performances of the plays at Edinburgh's new public theatres.

The Edinburgh Scene

The history of the Edinburgh stage in the period from Restoration to Regency is of a growing local desire for plays as entertainment and cultural enlightenment, constantly threatened by opposition from those who saw plays as immoral and their audiences as idle and disruptive.

Public performances by locals took place on makeshift stages at Holyrood, in halls and in private clubs until the Canongate theatre was built in the early eighteenth century. This theatre saw the first performance of John Home's play *Douglas*, at which one audience member is famously said to have shouted, 'Whaur's your Wullie Shakespeare noo?' or, less emphatically, 'Weel, lads, what think you of Wully Shakespeare noo?' The appetite for drama shown by Edinburgh audiences paved the way for the establishment of a grander playhouse once construction on the New Town began.

When the Theatre Royal was built in the earliest phases of development of Edinburgh's New Town in 1768, it was established in a precinct named Shakespeare Square. By the beginning of the next century, Shakespeare's statue presided over the city from its place on top of the building. His plays were a constant feature of its repertoire, and its leading actor West Digges was said to rival David Garrick, king of the London stage, for his performances in *Macbeth* and other plays.

Country House Libraries

In the eighteenth century, people often read plays as they do novels today. Aristocrats like the Bute family could retreat to their library to enjoy reading in tranquillity. Libraries were places of quiet order, symbolized by the classical architecture with which they were often designed. The books in them were organised and bound according to the taste of their owners. While individual family members might collect books which remained their own property, books in the family library usually became part of the estate, to be handed down to future generations.

The Bute family had libraries at all three of their homes – Cardiff Castle, Luton Hoo and Mount Stuart. The Luton Hoo library was designed by Robert Adam as part of his renovation and redevelopment of the house, and described in a letter from Mary Granville Delany to Bernard Granville of September 1774: 'You then go into the library, the dimensions of which I have been so stupid as not to remember. It is, in effect, three or five rooms, one very large one well-proportioned in the middle each end divided off by pillars, in which recesses are chimneys; and a large square room at each end, which, when the doors are thrown open, make it appear like one large room or gallery. I never saw so magnificent and so pleasant a library, extreamly well lighted, and nobly furnished with everything that can inform and entertain men of learning and virtu.'

The books now in the Bute collection were held at Luton Hoo when it was first built, and probably at all three houses at different times in their history. They remained in the wider family until the twentieth century, migrating from their then home at Falkland Palace in Fife to the safety of an Edinburgh solicitors' office, before finally being acquired by the National Library in the 1950s.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762)

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu is a vivid, dramatic figure – the epitome of the Georgian court lady who dazzled with her beauty and brilliance, enjoying legendary feuds and friendships with wits such as Alexander Pope. She is also celebrated as the first western European woman to travel to Constantinople and write of her experiences. It was on this journey that she discovered the practice of inoculation against smallpox, which she introduced to Britain in the face of much opposition.

But there was another Lady Mary behind this glamorous image. From her early childhood, she was an enthusiastic reader who spent hours with her books – like William Drummond, she particularly enjoyed French and English literature. As her granddaughter later wrote: ‘From the books Lady Mary Wortley died possessed of, which were but few, she appears to have been particularly fond of that ancient English drama lately revived among us; for she had several volumes of differently sized and wretchedly printed plays bound up together, such as the Duke of Roxburghe would have bought at any price; the works of Shirley, Ford, Marston, Heywood, Webster, and the rest, as far back as *Gammer Gurton’s Needle*, and coming down to the trash of Duffey. ... Dryden ... was also one of her favourite authors. She had his plays, his fables, and his Virgil, in folio, as they were first published; Theobald’s edition of Shakspeare, manifestly much read; and Tonson’s quarto Milton’ (‘Biographical Anecdotes’, attributed to Lady Louisa Stuart, 1837).

Daringly for a lady of the times, Lady Mary was not afraid to assume the role of literary critic, as in her 1713 essay on her friend Joseph Addison’s *Cato*, which compared his play to Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* to Addison’s disadvantage. Her judgement could sometimes be forthright – as can be seen from her notes in the books she owned which survive as part of the Bute collection in NLS.

John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute (1713-1792)

John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute, was born in Edinburgh and educated in England and the Netherlands, where he studied civil law. He married Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s daughter, also called Mary, in 1736.

In 1747 he became friends with Frederick, Prince of Wales, son of the then King George II. He joined the Prince and his circle in performing Shakespearean and other plays at their country house parties – at one such party, in 1749, fifteen plays were put on, and *Macbeth* was performed twice. After Frederick’s early death in 1751 the Earl became tutor and confidant to his son, the future George III, and a controversial Prime Minister in the early 1760s once his pupil had succeeded to the throne.

He was also a patron of prominent Scottish Enlightenment figures, and had wide-ranging intellectual interests. The Edinburgh minister and dramatist John Home sought Bute’s advice on his writing, and later became his secretary. Bute also established the Regius Chair of Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres – what we would now call English Literature

– at Edinburgh in 1762. As he had remarked in a letter the previous year, ‘most of our best writers are devoted to me’.

John Stuart, 1st Marquess of Bute (1744-1814)

The eldest of the Earl of Bute’s eight children was also called John. He married a wealthy wife who inherited her family estates in Cardiff, so that with Scottish Mount Stuart and the Butes’ English home at Luton Hoo, he had homes throughout mainland Britain. He inherited his father’s title but soon after was created first Marquess of Bute in 1796, as a reward for his diplomatic service. His grandfather Edward Wortley, Lady Mary’s husband, had chosen to leave his vast wealth not to John but to his younger brother. Lady Mary’s books were perhaps the only inheritance he received from his mother’s family.

The Marquess lived during a golden age of book collecting – the age of ‘bibliomania’. He added some of the most interesting early Shakespeare quartos to the family collection, acquiring them from the sales of legendary libraries. He also had many of the playbooks rebound in a uniform style, splitting up some of the volumes that Lady Mary had originally assembled, before his death in 1814.

1-4. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: a critical reader

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu often wrote her pithily expressed opinions of the plays she had read on their pages. Her judgements do not always agree with the received critical opinion of the plays in her own time – or in ours. Although these books were over a century old by the time she bought them, some had not been reprinted. Buying these old playbooks was the only way Lady Mary could read them, whereas she owned a modern edition of Shakespeare’s plays – that of Lewis Theobald, whose patroness was a personal friend of hers.

1. The Case is Altered

The Case is Altered is one of Ben Jonson’s earliest plays, and like Shakespeare with his early *Comedy of Errors* he borrowed from the Greek playwright Plautus for its plot. Lady Mary may not have known this, but her judgement distinguishes between the ‘silly play’ and the ‘good plot’ on which it is hung. Here she agrees with modern critics who think that the play is flawed.

Ben Jonson, *A pleasant comedy, called: The case is altered* (London, 1609). NLS Bute.302, open at sig.A2.

2. The Roaring Girl

The Roaring Girl has attracted the attention of feminist critics today because of the title character, a woman who dressed as a man and was a notorious member of the criminal underworld. Lady Mary, however, considered the play 'woefull'.

Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker, *The roaring girle. Or Moll Cut-Purse* (London, 1611). NLS Bute.368, open at sig.B.

3. A Faire Quarrell

Most of Lady Mary's surviving comments on the plays she collected were negative. This London-set domestic play, centred on a young girl whose wealthy father wants to marry her to a husband of his choosing, instead of the man she loves, echoes themes of Lady Mary's own life and writing. It has a rare example of a positive review – it is marked 'good'.

Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, *A faire quarrell* (London, 1622). NLS Bute.239, open at sig.A3.

4. Imperiale

Now forgotten, this play was held in some critical esteem in Lady Mary's day. However her opinion was rather different: 'terrible' as she wrote on the title page. The 'MA' she also inscribed there is one of her marks of ownership.

Sir Ralph Freeman, *Imperiale, a tragedy* (London, 1655). NLS Bdg.s.741, open at the title page.

5-10. A Shakespearean country house library

After a century of collecting, the library of the Bute family contained a diverse range of Shakespearean texts, from original editions to eighteenth-century adaptations, made homogenous by their uniform rebinding in the early nineteenth century.

5-6. Attributed to Shakespeare

Mucedorus and *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* were both published without an author's name on the title page. They were being attributed to Shakespeare by the 1650s, perhaps because they were acted by his company. Scholars have debated if he had any part in writing them, but they are now generally believed not to be his. The history of this apocryphal attribution can be traced in the markings of three different hands on the title page of the copy of *Mucedorus* in the Bute collection: one says it is

'by Shakespeare', one cancels that by placing 'not' in front of it, and one concludes 'Anonymous'. This last hand is perhaps that of the librarian at Luton Hoo who produced a catalogue of the collection for the first Marquess of Bute. It was not until the twentieth century that scholars correctly identified *Mucedorus* as being a copy of the 1656 edition, not 1600 as written on the title page. Undaunted by the possibility of Shakespearean authorship, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu considered *Mucedorus* 'badd' and *The Merry Devil* 'ffoolishe'.

A most pleasant comedy of Mucedorus the kings son of Valentia, and Amadine the kings daughter of Aragon (London, 1656). NLS Bute.530, open at the title page.

The merry diuel of Edmonton (London, 1617). NLS Bute.528, open at the title page.

7. Early owners

The Bute collection includes a fine copy of what may have been one of Shakespeare's less successful plays. Whereas *Henry IV Part 1* went through at least six editions before the First Folio appeared, this is the only pre-Folio edition of its sequel. Some early owners have left their traces on this copy. Someone has noted on the title page that they paid fivepence for it on 31 December 1610. One early owner has written 'Howard Sulyard his Book 1613' on an inside page; elsewhere another early hand has signed themselves as 'George Brow[n]'.

William Shakespeare, *The second part of Henrie the fourth* (London, 1600). The First Quarto. NLS Bute.480, open at the title page.

8. An uncensored edition

The first Jacobean edition of *Richard II* is noteworthy for what the title page calls its 'new additions'. As someone has noted in an eighteenth century hand in this copy, the scene displayed appears for the first time in print. During Queen Elizabeth's reign, Shakespeare's company found themselves in trouble with the authorities because of this scene where Richard abdicates the throne, and the text was tactfully omitted from the edition published in her lifetime.

William Shakespeare, *The tragedie of King Richard the Second: with new additions of the Parliament Sceane, and the deposing of King Richard* (London, 1608). The Fourth Quarto. NLS Bute.506, open at sig. H1v-H2.

9-10. Shakespeare adapted

During the Restoration and eighteenth century, actors had no scruples about performing versions of Shakespeare's plays liberally adapted to the taste of the times. Later, when his reputation as a genius was assured, it was easy for critics to look back and mock the writers who took such liberties with Shakespeare's text, but it was thanks to these adaptations that Shakespeare's plays survived on the stage. These texts never claimed to be authoritative returns to the original, instead highlighting their relationship to current performances on their title pages – perhaps it is more accurate to compare them to the adaptations of classic novels for today's television audiences, which similarly prioritize contemporary entertainment over authorial intentions.

Sir William Davenant, Shakespeare's godson (and rumoured to be his illegitimate son), revived and revised his plays when the theatres reopened in the 1660s after being closed during the Civil War and Commonwealth years. Colley Cibber, one of the leading actors of his day, used lines from the *Henry VI* plays as well as his own additions in his text of *Richard III*. Cibber has been mocked for his arrogance, but his published playtext clearly indicates through its typography and other markings where he is interpolating original material, suggesting a greater deference to Shakespeare's text than is generally supposed. Elements of these theatrically effective adaptations survived for a long time: Laurence Olivier used some of Cibber's lines in his 1955 film of *Richard III*.

[William Shakespeare, adapted by Sir William Davenant,] *Macbeth, a tragaedy. With all the alterations, amendments, additions, and new songs. As it's now acted at the Dukes Theatre* (London, 1674).

NLS Bute.492, open at the title page.

[William Shakespeare, adapted by Colley Cibber,] *The tragical history of King Richard III. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal. By C. Cibber* (London, 1700).

NLS Bute.515, open at the title page.

11-17. Bute, Shakespeare and Scotland

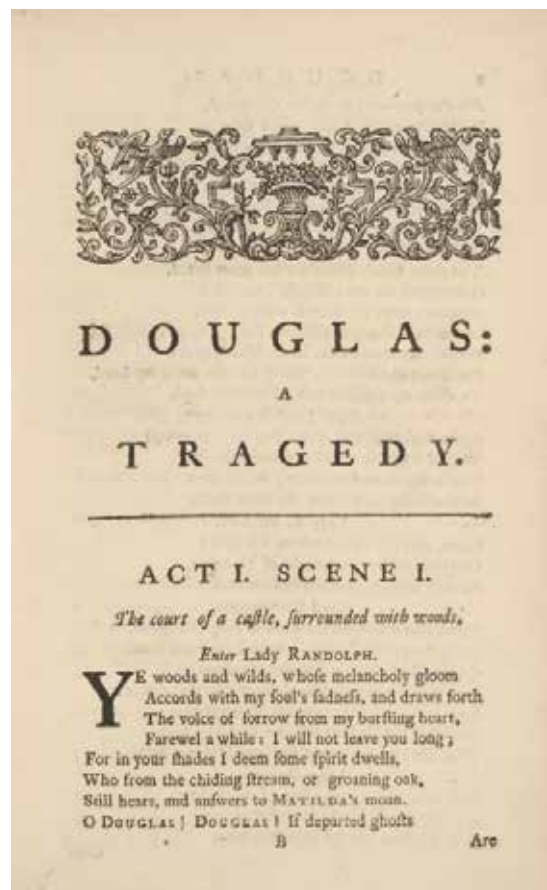
The Earl of Bute was closely associated with Enlightenment Edinburgh's cultural scene. He corresponded with John Home about his play *Douglas*, which caused a sensation when it was first performed in Edinburgh in 1756.

11-13. Enthusiasm and Controversy: Douglas

Douglas took its inspiration from the Scots ballad 'Gil Morrice', and set its tragic tale of a mother and her lost son

in an heroic ancient Scotland. Enlightenment luminaries such as David Hume, Adam Ferguson and the minister and critic Hugh Blair participated in rehearsals. For them, the play bore comparison with Shakespeare's tragedies and they celebrated its success on the London and Edinburgh stage, although others were less convinced of the play's artistic merits. Blair and other 'Moderates' believed that the theatre could be a force for good in Edinburgh public life, teaching the art of speaking well along with moral lessons, but members of the other faction in the Church of Scotland, the Evangelicals, saw the popular enthusiasm for playgoing demonstrated by the play's reception as a dangerous threat to public morals. Some argued against drama itself; others were more concerned that the theatre made the young students and apprentices who attended it idle. It should perhaps also be noted in relation to the charge of theatrical immorality that two of the leading actors in this play, West Digges and Sarah Ward, were known to be living together although both were married to other people.

The edition of *Douglas* displayed in the exhibition, published in London in 1757, includes cast lists for both the London and Edinburgh productions. The poster for the second night of its Edinburgh run would have been distributed around the city, helping to encourage the public appetite for theatre that so disturbed some within the kirk. The printed 'Admonition' shows how they attempted to counter this threat with a publicity campaign of their own.



John Home, Douglas. *A Tragedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden* (London, 1757).

NLS Ballantyne.11, open at sig.B.

Poster, etc., for A Concert of Music, and Douglas, by John Home, performed at Canongate on 15th December 1756 (Edinburgh, 1756).

NLS H.1.a.15.39, displaying the recto of the single sheet.

Admonition and Exhortation by the Reverend Presbytery of Edinburgh to All within their Bounds (Edinburgh, 1757).

NLS H.1.a.15.35, displaying the recto of the single sheet.

14. The Earl of Bute as a Patron of the Arts

The Earl of Bute's public standing made him an important figure in British cultural life, and a valuable patron and supporter of artists of many kinds. In the dedication to his 1759 tragedy, *The Orphan of China*, the playwright Arthur Murphy praises Bute for his 'innate partiality for every endeavour in the polite arts', and thanks him for the discerning encouragement he had given to the author.

The Orphan of China. A Tragedy. By Arthur Murphy, Esq. As Performed at the Theatre-Royal, Drury-Lane (London, 1797). NLS Bute. 857, open at sig.Aij.

15. John Home and the Earl of Bute

Inspired by the triumph of *Douglas*, and keen to escape the wrath of his kirk enemies, Home moved to London. There he pursued an often successful career as a dramatist, and found employment both as Bute's secretary and, through his influence, as tutor to the Prince of Wales. Home's friendship with the Earl was long and close, as the autograph dedication on a copy of his 1773 tragedy, *Alonzo*, 'To the Earl of Bute. From the Author', amply testifies. Home has also added his name on the title page; the play had been printed without it.

John Home, Alonzo. *A Tragedy. In Five Acts. As it is Performed at the Theatre-Royal, Drury-Lane* (London, 1773). NLS Bute 296, open at the flyleaf containing Home's holograph inscription.

16. 'Macboot'

Bute's closeness to George III was resented by many English rivals for power and favour, and their hostility only increased when he became prime minister in 1762. Chief among these enemies was the MP John Wilkes, who complained loudly about the Scottish presence in Westminster politics. His forceful opposition to the policies of Bute and his successors was rewarded with imprisonment in 1763. Wilkes's allies struck back, satirising

Bute as the diabolical 'Macboot' in this polemical rewriting of Shakespeare's play. Contemporary caricatures pick up this allusion, for instance picturing Scots politicians as witches on broomsticks flying down to London. *Macbeth* as an archetypal image of Scottishness was becoming part of the public consciousness: it was around this time that first West Digges in Edinburgh and then David Garrick in London began to perform the role dressed in an attempt at authentic Scottish period costume.

The Three Conjurors, a Political Interlude. Stolen from Shakespeare (London, 1763).

NLS RB.m.271, open at sig.D.

17. An Edinburgh Edition of Shakespeare

The growing commercial and intellectual confidence of Scottish publishers and men of letters in the Britain of the mid-eighteenth century is visible in the first Edinburgh edition of Shakespeare's works, published in 1753. The text was closely based on earlier editions, but the 'Scots Editor' responsible – long thought to be Hugh Blair, but now plausibly identified as the printer John Reid – nevertheless boasted of its improvements on the work and presentation of his predecessors, and declared itself the product of a desire to boost Scotland's publishing industry. By this time Shakespeare's plays had become part of the Scottish theatrical repertoire: they were now appropriated into Scottish textual culture. A year earlier the Glasgow printer Robert Foulis, known for his printing of the classics, had begun to publish single plays, repackaging and reprinting them as a set in 1766.

[?John Reid, ed.] *The Works of Shakespear*. 8 volumes (Edinburgh, 1753). NLS RB.s.1962, displaying volume 1 open at the title page and the other volumes closed.

JAMES ORCHARD HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS, 1820–1889: 'MAGPIE' ANTIQUARY AND COLLECTOR

The DIVELL is an ASSE. 2;

There will be made seventeene, or eigheteene millions;
Or more, as't may be handled! wherefore, thinke,
Sweet heart, if th' hast a fancy to one place,
More then another, to be *Dutcheffe* of;
Now, name it: I will ha't, what ere it cost,
(If't will be had for mony) either here,
Of'n *France*, or *Italy*. *M^r. Fit.* You ha't strange phantasies!


A& II. Scene. IV.

Meer-craft. Fitz-dottwell. Ingine.

WHere are you, Sir? *Fit.* I see thou hast no talent
This way, wife. Up to thy gallery; doe, *Chuck*,
Leave us to talke of it, who understand it.
Mer. I thinke we ha' found a place to fit you, now, Sir.
Glaeser. Fit. O, no, I'll none! *Mer.* Why, Sir? *Fit.* 'Tis fitall.
Mer. That you say right in. *Spenser*, I thinke, the younger,
Had his last honour thence. But, he was but *Earle*.
Fit. I know not that, Sir. But *Thomas of WoodRoche*,
I'm sure, was *Duke*, and he was made away,
At *Calice*; as *Duke Humphrey* was at *Bury*:
And *Richard* the third, you know what end he came too.
Mer. By m' faith you are cunning i'the *Chronicle*, Sir.
Fit. No, I confesse I ha't from the *Play-booke*,
And thinke they are more *authentique*. *Ing.* That's sure, Sir.

R. 3.

fol. C.



Vpon Master WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARE, the
Deceased Author, and his
P O E M S.

POets are borne not made, when I would prove
This truth, the glad remembrance I would loye
Of never dying *Shakespeare*, who alone,
Is argument enough to make that one,
First, that he was a Poet none would doubt,
This heard th' applause of what he fees for out
Imprinted, where thou hast (I will not say)
Reader his Workers for to contrive a Play;
To him (was none) the partime of all wits,
Are without Art unperfield as yet.
Next Nature only helps him, for looke thow
This whole Booke, thou shalt find he doth not borrow;
One pleafe from *Graeces*, nor *Latins* imitate,
Nor once from vulgar Languages Translate,
Nor Plagiarist-like from others gleane,
Nor begges he from each wery friend a Scene
To prove his Acts with, all that he doth write.

Shakespeare's Poems. 1640.

* *Macbeth*, a Tragedy; which was revis'd
by the Dukes Company, and re-printed with
Alterations, and New Songs, 4^o. Lond. 1674.
The Play is founded on the History of Scotland.
The Reader may consult these Writers for the
Story: viz. *Hector Boetius*, *Buchanan*, *Du chefue*,
Hollinghead, &c. The same Story is succinctly
related in Verse, in *Huywood's Hierarchy of*
Angels, B. 1. p. 508. and in Prose in *Heylin's*
Cosmography, Book 1. in the Hist. of *Brittain*,
where he may read the Story at large. At the
Acting of this Tragedy, on the Stage, I saw a
real one acted in the Pit; I mean the Death of
Mr. *Scroop*, who received his death's wound from
the late Sir *Thomas Armstrong*, and died pre-
sently after he was remov'd to a House oppo-
site to the Theatre, in *Dorset-Garden*.

Shakespeare in the Nineteenth Century

By the nineteenth century, Shakespeare's place among the world's finest writers was assured. Cherished as the products of genius, his plays came to be seen as uniquely powerful portraits of the many sides of human nature. This view of Shakespeare as 'the chief of all Poets', as Thomas Carlyle put it, travelled abroad with the British Empire.

Shakespeare's high reputation led to ever greater shows of public glorification. There were dissenters, however: in 1901, the playwright George Bernard Shaw coined the term 'bardolatry' to describe the extremes reached by some of Shakespeare's admirers at the end of the century.

Who was Halliwell-Phillipps?

James Orchard Halliwell was born in 1820, the son of a prosperous London linen draper. Although Shakespeare was originally only one among his early antiquarian interests, Halliwell later came to focus his energies on the study of the playwright's life and work. It was this that drove him to collect playbooks and other Shakespeareana.

Halliwell-Phillipps published extensively on the conclusions and discoveries he drew from his researches and his own collections. The collections at NLS and the University of Edinburgh contain a fine selection of his output: catalogues of different aspects of his collection, his notes and comments on Shakespeare's plays, and the monumental historical researches culminating in his *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*.

Recognised at his death in 1889 as a great Shakespearean scholar, Halliwell-Phillipps was commemorated with a brass plate in the parish church of Stratford-upon-Avon, on a wall above Shakespeare's grave.

Disputes and Controversies

Although he was respected as a scholar, Halliwell was nonetheless dogged by controversy. Early in his career he was accused of stealing manuscripts from Trinity College, Cambridge, and although no charges were brought he was never again entirely free from suspicion. He married Henrietta, daughter of Sir Thomas Phillipps, who owned one of the finest private libraries of the time. Sir Thomas opposed the match and sought continually to ruin Halliwell's reputation and obstruct his collecting. Ironically, although Halliwell eventually added Phillipps's name to his own in order to meet the conditions set by his wife's

grandfather for inheriting a substantial property, he never inherited Phillipps's library.

Working Methods and the Edinburgh Connection

Halliwell-Phillipps created his Shakespeare collections primarily to further his studies. He acquired many copies of plays, and arranged clippings from other early printed works in scrapbooks alongside his own notes. He also produced facsimiles of the quartos, so that he might have accurate copies of editions he could not purchase. After negotiations overseen by David Laing, the celebrated Scottish antiquarian and scholar, the University of Edinburgh agreed to lend its copy of the very rare second quarto of *Titus Andronicus* to Halliwell-Phillipps so that he might make a facsimile. As a mark of his gratitude, and in order to establish a Shakespeare library in Scotland, he donated a large collection of books and manuscripts to the University Library in 1872, a gift described by a contemporary newspaper as 'the finest Shakespearean collection in the world' (*The Morning Advertiser*, 19 March, 1872).

1. Touring the Archives

James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps was among the earliest Shakespearean scholars to attempt the systematic exploration and investigation of surviving records and original sources that might shed light on Shakespeare's life and times. In this notebook he entered details of useful collections and repositories in Britain and abroad, and recorded the results of his investigations of them, such as the pages displayed which document his survey of Edinburgh University Library.

James Halliwell-Phillipps, 'Provincial Researches'
EUL H-P Coll. 335, open at pp.170-1.

2. Cataloguing his Collections

Throughout his long career, Halliwell-Phillipps shared his ever-growing and ever-changing collections with other people. He regularly published pamphlets, essays and catalogues of his books and welcomed visitors to see them. The catalogue shown here lists the collection he gathered together in a bungalow he built in the Sussex downs. He spent the last ten years of his life here, working on the several editions of his great biography, *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*. This particular collection eventually found a home in the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington.

James Halliwell-Phillipps, *A Calendar of the Shakespearean Rarities ... formerly preserved at Hollingbury Copse ... Edited by Ernest E. Baker* (London, 1891). NLS [Am]. 4/7, open at the title page.

3-4. Making Scrapbooks

Halliwell-Phillipps made scrapbooks as part of his Shakespearean research – a habit involving the cutting out and pasting in of hundreds of pages from early printed books. Some of the clippings he pasted in contained references to Shakespeare's life and times. Others shed light on details of his plays. Some of the clippings were taken from rare volumes, a practice which may seem alarmingly destructive by the standards of modern ideas about respecting the integrity of historic documents. But in the days before photocopying, it allowed Halliwell-Phillipps easily to compile a large collection of material, and may have preserved material from damaged or imperfect books which would otherwise have been lost to us.

The larger volumes in the University library belong to a series of more than 70 books of 'Literary Scraps'. On the pages of one such volume included in the exhibition

Halliwell-Phillipps has pasted an extract cut from a page of prefatory verse in the rare 1640 edition of Shakespeare's *Poems*. Facing this is an extract cut from a copy of the equally rare 1641 edition of Ben Jonson's play *The Devil is an Ass*, and the page also includes an extract from Gerard Langbaine's 1691 critical history, *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets*. Another page from perhaps the same copy of Shakespeare's *Poems* has been pasted into a smaller scrapbook from another series of such collections.

James Halliwell-Phillipps, 'Literary Scraps'.
EUL H-P Coll. 311, open at pp.110-11
James Halliwell-Phillipps, 'Shakespearean Miscellanies'.
EUL H-P Coll. 351, open at an unpaginated leaf with note by Halliwell-Phillipps 'Shakespeare's Poems 1640'.

5. Genuine and Facsimile Pages

Many copies of early quartos in circulation during Halliwell-Phillipps's lifetime had suffered some damage. Collectors and booksellers often inserted facsimile leaves in order to make up for missing pages. Halliwell-Phillipps commissioned the printing of facsimile leaves using a specially designed type based on that used in authentic Shakespeare quartos in his collection. However, as with this copy of the only quarto edition of *Much Ado About Nothing*, the facsimile leaf is clearly distinguishable because of the differences in the paper of the original and the reproduction.

William Shakespeare, *Much Adoe About Nothing* (London, 1600). The quarto edition. EUL JA 3714, open at sig. I4.

6. A Fragmentary Copy

Many quarto playbooks suffered damage because their early owners did not see them as books to be treasured. By the nineteenth century the fortunes of these cheap and ephemeral publications had changed dramatically. This copy of the first quarto of *Othello* contains only eighteen original leaves. Halliwell-Phillipps noted on a flyleaf, nonetheless, that '18 leaves of so very rare an edition should not be despised'.

William Shakespeare, *The Tragoedy of Othello, the Moore of Venice* (London, 1622). The First Quarto.
EUL JA 3720, open at pp.62-63.

7. Repairing a Quarto

This copy of the earliest quarto edition of *The Taming of the Shrew* demonstrates the desire of collectors to repair

and improve the copies that came into their hands. The original printed date on this title page had worn away: the bookbinder, at Halliwell-Phillipps's request, has replaced it with a date cut out from another copy in his collection. That copy is now at the University of Pennsylvania, still minus its date.

William Shakespeare, *A Wittie and Pleasant Comedie called The Taming of the Shrew* (London, 1631). The First Quarto. EUL JA 3702, open at the title page.

8. Collecting and Collating

Halliwell-Phillipps collated his copies and editions of the plays with each other, looking for variations in the printed text. In this he was following in the footsteps of earlier editors, even if he often had rather more copies of rather more editions at his disposal. His desire to be comprehensive is shown by his noting, in the back of this copy of the sixth quarto of *Richard II*, a textually trivial variant: the last line of sig. A2v includes the word 'once' where all previous editions have 'else'. The change is most likely to have been a compositor's error.

William Shakespeare, *The Life and Death of King Richard II* (London, 1634). The Sixth Quarto. EUL JA 3704, open at sig. A2v-A3.

9. A Luxury Edition

Halliwell-Phillipps followed many Shakespearean scholars in deciding to produce his own edition of the works. As this copy of the first volume of his lavishly bulky edition shows, he did not intend it for wide circulation. Only 150 copies were printed, and its eighteen volumes sold for more than two pounds each. At the head of the list of subscribers were the King of Prussia and the Duke of Buccleuch.

James Halliwell-Phillipps, ed. *The Works of William Shakespeare*. 18 volumes (London, 1853-65). EUL Hb.1, open at the title page.

10. A Generous Loan

This copy of the second quarto of *Titus Andronicus* was given to the University of Edinburgh early in 1700 by William Hogg of Harcase, among a gift of sixty-four miscellaneous books.

Titus Andronicus is the earliest of Shakespeare's tragedies, and one of the bloodiest. Collaboratively written with George Peele, it was originally published in quarto in 1594, perhaps only a year after it had been first performed. The play was

clearly popular with playgoers and readers: two further quarto editions appeared in the years prior to the publication of the First Folio in 1623.

The Second Quarto is exceptionally rare: only two copies are known to exist today. Halliwell-Phillipps was permitted to borrow the Edinburgh copy from the library in 1866 in order to have a facsimile made. In a series of letters sent to David Laing he wrote to confirm the book's arrival in London, to reassure him of precautions taken to keep it secure, and to let him know that it has begun its homeward journey.

William Shakespeare, *The Most Lamentable Romaine Tragedie of Titus Andronicus* (London, 1600). The Second Quarto. EUL De.5.111, open at sig. K1v-K2.

Letters from Halliwell-Phillipps to David Laing, 1865-6 EUL Laing IV.17, displaying fol. 4200.

11. A Shakespearean in Print

Halliwell-Phillipps published extensively on the conclusions and discoveries he drew from his researches and his own collections. A small portion of his output illustrates the range of his writings: catalogues of different aspects of his collection, his notes and comments on Shakespeare's plays, and the monumental historical researches culminating in his biography *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*.

A selection of Halliwell-Phillipps' publications, displayed closed on bookshelves:

J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *Memoranda on Shakespeare's Tragedy of Troilus and Cressida* (London, 1880). NLS H.19.e.18

J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *Memoranda on Shakespeare's Comedy of Measure for Measure*, (London, 1880). NLS [Am].8/6

J.O. Halliwell, *Selected notes upon Shakespeare's comedy of The Tempest* (London. 1868). NLS H.19.c.18

J.O. Halliwell, *Selected notes upon Shakespeare's tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra* (London, 1868). NLS H.19.c.38

[J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps], *Memoranda on the Midsummer Night's Dream*, A.D. 1879 and A.D.1855 (Brighton, 1879). NLS H.19.c.55

J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *Memoranda on Love's Labour's Lost, King John, Othello, and on Romeo and Juliet* (London, 1879). NLS H.19.c.54

- J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *Memoranda on the Tragedy of Hamlet* (London, 1879).
NLS H.19.c.53
- J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *Memoranda on All's Well That Ends Well, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Much Ado About Nothing, and on Titus Andronicus* (Brighton, 1879).
NLS H.19.c.52
- J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *A Budget of notes and memoranda on the life and works of Shakespeare, and on the history of the early English stage* (London, 1880).
NLS H.19.c.51
- J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *Cursory Memoranda on Shakespeare's Tragedy of Macbeth, with early notices of the moving wood stratagem* (Brighton, 1880).
NLS H.19.c.56
- J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *Memoranda on Shakespeare's Tempest, chiefly with reference to the probable date of the composition of that romantic drama* (Brighton, 1880).
NLS H.19.c.58
- J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *Discursive notes on Shakespeare's tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* (London, 1880).
NLS H.19.c.57
- J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *A hand-book index to the works of Shakespeare, including references to the phrases, manners, customs, proverbs, songs, particles &c. which are used or alluded to by the great dramatist* (London, 1866).
NLS H.19.c.36
- James O. Halliwell, *A skeleton hand-list of the early quarto editions of the plays of Shakespeare; with notices of the old impressions of the poems* (London, 1860).
NLS H.19.c.37
- Ernest E. Baker, ed., *A calendar of the Shakespearean rarities, drawings & engravings, formerly preserved at Hollingbury Copse, near Brighton, that quaint wigwam on the Sussex Downs which had the honour of sheltering more record and artistic evidences connected with the personal history of the Great Dramatist than are to be found in any of the world's libraries. 2nd edition* (London, Longmans 1891).
NLS [Am].4/7
- [J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps], *Rough list of Shakespearean rarities and manuscript collections, at Hollinbury Copse*, Brighton, April, 1880 (Brighton, 1880).
NLS H.19.b.36
- [J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps], *A brief list of some of the rarer and most curious old-book rarities in the library of J.O. Halliwell, Esq. illustrative chiefly of early English popular literature* (West Brompton, 1862).
NLS H.19.d.34
- [J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps], *New lamps or old? A few additional words on the momentous question respecting the E and the A in the name of our National Dramatist* (Brighton, 1880).
NLS [Am].4/7
- James O. Halliwell, *A catalogue of proclamations, broadsides, ballads and poems. Presented to the Chetham Library, Manchester* (London, 1851). NLS NG.1612.f.7
- J.O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines of the life of Shakespeare. 2nd edition* (London, 1882).
NLS [Am].1/6
- James O. Halliwell, *An historical account of the New Place, Stratford-upon-Avon, the last residence of Shakespeare* (London, 1864).
NLS A.53.b.4
- James O. Halliwell, *A descriptive calendar of the ancient manuscripts and records in the possession of the Corporation of Stratford-upon-Avon; including notices of Shakespeare and his family, and of several persons connected with the poet* (London, 1863).
NLS H.19.a.6

Act. c. 23
The most lamentable
Romaine Tragedie of Titus
Andronicus. ~~F. 66~~

As it hath sundry times beene playde by the
Right Honourable the Earle of Pembroke, the
Earle of Darbie, the Earle of Suffex, and the
Lorde Chamberlaine theyr
Seruants.



AT LONDON,
Printed by I. R. for Edward White
and are to bee solde at his shoppe, at the little
North doore of Paules, at the signe of
the Gun. 1600.



Above: William Shakespeare, *The Most Lamentable Romaine Tragedie of Titus Andronicus* (London, 1600).
The Second Quarto. EUL De.5.111, title page.

JOHN DOVER WILSON, 1881-1969: SCHOLAR, EDITOR AND CRITIC

ACT II SCENE II LINES 422-439

AVEC QUELLE RUSE
AMLETH, QVI DEPUIS FUT
ROY DE DANNEMARCH,
VENGEA LA MORT DE
SON PERE HORVVENDILLE,
OCCIS PAR FENCON SON
FRERE, ET AUTRE OCCUR-
RENCE DE SON HISTOIRE.

Qgoy que j'eusse delibere des le commencement de ce mien oeuvre de ne m'esloigner, tant peu soit, des histoires de nostre temps, y ayant assez de sujets pleins de succez tragiques, si est-ce que partie pour ne pouvoit en discourir sans chatouiller plusieurs ausquels je ne voudroy desplaire, partie aussi que l'argument que j'ay en main m'a semblé digne d'estre offert à la noblesse Françoise, pour les grandes, et gailhardes occurrences qui y sont deduites, j'ay un peu esgaré mon cours de ce siecle, et sortant de France et pays voisins, suis allé visiter l'histoire Danoise, afin qu'elle puisse servir et d'exemple de vertu, et de contentement aux nostres, ausquels je tasche de complaire, et pour le rassasiement desquels je ne laisse fleur qui ne soit goutee pour leur en tirer le miel le plus parfait et delicat, afin de les obliger à madiligence, ne me souciant de l'ingratitude du temps present, qui laisse ainsi en arriere et sans recompence ceux, qui servent au public, et honorent, par leur travail et diligence leur pays, et illustrent la France d'autant que souvent la faulte vient plustost d'eux que non des grands, lesquels ont d'autres affaires qui les destournent de chose qui semble de peu de consequence. Joint que je me tiens pour plus que satisfait en ce contentement et grande liberte d'esprit, de laquelle je jouys estant aymé de la noblesse, pour laquelle je travaille avec si peu de relache, caressé des gens de sçavoir pour les admirer, et leur faire reverence, telle que leur excellence

THE TRAGICALL HISTORIE OF



Ham. O Jephth Judge of Israell, what a treasure had'st thou!
Pol. What a treasure had be my Lord?
Ham. Why 'one faire daughter and no more, the which be loved passing well.'
Pol. Still on my daughter.
Ham. Am I not i'th' right old Jephth?
Pol. If you call me Jephth my Lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.
Ham. Nay that followes not.
Pol. What followes then my Lord?
Ham. Why 'as by lot God wot,' and then you knowe 'it came to passe, as most like it was; the first rowe of the pious chanson will showe you more, for looke where my abridgment comes.

HAMLET PRINCE OF DENMARKE

Enter the Players.



Ham. You are welcome maisters, welcome all, I am glad to see thee well, welcome good friends, ob old friend, why thy face is valant since I saw thee last, com'st thou to beard me in Denmark? what my poung Lady and mistris, byrlady pour Ladishippe is nerer to heaven, then when I saw you last by the altitude of a thopine, pray God pour voyce like a peece of uncurrant gold, bee not crackt within the ring: maisters you are all welcome, weele e'n to't like french Fauknors, fly at any thing we see, weele have a speech strait, come give us a tast of pour quality, come a passionate speech.
Play. What speech my good Lord?
Ham. I beard thee speake me a speech once, but it was

ACT II SCENE II LINES 440-454

THE PREFACE

Although in the beginning of this Hystorie, I had determined not to have troubled you with any other matter, then a Hystorie of our owne time having sufficient tragicall matter to satiasie the minds of men, but because I cannot wel discourse thereof, without touching many personages, whom I would not willingly displease, and partly because the Argument that I have in hand, seemed unto me a thing worthy to be offered to our French Nobilitie for the great and gallant occurrences therein set downe. I have somewhat strayed from my course, as touching the Tragedies of this our age, and starting out of France and over Neitherlanders countries, I have ventured to visit the Hystories of Denmarke that it may serve for an example of vertue and contentment to our Nation (whom I specially seeke to please) and for whose satisfaction I have not left any flower whatsoever untasted, from whence I have not drawne the most perfect and delicate hony, thereby to bind them to my diligencce therein, not caring for the ingratitude of the time present, that leaveth (and as it were rejecteth) without recompence, such as serveth the Commonwealth, and by their travell and diligencce honour their Countrey, and illustrate the Realme of France, so that often times the fault proceedeth rather from them, then from the great personages that have other affaires which withdraw them from things that

Shakespeare in the Twentieth Century

The twentieth century cemented Shakespeare's standing in world culture. In the United States, Henry Clay Folger created a library to make his outstanding Shakespeare collection accessible to the public. In Britain, high profile institutions such as the Royal Shakespeare Company were established to keep his plays permanently in the professional repertoire. The plays became perennial objects of study in schools worldwide, and the focus of ever more detailed academic attention. The rise of film and television gave them a new lease of commercial life on screen, while Shakespeare tourism became a multi-million pound industry. At the end of the century, the rebuilt Globe theatre on London's South Bank brought Shakespeare back to where it all began. A combination of tourist attraction and theatre laboratory, the Globe perfectly demonstrates the conjunctions of social forces and capacities that are sustaining Shakespeare's unique status in global culture into the twenty-first century.

Who was John Dover Wilson?

Born in Surrey in 1881, John Dover Wilson began his professional life as an education inspector, and was also involved in the Workers' Educational Association. He had a passion for Shakespeare, and pioneered new ways of determining reliable texts of the plays. In 1935 he was appointed Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature at Edinburgh – the position first established with the assistance of the Earl of Bute in 1762. From then until his death in 1969 he lived at Balerno, completing a groundbreaking new edition of Shakespeare's works.

Wilson and Hamlet

For Wilson, literary scholarship was an adventure. In his memoirs, he describes becoming 'converted - to Shakespeare!' during a train journey from Leeds to Sunderland on a dark winter's night in 1917. The cause of his conversion was a 'devilish ingenious but damnably wrong' reading of *Hamlet* advanced by one of his contemporaries, the critic and editor W. W. Greg. Realising that he 'had been born to answer it', Wilson threw himself into the problems and difficulties of the play. Over the next twenty years, he produced two striking new editions and a highly popular critical account simply called *What Happens in Hamlet*. His work had a lasting influence on the way the play was read and staged, combining as it did a careful attention to textual difficulties with some highly imaginative interpretation. Greg once drily described Wilson's

speculations as 'the careerings of a not too captive balloon in a high wind.'

Wilson's Correspondents

Shakespeare opened many doors for Wilson. Among those who sought his opinions or advice were some of the century's finest theatrical talents, from Harley Granville Barker and Tyrone Guthrie to Laurence Olivier, Vivien Leigh and Michael Redgrave. He was friends, too, with writers including Rupert Brooke, Edwin Muir, E. M. Forster and Siegfried Sassoon. *What Happens in Hamlet* brought him a letter of admiration in 1936 from the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Neville Chamberlain, and the two men corresponded warmly on Shakespearean matters for three years, until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939.

Edinburgh's Collections

Wilson was not himself a collector of Shakespearean books and manuscripts. By the mid-twentieth century, most large scale collecting of Shakespearean books was undertaken by libraries rather than individuals, and many items which had once been in private hands were now publicly available to researchers. But Wilson influenced the destiny of important collections, nonetheless. In 1956 he helped to arrange the acquisition of the Bute collection by the new National Library of Scotland, of which he was a trustee, an achievement he described as 'one of the proudest feats of my career in Edinburgh'. Ten years later, he prompted the University to buy another collection of plays once owned by Halliwell-Phillipps, which their collector had given to the town of Penzance.

1-2. A Shakespearean Life

In his autobiography, completed soon before his death and published posthumously, John Dover Wilson detailed the perhaps surprisingly lively incidents of a life in the service of Shakespeare. He described the genesis and development of the Cambridge edition of Shakespeare's works which occupied him for most of his career, and his lifelong fascination with the editorial and interpretative problems of *Hamlet*.

He spoke warmly of his friendships with fellow Shakespeare enthusiasts, professional and amateur, and proudly of his achievements over more than thirty years spent in Edinburgh. A manuscript of the book is preserved in NLS, and shows him shaping his autobiography for publication. His narrative proudly recounts his involvement in the 'the acquisition for Scotland of this great body of Shakespeareana' – the Bute and Halliwell-Phillipps collections.

John Dover Wilson, *Milestones on the Dover Road* (London, 1969). Exhibition copy.

John Dover Wilson, 'Milestones on the Dover Road' Typescript. NLS MS.14371, displaying fols. 281 and 287.

3. Reading Hamlet

Among Wilson's most well known books is *What Happens in Hamlet*, first published in 1935, just prior to his move to Edinburgh. In it, he advanced the interpretation of the play he had arrived at through many years of thought and textual study. The book proved enormously popular, and made his reputation among a general readership. It went through three editions, and was frequently reprinted for many years afterwards.

John Dover Wilson, *What Happens in Hamlet* (Cambridge, 1960). Exhibition copy, displaying the front cover.

4. A Landmark Edition

In 1919, Wilson was invited to join the respected scholar Arthur Quiller Couch in preparing a new edition of Shakespeare's works for Cambridge University Press. His collaborator stepped down after they had completed work on the comedies, and Wilson led the project to complete the edition until the final play was published in 1966. His methodical approach to the textual differences between the early editions of the plays proved highly influential, and the more speculative interpretations in which he indulged were never less than provocative.

The volumes of the *New Shakespeare* displayed are a mixed set assembled by Wilson and used by him as working copies, recording his corrections and revisions for future reprints.

John Dover Wilson, ed. *The New Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 1921-66).

NLS H1.79.387, displaying the set closed on a bookshelf.

5. Imagining Hamlet

The edition of *Hamlet* Wilson produced for his Cambridge New Shakespeare series reveals both his careful approach to the text of the play and his use of his lively imagination. The dialogue is closely based on the second quarto of 1604/5, which Wilson's research had led him to believe was the most authoritative early edition of the play. But while the vivid and elaborate stage directions draw on Wilson's understanding of Shakespearean playing conditions, they are entirely his own invention. Similar to those of early twentieth century playwrights such as George Bernard Shaw, they provide a frame for Shakespeare's text which would have helped to render it more comprehensible for Wilson's readers.

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. John Dover Wilson (Cambridge, 1934). NLS H1.79.387, open at p.1.

6-9. The Cranach Press Hamlet

Wilson's long obsession with *Hamlet* led to his involvement in one of the finest book productions of the twentieth century. In 1913, the German Count Harry Kessler established a private press dedicated to publishing books of the very highest quality in strictly limited editions. With the theatre director, engraver and designer Edward Gordon Craig he embarked on a plan to publish an illustrated edition of *Hamlet*, using engravings based on designs Craig had first developed for a famous Moscow production of the play in 1912.

The book was published in German in 1928. For an English edition, Kessler sought the contribution of Wilson, already recognised as a leading expert on *Hamlet*. Wilson furnished Kessler with an innovative text based on the second quarto, which was also to provide the basis for his Cambridge edition of the play. Kessler's edition provided a sumptuous setting for Wilson's Shakespeare text.

The Cranach *Hamlet* was published in English in 1930 in an edition of 300 'ordinary' copies and twenty two on finer paper or in especially rich bindings. Exceptionally, Edinburgh is home to three copies of the edition, two of

them unique. Among Wilson's papers at NLS are page proofs with editorial corrections; the library also holds a copy of the 'ordinary' edition, in which Wilson's edited text of *Hamlet* is framed by two of the sources on which the play was based and itself arrayed around Craig's extraordinary designs. The University library is now home to the leather-bound presentation copy of the edition given by Kessler to Wilson in gratitude for his invaluable contribution. The shared interest of both scholar and artist in the early publication of Shakespeare can also be seen in Wilson's preservation among his papers of a catalogue to an exhibition of Shakespeare editions held in Newcastle in 1923, which featured a preface written by Craig in which the artist and man of the theatre voices his admiration for the makers of modern editions as well as those who created the First Folio.

William Shakespeare, *The Tragedie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke*, ed. John Dover Wilson (Weimar, 1930). NLS FB.1.399, displaying pp.92-93; NLS F.3.d.22, displaying pp.86-87; EUL RB.F.100, displaying the front cover.

Catalogue of an Exhibition of Early Editions of the Works of Shakespeare... With a Preface by Gordon Craig (Newcastle, 1923). NLS MS.14321, fol.33.

10-19 A Shakespearean Circle: Wilson's correspondents

Wilson was careful throughout his life to preserve much of his extensive correspondence with his contemporaries, who for the most part share his enthusiasm for, and absorption in, Shakespeare. This correspondence is now held at NLS, and illustrates the extent to which a professional expertise in Shakespeare could be a commodity in high demand among the social, cultural and political elites of 20th century Western society.

10. Neville Chamberlain

A letter dated January 30th 1939 shows Chamberlain's ongoing friendship with Wilson, begun when the then Chancellor of the Exchequer wrote to Wilson in early 1936 to express his admiration for *What Happens in Hamlet*. The Prime Minister here makes reference to an invitation Wilson had passed on to him, asking whether he might accept the honorary presidency of the German Shakespeare Society in appreciation of his commitment to preserving peace. The invitation was to be declined, as the Society was not open to 'non-Aryan' members. NLS MS.14315, fol. 51.

11. Cedric Belfrage and the National Paul Robeson Committee

A 1957 letter testifies to Wilson's involvement in another political incident. The American actor, singer and human rights activist Paul Robeson was refused permission to travel abroad in 1950, as a result of official US suspicion of his political views at the height of the cold war. A public campaign was launched in the UK, agitating for the lifting of the ban. The campaign sought the support of public figures including Wilson, who duly wrote to *The Times* praising Robeson's performances as Othello. Robeson was finally permitted to travel in 1958. NLS MS.14318, fol.33.

12. Siegfried Sassoon

During the 1950s, Wilson became friendly with Siegfried Sassoon, who had risen to fame as a war poet and writer thirty years earlier. This vivid correspondence, with Sassoon's observations on everything from his own poetry to the activities of mutual acquaintances, gives a flavour of the life lived by the poet in his later years at Heytesbury House in Wiltshire, where he continued to write until shortly before his death in 1967. NLS MS.14322, fol.204.

13. Edwin and Willa Muir

A Christmas card sent by the writers Edwin and Willa Muir from Newbattle Abbey, an adult education college outside Edinburgh where Edwin was warden between 1950 and 1955, testifies to Wilson's involvement in the literary culture of his adopted country. A fine critic as well as a highly regarded poet, Edwin Muir had helped Wilson to select the recipients of the James Tait Black literary prizes during Wilson's tenure as Regius Professor. Willa Muir was an accomplished novelist and translator, responsible, with Edwin, for first bringing the work of Franz Kafka to an English-speaking public. NLS MS.14317, fols.55-56.

14. T. S. Eliot

T. S. Eliot was one of the most highly regarded poets of the twentieth century. His poetry was an essential component in the Modernist transformation of literature, and brought him both fame and notoriety after the publication of his poem *The Waste Land* in 1922. Eliot was also an editor at Faber, the publishing house, and a highly influential critic. His correspondence with Wilson began in 1926 when Eliot wrote to him to invite him to review a work of Shakespeare criticism. NLS MS.14316, fol.85.

15. Edith Sitwell

A 1947 letter from Edith Sitwell to Wilson asks him for permission to quote from his criticism in her own *Notebook* on *William Shakespeare*. Sitwell was one of the most exciting and celebrated poets of the period, and her poem *Façade* was an overnight sensation when first performed in 1923. It was later set to music by the composer William Walton. Of Sitwell and her brothers, Evelyn Waugh wrote, 'they took the dullness out of literature'.
NLS MS.14322, fol. 124.

16. Michael Redgrave

Michael Redgrave was one of the leading actors of his generation. He met Wilson while he was a young teacher, directing and acting in school productions, and they began a warm and lasting friendship. In a letter from 1952, Redgrave asks Wilson to send him a copy of his edition of *The Merchant of Venice* in order to help him prepare for three productions to be staged the following year. Redgrave's performances in these productions were widely held to be among his finest.
NLS MS.14322, fol. 185.

17. Barry Jackson

A letter from the eminent theatre director Barry Jackson preserved among Wilson's papers records their shared view of a staging of *King John* at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, which Jackson had founded and

where he was governing director. *King John* was the first Shakespeare production overseen by a promising young talent called Peter Brook, who would go on to become one of the most innovative, exciting and influential of modern directors. Fortunately, he never learned to curb his invention, as Wilson thought he might.
NLS MS.14322, fol.89.

18-19. Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh

Laurence Olivier was one of the finest actors of the twentieth century. He was nurtured by Barry Jackson at the Birmingham Rep before establishing himself as a star, and a highly capable director, in both theatre and film. He was particularly celebrated as a Shakespearean actor, and his wartime film of *Henry V* was hugely successful. In 1940 he married Vivien Leigh, an actress of equal talent and power, who had recently starred as Scarlett O'Hara in the film of *Gone with the Wind*.

A shared enthusiasm for Shakespeare was central to Wilson's friendship with Olivier and Leigh. Wilson sent copies of his published and unpublished editions to them, and he also advised Olivier at the actor's request on his plans for staging Shakespeare's plays. One letter shows Wilson providing detailed comments on ideas for a famous production of *Antony and Cleopatra* first staged in London in 1951, in which Olivier and Leigh took the title roles.
NLS MS.14317, fol. 61 verso and fol. 58; MS.14322, fols.298-99.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
THE TRAGEDIE OF HAMLET
PRINCE OF DENMARKE

EDITED BY J. DOVER WILSON LITT. D.
FROM THE TEXT OF THE SECOND QVARTO
PRINTED IN 1604-5
'ACCORDING TO THE TRUE AND PERFECT COPPIE'

WITH WHICH ARE ALSO PRINTED
THE HAMLET STORIES FROM SAXO GRAMMATICUS AND BELLEFOREST
AND ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS THEREFROM

ILLUSTRATED BY
EDWARD GORDON CRAIG

AND PRINTED BY COUNT HARRY KESSLER
AT THE CRANACH PRESS WEIMAR
MDCCCXXX

FROM PAGE TO STAGE: EARLY PROMPT COPIES

King. With all my heart, and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd. Good Gentlemen, ~~Give him a further edge, and drive his purpose on~~
To these delights.

Rosin. We shall, my Lord.

Exeunt.

King. Sweet *Gertrude*, leave us too,
For we have closely sent for *Hamlet* hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here ~~meet with~~
~~Afflict~~ *Ophelia*. Her Father, and my self (lawfull ~~spial~~)
Will so bestow our selves, that seeing unseen
We may of their encounter frankly judge, ~~if this is~~
And gather by him, as he is behav'd, ~~Hamlet~~
If 't be th' affliction of his love, or no. ~~Strange~~
That thus he suffers for.

Quee. I shall obey you :
And for your part, *Ophelia*, I doe wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of *Hamlets* wildnesse : so shall I hope your Virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your Honours.

Ophe. Madam, I wish it may.

Pol. *Ophelia*, walk you here. Gracious so please ye
We will bestow our selves ~~Read on this Book,~~
That shew of such an exercise may colour
Your lonelinesse. We are oft to blame in this
'Tis too much prov'd, that with Devotions visage,
And pious Action, we do surge o're
The Devil himself.

King. Oh 'tis true :
How smart a lash that speech doth give my Conscience ?
The Harlots Check beautied with plaistring Art
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Then is my deed, to my most painted word,
Oh heavy burthen !

Pol. I hear him comming, let's withdraw, my Lord.

Exeunt.

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the Question :
Whether 'tis Nobler in the mind to suffer
The Slings and Arrowes of outrageous Fortune,
Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them : to dye, to sleep
No more : and by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ake, and the thousand naturall shocks

Is sicklied o're, with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprizes of great pich and'moment,
With this regard their Currants turn away,
And loose the name of Action. Soft you now,
The fair *Ophelia* ? Nymph, in thy Horizons
Be all my sins remembered.

Ophe. Good my Lord,

How does your honour for this many a day ?

Ham. I humbly thank you : well, well, well.

Ophe. My Lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to redeliver.

I pray you now, receive them.

Ham. No, no, I never gave you ought.

Ophe. My honour'd Lord, I know right well you did,
And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd,
As made the things more rich, then perfume left :
Take these again, for to the Noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.
There, my Lord.

Ham. Ha, ha : are you honest ?

Ophe. My Lord.

Ham. Are you faire ?

Ophe. What meanes your Lordship ?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, your Honesty
should admit no discourse to your Beauty.

Ophe. Could beauty, my Lord, have better Comerce
then your honesty ?

Ham. I truly : for the power of beauty, will sooner
transforme honesty from what it is, to a Bawd, then the
force of honesty can translate Beauty into his likenesse.
This was sometimes a Paradox, but now the time gives it
proof. I did love you once.

Ophe. Indeed, my Lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me. For virtue
cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of
it. I loved you not.

Ophe. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a Nunnery. Why would'st thou
be a breeder of Sinners ? I am my self indifferent honest,
but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were bette-
re, my Mother had not born me. I am very proud, re-
vengefull, Ambitious, with more offenses at my beck,
then I have thoughts to put them in Imagination, to give
them shape, or time to act them in. What should such

The Halliwell-Phillipps collection at the University library contains four printed plays taken from copies of the first and third folio collections of Shakespeare's works which were used by theatre companies performing in the 1660s and 1670s, and are among the earliest Shakespearean 'prompt books' still surviving today.

Quarto playbooks were originally published as texts to be read, not performed. Acting companies such as Shakespeare's kept copies of their plays in manuscript, and would base productions on these. Individual actors had copies only of the part or parts they were playing, accompanied by the few words necessary to give them their cue each time they were due to speak. But a complete manuscript of the playtext as performed, called a prompt book, would be kept by the 'bookholder' or prompter and used to ensure the smooth running of the performance.

Once a play had been published, a printed copy, marked up with cuts and details of performance such as cues, might become the basis for a production. From the names of actors listed in these and other copies from the same volumes it can be shown that they probably come from two companies: the 'Nursery' theatre in London, in which young or inexperienced actors learnt their trade alongside more seasoned professionals, and Dublin's Smock Alley theatre, which was the first purpose-built theatre to be constructed in the city.

1-2. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

The earliest of two copies of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is taken from a first folio of 1623. While it can be convincingly associated with the London 'Nursery', it is not fully marked up for performance. The text has been cut to bring it down to a performable length, but no indications of cues or stage business are evident.

The third folio copy of the same play comes from the Smock Alley company, and shows cuts and scene settings but not other details of an actual performance. A later hand has introduced textual emendations made by 18th century editors. Whereas the Nursery copy makes an attempt to minimise the role of Titania, the Fairy Queen, and consequently much of the comic business surrounding Bottom the weaver, the Smock Alley cuts preserve these aspects of the play.

William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, from the first folio (London, 1623).

EUL JY 439, open at pp.152-153.

William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, from the third folio (London, 1663).

EUL JY 441, open at pp.152-153.

3. *Hamlet*

The copy of *Hamlet* in the collection is from the third folio of Shakespeare's plays, published in 1663. Although the play is heavily cut, 'To be or not to be', the most famous of Hamlet's soliloquies, is left untouched. Given the free hand with which other parts of the play are altered, this can be taken as evidence that the speech was at the very least regarded as theatrically effective by the Smock Alley company. Other details of performance, such as advance calls for entering actors, are also evident.

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, from the third folio (London, 1663). EUL JY 442, open at pp.742-743.

4. *The Comedy of Errors*

A copy of *The Comedy of Errors*, from the 'Nursery' theatre's first folio, shows cuts and other indications for performance, such as diagonal crossed lines to indicate an actor's entrance. Also legible on the right hand page are the annotations 'Act Ready', 'Ring' and 'A Dance here', which prompt the musical interlude staged between the acts of the play.

William Shakespeare, *The Comedy of Errors*, from the first folio (London, 1623). EUL JY 438, open at pp.88-89.

RECOVERING THE TEXT: EIGHTEENTH CENTURY EDITORS



Enter Richard Duke of Gloucester, solus.

NOW is the winter of discontent, ^{*of our*}
Made glorious sommer by this sonne of Yorke:
And all the cloudes that lowrd vpon our house, ^{*lowrd*}
In the deepe bosome of the Ocean buried, ^{*bosome*}
Now are our browes bound with victorious wreathes,
Our brused armes hung vp for monuments, ^{*brused*} 1602.
Our sterne alarums changd to merrie meetings,
Our dreadfull marches to delightfull pleasures, ^{*measures*} 1602.
Grim-visagde warre, hath smoothde his wringled front,
And now in stead of mounting barbed steeds,
To fright the soules of fearefull aduersaries,
He capers nimbly in a Ladies chamber,
To the lasciuious pleasing of a loue. ^{*loue*} 1602.
But I that am not sharpe for sportiue trickes, ^{*shapte of*} 1602.
Nor made to court an amorous looking glasse,
I that am rudely stampd, and want loues maiestie
To strut before a wanton ambling Nymph;
I that am curtaild of this faire proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deformd, vnfinisht, sent before my time
Into this breathing world halfe made vp, ^{*scarce*}
And that so lamely and vnfashionable,
That dogs barke at me as I halt by them: ^{*at*}
Why I in this weake piping time of peace
Haue no delight to passe away the time,
Vnlesse to spie my shadow in the Sunne,

while

In the eighteenth century, a series of scholars began to study the quartos. Among both University and National Library collections are a number of copies of early quarto editions which once belonged to editors of Shakespeare's plays. Their work, visible in the books they owned, shaped the way we read Shakespeare's plays today.

Editors and collectors

The first great Shakespearean editor, Nicholas Rowe, had concentrated on the folio text of the plays. These editors turned their attention to the many different quartos, beginning arguments about the rival merits of quarto editions and quarto versus folio texts which still occupy scholars today. They compiled their own collections of early editions to help their researches, at a time when these books were still relatively easily affordable for a gentleman. Their quartos became working copies, in some cases accumulating extensive notes to aid them in the production of their own editions.

The first editor represented in the collections was Lewis Theobald (1688-1744), who trained as a lawyer but made a living as professional poet, playwright and critic. He was prompted to edit Shakespeare's plays because he found so many faults with Alexander Pope's edition. Pope took revenge by satirizing Theobald as the archetypal tedious scholar in his poem *The Dunciad*.

Like Halliwell-Phillipps a century later, Theobald bought and borrowed as many quartos as possible in his concern to go back to read the early editions of Shakespeare's plays for himself. After his death, some of Theobald's copies came into the hands of George Steevens (1736-1800), who shared Theobald's interest in the early quartos and his habit of making notes on his books as he studied them. Steevens, whose collecting habits were helped by his private fortune, began his editing career by working on revisions to Samuel Johnson's Shakespeare edition, before producing editions first of the quartos and then of the complete works himself. Edward Capell (1713-1781) was Steevens' rival both as an editor and a collector. A lawyer by training, Capell was a precise and obsessive scholar who would be described by Halliwell-Phillipps as 'one of the most acute, sensible, and learned of all Shakespearean critics' (*A Few Words in Defence of the Memory of Edward Capell*, 1861).

After these editors died, their collections were dispersed and are now in libraries all over the world. Some copies

ended up in the Bute collection, and some were eventually bought by Halliwell-Phillipps. This exhibition brings some of these editors' books back together for the first time in just over two hundred years.

Editors at work

Copies in both collections demonstrate some of the typical ways in which these editors worked. They compared copies, identified errors, and made changes which they thought improved the text. In their own editions, they introduced elements which have become part of our normal experience of reading Shakespeare's text on the page.

One task these editors performed was collating: comparing different editions, and different copies of the same edition. This helped them to identify places where there might be mistakes in the printing, or changes to the text over time. Many of the notes they made on these plays record the variants they discovered, such as Lewis Theobald's annotations on his copy of a 1630 edition of *Pericles* comparing it with the editions of 1609 and 1619.

Theobald wrote in the preface to his edition that editing was about 'the Emendation of corrupt Passages [and] the Explanation of obscure and difficult ones', a practice amply illustrated by the notes made by first Theobald and then Steevens on the books which passed from the former to the latter.

Each generation of Shakespearean editors builds on the foundation of their predecessors in carrying out their own work. Both Halliwell-Phillipps and Dover Wilson drew on these editors' versions of the texts when they were producing their own editions. Without all of these people, we would be reading very different texts of Shakespeare's plays today.

1. Henry IV part 1

This was one of Shakespeare's most popular plays among early readers – six quarto editions were published before the First Folio. Lewis Theobald was one owner of this copy. Its title page is missing and it was Theobald's detective work, as seen in his notes facing the last page of the play, which correctly identified it as a copy of the 1604 edition.

William Shakespeare, *The historie of Henrie the fourth* (London, 1604). The Third Quarto.
NLS Bute.479, open at sig.K4v and facing flyleaf.

2. Theobald's Shakespeare

Lewis Theobald's pioneering work on Shakespeare's plays gave birth not only to his own edition but to the idea of what an edition of the plays should be. In his edition's preface he explained the work of an editor: extensive reading of sources and analogues, 'a faithful collation of all the printed copies' and 'the dry Task of consulting Etymological Glossaries'. But, he said, he carried all this work out because of 'the dear and ardent Love I bear for Shakespeare'.

Lewis Theobald, ed. *The Works of Shakespeare in Seven Volumes* (London, 1733).
NLS [Am].6/1.1, displaying vol. 1 open at the title page.

3. The Merry Wives of Windsor

One of the tasks of an editor is to try to explain Shakespeare's jokes, whose sense can be lost with the passing of time. In his note on this play's first scene, where the humour comes from a pun on 'louse' and the obscure word 'luse', Lewis Theobald correctly identifies 'luse' as a fish: the 'luce', or pike. He cites the 16th-century encyclopedia *Historia Animalium* by Conrad Gessner, demonstrating exactly the kind of trawl through dry reference sources which he believed a good editor should practise.

William Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (London, 1630). The Third Quarto.
NLS Bute.499, open at sig. A2v-3.

4. The Merchant of Venice

The copy of the 1600 edition of *The Merchant of Venice* in the Bute collection was owned by Theobald and Steevens and is full of their annotations. Theobald notes on the title page that he has compared it to the 'other edition of the same date'. We now know that the 'other' edition was

printed in 1619, with a false imprint, as explained in the 'Mystery of the Pavier Quartos' section below.

William Shakespeare, *The most excellent historie of the merchant of Venice* (London, 1630). The First Quarto.
NLS Bute.494, open to display the detached title page facing sig. A2.

5. Henry V

The initials 'E.C.' on the title page tell us that Edward Capell owned a copy of this quarto of *Henry V*, one of the Pavier quartos which form the subject of the next section of the exhibition. Capell did not make any marks in this copy, but used a copy of the same edition now at the University of Pennsylvania for his working notes. Both of Capell's copies were subsequently owned by James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps.

William Shakespeare, *The chronicle history of Henry the fifth, with his battell fought at Agin Court in France* (London, 1619). The Third Quarto.
EUL JA 3716, open at the title page.

6. Pericles

On his copy of the fifth quarto edition of *Pericles* Lewis Theobald recorded the variations he observed between it and those of 1609 and 1619. Some of its pages show the effects of an accident during the printing process, when some type must have been dropped and other letters knocked out of place. This would have been corrected when it was noticed – other copies survive where the line is printed perfectly.

William Shakespeare, *The late, and much admired play, called Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (London, 1630).
The Fifth Quarto.
EUL JA 3718, open at sig.E4v-F.

7. Richard II

Many editors of Shakespeare's plays conflate elements from the different early editions to produce what they think is the best possible text. This process can be seen in practice in a page from the fifth quarto of *Richard II*, where George Steevens notes the scene break and stage direction adapted from the First Folio.

William Shakespeare, *The tragedie of King Richard the second* (London, 1615). The Fifth Quarto.
NLS Bute.507, open at sig. F2v-F3.

8-10. Richard III: Shakespeare and Steevens

The 1612 edition of *Richard III* was printed with various errors, for instance the omission of 'our' from the famous first line, 'Now is the winter of our discontent'. It is easy to see the relationship between George Steevens' working notes on his copy of the 1612 *Richard III*, where he notes these errors and suggests corrections, and the text he presented in his edition of the quartos, *Twenty of the Plays of Shakespeare*.

Steevens was the first person to republish the early quarto texts for a modern audience. He explained that he did this partly 'to multiply the chances of their being preserved' and partly because he thought that people should be able to see and compare the different versions of the texts for themselves.

A second copy of the 1612 *Richard III* in the collections was owned first by Theobald and then Halliwell-Phillipps, who in his own pursuit of texts to collate had some leaves from an incomplete copy bound in at the end of the play. These leaves contain attempts at amendments by an early reader. Without the benefit of comparing the text to other copies, they have come up with some strange variants – 'Now is the winter of *all* discontent', for instance.

William Shakespeare, *The tragedie of King Richard the third* (London, 1612). The Fifth Quarto.

NLS Bute.511, open at sig. A2.

EUL JA 3713, open at the copy of sig. A2 tipped in at the end of the volume.

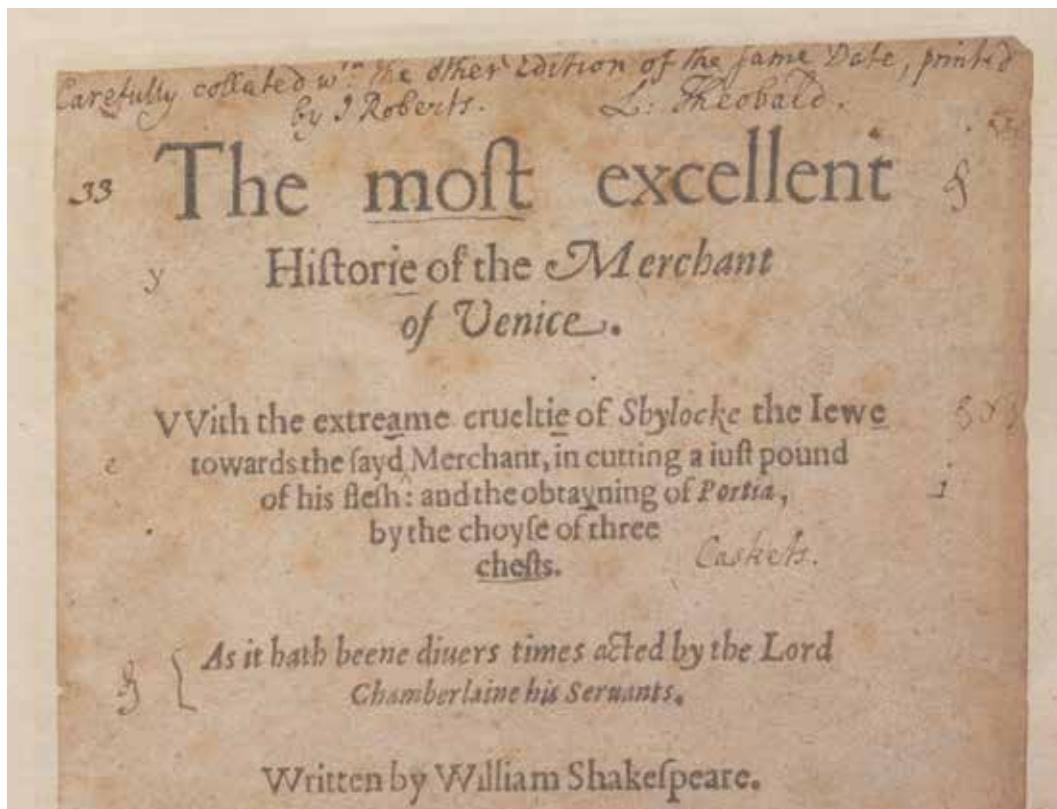
George Steevens, ed. *Twenty of the Plays of Shakespeare ... Publish'd from the Originals* (London, 1766).

NLS X.146.c, displaying vol.3 open at sig.N6v-N7.

11. Double Falsehood: Shakespeare or Theobald?

Around the same time as he first began to edit Shakespeare's plays, Theobald published the play *Double Falsehood*, claiming it came from the manuscript of a play by Shakespeare. But how much did this text owe to Theobald, who had written several successful plays? In 2010 the play was included in the authoritative Arden Shakespeare series in an edition edited by Brean Hammond. Hammond made a case for the play being substantially based on a collaboration by Shakespeare and his contemporary John Fletcher called *Cardenio*, for which some fragmentary and inconclusive evidence survives. Two productions that year, however, failed to convince critics that Theobald had really discovered a lost Shakespearean masterpiece.

Lewis Theobald, *Double Falshood; or, the Distrest Lovers* (Dublin, 1728). EUL Hc.10.52, open at the title page.



Above: William Shakespeare, *The most excellent historie of the merchant of Venice* (London, 1630). The First Quarto. NLS Bute.494, detached title page facing sig. A2.

THE MYSTERY OF THE
PAVIER QUARTOS

THE
Whole Contention
betweene the two Famous
Houses, LANCASTER and
YORKE.

*With the Tragical ends of the good Duke
Hurfrey, Richard Duke of Yorke,
and King Henrie the
fixt.*

Diuided into two Parts : And newly corrected and
enlarged. Written by *William Shake-
fpeare, Gent.*



*Whole Contention
Yorke, are not
parts of Henry VI
lio Editions of the
parts are to be...*

In 1619, the publishers Thomas Pavier and William Jaggard produced a set of playbooks with Shakespeare's name prominently displayed on the title page. Scholars know these books as the 'Pavier Quartos' – but there is a mystery about them which has never yet been fully resolved.

A planned edition...

Were the Pavier Quartos intended to form a collection – either a collected 'works' which would have predated the First Folio, or a series of Shakespeare playbooks? The title pages of some of these quartos suggest that the books form some kind of collection. They share the same layout, often with Shakespeare's name set in capital letters in the same prominent place, and have imprints with Pavier's initials and the correct date.

Two quartos show an important clue that they were published together. The editions of *The Whole Contention* and *Pericles* have separate title pages, but the inner leaves tell a different story. Early modern printers used 'signatures' – the letters in alphabetical order at the bottom of the right hand pages of the books they were producing – so that they knew the right order in which to assemble gatherings of printed pages to form a single work.

These quartos were printed with consecutive signatures – the last gathering of *The Whole Contention* is 'Q' and the first of *Pericles* is 'R'. These separate plays could easily have been assembled and sold as one book.

... or pirate printers?

Some of the quartos printed for Pavier and Jaggard give misleading information on their title pages – they claim to be printed by other people, in other years. Did Pavier and Jaggard fake these details because they were printing the books illegally?

In Shakespeare's day, it was the publisher who held the rights to a book, not the author. Thomas Pavier owned the rights to some of this group of plays printed in 1619, but not to all of them – especially not to the ones with false imprints. Were these misleading title pages designed to hide Pavier from the anger of the real owners?

Shakespeare's company, the King's Men, made an official complaint in 1619 about the unauthorised printing of his plays. Was it about Pavier and Jaggard? The company

often performed at court, and may have used this influence to persuade the authorities that they should have some control over the publication of plays they still performed. However William Jaggard was involved in printing the First Folio. Would the King's Men have let that happen if they were still angry about an unlicensed edition?

1-2. The Whole Contention

Shakespeare wrote three plays about the reign of Henry VI, but it was only in the First Folio that they were titled as we know them today: *The First/Second/Third Part of King Henry VI*. Before that, editions of the last two plays were published as plays about different parts of 'the contention between the two famous houses Lancaster and Yorke' – the Wars of the Roses. The Pavier edition unites the two plays together, combining the titles by which they were best known to contemporary audiences.

William Shakespeare, *The whole contention between the two famous houses, Lancaster and Yorke* (London, 1619). The Third Quarto of both plays.
EUL JA3737, open at sig. Q.
NLS Bute.532, open at the title page.

3-4. Pericles

Pericles is unusual in that it is considered part of the Shakespeare canon although it was not included in the First Folio. The University of Edinburgh copy, from the Halliwell-Phillipps collection, is particularly interesting because it is one of the few surviving quartos to keep its original size – unlike many other quartos, its pages were never cropped in rebinding. Most of the smaller quartos on display in the exhibition would have once been this large.

William Shakespeare, *The late, and much admired play, called, Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (London, 1619). The Fourth Quarto.
EUL JA3707, open at the title page.
NLS Bute.504, open at sig. R.

5-6. The Merry Wives of Windsor and Henry V

Pavier chose to reprint plays because he thought would they would sell. His choices tell us something about what Shakespeare's first readers particularly enjoyed. These two plays both feature Falstaff, still appreciated today. But these title pages also make prominent mention of 'ancient Pistol', a comic character popular at the time, but whose humour

does not find many modern admirers.

William Shakespeare, *A most pleasant and excellent conceited comedy, of Sir John Falstaffe, and the merry wives of Windsor* (London, 1619). The Second Quarto. NLS Bute.498, open at the title page.

[William Shakespeare], *The chronicle history of Henry the fifth, with his battell fought at Agin Court in France*. The Third Quarto.

NLS Bute.485, open at the title page.

7-8. A Yorkshire Tragedy

A domestic drama based on a notorious real-life murder which took place in 1605, *A Yorkshire Tragedy* is one of several plays attributed to Shakespeare in his lifetime which scholars do not believe he wrote. Pavier seems to have thought it to be by Shakespeare when he first published it in 1608. The caption title at the beginning of the play suggests one reason why Shakespeare's name was attached to it – because it was performed by his company, the King's Men. Thomas Middleton is now generally accepted as the author.

Thomas Middleton, *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (London, 1619). The Second Quarto.

EUL JA 3712, open at the title page.

NLS Bute.534, open at sig. A.

9-10. King Lear

Quarto editions sometimes show signs that they were not printed with the greatest care or to the highest standard. Pavier and Jaggard's edition of *King Lear* contains one example of this. Lear's speech beginning 'Rumble thy bellyfull...' (Act 3, Scene 2) is entirely in blank verse. It is printed in the 1619 quarto in the middle of the page signed F2, and its last lines collapse into a jumble of what appears to be prose. Perhaps this is because the copytext from which the printers were working was not clear, perhaps because they were trying to fit the text onto the page.

William Shakespeare, *[The] true chronicle history of the life and death of King Lear, and his three daughters* (London, 1619).

EUL JA 3729, open at the title page.

NLS Bute.488, open at sig. F1v-F2.

11-12. A Midsummer Night's Dream

The type, layout and device on the title page of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* give it a radically different appearance to the other Pavier quartos, and there is no obvious reason why this should have been so. This is one of the pieces of evidence which led scholars to believe this edition was pirated: was the difference from other Pavier publications designed to convince people that this was really a book published by James Roberts in 1600, and not by William Jaggard in 1619?

William Shakespeare, *A midsummer nights dreame* (London, 1619). The Second Quarto.

EUL JA 3710, open at the title page.

NLS Bute.500, open at sig.A2.

13. The Merchant of Venice

Unlike *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, this quarto uses the same type, layout and device as the other Pavier quartos, although it also claims to have been printed in 1600 by James Roberts. The discrepancy between the different pieces of evidence is one reason why the true story behind the publication of the Pavier Quartos remains so tantalisingly elusive.

William Shakespeare, *The excellent history of the merchant of Venice* (London, 1619). The Second Quarto. EUL JA 3275, open at the title page.

THE LATE,
And much admired Play,
CALLED,
Pericles, Prince of
Tyre.

*With the true Relation of the whole Hi-
story, adventures, and fortunes of
the saide Prince.*

Written by W. SHAKESPEARE.



Printed for T. P. 1619.

Above: William Shakespeare, *The late, and much admired play, called, Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (London, 1619).
The Fourth Quarto. EUL JA3707, title page.

WHOSE BARD?



Shakespeare has been read, performed, and collected in Scotland for centuries. But does that mean that he holds the same place in literary culture here as in his native England?

Some of his admirers over the centuries have celebrated Shakespeare as a specifically English dramatist, both a source of national pride and a distillation of particularly English qualities. For many he is the English national bard, with his plays about English monarchs setting out a stirring and emotive vision of national history. Writing in the mid-nineteenth century, the Scot Thomas Carlyle declared, ‘he is the grandest thing we have yet done. For our honour among foreign nations, as an ornament to our English Household, what item is there that we would not surrender rather than him?’

But not all Scots have followed Carlyle in identifying with this English claim on Shakespeare. After all, Scotland has its own bard in Robert Burns. Its national storytellers have ranged from Blind Harry to Walter Scott and beyond. How then have Scots responded to Shakespeare and appropriated him into their culture?

Macbeth, the play where Shakespeare rewrites a Scottish historical tale, has been a particularly fertile prompt.

1. Macbeth Comes to Scotland

The identification of *Macbeth* as the ‘Scottish play’ is not a modern phenomenon. It was the first of Shakespeare’s plays to be published in Scotland, in the little-known edition displayed here, just over a century after it first appeared in print. As the title page shows, this edition was based on the performance of the play at Edinburgh’s first public theatre. Two celebrated literary Scots of the day were involved in its publication: the poet Allan Ramsay sold it in his bookshop, and the scholar and librarian Thomas Ruddiman published it. The two usually collaborated on projects designed to promote Scots language, history and culture, such as the collection of sixteenth century Scots poetry *The Ever Green* (1724).

Ramsay was one of the strongest advocates of the creation of a theatre in Edinburgh, but he and Ruddiman were also Jacobites, supporters of the Stuart monarchy and opponents of the Act of Union. Sadly their edition does not include their thoughts on a play full of complex negotiations of physical and moral authority between England and Scotland, and composed in the first years of the Union of the Crowns, but their publication of *Macbeth* shows how, since the beginnings of the modern Scottish theatre, *Macbeth* has been appropriated by Scots as a play which particularly belongs to them.

William Shakespeare: *Macbeth: a tragedy; as it is now acted at the New Theatre of Edinburgh. Written by Mr. Shakespear, with alterations by Mr. Tate* (Edinburgh, 1731).
NLS Ry.II.f.26, open at the title page.

2. Rewriting Shakespeare

In 2010, David Greig’s play *Dunsinane* was staged by the Royal Shakespeare Company, in a production brought north by the National Theatre of Scotland a year later. *Dunsinane* tells the story of what befalls the English army which has helped to depose Macbeth. Shakespeare’s tale of the liberation of Scotland from the rule of a tyrant and his ‘fiend-like queen’ is rewritten: Lady Macbeth, given her historical name of Gruach, survives her husband to confuse and confound the English general Siward. Through their exchanges, a Scotland beyond Shakespeare’s imagining dissents from his authoritative telling of its story.

David Greig, *Dunsinane* (London, 2010).
NLS PB5.210.690/10, displaying the front cover.

4. Shakespeare in Scots

Writers and translators have sometimes sought to make *Macbeth* more of a ‘Scottish play’ than Shakespeare had managed to do. The two translations of the play into Scots shown here were both published in 1992, and demonstrate another way in which modern and contemporary writers have chosen to recognise and respond to Shakespeare’s elevated cultural position.

Though some of his contemporaries included the languages and dialects of Britain in their plays, and Shakespeare gave one of the characters in Henry V elements of Scots speech, *Macbeth* itself is written entirely in the southern English of the early 17th century. In translating the play into Scots, David Purves and Robin Lorimer were not attempting to improve its accuracy as a representation of medieval Scotland – the historical Macbeth would have spoken Gaelic – but were instead hoping to bring ‘the Scottish play’ back home. Yet what might seem to be minor variations in approach by these translators reveal some radically different aspirations. While Purves renders all of the text into modern Scots, Lorimer rewrites the speeches of the English soldier Siward in non-Shakespearean but standard English. Purves’ choice appropriates the whole cloth of the play, while Lorimer chooses to mark out national differences between the Scots and the English in the play’s own language.

William Shakespeare, *MacBeth*, translated by R. C. L. Lorimer (Edinburgh, 1992).

NLS H3.93.1549, displaying the front cover.

William Shakespeare, *The Tragedie o Macbeth*, translated by David Purves (Edinburgh, 1992).

NLS HP4.92.892, open at pp.94-95.

5. Speaking Back to Shakespeare

Some Scottish writers have seen Shakespeare's cultural prestige as a political issue. The poet Tom Leonard has sought in his writing to challenge the hierarchies that grant high value to certain ways of speaking and deny it to others.

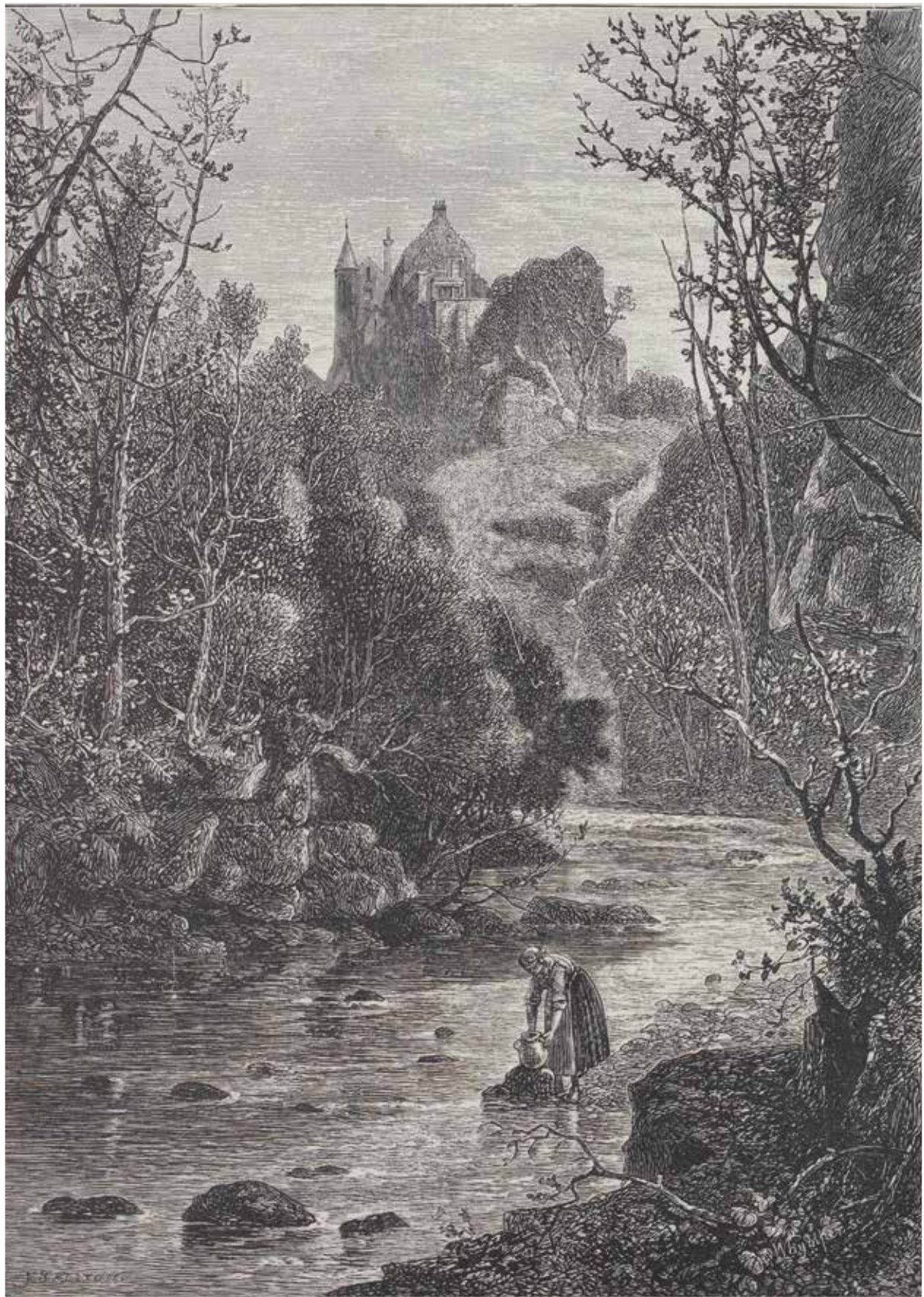
For Leonard, this can involve the politically alert rewriting of authoritative voices, including Shakespeare's. In the works shown here, he renders Hamlet's famous soliloquy strange by recasting it in a dispassionate, technical prose, and overlays the prized eloquence of one of Shakespeare's most famous sonnets with the passionate and halting articulation of modern vernacular speech.

Tom Leonard, *Intimate Voices: Selected Work*, 1965-1983 (Buckfastleigh, 2003).

NLS H1.205.110, open at 'To be or not to be', p.152 and

HB1.209.2.74, open at 'A Summer's Day', p.41.





Above: Engraving of Hawthornden Castle, from Samuel G Green, *Scottish Pictures Drawn with Pen and Pencil* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1883).

Image left: James Gordon, *Edinudunensis Tabulam* (?Amsterdam, 1647). NLS EMS. s. 52, detail. The University library is the building at 'w'.

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SCENE I.

Scenery bounded with woods.

RANDOLPH.

Whose melancholy gloom
I feel, and draws forth
From my bursting heart,
Do not leave you long ;
Do not dwell,
In the gloaming oak,
On GILDA'S moan.
On the departed ghosts

Are

SCENE

Scenery bounded with

RANDOLPH.

Whose melancholy
I feel, and draws forth
From my bursting
Do not leave you
Do not dwell,
In the gloaming o
On GILDA'S moan
On the departed gho