

SUMMARY: The document below is an undated letter from the Stratford upon Avon mercer, Adrian Quiney (d.1607), to his son, Richard Quiney (d.1602) mentioning William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon. According to Halliwell-Phillipps, the letter dates from late 1598 or early 1599.

For two other letters from this period mentioning Shakespeare and Richard Quiney, see SBTRO ER 27/4 and SBTRO BRU 15/1/136.

At the time the letter was written, Richard Quiney was in London pursuing a suit at court on behalf of the Corporation of Stratford upon Avon:

*October came, and Richard Quiney was again in London, this time to petition the Privy Council for a corporation charter on better terms and for relief from the latest subsidy voted by Parliament. With the bad weather and two devastating fires, Stratford had fallen on hard times, so Quiney had a good case. But he was forced to wait in London for four months.*

See Schoenbaum, *Samuel, William Shakespeare: A Compact Documentary Life*, rev. ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 238 at:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=-6VS\\_J9IVIYC&pg=PA238&lpg=PA238&dq=%22prosecuting+the+cause%22+%22Greville%22&source=bl&ots=SgtR1FWOw7&sig=N2hAc76Yujiz\\_3ghmlyVGJpVo&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi4i53X-J\\_JAhXWNogKHZ6cBWQQ6AEIHDA#v=onepage&q=%22prosecuting%20the%20cause%22%20%22Greville%22&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?id=-6VS_J9IVIYC&pg=PA238&lpg=PA238&dq=%22prosecuting+the+cause%22+%22Greville%22&source=bl&ots=SgtR1FWOw7&sig=N2hAc76Yujiz_3ghmlyVGJpVo&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi4i53X-J_JAhXWNogKHZ6cBWQQ6AEIHDA#v=onepage&q=%22prosecuting%20the%20cause%22%20%22Greville%22&f=false)

In the letter below Adrian Quiney advises his son that profit can be made from the sale of knit stockings, and suggests that:

*If you bargain with William Shakespeare or receive money therefore, bring your money home that you may, and see how knit stockings be sold.*

The foregoing comment indicates that Shakespeare knew where money was to be had in London, and could both loan his friends in Stratford funds of his own ('If you bargain with William Shakespeare'), or arrange loans for them with others ('or receive money therefore', i.e. through Shakespeare). SBTRO ER 27/4 also contains the suggestion that Shakespeare was in a position to do both.

For further particulars of the Quiney family of Stratford upon Avon, see Palmer, Alan and Veronica Palmer, *Who's Who in Shakespeare's England*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981, 1999), pp. 198-9.

'Mr Smyth of Wootton' mentioned in the letter may have been Sir Francis Smith (d. 3 September 1605) for whom see the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/smith-francis-1516-1605>.

The modern spelling transcript below is based on Halliwell-Phillipps, J.O., *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, (London: Longmans, Green, 1907), pp. 58-9 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/outlineslifेशa00hallgoog#page/n64/mode/2up>.

For a facsimile of the letter see the Windows on Warwickshire website at:

[http://www.search.windowsonwarwickshire.org.uk/engine/resource/exhibition/standard/default.asp?txtKeywords=Quiney&lstContext=&lstResourceType=&lstExhibitionType=&chkPurchaseVisible=&txtDateFrom=&txtDateTo=&originator=%2Fengine%2Fsearch%2Fdefault\\_hndlr.asp&page=&records=&direction=&pointer=10460&text=0&resource=10120](http://www.search.windowsonwarwickshire.org.uk/engine/resource/exhibition/standard/default.asp?txtKeywords=Quiney&lstContext=&lstResourceType=&lstExhibitionType=&chkPurchaseVisible=&txtDateFrom=&txtDateTo=&originator=%2Fengine%2Fsearch%2Fdefault_hndlr.asp&page=&records=&direction=&pointer=10460&text=0&resource=10120).

To my loving son, Richard Quiney, at the Bell in Carter Lane deliver these in London.

You shall, God willing, receive from your wife by master bailie, this bearer, assurance of 10s, and she would have you to buy some grocery if it be reasonable. You may have carriage by a woman who I willed to come to you. Mr Lane by report hath received a great sum of money of Mr Smyth of Wootton [=Wootton Wawen], but will not be known of it, and denied to lend your wife any, but his wife said that he had received £5, which was given her, and wished him to lent [sic] that to your wife, which he did. She hopeth to make provision to pay Mr Combe and all the rest.

I wrote to you concerning John Rogers. The house goeth greatly to decay. Ask secretly therein, and do somewhat there, as he is in doubt that Mr Parsons will not pay the £3 13s 4d. Wherefore write to him, if you may have carriage, to buy some such wares as you may sell presently with profit. If you bargain with William Shakespeare or receive money therefore, bring your money home that you may, and see how knit stockings be sold. There is great buying of them at Aysshome [=Evesham?].

Edward Wheat and Harry, your brother's man, were both at Evesham this day sennight, and as I heard, bestow[ed] £20 there in knit hose, wherefore I think you may do good if you can have money.