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***OXMYTHS AND STRATMYTHS: SECTION VI***

The 'myths' below involving Sir Henry Neville (d.1615) are arranged chronologically.

***MYTH: The first wife of Sir Henry Neville (d.1593) disappeared.***

In *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, p. 43, it is stated that:

*His father's first wife disappeared . . . .*

The first wife of Sir Henry Neville (d.1593), father of Sir Henry Neville (d.1615) was Winifred Losse. See the *ODNB* entries for Sir Henry Neville (d.1593) and Hugh Losse (d. 8 May 1555).

In his will dated 4 May 1555, Winifred's father, Hugh Losse, esquire, states that Winifred had predeceased him, and that Sir Henry Neville (d.1593) still held a life estate in certain properties assured to him by Hugh Losse:

*. . . reversion of such lands, tenements and hereditaments as I have heretofore appointed & assured to Sir Henry Neville, knight, who married Winifred, my daughter, now deceased, for term of his life, shall wholly remain and be to the said Robert, my son, and to th' heirs of his body lawfully begotten . . . .*

References:

(1) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), p. 43.

(2) Will of Hugh Losse, TNA PROB 11/37/397.

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville's mother was the daughter of Sir John Gresham (c.1495-1556), Lord Mayor of London in 1547.***

It is erroneously claimed in *The Truth Will Out*, p. 65, that Sir Henry Neville's mother, Elizabeth Gresham (d.1573), was the daughter of Sir John Gresham (c.1495-1556), Lord Mayor of London.

In fact, Elizabeth Gresham's father was Sir John Gresham (d.1560), the elder of the two sons of Sir Richard Gresham (c.1485–1549).

Sir Richard Gresham (c.1485-1549) was the brother of Sir John Gresham (c.1495-1556), Lord Mayor of London.

Sir John Gresham (c.1495-1556) was thus not the father of Sir Henry Neville's mother, Elizabeth Gresham (d.1573), but rather her great-uncle.

Elizabeth Gresham's mother was Frances Thwaytes (d. October 1580), the daughter and coheir of Sir Henry Thwaytes of Lownd, Yorkshire.

From the *ODNB*:

*Richard's eldest son and heir apparent, John Gresham (d. 1560), with his wife, Frances, the daughter and coheir of Sir Henry Thwaytes of Lownd in Yorkshire, benefited during the remainder of the 1540s from a peripheral contact with Richard's operations as a speculator in monastic property. In 1538 they obtained, probably through his good offices, leases from the crown for Wabourne Priory, Norfolk, with the rectories of Wabourne and East Beckham. They had by this date, however, abandoned their connections with the mercantile financial operations of the 'House of Gresham', preferring instead life as members of the lesser gentry. When required in 1544 to muster troops for Henry VIII's French expedition, John was able to provide his quota of seven men for the levy. When, as in 1545–6, he was called on to assume such minor public offices as the king's commissioner at Dover, he performed his duties unenthusiastically, but with sufficient diligence to ensure himself a knighthood, bestowed in 1547. Unlike his father, John cared little for either business or court life. His investments in Chancellor's ill-fated expedition to Russia in 1553 and in the Muscovy Company in 1555 were probably passive ones, and his office of assistant of the newly created company titular rather than active. The focus of his life lay far from London on his Norfolk estates. Here he lived a quiet rustic life, enlivened only by occasional visits to his metropolitan town house or attendances at the family gatherings which were hosted by Sir Richard and then Thomas Gresham at Inwood Hall. For most of their adult life Sir John and Frances were the London Greshams' rustic relatives. They were also their poor relations, and on his death in 1560 John left his widow in somewhat straitened circumstances. Yet such were the filial ties between the brothers that Thomas immediately came to the rescue, bestowing on Frances a handsome annuity of £133 6s. 8d., which was to be her main financial support until her death in October 1580. If, as seems probable from his marriage into the gentry and his early involvement in Sir Richard's property dealings, John was being groomed by his father for a partnership in the family property business, then Sir Richard was going to be sadly disappointed. Such talents and connections as John possessed were deployed to a far more traditional end—a successful marriage for his only daughter and heir, Elizabeth. And in this at least he was successful, for she was matched with Sir Henry Neville of Billingbere, who had received from his grandfather considerable estates in Berkshire which were to descend in the family line for generations to come.*

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 65.

(2) Rubinstein, William D., 'The Case for Sir Henry Neville as the Real Shakespeare', *The Oxfordian*, Vol. XIV, 2012, pp. 121-9 at p. 121, available online at:

<https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/the-oxfordian/>

(3) Pedigree of Sir John Gresham (d.1560) in Leveson Gower, Granville, *Genealogy of the Family of Gresham*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1883), p. 162:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YNQKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA162>

(4) Will of Frances (nee Thwaytes) Gresham, TNA PROB 11/62/471.

(5) *ODNB* entry for Sir Thomas Gresham.

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville was illegitimate, having been born before his parents' marriage.***

It is erroneously claimed in *The Truth Will Out*, p. 64, 327, and in *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, p. 50, that Sir Henry Neville (d.1615) was born before his parents were married. From the latter:

*There was a further, more personal reason why Neville may have felt deeply concerned to keep his writing secret. It seems he was born out of wedlock, or at least before his parents were formally married. His father's first wife disappeared, and it was not until after Neville's birth that a marriage settlement between Sir Henry Neville and Elizabeth Gresham was finally concluded. Any suspicion of illegitimacy would have threatened Neville's inheritance, just as we see in King John, when Robert Falconbridge challenges his older brother Philip's legitimacy. If indeed Neville did harbor secret anxieties about his own legitimacy he would have had a clear motive for Shakespeare's recurring interest in bastards. Neville served on a Parliamentary committee at the time Shakespeare wrote King Lear, with the most famous of his bastards, Edmund, demanding, 'Now, gods, stand up for bastards!' (1/2/22)*

No citation is provided for this claim, which appears to be based on a misinterpretation of Leveson Gower's note, p. 163, that an indenture dated 26 January 1568 may have been a marriage settlement between Elizabeth Gresham (d.1573) and Sir Henry Neville (d.1593). Leveson Gower gives no citation for the indenture, and it is unclear whether it is extant. However jointures were sometimes not finalized until many years after marriage.

The funeral certificate for Elizabeth (nee Gresham) Neville (d.1573) establishes that Sir Henry Neville (d.1615) was born in 1563. The certificate states that Elizabeth Gresham Neville died 7 November 1573, and that at that time Henry Neville, her eldest son and heir, was 10 and a half years of age, and had thus been born in May 1563.

Moreover the funeral certificate also states that at the date of her death Elizabeth (nee Gresham) Neville had a 12-year old daughter, Elizabeth Neville. It thus seems likely that Sir Henry Neville (d.1593) and Elizabeth (nee Gresham) Neville (d.1573) were married about 1560, at the time Sir Henry Neville took a lease on property in the Blackfriars.

For the funeral certificate, see Leveson Gower, pp. 9-10.

The fact that Elizabeth Gresham (d.1573) and Sir Henry Neville (d.1593) were married earlier than 1568, the date of the alleged marriage settlement, is also established in the will, dated 18 April 1565, of Isabel (nee Worpfall) Taverson Gresham (d.1565), second wife of Sir Richard Gresham. See Leveson Gower, *supra*, pp. 65, 76-9, 150 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YNQKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA76>

*And to my daughter [=step daughter-in-law] Frances Gresham, widow, a plain chain of gold weighing three ounces and three quarters. . . . And to my cousin, her daughter, and to her husband, Sir Henry Neville, knight . . . .*

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), pp. 64, 327.

(2) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), pp. 42, 50.

(3) Leveson Gower, Granville, *Genealogy of the Family of Gresham*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1883), pp. 10-11, 163:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YNQKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA163>

(4) Will, dated 18 April 1565 and proved 28 May 1565, of Isabel (nee Worpfall) Taverson Gresham, TNA PROB 11/48/161.

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville's mother was the niece and heiress of Sir Thomas Gresham.***

It is erroneously claimed in *The Truth Will Out*, p. 53, that Sir Henry Neville's mother, Elizabeth Gresham (d.1573), was the niece and heiress of Sir Thomas Gresham (c.1518–1579). Elizabeth Gresham was Sir Thomas Gresham's niece, and by law his heir apparent, but since she predeceased him, she did not inherit under his will.

From the will of Sir Thomas Gresham dated 4 July 1575:

*And further in consideration that such charges of wardship, livery and primer seisin as by my death shall fortune to be due to the Queen's Majesty of or for all my lands, tenements and hereditaments according to the laws and statutes of the realm shall be paid and borne by Sir Henry Neville, knight, and by the heirs males which he hath begotten on the body of Elisabeth, his late wife, deceased, daughter of my brother Sir John Gresham, knight, deceased, while she lived my cousin and heir apparent . . .*

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 53.

(2) Will of Sir Thomas Gresham in Leveson Gower, Granville, *Genealogy of the Family of Gresham*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1883), p. 84:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YNQKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA80>

(3) Gresham pedigrees in Leveson Gower, Granville, *Genealogy of the Family of Gresham*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1883), pp. 162-3:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YNQKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA162>

**MYTH: During his tenure in 1576, Sir Henry Neville supported Richard Farrant . . . in acquiring rooms at Blackfriars for a theater rehearsal space.**

Casson and Rubinstein write (pp. 75-6):

*During his tenure in 1576, Sir Henry Neville supported Richard Farrant (who had been Master of the Children of St George's Chapel, Windsor) in acquiring rooms at Blackfriars for a theater rehearsal space.*

And on p. 230:

*Henry Neville was baptized and grew up in the Blackfriars. Sir Henry Neville's father asked permission for Richard Farrant to use part of the property to create the first Blackfriars Theatre for the child actors of the Chapel Royal.*

And on p. 242:

*Neville's father was concerned with the establishment of the first Blackfriars theatre. . . .*

Casson and Rubinstein cite Laoutaris. However Laoutaris' account differs significantly from Casson and Rubinstein's. Laoutaris writes:

*Practically abutting the south side of Elizabeth's Blackfriars home was the former Porter's Lodge of the Blackfriars' monastery, which had been converted into the mansion of Sir William Brooke, Lord Cobham. Attached to this, running some hundred feet along the western end of what was once the Great Cloister, was the former Buttery, now two tenements also occupied by Cobham, the southern section having passed to him from 1571. Three years before that it had belonged to Henry Neville, who had been granted the property in 1560. In the summer of 1576 Farrant heard that Cobham had decided to vacate this tenement and immediately appealed to its former owner, Neville, to help him acquire it. His plan was to commandeer it as a rehearsal and performance space for the Queen's choristers. The two men coordinated their efforts, sending letters to William More on the same day. . . .*

*Both Farrant and Neville, in their letters to More, neglected to mention their real plans for the property. More was not pleased to discover that the windows in his tenement had been blocked out, to create the intimate ambience of the theatre during candlelit performances. . . 'Farrant pretended unto me to use the house only for the teaching of the Children of the Chapel,' he later complained, 'but made it a continual house for plays, to the offense of the precinct'.*

Thus these events occurred, not during Sir Henry Neville's tenure in the Blackfriars, but eight years after Sir Henry Neville (d.1593) had left the Blackfriars. Moreover Sir Henry Neville did not support Farrant in acquiring the premises for a 'theatre rehearsal space' or for the 'establishment of the first Blackfriars theatre' or to 'create the first Blackfriars theatre for the child actors of the Chapel Royal'. None of these purposes is mentioned in either Sir Henry Neville's letter to Sir William More dated 27 August 1576 or Richard Farrant's letter to More of the same date (see Folger MS No. 71 and Folger MS L.b.446 on this website.)

It should also be noted that Sir Henry Neville did not 'grow up' in the Blackfriars. His father left the Blackfriars in 1568, when Sir Henry Neville was a young child.

#### References:

- (1) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), pp. 75-6, 230, 242.
- (2) Laoutaris, Chris, *Shakespeare and the Countess*, (London: Fig Tree, 2014), pp. 111-12.

**MYTH: Sir Henry Neville (d.1615) inherited Mayfield in Sussex in 1579 from his mother's uncle, Sir John Gresham.**

Duncan, p. 66, states that:

*Sometime between 1586 and 1588 [Sir Henry Neville (d.1615)] had moved out of his father's house with his new wife Anne, to establish himself in the mansion of Mayfield, a palace that had once belonged to Cardinal Wolsey, and had come to the Neville family in 1579 on the death of Sir John Gresham, uncle to Henry's mother, Elizabeth.*

Duncan appears to have confused John Gresham (d.1578?) of North End, Fulham, with his father, Sir John Gresham (c.1495-1556), Lord Mayor of London. Sir John Gresham (d.1578?) of Fulham was the second son of Sir John Gresham (c.1495-1556), and was not knighted. He inherited Mayfield from his father (who had purchased it from Sir Edward North) and sold it in 1567 to his first cousin, Sir Thomas Gresham (d.1579).

Although Mayfield was a substantial country house visited by the Queen in 1573, it was a 'palace' only in the sense that it had formerly belonged to the Archbishop of Canterbury. From the OED:

*palace*

*a. Christian Church. An official residence of an archbishop or bishop; spec. the official episcopal residence in a cathedral city. Also in extended use: any episcopal residence.*

References:

(1) Duncan, Owen Lowe, 'The Political Career of Sir Henry Neville: An Elizabethan Gentleman at the Court of James I', 1974, Ph.D. thesis, p. 66.

(2) History of Parliament entry for John Gresham (d.1578?) at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/gresham-john-1529-86>

(3) *Victoria County History of Sussex*, Vol. II, p. 247.

(4) Hoare, Henry Rosehurst, 'Historical and Archaeological Notices of Mayfield Palace', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol. II, (London: John Russell Smith, 1849), pp. 221-246 at pp. 231-3:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=5\\_cGAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA230](https://books.google.ca/books?id=5_cGAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA230)

*The deed of alienation [from Archbishop Cranmer to Henry VIII] of the manor and park of Mayfield is dated Nov. 12, 1545. The rectory also is included . . . .*

*Like most of the estates once belonging to the church, it has several times changed its owners. It was granted, in 1545, to Sir Edward North; after whom it passed into the possession of Sir Thomas Gresham, who resided here in great style, and entertained Queen Elizabeth when on her Kentish progress in 1573. . . .*

(5) East Sussex Record Office ACC7755/46, copy memorial of grant, Jan 1546, by Henry VIII to Sir Edward North and his wife Alice of manor of Mayfield, with rectories, tithes and advowsons of Mayfield and Wadhurst . . . .

(6) Brewer, John Sherren and Robert Henry Brodie, *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, p. 353:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=k4oKAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA353>

Licence to alienate, 19 April 1546. *Sir Edward North and Alice his wife to Sir John Gresham and Wm. Hardyng, in fee to the said Sir John. Manor of Maighfeld alias Mayfeld alias Maugheld . . . P. 10, m. 7.*

(7) Surrey History Centre G52/8/1/2. Deed to declare the uses of 3 recoveries suffered by Dame Katherine Gresham, widow of Sir John Gresham . . . .

**MYTH: In 1579 Sir Henry Neville (d.1615) inherited Mayfield in Sussex from Sir Thomas Gresham.**

James and Rubinstein, p. 84, state that Sir Henry Neville (d.1615) inherited Mayfield in 1579.

The descent of Mayfield is complicated by the fact that there were three John Greshams:

(1) Sir John Gresham (c.1495-1556) of Titsey, Surrey Lord Mayor of London in 1547, who married firstly Mary Ipswell, and secondly Katherine Sampson. In his will, he left Mayfield to his second son:

*Also I give and bequeath to the said John Gresham, my son, my lordship and manor of Mayfield . . . .*

(2) John Gresham (d.1578?), second son of Sir John Gresham (c.1495-1556). He inherited Mayfield from his father, and sold it on 3 January 1567 to his first cousin, Sir Thomas Gresham (d.1579). See the History of Parliament entry for John Gresham (d.1586?) at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/gresham-john-1529-86>

See the pedigree showing the marriage of John Gresham (d.1578?) to Elizabeth Dormer in Leveson Gower, p. 167, at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YNQKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA167>



(3) Sir John Gresham (d.1560), elder brother of Sir Thomas Gresham (d.1579). He married Frances Thwaytes (d.1580), by whom he was the father of Elizabeth Gresham (d.1573), wife of Sir Henry Neville (d.1593). The latter were the parents of Sir Henry Neville (d.1615).

See the pedigree in Leveson Gower, pp. 162-3:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YNQKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA162>

The will of Sir Thomas Gresham, dated 4 July 1575, has this provision concerning Mayfield:

*And further in consideration that such charges of wardship, livery and primer seisin as by my death shall fortune to be due to the Queen's Majesty of or for all my lands, tenements and hereditaments according to the laws and statutes of the realm shall be paid and borne by Sir Henry Neville, knight, and by the heirs males which he hath begotten on the body of Elizabeth, his late wife, deceased, daughter of my brother, Sir John Gresham, knight, deceased, while she lived my cousin and heir apparent, their heirs males, executors or assigns, I do will and dispose as concerning my manor and manors of Mayfield and Wadhurst with the appurtenances and all my lands, tenements and hereditaments in the county of Sussex or elsewhere used or reputed or belonging to the said manor of manors of Mayfield or Wadhurst, that after the expiration and determination of the particular uses, estates and interest for life and entail thereof limited in the said indenture [dated 20 May 1575, the same shall remain and the use thereof shall be unto my cousin, Sir Henry Neville, and to the heirs males of Dame Elizabeth, his wife, my niece . . . .*

The indenture of 20 May 1575 can be found in the inquisition post mortem taken after the death of Sir Thomas Gresham. See Leveson Gower, *supra*, p. 141.

Sir Thomas Gresham married Anne Ferneley (d.1596). Their only son, Richard Gresham, died in 1564. Sir Thomas Gresham's only other child was an illegitimate daughter, Anne, who married Sir Nicholas Bacon (1546-1622) of Stiffkey.

The will states that Elizabeth (nee Gresham) Neville (d.1573), the only child of Sir Thomas Gresham's elder brother, Sir John Gresham (d.1560), had earlier been Sir Thomas Gresham's heir apparent. She had predeceased him, and her son, Sir Henry Neville (d.1615) was thus Sir Thomas Gresham's heir. According to the inquisition post mortem, on 21 March 1580 Sir Henry Neville (d.1615) was aged 16 years 11 months and 10 days.

Since Sir Henry Neville (d.1593) was responsible for the fines for wardship, livery and primer seisin due to the crown, Sir Thomas Gresham therefore left Mayfield to Sir Henry Neville (d.1593) and the male heirs of Elizabeth (nee Gresham) Neville (d.1573) for the purpose of paying those fines.

Exactly when Elizabeth (nee Gresham) Neville's male heirs, including Sir Henry Neville (d.1615), inherited Mayfield is unclear. It seems from the provision in Sir Thomas Gresham's will that Sir Henry Neville (d.1593) would have held Mayfield until his own death in 1593, and that only then would Sir Henry Neville (d.1615) have inherited it, although he may have resided at Mayfield from the mid-1580s.

According to another inquisition post mortem taken after the death of Sir Thomas Gresham, by an indenture of 1 September 1570, various properties were conveyed in trust to the use of Sir Thomas Gresham and his wife, Anne, with remainders over. See Leveson Gower, *supra*, pp. 141-2. An inquisition taken after the death of Sir Thomas Gresham's widow states that her heir was William Reade, her son by a former marriage. See Leveson Gower, *supra*, pp. 142-3.

#### References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 84.

(2) Will of Sir John Gresham (c.1495-1556), TNA PROB 11/38/241.

(3) Transcript of will of Sir John Gresham (c.1495-1556) in Leveson Gower, Granville, *Genealogy of the Family of Gresham*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1883), p. 30:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YNQKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA30>

(4) Transcript of will of Sir Thomas Gresham in Leveson Gower, *supra*, p. 80:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YNQKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA80>

(5) Gresham pedigrees in Leveson Gower, *supra*, pp. 162-3:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YNQKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA162>

(6) Inquisitions post mortem dated 22 March 1580 and 11 July 1581 taken after the death of Sir Thomas Gresham, TNA C 142/190/36 (Middlesex) and TNA C 142/192/11 (Norfolk).

(7) Duncan, Owen Lowe, 'The Political Career of Sir Henry Neville: An Elizabethan Gentleman at the Court of James I', 1974, Ph.D. thesis, p. 66.

**MYTH:** *Sir Henry Neville's stepmother was the daughter of Sir Nicholas Bacon (c.1543-1624) and his wife, Anne.*

Sir Henry Neville's stepmother, Elizabeth Bacon (d.1621), was the eldest daughter of the Lord Keeper, Sir Nicholas Bacon (1510-1579), by his first wife, Jane Ferneley.

References:

(1) Burgoyne, Frank J., *Collotype Facsimile & Type Transcript of an Elizabethan Manuscript Preserved at Alnwick Castle, Northumberland*, (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1904), p. xvi at:

<https://archive.org/stream/cu31924013117480#page/n19/mode/2up>

(2) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 65.

(3) Titler, Robert, *Nicholas Bacon: The Making of a Tudor Statesman*, (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1976), p. 153.

**MYTH:** *Because his stepmother, Elizabeth Bacon, was Sir Francis Bacon's half-sister, Sir Henry Neville regarded himself and Bacon as 'twins', and wrote The Comedy of Errors for the Gray's Inn Revels with that in mind, in collaboration with Bacon, who wrote speeches for the Revels.*

According to the *ODNB*, Bacon wrote speeches for the *Gesta Grayorum*, the Christmas festivities of 1594–5 at Gray's Inn. However the claim that Neville considered himself and Bacon as 'twins' is without foundation. There is no evidence of a relationship between the two men during their lifetimes, and in 1594, the year of the Gray's Inn Revels, Neville sued both his stepmother and Sir Francis Bacon's half-brother in Chancery, and Neville and Bacon therefore had good reason to be at odds with each other at the time. Moreover although Neville's stepmother made her half-brother, Sir Francis Bacon, her executor, she made no mention of any member of the Neville family in her will.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 102.

(2) Greg, W.W., ed., *Gesta Grayorum, 1688*, (Malone Society Reprints, 1914), No. 41, p. vi at:

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

(3) *ODNB* entry for Sir Francis Bacon.

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(4) Will of Sir Francis Bacon's half-sister, Elizabeth (nee Bacon) Doyley Neville Peryam, TNA PROB 11/148/110.

(5) TNA C 2/Eliz/N5/49 at:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C5705022>

(6) TNA C 3/246/6 at:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C3794405>

***MYTH: There are 'obvious traces of a friendship' between Sir Francis Bacon and Sir Henry Neville in the Northumberland manuscript.***

Although Sir Francis Bacon is mentioned by name in the Northumberland manuscript and several of his works are listed on it, Sir Henry Neville is not mentioned in the Northumberland manuscript or connected with it in any way (see below).

Moreover according to the *ODNB*, after his father's death in 1593 Sir Henry Neville and his stepmother sued each other in Chancery, in one of which suits Neville also sued Sir Francis Bacon's half brother, Nathaniel Bacon (1546?-1622). It seems unlikely these lawsuits were conducive to a friendship between Neville and Sir Francis Bacon, and according to the History of Parliament entry for Francis Moore, who represented Neville in the 1594 lawsuit, Moore later saw Sir Francis Bacon as an obstacle to his advancement. It is difficult not to envisage this as a result of Moore's representation of Neville in a lawsuit against members of Bacon's family.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 65.

(2) *ODNB* entry for Sir Henry Neville (1561/2-1615).

(3) TNA C 2/Eliz/N5/49 at:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C5705022>

(4) TNA C 3/246/6 at:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C3794405>

(5) History of Parliament entry for Francis Moore, who represented Sir Henry Neville in his lawsuit against his stepmother in 1594:

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<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/moore-francis-1559-1621>

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville was known to be a protégé of Lord Burghley.***

There is no evidence of this.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 92.

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville was introduced to court by Lord Burghley.***

There is no evidence of this.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 92.

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville was introduced to court by Sir Robert Cecil after the death of his father in 1593.***

There is no evidence of this. Duncan makes the statement on p. 80, citing Tighe, p. 611. However the latter source makes no mention of Neville's introduction to court.

References:

(1) Duncan, Owen Lowe, 'The Political Career of Sir Henry Neville: An Elizabethan Gentleman at the Court of James I', 1974, Ph.D. thesis, p. 80.

(2) Tighe, R.R. and J.E. Davis, *Annals of Windsor*, (London: Longman Brown, 1858), Vol. I, p. 611 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/annalsofwindsor01tigh#page/610/mode/2up>

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville and Sir Robert Cecil married cousins, ‘daughters of the Cooke family’.***

This claim is erroneous. Sir Robert Cecil married Elizabeth Brooke (1562–1597), the daughter of William Brooke (1527–1597), 10<sup>th</sup> Baron Cobham, and his wife, Frances Newton (d.1592). Sir Robert Cecil and Sir Henry Neville’s wife, Anne Killigrew, were first cousins, and their mothers, Mildred (nee Cooke) Cecil (1526–1589) and Katherine (nee Cooke) Killigrew (c.1542–1583), were sisters, the daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, which perhaps led to Duncan’s confused statement that Sir Robert Cecil and Sir Henry Neville married ‘cousins, daughters of the Cooke family’.

References:

(1) Duncan, Owen Lowe, ‘The Political Career of Sir Henry Neville: An Elizabethan Gentleman at the Court of James I’, 1974, Ph.D. thesis, p. 18.

(2) *ODNB* entry for Sir Robert Cecil.

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville and the Earl of Essex went to Scotland with Sir Francis Walsingham’s embassy in 1583.***

This claim is without foundation. Essex was with Leicester’s brother-in-law, Henry Hastings, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Huntingdon, in the summer of 1583, and Huntingdon, Essex and other members of leading northern families greeted Walsingham on his return from Scotland. They were not in Scotland with him. Nor was Sir Henry Neville. A Latin poem by Richard Edes, *Iter Borealis* (1583), mentions ‘Neville, distinguished for his learning’ as being at Durham with Walsingham and Essex, but there is no evidence that this was Sir Henry Neville, who matriculated at Merton College, Oxford, on 20 December 1577, spent only a single year at Oxford and would not have been considered ‘learned’ by Edes.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 235.

(2) *ODNB* entry for Robert Devereux, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Essex.

(3) Hammer, Paul, *The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Essex*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 32 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=VbKM-1eXuBkC&pg=PA32>

(3) Sutton, Dana, ed., transcript and translation of *Iter Boreale* by Richard Edes, The Philological Museum, at:

<http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/eedes/intro.html>

(4) Duncan, Owen Lowe, 'The Political Career of Sir Henry Neville: An Elizabethan Gentleman at the Court of James I', 1974, Ph.D. thesis, pp. 45, 47, 55.

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville and Charles Paget were together in Scotland in 1583.***

As noted above, there is no evidence that Sir Henry Neville was in Scotland in 1583. Similarly, Charles Paget was not in Scotland in 1583.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 234.

(2) *ODNB* entry for Charles Paget.

***MYTH: In 1583, Elizabeth sent the brother of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, down to Mayfield to discipline Neville on his export of ordnance.***

The foregoing erroneous statement is made in James and Rubinstein, p. 90:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=BsEtDwAAQBAJ&pg=PT105>

Lower, p. 187, states that this occurred in 1587, not 1583, that Ambrose Dudley did not go to Sussex personally, that Ambrose Dudley's representative did not go specifically to Mayfield, and that the objective was not specifically to 'discipline Neville':

*In defiance of these measures, however, the surreptitious exportation of Sussex cannon went on for some years longer. In 1587, the Earl of Warwick, master of the ordnance, dispatched "a gentleman of his, one Mr. Blincoe," into Sussex to summon all the gun-founders of the county up to London, to understand his pleasure respecting their further continuance of the manufacture. "Henry Nevel, and the rest of that occupation," obeyed the summons, and the matter was referred to the arrangement of Mr. Hockenal, the deputy-master of the ordnance, and Mr. Blincoe. The result was, that a fixed quantity of cannon should be cast annually, for the necessary provision of our own navigation; a certain proportion being allowed to each founder. It was also stipulated that no ordnance should be sold except in the city, and not even there but to such merchants "as my lord or his deputy should name."*

The erroneous date of 1583 appears to have been chosen because *Leicester's Commonwealth* was published in 1584. James and Rubinstein argue on p. 90 that:

*This would have infuriated Neville, who would have put his undoubted scholastic and research abilities to work to find whatever he could against the Dudley family. . . . All this was only one year before Paget's anonymously printed book [=Leicester's Commonwealth] damning the family came out on the Continent.*

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 90:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=BsEtDwAAQBAJ&pg=PT105>

(2) Duncan, Owen Lowe, 'The Political Career of Sir Henry Neville: An Elizabethan Gentleman at the Court of James I', 1974, Ph.D. thesis, p. 69.

(3) Lower, Mark Antony, 'Historical and Archaeological Notices of the

Works of the County of Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, (London, 1849), Vol. II, pp. 189-220 at pp. 187, 214:

<https://archive.org/details/sussexarchaeolo61socigoog/page/n222>

<https://archive.org/details/sussexarchaeolo61socigoog/page/n256>

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville was known as a friend of Southampton when Venus and Adonis was published in 1594.***

This claim is explicitly contradicted by the testimony of Neville himself in 1601, when he stated that he had never spoken with Southampton since the latter was a child (see Akrigg, p. 22).

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 92.

(2) Duncan, Owen Lowe, 'The Political Career of Sir Henry Neville: An Elizabethan Gentleman at the Court of James I', 1974, Ph.D. thesis, pp. 17-18.



(3) Akrigg, G.P.V., *Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 22.

***MYTH: The Encomium of Richard III is dedicated to Sir Henry Neville.***

*The Encomium of Richard III* was written by Sir William Cornwallis the younger, and was dedicated to John Donne. A manuscript entitled ‘The praise of Kinge Richard ye third’ once owned by Charles Yarnold and now BL Add MS 29307 contains a dedication to Sir Henry Neville.

References:

(1) Rubinstein, William D., ‘The Case for Sir Henry Neville as the Real Shakespeare’, *The Oxfordian*, Vol. XIV, 2012, pp. 121-9 at p. 125, available online at:

<https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/the-oxfordian/>

(2) Singer, S. W., ‘Essayes of Certain Paradoxes: Poem on Nothing’, *Notes & Queries*, Vol. II, No. 42, June-December 1850, (London: George Bell, 1851), p. 182 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=WvARAAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA182>

(3) Kincaid, A.N. and J.A. Ramsden, *The Encomium of Richard III by Sir William Cornwallis the Younger*, (London: Turner & Devereux, 1977).

***MYTH: In 1603 Southampton dedicated his manuscript copy of The Encomium on Richard III [sic], BL Add MS 29307, to Sir Henry Neville.***

Casson and Rubinstein (p. 86) state:

*Significantly, and perhaps in return, Southampton expressed his love to Neville: in the Encomium dedication he described the work as ‘an earnest peny of my love’. . . . Given that Southampton’s unique handwritten copy of the Encomium was given to Neville, it must have been this copy that became the source document for Thorpe’s printing . . . .*

And on p. 243:

*In 1603 the Earl of Southampton had dedicated his Encomium on Richard III to Neville.*

Casson (p. 7) states that:

*Hardwick MS. 44, or another copy of the document, was the basis for Henry Wriothesley, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Southampton's manuscript version (BL, Add. MS. 29307), which he dedicated to Sir Henry Neville while they were fellow prisoners in the Tower.*

These claims are without foundation. As noted above, the manuscript in question, BL Add MS 29307, is not entitled 'The Encomium on Richard III', but rather 'The praise of Kinge Richard ye third'.

The manuscript contains a dedication to Sir Henry Neville by 'Hen. W'., who terms himself, 'Your Honour's most affectionate servant', a mode of address which would not have been used by an earl (Southampton) to a knight (Sir Henry Neville).

Moreover there is no evidence that this manuscript is in the handwriting of Henry Wriothesley, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Southampton. The manuscript, including the dedication, is in a rather distinctive secretary hand. From Kincaid's description, p. ix:

*Secretarial hand with exaggerated descenders and very marked slope to the right. Paper c.1600, a blank page at the end dated 1603 in the watermark.*

From an early age Southampton wrote an italic hand, and signed himself 'H. Southampton', not 'Hen. W'. Stopes mentions several of Southampton's early letters in the Lansdowne manuscripts and the Cecil papers. On pp. 24-5 Stopes describes a letter endorsed June 1586 written in 'a beautiful clear Italian handwriting', Lansdowne MS 50, f. 23, and another letter, Cecil Papers 302, dated 22 July 1586, written in 'a similar handwriting', as well as letters in Lansdowne MS 53, f. 51. See:

<https://archive.org/details/lifeofhenrythird00stopiala/page/24>

On p. 49 Stopes reprints a letter dated 26 June 1592 from Southampton to Michael Hicke, Lansdowne MS 71/72:

<https://archive.org/details/lifeofhenrythird00stopiala/page/48>

See also Stopes' index, which contains references to numerous other letters of Southampton's, p. 542 at:

<https://archive.org/details/lifeofhenrythird00stopiala/page/542>

An image of one of Southampton's letters, with his characteristic signature 'H Southampton' was sold by Sotheby's. See:

<http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2015/property-collection-robert-s-pirie-books-manuscripts-n09391/lot.755.html>

That letter appears to have been acquired by the Folger. See Folger V.a.662 at:

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<https://hamnet.folger.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=344164>

A brief autograph letter of Southampton's with the signature 'H. Southampton' can be found in Smith, p. 278 at:

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.319510014915559;view=1up;seq=278>

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=TAExAQAAMAAJ&pg=PP279>

Add MS 46501 f. 202 is a letter in secretary hand from Southampton to John Meux of Kingston in the Isle of Wight written in 1604.

Kincaid suggested in 1977 at pp. vi-vii that Add MS 29307 might be in Southampton's handwriting, but offered no evidence, and it is unclear whether he had seen any of Southampton's numerous letters and signatures, none of which appear to resemble the handwriting, dedication and signature in Add MS 29307.

Sir Henry Wotton is a possible candidate for the authorship of BL Add MS 29307. For an example of his handwriting and signature, see a letter dated 'from Venice this 22. of June 1609' in Smith, p. 292 at:

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.319510014915559;view=1up;seq=292>

After a comparison of Add MS 29307 with two of Sir Henry Wotton's letters, the Modern Archives and Manuscripts Division of the British Library has effectively ruled out Sir Henry Wotton as the writer of Add MS 29307, but has expressed the view that Add MS 29307 is a scribal copy, thus leaving open the question of whether Sir Henry Wotton was, in fact, the author of Add MS 29307. The view that Add MS 29307 is a scribal copy is supported by the fact that the dedication contains an interlineation, which is unlikely to have been the case in a formal presentation copy handwritten by the actual author of Add MS 29307.

#### References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), pp. 97, 332-3.

(2) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), pp. 34, 50, 58, 86-8, 199, 243.

(3) Casson, John, 'The Watermarks on the Northumberland Manuscript and Hand D', *Electronic British Library Journal*, (2018), p. 7, available online as a pdf file at:

<http://www.bl.uk/eblj/2018articles/article11.html>

(4) Singer, S. W., 'Essayes of Certain Paradoxes: Poem on Nothing', *Notes & Queries*, Vol. II, No. 42, June-December 1850, (London: George Bell, 1851), p. 182 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=WtARAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA182>

(5) Kincaid, A.N. and J.A. Ramsden, *The Encomium of Richard III by Sir William Cornwallis the Younger*, (London: Turner & Devereux, 1977), pp. vi-vii, ix.

(6) Stopes, Charlotte Carmichael, *The Life of Henry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Southampton, Shakespeare's Patron*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), pp. 25, 48, 542.

(7) Smith, Charles John and John Gough Nichols, *Autographs of Royal, Noble, Learned, and Remarkable Personages*, (London: J.B. Nichols and Son, 1829), p. 278.

(8) Private e-mails dated 21 March 2019 and 20 May 2019 from Catherine Angerson, Curator, Modern Archives and Manuscripts, British Library.

(9) Add MS 46501, f. 202 (Worsley papers), letter in secretary hand dated 1604 from Henry Wriothesley, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Southampton, to John Meux of Kingston, Isle of Wight.

**MYTH:** *As a knight of the shire for Sussex from 1589-93, Sir Henry Neville was 'entitled to be formally addressed as Sir Henry', and thus 'The praise of Kinge Richard ye third' (see above) could have been dedicated to Sir Henry Neville in the early 1590s.*

This claim is erroneous. A knight of the shire (i.e. a member of Parliament) was not entitled to be addressed as 'Sir'. Moreover the dedication specifically contains the word 'knight', establishing that Neville had been formally knighted prior to the penning of the dedication.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 332.

(2) Singer, S. W., 'Essayes of Certain Paradoxes: Poem on Nothing', *Notes & Queries*, Vol. II, No. 42, June-December 1850, (London: George Bell, 1851), p. 182 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=WtARAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA182>

**MYTH:** *The name Sir Henry Neville 'heads' the Northumberland manuscript.*

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This claim is erroneous. A barely legible single word, which may be ‘Nevell’ or ‘Nevill’, appears at the top left of the fly-leaf of what is now commonly referred to as the Northumberland manuscript. See the Burgoyne facsimile below.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), pp. 43, 231, 237-9.

(2) Rubinstein, William D., ‘The Case for Sir Henry Neville as the Real Shakespeare’, *The Oxfordian*, Vol. XIV, 2012, pp. 121-9 at p. 128, available online at:

<https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/the-oxfordian/>

(3) Burgoyne, Frank J., *Collotype Facsimile & Type Transcript of an Elizabethan Manuscript Preserved at Alnwick Castle, Northumberland*, (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1904) at:

<https://archive.org/stream/cu31924013117480#page/n197/mode/2up>

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville’s signature is at the very top left of the Northumberland manuscript.***

Sir Henry Neville’s signature does not appear anywhere on the fly-leaf of what is now commonly referred to as the Northumberland manuscript. A barely legible single word, which may be ‘Nevell’ or ‘Nevill’ and is not a signature, appears at the top left of the fly-leaf. See the Burgoyne facsimile below.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 242.

(2) Burgoyne, Frank J., *Collotype Facsimile & Type Transcript of an Elizabethan Manuscript Preserved at Alnwick Castle, Northumberland*, (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1904) at:

<https://archive.org/stream/cu31924013117480#page/n197/mode/2up>

***MYTH: The Northumberland manuscript contains verses incorporating Sir Henry Neville’s name and family motto.***

In *The Truth Will Out*, the authors combine the name ‘Nevill’, the motto, and the verses as follows:

*Nevill, Nevill, Ne vile velis  
Multis annis iam transactis  
Nulla fides est in pactis  
Mell in ore Verba lactis  
ffell in Corde ffraus in factis*

However according to Tom Veal:

*As a glance at the appended facsimile and transcript will show, the “rhyme incorporating the family motto” is no such thing. “Neville” is separated by about five lines vertically from the first occurrence of “ne vile velis”. An equal distance separates a second “ne vile velis” from the four lines of Latin.*

*The quatrain is not original. It appears, with slight variations, in texts going back to the 14th Century [Carleton Brown, *Religious Lyrics of the XVth Century* (1939), p. 346]. (For an example, vide Humphrey Milford, ed., *The Poems of John Audelay* (1931), p. 94. Fr. Audelay was an Augustinian friar whose floruit was c. 1417–1426.) It has no connection to the Neville family.*

Moreover the motto was prominently associated with Thomas Neville (c.1548-1615) (see below).

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 242.

(2) Tom Veal’s Stromata blog, 28 January 2006 at:

[http://stromata.typepad.com/stromata\\_blog/2006/01/the\\_nevilleshak.html](http://stromata.typepad.com/stromata_blog/2006/01/the_nevilleshak.html)

(3) Burgoyne, Frank J., *Collotype Facsimile & Type Transcript of an Elizabethan Manuscript Preserved at Alnwick Castle, Northumberland*, (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1904) at:

<https://archive.org/stream/cu31924013117480#page/n195/mode/2up>

(4) ODNB entry for Thomas Neville, and:

<http://www.panoramio.com/photo/76385397>

**MYTH:** *The copy of Leicester's Commonwealth which once formed part of the Northumberland manuscript has never been found.*

James and Rubinstein write (p. 231):

*A copy of Leycester's Commonwealth is mentioned on the Northumberland Manuscript, but this book was never found along with some of the works mentioned on this paper too. Neville's name heads the Northumberland Manuscript . . . so it is logical to assume that he was the owner of the books listed on that page. It may well be therefore, that the copies of the Commonwealth which finally came into the possession of his daughter were the ones mentioned on the Northumberland manuscript itself.*

And pp. 238-9:

*Leycester's Commonwealth is actually referred to in the Northumberland Manuscript, yet a copy of it was not included inside the package that this scrappy cover wrapped. It is probable, therefore, that Neville's copy of the Commonwealth, which was omitted, was one of those which has turned up in the possession of the Earls of Yarborough, and now lies in the Lincolnshire Record Office.*

The claim that this copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* is missing is without foundation. A copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth*, 'imperfect both at the commencement and the end', formed part of what is now the Northumberland manuscript when certain documents held in two black boxes were examined by John Bruce at the behest of the Duke of Northumberland in August 1867 at Northumberland House in London, according to Bruce's letter dated 14 August 1869. See Burgoyne, p. ix at:

<https://archive.org/stream/cu31924013117480#page/n11/mode/2up>

*Up to about two years ago, there had remained at Northumberland House, for a long time, two black boxes of considerable size, presumed to contain papers, but nobody knew of the boxes having ever been opened, or could give any information respecting their history, or tell what kind of papers they contained. These boxes were opened at the time I have indicated, and the contents, which turned out to be papers, as had been supposed, were taken out that I might inspect them. I did so in the month of August, 1867. I found them to be of a very miscellaneous character, many of them more or less connected with the history of the Percys, and others of a more general interest.*

*Upon some of them were found notes in reference to their contents, written by the hand of Bishop Percy, the editor of the Reliques, who was domestic chaplain at Northumberland House from about 1765 to 1782. He occupied apartments in the House, and gave considerable attention to the old papers belonging to the family. It is probable that he looked through all the papers now under consideration, and that it was under his direction that they were placed in the boxes alluded to.*

*Among the papers taken out of these boxes I found the transcripts of the papers of Bacon. They formed part of a miscellaneous collection, or unbound volume, of transcripts, containing among other things a copy of Leicester's Commonwealth and other pamphlets and documents relating to the reign of Queen Elizabeth. . . .*

*What I have stated seems to lead to the conclusion that the papers were deposited in boxes after 1768. . . .*

*We may also I think find another limit. Dr. Percy was in 1782 appointed Bishop of Dromore, 'where he continually resided' (Nichols's Lit. Anecd. iii. 754) from his appointment to his death in 1811. The putting these papers into the boxes, looks very like the act of Dr. Percy when taking leave of Northumberland House and about to remove to Dromore.*

*From 1782 to 1867 the history of these papers is pretty clear.*

A facsimile of this copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth*, folios 63-70 of the Northumberland manuscript, is provided by Burgoyne, beginning at:

<https://archive.org/stream/cu31924013117480#page/n259/mode/2up>

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), pp. 231, 238-9.

(2) Burgoyne, Frank J., *Collotype Facsimile & Type Transcript of an Elizabethan Manuscript Preserved at Alnwick Castle, Northumberland*, (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1904).

***MYTH: The copies of Leicester's Commonwealth in the Lincolnshire Archives is/are the 'missing' copy/copies of Leicester's Commonwealth which once formed part of the Northumberland manuscript.***

James and Rubinstein write (p. 231):

*A copy of Leicester's Commonwealth is mentioned on the Northumberland Manuscript, but this book was never found along with some of the works mentioned on this paper too. Neville's name heads the Northumberland Manuscript . . . so it is logical to assume that he was the owner of the books listed on that page. It may well be therefore, that the copies of the Commonwealth which finally came into the possession of his daughter were the ones mentioned on the Northumberland manuscript itself.*



It is difficult to understand how a single missing copy mentioned in the Northumberland manuscript can be said to have been found as two copies in the Lincolnshire Archives. Leaving that aside, however, the imperfect copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* which was in the boxes opened in August 1867 at Alnwick Castle (see above) and bound as part of the Northumberland manuscript is still part of that manuscript.

The Lincolnshire Archives holds two manuscript copies of *Leicester's Commonwealth*, 1 Worsley 36, and 1 Worsley 47, both of which are different from the manuscript copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* in the Northumberland manuscript. It is difficult to understand how James and Rubinstein could have become so confused on this key point.

John Casson examined the copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* in the Northumberland manuscript at Alnwick Castle, and published an article on his findings in 2018:

*There is a manuscript copy of Leicester's Commonwealth (so named on the title page) in the NHMS folder.*

Peck lists 44 extant manuscript copies of *Leicester's Commonwealth*, including the imperfect copy at Alnwick Castle, Northumberland, i.e. the Northumberland manuscript mentioned above, and comments that the existence of so many manuscript copies is due to government suppression of the 1584 printed edition. Peck appears to have been unaware of the two manuscript copies of *Leicester's Commonwealth* held by the Lincolnshire Archives.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 231.

(2) Entry for 1 Worsley 36 in the Lincolnshire Archives online catalogue:

<https://www.lincstothepast.com/A-volume-containing-two-lengthy-Elizabethan-essays/725288.record?pt=S>

### **A volume containing two lengthy Elizabethan essays**

#### **Reference Name 1-WORSLEY/36**

"The epistle directorie to Mr G M in grations street in London."

[Popularly known by the title "Leicester's Commonwealth" and originally published as a pamphlet in 1584.

Concerns a "conference" between a pupil about to leave Cambridge for one of the Inns of Court, his father, his Master (the writer of the "epistle") and "an ancient man that professed the law" taking place at a house near London - in reality a discussion arising out of the recent trials of Papists in the reign of Elizabeth. Much of the essay is concerned with the supposed wrongdoings of the Earl of Leicester.

"An addycion of the translator in which are declared many enormous and unchristen actes committed by the Said Erle of Leyster of which thear hath beene new advertismente and knowledge day by day."

Both essays are written in a 16th century hand, though by a different writer.

**Date:** c1560-c1599

**Repository:** Lincolnshire Archives [057]

(3) Entry for 1 Worsley 47 in the Lincolnshire Archives online catalogue:

<https://www.lincstothepast.com/-The-Epistle-dedicatorie-to-Mr-G-M-in-Grations-Street-in-London--/826828.record?pt=S>

**"The Epistle dedicatorie to Mr G M in Grations Street in London."**

**Reference Name 1-WORSLEY/47**

[Popularly known by the title "Leicester's Commonwealth" and originally published as a pamphlet in 1584. See WORSLEY/36 for another contemporary copy.]

Followed by two treatises entitled: "Julie 15 anno 1613 Lord Archbishop George Abbott to his Majestie" and "His Majestie's Answere to the presedent discourse." In the first of these articles the Archbishop outlines his objections to the proposed annulment of the marriage of the Earl of Essex to Frances Howard and, in the second, the King puts the case in favour of its dissolution.

The volume also contains a copy of a despatch from Paris, dated 24 April 1617, written by John Woodford and an account of "The Arraignment of the Earle of Castlehaven the 25th April 1631".

**Extent:** 84 pages

**Date:** c1584-c1631

**Repository:** Lincolnshire Archives [057]

(4) Casson, John, 'The Watermarks on the Northumberland Manuscript and Hand D', eBLJ 2018, Article 11, p. 2.

(5) Peck, Dwight C., ed., *Leicester's Commonwealth*, (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press), pp. 150-1 in the 2006 online edition.

**MYTH:** *The copies of Leicester's Commonwealth in the Lincolnshire Archives, 1 Worsley 36 and 1 Worsley 47, were once owned by Sir Henry Neville.*

James and Rubinstein write (pp. 89-90):

*Notes towards the history plays are also present in the two manuscript copies of Leycester's Commonwealth which Neville seems to have possessed. . . . The history of the Wars [of the Roses] he produces is occasionally annotated in both copies – in what*

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*seems to be Neville's hand. . . .it does seem that these two copies of Leycester's Commonwealth were also used by Neville as a source for his history plays.*

*And p. 229:*

*The most important manuscripts in the Lincolnshire Worsley collection, aside from the Tower Notebook, must be the two copies of Leycester's Commonwealth, one of which is written in italic handwriting, the other in Elizabethan secretary script.*

*And p. 230:*

*Within these two copies found in the Lincolnshire Record Office (see Plate 13), the name Neville is emboldened every time it appears, which is itself suggestive of a Neville having owned them. . . . And the annotator – who emboldens his own name every time it appears – was probably the owner of this copy of he Commonwealth.*

*And p. 231:*

*A copy of Leicester's Commonwealth is mentioned on the Northumberland Manuscript, but this book was never found along with some of the works mentioned on this paper too. Neville's name heads the Northumberland Manuscript (as briefly described in Chapter 2 and detailed later in this chapter) so it is logical to assume that he was the owner of the books listed on that page. It may well be, therefore, that the copies of the Commonwealth which finally came into the possession of his daughter [and from thence to the Lincolnshire archives:NG] were the ones mentioned in the Northumberland manuscript itself.*

There is no evidence that any of these copies of Leicester's Commonwealth were owned by Sir Henry Neville (d.1615), or that any annotations in them were made by him.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), pp. 89-90, 229-31.

(2) Entries for 1 Worsley 36 and 1 Worsley 47 in the Lincolnshire Archives online catalogue (see above).

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville owned three manuscript copies of Leicester's Commonwealth.***

Casson and Rubinstein write (p. 48):

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*For Neville to have owned three copies of a banned work attacking Leicester is extraordinary.*

And p. 53:

*1584. Leicester's Commonwealth (L/C) published. Neville copies L/C into Worsley MS 47.*

And p. 72:

*Henry Neville . . . owned copies of Philip Sidney's letter to Elizabeth against the marriage to 'Monsieur' (d'Alencon) and the banned tract, Leicester's Commonwealth (both are to be found in the folder of the Northumberland Manuscript).*

And p. 73:

*Neville owned copies of Leicester's Commonwealth . . . .*

And p. 74:

*While this list is not exhaustive it is perhaps long enough to suggest that Leicester's Commonwealth was a possible source for Titus Andronicus and, of course, Neville had his own manuscript copy.*

And p. 75:

*In his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth Neville wrote in a unique annotation: 'A tiranous reuenge vpon a Tirante'. . . .*

*Annotating his Worsley MSS 47 copy of Leicester's Commonwealth Neville often inserted a 'u' into words such as France, strange/stranger . . . .*

And p. 76:

*One printed Leicester's Commonwealth marginal note is: 'The happy coniunction of the twoe houses'. Neville rendered this [in Worsley MSS 47] as 'The ioynnige of howses'.*

And p. 79:

*Neville's handwritten copy of Leicester's Commonwealth, Worsley MSS 47, predates the writing of the history plays and has been dated to 1584-6. Neville annotated and added to the text with information we later find in the plays. Sometimes Neville made changes to the text as he copied and these changes also point to his authorship as we show below.*

And p. 80:

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*An example of the way Neville's annotated changes to Leicester's Commonwealth are related to the play is shown in the five marginal annotations made where the word 'impediments' appears in the printed text.*

And p. 82:

*In his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth, Neville added details of the royal houses to a printed annotation . . . .*

*This is an example of Neville annotating material which, less than five years later, would appear on stage in the Henry VI trilogy.*

And on p. 83:

*Neville's annotations and changes to the text of Leicester's Commonwealth reveal further manuscript evidence that he was preparing to write the history plays. . . .*

*In Leicester's Commonwealth the Lawyer asks rhetorically, 'Why should the rest be damnified thereby?' (Peck, 169/112). Neville copied this as 'whie should ye rest be defamed'.*

And p. 85:

*In the printed text of Leicester's Commonwealth we read, 'Edward V and his brother, who after were both murdered in the Tower'. However, in the copy he made, Neville named the brother as 'Rich: d. of york'.*

*Neville took a consistently negative view of Richard [III]. In the copy of Leicester's Commonwealth which he made in 1585 he added a marginal notation, 'Rich: Duke of Gloucester an vsurper'.*

And p. 86:

*When copying out Leicester's Commonwealth Neville, in a marginal note, wrote, 'The practise of Ri: 3 for dispatching his wife, namely Anne Neville.*

And p. 87:

*The annotations in Neville's own manuscript copy of Leicester's Commonwealth show a parallel tendency to note historical events that had echoes of current relevance and connections to the Shakespeare plays.*

And p. 89:

*Neville made his own notes on the reign of Edward III in Leicester's Commonwealth and in his Tower notebook.*

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*In his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth Neville annotated the text: 'Iohn of Gaunte The Pedigree of . . . .'.*

And p. 90:

*Neville made notes on Richard II in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth and his Tower notebook proving that he had continued his interest in this reign over twenty years.*

And p. 92:

*Neville, annotating his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth, made a note of the Percys during the reigns of Richard II and Henry IV.*

*In the above illustrated text from Leicester's Commonwealth, Neville spelt Henry's surname Bullnigbrook.*

And p. 93:

*Neville's copy of Leicester's Commonwealth is not the only manuscript source for the plays in which his use of language echoes Shakespeare.*

And p. 96:

*Neville used italics for names in both his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth and his letters.*

*In both Hall's Chronicle and his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth France is spelt with 'au'.*

And p. 97:

*Neville annotating his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth also made an annotation which reads, 'The Lawe Salique in ffraunce'.*

*The phrase used in the main text of Leicester's Commonwealth is 'the Law Salick in Fraunce' (original spelling). . . . Shakespeare spelt this as 'Salique' as does Neville in his annotation in Leicester's Commonwealth.*

And p. 151:

*For comparison we are using Neville's 1585 copy of Leicester's Commonwealth (Worsley MSS 47 at the Lincoln Archives). . . .*

And p. 152:

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*When we turn to Neville's handwritten copy of Leicester's Commonwealth (c. 1585) we find he did use a curled spur when writing the word 'any'.*

And p. 153:

*Neville combined elements of both secretary script and italic in some of his handwritten documents and in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth he switched from one to the other.*

And p. 155:

*However in Neville's copy of Leicester's Commonwealth, Worsley MS 47, there are many open capital 'C's.*

And p. 156:

*These can be seen to mirror examples to be found in Neville's copy of Leicester's Commonwealth.*

And p. 157:

*Neville used these superscripts in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth (Worsley MSS 47).*

And p. 158:

*Neville spelt France with a double 'ff' and 'au' in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth and we can compare this with the same word in Hand D.*

*Neville does occasionally use these rightward curling 'g's, as is evident in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth (Worsley MS 47) above and in his 1601 letter.*

And p. 159:

*We have already seen see [sic] the rightward curling 'g's in 'strangers' in Neville's copy of Leicester's Commonwealth and Hand D above. Not all Hand D's 'g's curl to the right.*

And p. 173:

*Shakespeare examines this question, and we know that Neville was also concerned with these issues, from his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth (1584-5). . . .*

And p. 184:

*Neville also used italics for Latin quotations in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth.*

And p. 192:

*One of Neville's annotations in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth is the word 'Beares' written in italic, against a passage in secretary script.*

And p. 199:

*Neville wrote names in italics in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth.*

And pp. 208-9:

*In his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth Neville made a marginal note about 'the tiranie of the Engl: state'. In the 1609 printing of Sonnet 115 this word is spelt 'tiranie'.*

*Another annotation in Neville's copy of Leicester's Commonwealth states, 'The Lord(ship) of Denbigh a great gift'. In Sonnet 87 Shakespeare wrote: 'So thy great guift', spelling the word with a 'u' twice in the 1609 printing. . . .*

Neville used the word 'Unloked' in a letter dated 1 November 1599. In the 1609 printing of Sonnet 7 the spelling is 'Vnloked'. Copying Leicester's Commonwealth, Neville used the spelling of 'pollicie'.

*The same spelling is used in the 1609 printing of Sonnet 118 and in the first quarto edition of Titus Andronicus (1594, line 669). Neville used the spelling 'made' instead of 'mad' in an annotation in Leicester's Commonwealth: 'Roland Howard and his made recorder'. In the 1609 printing of Sonnet 129 lust is described as 'Made in pursuit', meaning 'Mad in pursuit'. A few such spellings might be dismissed as coincidence, but when there are as many as this they point to Neville's authorship.*

And p. 212:

*Neville used this identical form [=tilda], which curves upward in a horizontal 'S' shape, to indicate abbreviated letters in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth.*

And p. 215:

*This spelling is also to be seen in Neville's copy of Leicester's Commonwealth (Worsley MSS 47).*

*Neville used a double 'ff' in writing 'ffraunce' and 'fflaunders' in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth.*

*As the next example from Neville's copy of Leicester's Commonwealth shows, he did occasionally use a double 'f' for 'ffrnid'.*



And p. 216:

*Neville used colons in his annotations of Leicester's Commonwealth . . . and used forward slashes at the end of annotations . . . .*

And p. 217:

*We can also see that Neville used similar capital 'B's (on the words 'Beare', 'But' and 'Before') that look like the number 23 in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth and in his letters of 1603 and 1613.*

And p. 218:

*The inversion of 'in' into 'ni' is typical of Neville's habit of writing 'ni' in words like king (knig) and against (aganist) as can be seen in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth, his letters, the NHMS, the annotated Hall and Hand D.*

And p. 222:

*Neville was aware of Dee as is evident in an annotation in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth.*

And p. 229:

*Neville made a special note of this testament [=Henry VIII's will] in a marginal note in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth . . . .*

And p. 234:

*At the end of Worsley MSS 47, the notebook which includes Neville's copy of Leicester's Commonwealth, there is a handwritten copy of the report by George Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury to James I, on the divorce of Frances and the Earl of Essex, and his Majesty's response, dated 16 July 1613.*

Endnote 40 on p. 301 refers to the comment immediately above:

*40. Worsley MSS 47 in the Lincoln archives: see Casson, 2010. That Neville made these notes on the divorce at the end of this notebooks [sic] is evidence that he kept his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth close at hand over thirty years.*

And p. 240:

*Amongst these was the poet Philip Sidney who influenced the Bard and whom Neville knew personally, noting his name in italics in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth.*

And p. 248:

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*Unlike Shakespeare from Stratford . . . Neville left a large number of manuscript documents. His copy of Leicester's Commonwealth, Worsley MSS 47, with its relevant annotations, has been shown to be a source for the history plays.*

And p. 303:

*Neither 'procure' nor 'pardon' are hapaxes but these abbreviated spellings are found in Hand D and Neville's copy of Leicester's Commonwealth, Worsley MSS 47.*

Despite the foregoing repeated assertions by Casson and Rubinstein that Sir Henry Neville owned three copies of *Leicester's Commonwealth* and wrote out and annotated one of them in his own hand (1 Worsley 47), there is actually no evidence whatsoever that Sir Henry Neville owned any manuscript copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth*, much less three manuscript copies. See above.

Moreover endnote 40 (see above) on p. 301 suggests that the manuscript copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* (1 Worsley 47) referred to repeatedly in the statements above, and dated 1584/5 by Casson and Rubinstein, may date from much later. The Lincolnshire Archives dates 1 Worsley 47 c1584-c1631.

References:

(1) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016).

(2) Entry for 1 Worsley 47 in the Lincolnshire Archives online catalogue (see above).

***MYTH: The two manuscript copies of Leicester's Commonwealth in the Lincolnshire Archives, 1 Worsley 36 and 1 Worsley 47, are in the handwriting of Sir Henry Neville.***

From a review of John Casson's *Much Ado About Noting*:

*Banned by Elizabeth I, the political tract, Leicester's Commonwealth, was an attack on Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, the Queen's favourite. His reputation has never recovered. Sexed up with scandal and murder, this dangerous document eluded all attempts to destroy it and was even read by courtiers, including the young Henry Neville, who made his own secret copy. In 2005 Brenda James revealed that Neville was the hidden writer behind the pseudonym 'William Shakespeare'. Amongst the evidence she discovered in the Worsley collection of Neville papers were two hand written copies of Leicester's Commonwealth. Dr. John Casson now reveals how these are connected with three other 'Shakespeare' manuscripts: the annotated Halle's Chronicle, the Hand D section of Sir Thomas More and the Northumberland Manuscript.*

There is no evidence that any manuscript copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* is in the hand of Sir Henry Neville. The Lincolnshire Archives makes no such claim with respect to 1 Worsley 36 or 1 Worsley 47.

References:

(1) Casson, John, *Much Ado About Noting*, (Dolman Scott Ltd., 2010) at:

<http://www.creativepsychotherapy.info/my-shakespeare-neville-research/>

(2) Casson, John, 'Hand D: The Evidence for William Shakspere and Henry Neville', 2012, 29 pp., available online in pdf format.

(3) Entries for 1 Worsley 36 and 1 Worsley 47 in the Lincolnshire Archives online catalogue (see above).

**MYTH: *Hand D in The Play of Sir Thomas More is in the handwriting of Sir Henry Neville.***

It is not. No document in the handwriting of Sir Henry Neville exhibits the six distinctive features of Hand D:

1. initial straight upstrokes on many small letters such as 'm', 'w', 'v', 'r' and 'i'.
2. spurred 'a' (not invariable, but frequent).
3. large lower loops on the letter 'h' (in many cases those in the Hand D passage are significantly larger than those found in many other hands of the period).
4. a spiky flourish at the end of the letter 'f' in the words 'if' and 'of'.
5. a forward tail on small 'g' (not invariable, but frequent).
6. large tails on final 'y' (there appear to be only two examples of this, rendering it less significant than the first five characteristics).

Moreover the Hand D passage contains errors which demonstrate that it was written out by a scribe, and not by the author of the passage.

References:

(1) Casson, John, 'Hand D: The Evidence for William Shakspere and Henry Neville', 2012, 29 pp., available online in pdf format.

(2) Rubinstein, William D., 'The Case for Sir Henry Neville as the Real Shakespeare', *The Oxfordian*, Vol. XIV, 2012, pp. 121-9 at p. 127, available online at:

<https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/the-oxfordian/>

(2) Facsimile of Hand D from the Wikipedia article on the play in which the foregoing six features are clearly visible:

[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/21/Sir\\_Thomas\\_More\\_Hand\\_D.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/21/Sir_Thomas_More_Hand_D.jpg)

**MYTH:** *The Tower Notebook (Serieanties of sundry kinds namely personall services appertaining to the Crowne and kings of this realme as well in tymes of Warre as of Peace and pastime especially at there Coronation copyed and collected out of the Recordes in the tower), now 1 Worsley 40 in the Lincolnshire Archives, was owned by Sir Henry Neville, and compiled by him as a commonplace book.*

There is no evidence of this. The Lincolnshire Archives makes no claim that 1 Worsley 40 was either owned or compiled by Sir Henry Neville. See the entry in the National Archives online catalogue at:

**Reference:** 1 WORSLEY 40  
 "Serieanties of sundry kinds namely personall services appertaining to the Crowne and kings of this realme as well in tymes of Warre as of Peace and pastime especially at there Coronation copyed and collected out of the Recordes in the tower."  
**Description:** Annotated in a different (17th century) hand.  
**Date:** 1602  
**Held by:** [Lincolnshire Archives](#), not available at The National Archives  
**Language:** English  
**Physical description:** c196 pages

On p. 160 James and Rubinstein write:

*Towards the end of his stay in the Tower, Neville kept a miscellaneous commonplace book, known as the Tower Notebook (1602). After Neville's death it was inherited by his daughter-in-law [sic], Lady Worsley, and remained in the Worsley family until about 1954, when it was given to the Lincolnshire Record Office.*

And further on p. 47:

*There are several important points about . . . the Tower Notebook. First, its provenance is unquestionably from Sir Henry Neville: he was a prisoner in the Tower in 1601-03. . . . At Neville's death in 1615, the notebook was inherited by his favourite daughter and her husband Sir Richard Worsley.*

And on p. 227:

*[L]et us look at evidence pointing to his ownership of the Notebook. First, the Notebook emanated from the estate of his own daughter and son-in-law. Secondly, the Tower Notebook was found bundled together with other works also annotated by Neville, and with a letter on a subject about which he had been in correspondence.*

And on p. 228:

*But how had all this forgotten ownership come about? Briefly, Neville's second daughter married Sir Richard Worsley of Appuldurcombe House, Isle of Wight (see the Worsley family tree illustrated on p. xxii). After their marriage Neville is known to have visited them frequently. It must have been on one of these visits that he left the Notebook and the other documents with his daughter.*

There is no evidence that Sir Henry Neville owned the Tower Notebook, or that it was inherited at his death in 1615 by his daughter, Frances Neville, or that it was left by Sir Henry Neville during his lifetime at her house in the Isle of Wight. Nor is there evidence that the Tower Notebook was found 'bundled together with other works also annotated by Neville'. These are merely speculative and unsupported assertions by James and Rubinstein.

As for the handwriting, James and Rubinstein describe it as 'Gothic-like' on p. 44:

*[S]ome of these extracts, copied out in a Gothic-like hand, are concerned with the coronations of the English monarchs. In a separate hand, a writer . . . has annotated these notes, adding further remarks.*

Concerning the question of the writer's identity, on p. 50 James and Rubinstein write:

*The fact that the Tower Notebook does not appear to be in Neville's hand does not present a problem. The employment of scribes was entirely permissible for wealthy prisoners in the Tower, and Neville's long-time scribe, John Packer, was probably employed for this purpose.*

On p. 219 Brenda James, using the first person, writes:

*[I]t is my contention that Henry Neville was both the compiler and the annotator. . . . Neville was imprisoned in the Tower of London itself at the time the Notebook was written. He would have been allowed to pay a researcher to take notes in the library, and it is quite probable that the man who was his scribe and clerk in France – John Packer – undertook this task. Neville had long complained of gout, which affects the hands, so a scribe must have been something of a necessity for him.*

James and Rubinstein thus admit that the Tower Notebook (1 Worsley 40) is not in Sir Henry Neville's hand, and claim that the principal hand in the manuscript is that of his scribe, John Packer, a claim for which no supporting evidence is offered.

On p. 147 James and Rubinstein claim that the annotations in the Tower Notebook are in Sir Henry Neville's own hand:

*Neville obviously feared exposure as the writer of [Shakespeare's Richard II], and many notes of his in the tower Notebook are concerned with preparing a case detailing the legality of Richard II's deposition.*

There is no evidence that the annotations in the Tower Notebook are in Sir Henry Neville's hand. This, too, is merely an unsupported assertion.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), pp. 44-50, 147, 160, 218-29, 231.

(2) Reference to 1 Worsley 40 in the National Archives catalogue at:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/69fec0a8-7bb6-444c-b843-8f01a687bce4>

(3) Reference to 1 Worsley 40 in the Lincolnshire Archives catalogue:

<https://www.lincstothepast.com/Records/RecordDisplaySearchResults.aspx?oid=496937&mode=c&pageNo=2>

(4) See also 7984 'Serjeanties of sundry kinds' in *Catalogi Librorum Manuscriptorum Angliae et Hiberniae*, (Oxford: Teatro Sheldoniano, 1697), p. 346 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=zcXOJnGdCs8C&pg=PA346>

***MYTH: The Tower Notebook (see above), now 1 Worsley 40 in the Lincolnshire Archives, was prepared by Sir Henry Neville as background material for the coronation procession of Queen Anne Boleyn in Shakespeare's Henry VIII.***

Casson and Rubinstein state (p. 231):

*Neville made notes on coronation rituals from Richard II onwards while he was incarcerated in the Tower between 1602 and 1613 [sic]. Brenda James identified the notebook as a source for the scene of Anne Boleyn's coronation in Henry VIII.*

Casson and Rubinstein also state (p. 44), referencing the Tower notebook:

*[Neville] spent the next two years in the Tower along with Southampton. Neither was in 'close confinement' and Neville occupied some of his time with historical research.*

This claim is without foundation. The Tower Notebook is concerned solely with sergeancies, i.e. feudal tenures held on condition that personal services would be rendered to the monarch, and there is thus no relationship whatsoever between the Tower Notebook and Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*. The Tower Notebook does mention the presence of the Lord Mayor and the Barons of the Cinque Ports at the coronation of Queen Anne Boleyn, *but only in connection with their sergeancies*. The sergeancies are, of course, *not mentioned* in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*. All the material actually used for the coronation procession of Queen Anne Boleyn in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* is found in Hall and Holinshed.

It seems likely the Tower Notebook (or more accurately, The Book of Sergeancies manuscript) was compiled just before or immediately after Queen Elizabeth's death on 24 March 1603. The title page of the manuscript is dated '1602', but for the Elizabethans the New Year did not begin until 25 March, so the manuscript likely dates from the first three months of 1603 when it had become obvious to officials that the coronation of a new monarch would take place in the near future, necessitating the involvement in the coronation of individuals who held by serjeanty. The Tower records were thus searched for all mentions of those who held by serjeanty, and what their specific serjeanty tenures involved, both in terms of a coronation or otherwise.

References:

(1) *Oxford English Dictionary*: Serjeanty: A form of feudal tenure on condition of rendering some specified personal service to the king.

(2) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), pp. 44-50, 160.

(3) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016).

(4) Reference to 1 Worsley 40 in the Lincolnshire Archives catalogue:

<https://www.lincstothepast.com/Records/RecordDisplaySearchResults.aspx?oid=496937&mode=c&pageNo=2>

**MYTH: Neville made a note on King John in his Tower notebook of 1602.**

Bradbeer and Casson state (p. 12):

*During his subsequent imprisonment, Neville made notes on historical documents kept in the Tower of London. In his 1602 Tower notebook, now preserved as Worsley MSS 40 in the Lincoln archives, he noted, “Knig Joh. magnacart”, showing he continued to be interested in this king’s reign (folio 210 verso).*

Casson and Rubinstein state (p. 80-1):

*Annotating his Tower notebook in 1602 Neville wrote ‘de fawconbridge’ in the margin. . .*

*Neville made a note on King John in his Tower notebook of 1602, so proving his continuing interest in this reign.*

These claims are without foundation. As James and Rubinstein admit, the Tower notebook is not in the hand of Sir Henry Neville, and the claim that the annotations are in his hand is merely an unsubstantiated assertion.

References:

(1) Bradbeer, Mark and John Casson, ‘Henry Neville and the History Plays’, (2011), available as a pdf file online at:

[www.creativepsychotherapy.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/NevilleKingJohn.pdf](http://www.creativepsychotherapy.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/NevilleKingJohn.pdf)

(2) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), p. 81 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=X8h5DAAAQBAJ&pg=PT94>

(3) Reference to 1 Worsley 40 in the Lincolnshire Archives catalogue:

<https://www.lincstothepast.com/Records/RecordDisplaySearchResults.aspx?oid=496937&mode=c&pageNo=2>

***MYTH: The annotated copy of Hall’s Chronicle formerly held by the British Library as ‘Loan 61’ was purchased by Alan Keen at an auction in York.***

James and Rubinstein write (p. 232):

*[T]here is a book actually entitled The Annotator, which was published in 1954. The writer, Alan Keen, was an antiquarian book dealer who bought a copy of Halle’s Chronicles at an auction in York.*

This statement is inaccurate on two counts. Keen did not buy the annotated Hall’s *Chronicle* at an auction, nor did he buy it at York. From Keen’s *The Annotator*, p. 1:



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*Thumbing through centuries-old books is a routine matter for many people — certainly for an antiquarian bookseller running a professional eye over his purchase of a country library ‘just in’, as I was doing on 22 June 1940. Countless books from this particular library had on that day been opened and closed by my assistant and me, to be sorted and separated, until it fell to my lot to open the shabby folio, opening also (though I did not then know it) a detective story which has now lasted over ten years.*

And pp. 92-3:

*I had bought the book in 1940 from a Yorkshire house, where it lay among a dump of uncatalogued books; in this case, in a bundle with a dilapidated Bible and an equally dilapidated dictionary, with the auction slip of the previous sale still tucked in one of the volumes. The owner could give me no information about the previous sale, or the origin of the dumped books; nor could the many local booksellers I consulted. But the likelihood was that the former sale had not been far afield; and consequently, quite apart from the annotations, I had always been on the lookout for some explanation of the book’s presence in Yorkshire — or in nearby Lancashire.*

Keen states that he acquired the annotated Hall’s Chronicle when he purchased the library of a country house in Yorkshire. But he states that the annotated Hall’s *Chronicle* had never been catalogued by the owner of that country house. It was bundled with two other books, a Bible and a dictionary, with the auction slip from an earlier sale of those three books still in one of them, and ‘lay among a dump of uncatalogued books’.

Keen did not reveal in his book the name of the country house or its location or the name of the owner, although he obviously had that information. Keen’s reticence can likely be ascribed to the discretion an antiquarian bookseller would have exercised at the time in dealing with someone with money and influence such as the owner of a country house with a large library. Revealing personal information in a published book could jeopardize an antiquarian book dealer’s business.

Keen describes his inquiries in the locality of the country house in Yorkshire from which he had purchased the library. On p. 92 Keen expresses the view that ‘the likelihood was that the former sale had not been far afield’. However this seems doubtful in light of the fact that Keen was unable to glean any information locally, despite his many inquiries, and appears to be influenced by Keen’s later discovery of links between Robert Worsley of Hovington, Yorkshire (actually the wrong Robert Worsley), and Lancashire. On p. 93 Keen writes:

*When I woke up the morning after our discovery of [The Theory of the Earth, 13 years later, i.e. in 1953], I found that Worsley had become intertwined with Knowsley in my mind. Reaching for Raines’ edition of the Derby Household Books . . . .*

Although Keen identified the wrong Robert Worsley, it should be noted that this statement suggests that the country house in Yorkshire at which he had purchased the

annotated Hall's *Chronicle* was near the Yorkshire border with Lancashire. For the Worsley family of Booth's Lancashire, see the pedigree compiled by Clement Francis Worsley and Philip John Worsley in November 1902.

To recap. Keen purchased the annotated Hall's *Chronicle* in 1940 from the owner of a country house in Yorkshire, where it lay among a 'dump of uncatalogued books', three of which (including the Hall's *Chronicle*) had been purchased at auction, as attested by an auction slip. The owner of the country house had no idea where that auction had taken place. This may have been because the owner of the country house had purchased a fairly large number of books at some time in the past without particularly noticing at the time that three of them were bundled together with an auction slip. Since the owner of the country house never catalogued most of those books, the fact that three of them were bundled together with an auction slip never came to his attention over the years he owned those uncatalogued books. The owner thus could not recall an auction at which those three books had originally been offered for sale because he hadn't actually been at that auction, but had merely purchased that bundle of three books along with other books at some time in the past.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 232.

(2) Keen, Alan and Roger Lubbock, *The Annotator: The Pursuit of an Elizabethan Reader of Halle's Chronicle*, (London: Putnam, 1954), pp. 1, 92-3.

***MYTH: A handwriting expert consulted by Alan Keen found three different forms among the handwriting in the annotations in the annotated copy of Hall's Chronicle formerly held by the British Library as 'Loan 61', which the handwriting expert considered were all from the same single hand.***

James and Rubinstein write (p. 233):

*Keen had even consulted a handwriting expert who had found three different forms among the handwriting in the annotations of Halle's Chronicles, and yet the specialist still considered they were from the same single hand. The expert supposed that this might be because they were written by a very young man who had not yet settled on a style, but this diagnosis does not tie in with the obvious semantic maturity of the annotator's remarks.*

The expert consulted by Keen was the British criminologist and author, H.T.F. Rhodes. See:

<http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-no97047958/>

Rhodes' analysis in Appendix III of Alan Keen's *The Annotator* says nothing about 'three different forms among the handwriting . . . all by the same single hand'. James and Rubinstein appear to have misunderstood Alan Keen's comment that three other people, besides an early nineteenth century owner, had marked the book, not that Rhodes found three different forms of handwriting by the annotator. See p. 210:

*Three other people have marked the book: Rychard Newport (Sir Richard Newport, of High Ercall Shropshire), perhaps the first owner, who has written his name twice, also his initial R.N. with the date '6. Aprill ao. 1565'. Then the name 'Edward (apparently an Elizabethan schoolboy or child), once in ink and once pricked out with a pin. Finally, there are four hundred and six marginal notes with no indication of authorship [i.e. the annotator's annotations].*

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 233.

(2) Keen, Alan and Roger Lubbock, *The Annotator: The Pursuit of an Elizabethan Reader of Halle's Chronicle*, (London: Putnam, 1954), p. 210, and Appendix III, pp. 151-63.

***MYTH: The annotations in secretary hand in the annotated copy of Hall's Chronicle formerly held by the British Library as 'Loan 61' contain 'characteristic habits' which distinguish it from other writing in secretary hand of the period.***

In *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, p. 38, John Casson writes:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=X8h5DAAAQBAJ&pg=PT42>

*After careful study of the actual volume we have accepted that the notes in the annotated Hall's Chronicle were by Neville. . . . The person who annotated Hall's Chronicle had the following characteristic habits:*

- 1) *[The annotator] abbreviated words beginning with 'pro' such 'pmoty'd' instead of promoted.*
- 2) *He substituted the symbol '&' for 'and'.*
- 3) *He used o [with a wavy line above:NG] to symbolise an abbreviated m as in 'copanions' instead of companions.*
- 5) *He used Roman numerals.*

6) *He used 'au' instead of 'a' as in 'Fraunce'.*

12) *He used miniscules such as S<sup>r</sup> for Sir and w<sup>t</sup> for with.*

Of the 12 alleged 'characteristic habits' identified by John Casson, the six listed above are universal features of the secretary hand of the Elizabethan period. Moreover John Casson also lists as 'characteristic habits':

4) *He used X (the Greek letter X), as in Xmas for Christmas.*

10) *he used characteristic spellings such as 'rebells' with a double 'l' and 'howse' with a 'w'.*

Although the abbreviation 'Xmas' is necessarily less frequently found than the other six characteristics listed above because of the relative rarity of the use of the word 'Christmas', it is nonetheless abbreviated in that way in many documents of the period, for example as 'Xpmas' in the will of Roger Alford (d.1580), TNA PROB 11/62/442). Alford's will also contains the spellings 'usuall', 'lawfull', and 'howse', all common spellings at the time.

One has to have read and transcribed a great many original Elizabethan documents to know this, so John Casson's claim concerning the annotator's alleged 'characteristic habits' will convince many readers of his book who have had little or no experience with the secretary hand, but experts in the Elizabethan secretary hand will be incredulous at the claim that these are distinguishing features which would set the annotator's handwriting apart, and/or would allow for any meaningful comparison of the annotator's handwriting with anyone else's handwriting of the Elizabethan period.

Moreover John Casson confuses the handwriting in a personal letter, for example, with the use of manicules and the symbol # to signpost part of the text in the *Chronicle* as 'characteristic habits' of the annotator, but these are not 'characteristic habits' of the annotator's handwriting. They are very common types of non-verbal marginalia found in many annotated books of the period, and in the case of manicules, over the centuries.

The handwriting expert consulted by Alan Keen (see above), H.T.F. Rhodes, mentions none of the twelve alleged 'characteristic habits' identified by John Casson.

References:

(1) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), p. 38 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=X8h5DAAAQBAJ&pg=PT42>

(2) *Edward De Vere Newsletters* Nos. 32, 33, 34, 39, 56 concerning the annotated Hall's *Chronicle*, available on this website at:

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

(3) Keen, Alan and Roger Lubbock, *The Annotator: The Pursuit of an Elizabethan Reader of Halle's Chronicle*, (London: Putnam, 1954), Appendix III, pp. 151-63.

**MYTH: *The annotated copy of Hall's Chronicle formerly held by the British Library as 'Loan 61' contains annotations in the hand of Sir Henry Neville.***

James and Rubinstein write (p. 89):

*Neville is virtually certain to have been the 'annotator' of the copy of Halle's Chronicles . . . described by Alan Keen and Roger Lubbock in The Annotator (1954). . . . The handwriting of the annotations is almost certainly Neville's.*

Casson and Rubinstein write (p. 38):

*Neville showed all of these twelve habits in his copy of Leicester's Commonwealth, and in his extant manuscript letters and other documents.*

As noted above, six of the alleged twelve habits singled out by John Casson as characteristic of the annotator of the annotated Hall's *Chronicle* are universal features of the secretary hand of the Elizabethan period found. There is no evidence that Sir Henry Neville was the annotator of the annotated copy of Hall's *Chronicle*.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 89.

(2) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), p. 38.

(3) Keen, Alan and Roger Lubbock, *The Annotator: The Pursuit of an Elizabethan Reader of Halle's Chronicle*, (London: Putnam, 1954).

**MYTH: *The annotated copy of Hall's Chronicle formerly held by the British Library as 'Loan 61' came from the library of Sir Henry Neville's son-in-law Sir Richard Worsley, whose wife, Frances Neville, inherited many of Sir Henry Neville's books after her father's death.***

James and Rubinstein write (p. 89):

*[T]he book came from the library of Sir Richard Worsley, whose wife inherited many of Neville's books after her father's death.*

And on pp. 232-3:

*Now on a quest to discover the identity of Robert Worsley, Keen found a family of that name in Lancashire, but was again unable to discover a direct connection with Shakespeare. However, as can be seen from our own work, the Robert Worsley in question happens to have lived many miles south of that county; in fact he was the grandson of Neville's son-in-law, Sir Richard Worsley, who lived at Appuldurcombe House on the Isle of Wight (hence the App of the library mark).*

[Parenthetically, it should be noted that the identification of the correct Robert Worsley as Sir Robert Worsley (d.1747) of Appuldurcombe was the work of Nina Green. See *Edward De Vere Newsletter*, No. 56, (October 1993) at the link in the references below. See also Brenda James' acknowledgement that she had seen that *Newsletter* on p. 51 of *The Truth Will Out*. The Worsley pedigree on p. xxii of *The Truth Will Out* was also the work of Nina Green. Compare it with the pedigree at the end of *Edward De Vere Newsletter*, No. 56, (October 1993).]

James and Rubinstein continue (p. 233):

*It seems, then, that Keen's copy of Halle's Chronicles may eventually have been passed up to the Earl of Yarborough, who had taken over everything that belonged to his wife, the nineteenth-century heiress of the Isle of Wight Worsleys, when the male line died out. It was beginning to look very much as if a later Earl of Yarborough may have cleared out and auctioned some of his possessions, not realizing their importance. It was looking as if Keen's and his friend's books began their itinerant life by being sold off along with the rest of the Appuldurcombe estate in 1855.*

*But was the former Earl of Yarborough so careless? Or is there perhaps another explanation for Keen's book being separated from its companion documents, and so not being formally catalogued by the Earl or his descendants? The man who helped the Earl of Yarborough to catalogue the Appuldurcombe collection in 1834 was a William Allason, who had a book-shop in New Bond Street, London . . . .*

For the 1834 catalogue and William Allason, see:

<https://www.lincstothepast.com/Catalogue-of-the-Worsley-Manuscripts-and-State-papers-in-the-Library-of-the-Right-Honorable-Lord-Yarborough-at-Appuldurcombe-/821562.record?pt=S>

*"Catalogue of the Worsley Manuscripts and State-papers in the Library of the Right Honorable Lord Yarborough at Appuldurcombe"*

*Reference Name 1-WORSLEY/62*

*The library arranged by W Allason of 31 New Bond Street and the catalogues by C J Stewart.*

*Date: 1834*

*Repository: Lincolnshire Archives [057]*

The foregoing suggestion ignores the fact that Sir Richard Worsley (17 March 1751 – 5 August 1805) had had the library at Appuldurcombe catalogued in 1777. See Lincolnshire Archives, 1 Worsley/59 at:

<https://www.lincstothepast.com/-Catalogue-of-the-Library-of-Sir-Richard-Worsley-Bart--at-Appuldurcombe-Park--Isle-of-Wight--1777-/821560.record?pt=S>

*"Catalogue of the Library of Sir Richard Worsley Bart. at Appuldurcombe Park, Isle of Wight, 1777"*

*Reference Name 1-WORSLEY/59*

*Alphabetical catalogue, followed by classical catalogue (by lettered cases).*

*Date: 1777*

*Repository: Lincolnshire Archives [057]*

James and Rubinstein continue (p. 234):

*So, altogether, the rebound, annotated books and notes, and Keen's annotated book, were probably all originally deposited as one whole collection with the true author's daughter and son-in-law. When the son-in-law's family estate was abandoned, nearly 200 years later, the books were moved to their new home in Lincolnshire. . . .*

This is mere supposition which fails to take into account, as noted above, that the library at Appuldurcombe had been catalogued by Sir Richard Worsley in 1777, decades before the move to Lincolnshire. If the annotated Hall's *Chronicle* does not appear in the 1777 catalogue of the Appuldurcombe library, there is no rationale for supposing it was moved to Lincolnshire when Appuldurcombe was sold in 1855.

There is no evidence that the annotated copy of Hall's *Chronicle* was ever owned by Sir Henry Neville (d.1615), or that his daughter, Frances Neville, one of a family of six sons and six daughters, inherited any of her father's books after his death, or that the annotated Hall's *Chronicle* was ever in the library of Sir Henry Neville's son-in-law, Sir Richard Worsley (d. 17 June 1621), or in the possession of Charles Pelham (1741-1846), 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Yarborough, in 1834.

The fact is that Alan Keen, the antiquarian bookseller who discovered the annotated Hall's *Chronicle*, wrote in 1954 that he had been attempting to ascertain the volume's

provenance since 1940, but had been unsuccessful, nor has anyone been able to ascertain its provenance since Keen's death.

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 89, 232-4.

(2) Keen, Alan and Roger Lubbock, *The Annotator: The Pursuit of an Elizabethan Reader of Halle's Chronicle*, (London: Putnam, 1954).

(3) Green, Nina, 'Was the annotated copy of Hall's Chronicle in the library of Robert Worsley, a lineal descendant of Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford?', *Edward De Vere Newsletter*, No. 56, (October 1993), at:

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

(4) See also the Worsley pedigree in Burke, John and John Bernard Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Extinct and Dormant Baronetcies of England*, (London: Scott, Webster and Geary, 1838), p. 581 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=K1kBAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA581>

**MYTH: Shakespeare's hapax legomena establish that Sir Henry Neville was the annotator of the annotated copy of Hall's Chronicle formerly held by the British Library as 'Loan 61'.**

John Casson writes (pp. 1, 4):

*A hapax legomenon is a word which an author only uses once. . . . I offer this paper as further evidence that Sir Henry Neville was the hidden poet using William Shakespeare as a pseudonym/front man to protect his identity. . . .*

*Note on Males: In his letter Neville writes "the heires males". The annotator of Halle's Chronicle uses these very words when he notes "the heares males of both the howses york & lan - aster were destroyed". These annotations may be by Shakespeare (see Keen & Lubbock, 1954; Casson, 2010b, 78). . . .*

*According to LION no other writer used these two words together between 1594-1603.*

The phrase 'heirs males' was commonly used in wills and other documents from c.1450-1700. Oxford uses the phrase 'heirs males' several times in his indenture of 30 January 1575. From the *OED*:

***heir male***



***n. an heir who is a male, and who traces his descent from the ancestor in question wholly through males.***

1450 *Rolls of Parl. V. 188/1 To hym and to his heires masles of his body lawfully begoten.*

. . . .

1614 *J. Selden Titles of Honor 196 Reseruing..the reuersion to themselues in default of heires masles.*

1697 *N. Luttrell Diary in Brief Hist. Relation State Affairs (1857) IV. 172 He cutting of the entail from the heirs males.*

Moreover when the annotator of Hall's *Chronicle* used the phrase 'heirs males', he was merely repeating in a marginal note the phrase 'heirs males' used by Hall in the text.

References:

(1) Casson, John, 'Words that Shakespeare only used once: Hapaxes in Shakespeare and ten letters of Henry Neville', (2011), available online at:

[www.creativepsychotherapy.info/wp-content/uploads/.../HAPAXLEGOMENON.pdf](http://www.creativepsychotherapy.info/wp-content/uploads/.../HAPAXLEGOMENON.pdf)

(2) ERO D/DRg2/25, Indenture entered into by Oxford with five trustees on 30 January 1575 prior to his departure on his continental tour.

***MYTH: Because Sir Henry Neville used some of Shakespeare's hapax legomena in his personal letters, Shakespeare can only have learned those words in certain sources to which Sir Henry Neville had access, including the annotated copy of Hall's Chronicle, the Tower Notebook, and a manuscript copy of Leicester's Commonwealth.***

Casson and Rubinstein write (p. 245):

*For many of Shakespeare's plays we can prove that Neville had access to the source books. . . . Neville used the same rare vocabulary in his letters as the Bard used in the plays.*

*Hapax legomena are words that occur only once in a writer's works. They have been used by scholars to determine authorship. In his letters Neville used many words that occur only once in Shakespeare's oeuvre. . . .*

Casson and Rubinstein erroneously claim that hapax legomena are generally accepted by scholars as useful in determining authorship, citing the Wikipedia article on hapax legomena. However the article actually contradicts that claim, concluding that hapax legomena are 'not a reliable indicator'. See:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hapax\\_legomenon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hapax_legomenon)

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*Some scholars consider Hapax legomena useful in determining the authorship of written works. P. N. Harrison, in *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles* (1921)<sup>[8]</sup> made hapax legomena popular among Bible scholars, when he argued that there are considerably more of them in the three Pastoral Epistles than in other Pauline Epistles. He argued that the number of hapax legomena in a putative author's corpus indicates his or her vocabulary and is characteristic of the author as an individual.*

*Harrison's theory has faded in significance due to a number of problems raised by other scholars. . . . In other words, hapax legomena are not a reliable indicator.*

On pp. 245-7 Casson and Rubinstein have compiled a table of a number of Shakespeare's hapax legomena which are also found in Sir Henry Neville's letters, and have 'matched' these against Shakespeare's alleged 'sources. The table includes the following words for which Shakespeare's sources are alleged to have been the annotated copy of Hall's *Chronicle*, the Tower Notebook, and a manuscript copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth*:

*peremptorily*  
*accommodated*  
*acknowledgement*  
*sifted*  
*obligations*  
*Hollanders*  
*proportionable*

With respect to the annotated Hall's *Chronicle*, it should be noted in passing that the annotator used none of these words. See the transcript of the annotations in *Edward De Vere Newsletter*, No. 33. Rubinstein and Casson's contention thus appears to be that Shakespeare learned these words from Hall's text, not from the annotations.

The claim that the foregoing examples of Shakespeare's hapax legomena can be traced to these three sources is a non sequitur for several reasons.

Firstly, Shakespeare hapax legomena are not rare words per se. They are 'rare' only in the sense that Shakespeare used them once in the entire Shakespeare canon. However their rarity in the canon is partly explained by the constraints placed on Shakespeare by subject matter. For Shakespeare to use the word 'Hollanders', for example, meant that the Dutch had to be a subject of discussion in a Shakespeare play. Thus although the word 'Hollanders' was commonly used in everyday speech and writing to refer to the Dutch, and had been so used since 1549, Shakespeare use of 'Hollanders', considering the subject matter of the Shakespeare plays, was bound to be rare. From the *OED*:

*a. A native of Holland, a Dutchman; also a Dutch ship.*  
*a1549 A. Borde Fyrst Bk. Introd. Knowl. (1870) ix. 148 And I am a Holander; good cloth I do make.*

*a1616 Shakespeare Othello (1622) ii. iii. 72 Your Dane, your Germaine, and your swag-bellied Hollander; drinke ho, are nothing to your English.*

The rarity of Shakespeare's hapax legomena can also be explained by the constraints placed on him by the fact that he was writing iambic pentameter verse. There are many multi-syllabic words which obviously pose no problem when used in prose, but which do not easily lend themselves to inclusion in iambic pentameter verse, 'peremptorily', 'accommodated' and 'proportionable' in the foregoing list being obvious examples. 'Peremptorily' was in common use in prose from 1435 on. From the *OED*:

*1. Law. †a. By, as, or in obedience to a peremptory order or writ; without (the possibility of) delay or postponement. Obsolete.*

*1435 Petition in J. H. Fisher et al. Anthol. Chancery Eng. (1984) 242 So that he had a day peremtorely atte last to remue and to come in and to abyde the revle of the said Iustices.*

*c1460 in A. Clark Eng. Reg. Oseney Abbey (1907) 89 (MED) Hit was i-schewed þe seyde gilty at þe same day and place lawfully and peremptoryly to haue be i-callid.*

*1513 King James IV Let. to Henry VIII 26 July in E. Hall Chron.: Henry VIII 29 b The sayd metyng of our and your commissioners at the borders, was peremptorily appoynced betwyxt you and vs.*

But for Shakespeare to have use 'peremptorily' in an iambic pentameter line would have been difficult, and in fact his sole use of 'peremptorily' is found in a prose passage, Falstaff's speech in Act 2, Scene 1 of *Henry IV Part 1*:

*If then the tree may be known by the fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then peremptorily I speak it: there is virtue in that Falstaff. . . .*

Secondly, for all seven of Shakespeare's hapax legomena listed above, Casson and Rubinstein list *three* alleged sources: the annotated Hall's *Chronicle*, the Tower Notebook, and a manuscript copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth*. The fact that each of these words is found in all three alleged 'sources' attests to how common these words actually were, undermining Casson and Rubinstein's contention that Shakespeare could only have learned the words in question from these three books/manuscripts. Clearly, Shakespeare could have learned these seven words from any number of sources.

Thirdly, most of these Shakespeare hapax legomena are defined in the *OED* in several different senses. Casson and Rubinstein fail to take into account the fact that Shakespeare may have used any of these words (with the possible exception of *Hollanders*) in a different sense than the sense in which the same word was used by Hall, or in the Tower Notebook, or in *Leicester's Commonwealth*, thus rendering the identification of Shakespeare's alleged 'sources' for these word meaningless.

References:

(1) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), pp. 245-7.

(2) *Edward De Vere Newsletter*, No. 33, (November 1991), available as a pdf file on this website at:

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

**MYTH: *Sir Henry Neville's father-in-law, Sir Henry Killigrew, was one of the editors of the 1587 edition of Holinshed's Chronicles.***

Casson and Rubinstein write (p. 53):

*Holinshed's Chronicles published: Neville's father-in-law, Henry Killigrew, one of the editors.*

And p. 90:

*Killigrew was Neville's father-in-law and he was one of the government editors of the 1587 edition of Holinshed.*

And p. 245:

*Neville would have had access to the 1587 edition as his father-in-law was one of the editors.*

Sir Henry Killigrew was not one of the editors of the 1587 edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles*. On 1 February 1587 the Privy Council ordered that the 1587 edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles* be 'reviewed and reformyd', i.e. censored. Sir Henry Killigrew, a long-standing client of the Earl of Leicester, was one of three men appointed by the Privy Council to execute this task. See Kewes, pp. 57-8, 330.

References:

(1) Kewes, Paulina et al, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Holinshed's Chronicles*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 57-8, 330 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=eIxrIRTtD1kC&pg=PA45>

(2) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), pp. 53, 90, 245.

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville was a Baron of the Cinque Ports, and as such was entitled to bear the canopy over the monarch at a coronation, and could have expected to do so at the coronation of King James.***

James and Rubinstein write (p. 47):

*It appears that Neville, who was a Knight of Sussex and a Baron of the Cinque Ports, was therefore entitled to bear the canopy over the king at his coronation, and could well have expected to have done so at the coronation ceremony of James I, held in 1604. (This [Shakespeare] Sonnet can thus probably be dated to about 1604-05.)*

And on p. 160:

*In the [Tower] Notebook, Neville also hints at his hopes to 'bear the canopy' at the coronation, hopes which might have been dashed, for he either regrets or records the event ('Were 't ought to me I bore the canopy . . .') in [Shakespeare's] Sonnet 125.*

This claim is erroneous. Sir Henry Neville was not a Baron of the Cinque Ports, and had no entitlement to bear the canopy at the coronation of King James with the Barons of the Cinque Ports.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 47, 160.

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville carried the canopy at the coronation of King James.***

On pp. 224-5 James and Rubinstein write:

*[Neville's] 'outward honouring' of James had probably been demonstrated by the carrying of the canopy at his coronation. . . .*

*In 1613, when [Shakespeare's Henry VIII] was first performed, Neville needed to remind the King of how he had once honoured him.*

This claim is erroneous. Sir Henry Neville was not entitled to bear the canopy at the coronation of King James, and did not do so.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 47, 160, 224-5.

***MYTH: Verses written to Ben Jonson refer to the funeral of Sir Henry Neville.***

James and Rubinstein state that the verses in bold type below refer to the funeral of Sir Henry Neville in 1615.

Casson and Rubinstein write (p. 244):

*Beaumont sent another verse letter in 1615 in which he referred to Sir Henry Neville's funeral.*

It should be noted that of the four manuscript versions, none is autograph, and while one manuscript has the initials 'FB', another has the initials 'TB'. For a facsimile of BL Add MS 30982 f. 75v, which has the initials 'TB', see the Shakespeare Documented website at:

<https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/exhibition/document/letter-beaumont-jonson-refers-shakespeare-name>

The verses are usually attributed to Francis Beaumont, although there is no clear evidence which establishes his authorship. Chambers writes:

*In view of the variant initials, one cannot be quite sure of the author.*

For Chambers' discussion of the two manuscripts known to him, see Chambers, E.K., *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), Vol. II, pp. 222-4:

<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.80390/page/n255>

Bland located two other manuscript versions, both of which he considered more reliable than the two versions examined earlier by Chambers, and on which he based his transcript on pp. 174-5:

*To Mr: Ben: Jonson*

*Neither to follow fashion, nor to show  
My wit against the state, nor that I know  
Anything new with which I am with child  
Till I have told, nor hoping to be styled  
A good epistler through the town (with which  
I might be famous), nor with any itch  
Like these wrote I this letter, but to show  
The love I carry and methinks I owe  
To you above the number, which will best,*

*In something which I use not, be expressed.  
 To write this I invoke none but the post  
 Of Dover or some carrier's pistling ghost,  
 For if this equal but that style which men  
 Send cheese to town with, and thanks down again,  
 'Tis all I seek for. Here I would let slip  
 (If I had any in me) scholarship,  
 And from all learning leave these lines as clear  
 As Shakespeare's best are, which our heirs shall hear  
 Preachers cite to their auditors to show  
 How far sometimes a mortal man may go  
 By the dim light of nature. 'Tis to me  
**An help to write of nothing, and as free  
 As he whose text was God made all that is  
 I mean to speak. What do you think of his  
 State who hath now the last that he could make  
 In white and orange-tawny on his back  
 At Windsor? Is not his misery more  
 Than a fallen sharer's that now keeps a door?  
 Hath not his state almost as wretched been  
 As his that is ordained to write *The Grin  
 After The Fawn and Fleer shall be (as sure  
 Some one there is allotted to endure  
 That cross!)*. There are some I could wish to know,  
 To love and keep with if they would not show  
 Their studies to me, or I wish to see  
 Their works to laugh at if they suffer me  
 Not to know them, and thus I would commerce  
 With honest poets that make scurvy verse.  
 By this time you perceive you did amiss  
 To leave your worthier studies to see this,  
 Which is more tedious to you than to walk  
 In a Jew's church, or Breton's Common Talk.  
 But know I write not these lines to th' end  
 To please Ben: Jonson, but to please my friend.***

Although Chambers tentatively dates Beaumont's verses to 1615, according to Bland they can be dated via theatrical allusions to 'late May or June 1606'. See Bland, p. 165. Bland states that Beaumont was 'poking fun at Marston and Sharpham (whom Jonson called 'rogues')'. See Bland, *supra*, p. 156.

See also Bland, *supra*, pp. 165-6:

*Second, the date [i.e. Chambers' dating of the poem to 1615] cannot be reconciled with the reference to Marston's *The Fawne* and Sharpham's *The Fleire*, the latter of which was performed in 1606. One of Beaumont's jokes is that someone will be required to*

*write a sequel called The Grinne: that comment makes no sense if the sequel has not been written within the previous nine years*

In 2006, James and Rubinstein wrote (pp. 211-12):

*This could, of course, refer to the recently deceased Neville if the poem was written, as Chambers apparently believes, just after 1615. Neville's coat of arms was a white cross on an orange (or 'tawny' in heraldic terminology) ground, so a flag with these arms may well have draped his coffin.*

In the foregoing statement, James and Rubinstein have confused coats of arms with livery. The words 'on his back' refer to a white and orange livery, i.e. the uniform or insignia of a household retainer. From the *OED*:

coat of arms

*2. The distinctive heraldic bearings of a gentleman (armiger) originally borne on a 'coat of arms' (sense 1); a shield, escutcheon.*

livery

*[T]he characteristic uniform or insignia worn by a household's retainers or servants, typically distinguished by colour and design.*

By 2012, Rubinstein had accepted that the verses refer to livery. See p. 126:

*Chambers suggests that the "white and Orange tawny" may have been the livery (uniform) worn by English ambassadors to France. This was the highest position ever held by Neville, in the livery of which he was presumably laid out at his funeral.*

However the rest of Rubinstein's statement is inaccurate. Chambers did not generalize that white and orange tawny was the livery worn by English ambassadors to France. Chambers mentioned only a single embassy in 1616 in which James Lord Hay was sent to France to negotiate a marriage, and stated that Hay's entourage had 'tawny liveries', whereas the verses mention **white** and orange tawny liveries. See Chambers, p. 223:

*James Lord Hay was then a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and he had tawny liveries on an embassy to France in 1616.*

For Chambers' source, see Wilson, Arthur, *The History of Great Britain, Being the Life and Reign of King James the First*, (London: Richard Lownds, 1653), pp. 93-4 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=oOBlAAAcAAJ&pg=PA94>

Moreover, as explained in the *OED* definition above, livery was worn by household servants. Sir Henry Neville was not a household servant, and thus the white and orange-tawny livery described in the verses can have had nothing to do with him. There is a remote possibility that Sir Henry Neville wore the Queen's livery when he was received



by the French King as English ambassador in Paris, but the Queen's livery was not white and orange-tawny. The Tudor livery was green and white. See Gosman, Martin et al, eds., *Princes and Princely Culture 1450-1650*, Vol. 2, (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p. 161 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=Ig9GdB5SIx4C&pg=PA161>

Moreover the verses clearly indicate that the individual in question is not 'recently deceased', but in fact is very much alive at Windsor, and has been reduced to entering the service of some nobleman or official whose orange-tawny livery he now wears on his back. His current miserable state is jestingly compared to that of a theatre shareholder who has now fallen to the position of [theatre?] doorkeeper.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 47, 160.

(2) Rubinstein, William D., 'The Case for Sir Henry Neville as the Real Shakespeare', *The Oxfordian*, Vol. XIV, 2012, pp. 121-9 at p. 126, available online at:

<https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/the-oxfordian/>

(3) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), p. 2444

(4) Chambers, E.K., *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), Vol. II, pp. 222-4:

<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.80390/page/n255>

(5) See Bland, Mark B., 'Francis Beaumont's Verse Letters to Ben Jonson and "The Mermaid Club"', in Beal, P. et al, eds., *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700*, (London: British Library, 2005), pp. 139-179, available online at:

[http://www.academia.edu/4064513/Francis\\_Beaumonts\\_Verse\\_Letters\\_to\\_Ben\\_Jonson\\_and\\_The\\_Mermaid\\_Club](http://www.academia.edu/4064513/Francis_Beaumonts_Verse_Letters_to_Ben_Jonson_and_The_Mermaid_Club)

(6) See also the discussion of the verses on the Documents page of this website.

**MYTH: *Sir Henry Neville was a key figure in the enquiry into the death of Sir Thomas Overbury.***

Casson writes (p. 18):

*[Sir Henry Neville] became a key figure in the enquiry into Overbury's death.*

Anne Somerset's *Unnatural Murder* contains few references to Sir Henry Neville, who, although a friend of Sir Thomas Overbury (1581 - , was not in any way a 'key figure' in the inquiry into Overbury's murder at the behest of King James' favourite, Robert Carr (1585/6?-1645), Viscount Rochester and Earl of Somerset, and his wife, Frances Howard (1590-1632), daughter of Thomas Howard (1561-1626), 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Suffolk.

Somerset writes (p. 66)

*[Rochester] began urging [in 1611] that when Parliament next assembled, James should entrust its management not to Salisbury, but to a corpulent country gentleman named Sir Henry Neville. Neville was a former ambassador to France who had been implicated in the second Earl of Essex's rebellion, and who had consequently spent the last two years of Queen Elizabeth's reign in the Tower. On James's accession he had been freed, but Salisbury had blocked his further political advancement. The King mistrusted Neville because, during the Parliament of 1610, Sir Henry 'had ranged himself with those patriots that were accounted of a contrary faction' to his ministers. Nevertheless, Rochester now maintained that, precisely because of these links with the opposition, Neville would control the Commons much more effectively than Salisbury had done. . . .*

*It is clear that Overbury was the person who had incited Rochester to argue for Neville's promotion. A contemporary later noted that it 'was generally observed that Overbury carried [Rochester] on in courses separate and opposite to the Privy Council.*

(p. 90):

*Overbury did not confine himself to acting as Rochester's business manager. Rochester had an indifferent intellect, and he found his new political responsibilities overwhelming. Unaccustomed to statecraft, he was left struggling with the massive amounts of paperwork and reading which the King now expected of him. Overbury, on the other hand, had an incisive mind, and found it easy to assimilate detailed information, or to reduce a complex document to its essentials. Unable to cope on his own, Rochester turned to Overbury for assistance. When despatches arrived from abroad, Rochester would pass them to his friend so that he could condense them for him. . . .*

*The arrangement meant that Overbury exerted a real, if unacknowledged, influence on state affairs. When summarising a document he could lay particular stress on one part, and this might well colour the King's interpretation of it. Despite the fact that he had no official position, he now enjoyed regular access to top-secret papers, many of which were never seen even by Privy Councillors. Before long he and Rochester were routinely exchanging such sensitive information that they developed a rudimentary cipher to be used in written communications, whereby all the leading figures at court were given their own sobriquets. While this was obviously a sensible security measure, there was also a more light-hearted side to it, for several of the nicknames they devised had humorous overtones. For example, since Sir Henry Neville bore a marked resemblance to the late*

*King Henry VIII, Rochester and Overbury christened him 'Similis'. Other eminent persons were given slightly irreverent codewords. Thus the Queen was 'Agrippina', the Archbishop of Canterbury 'Unctius', the Earl of Pembroke 'Niger, and the earl of Suffolk 'Wolsey'.*

(pp. 91-2)

*Once people became aware that Overbury was transacting so much confidential business, it led to speculation that he would shortly be appointed Secretary, the assumption being that he would 'fit himself . . . to furnish the place . . . by the practice and experience he is now in'. In view of the King's fixed dislike of Sir Thomas [Overbury] this was never a realistic prospect, and Overbury had the sense to understand as much. Instead he urged Rochester to persuade the King to give the job to their long-established political ally, Sir Henry Neville. Neville's appointment had the support of other influential men at court, including the Earl of Pembroke (like Rochester, a Privy Councillor) and the Earl of Southampton. Both believed that it would ease political tensions in the country by contenting those 'Parliament mutineers' who had criticised the King during the last session. The two Earls started attending meetings in Rochester's Whitehall chambers, at which all those who favoured Sir Henry's candidacy debated how best to achieve their ends.*

*The Earl of Suffolk was displeased by Rochester's campaign on Neville's behalf. He had a rival candidate for the post of Secretary, leading one courtier to report that the matter had become 'a subject of notorious opposition between our great Viscount [Rochester] and the house of Suffolk'. Much more alarmingly, however, it brought Rochester into conflict with the King. James had never forgiven Neville for having opposed him in the commons, and how he declared angrily that he would 'not have a Secretary imposed upon him by Parliament'.*

*Overbury saw to it that Rochester did not accept this as final. Despite complaints from the Council that the absence of a Secretary meant that 'matters find not that despatch that were to be wished', the position remained vacant, and Overbury refused to drop Neville's candidacy until another man had been chosen. For months the King kept everyone in suspense. There were times when it did seem that he was contemplating appointing Neville, but he always drew back before committing himself. Contrary to Overbury's calculations, he did not grow more amenable as time went by, and instead became irritated by Rochester's dogged support of Sir Henry. It displeased James that his favourite [Rochester], who in the past had always been so tractable and obliging, should now be so tiresomely persistent, and the King blamed Overbury for the transformation. His anger was fuelled by Sir Thomas's many enemies, who seized every opportunity to speak evil of him. Since Overbury's obstreperous behaviour had also alienated many of the men who had earlier worked with him to secure Neville's advancement, he had very few defenders. Towards the end of 1612 Sir Henry Neville wrote sombrely to a friend, 'There hath been much poison cast out of late unto the King both against him [Overbury] and me, but more especially against him and with more advantage, because I doubt [i.e. fear] he hath given some advantage to take hold of,*

*being, as you know, violent and open.’ Neville added that the King was now so exasperated that he was even showing signs of disenchantment with Rochester.*

*The Earl of Suffolk’s detestation of Rochester was no secret, but his daughter Frances was not the only member of his family who harboured feelings of a very different nature for the favourite. The Earl of Northampton was also greatly taken with Rochester, and worked hard to establish a warm relationship with him. It is tempting to suggest an element of physical attraction in this. Northampton was a confirmed bachelor, ‘more wedded to his book than his bed’, but his fondness for nobly born young men attracted some comment. One observer noted that he was ‘always attended (and he loved it) with gentlemen of quality, to whom he was very bountiful’. While there is no evidence whatever he ever made physical advances, Northampton’s letters to Rochester do give the impression that he was a little in love with the young man. He invariably addressed him as ‘Sweet Lord’ or ‘Sweet Rochester’, and the correspondence abounds with sickly assurances, such as ‘No man lies nearer than yourself to my heart.’*

(pp. 94-5)

*The Earl of Salisbury’s death had made inevitable a general reshuffle of court offices, and Northampton was able to draw Rochester closer because they shared an interest in the outcome. . . .*

*In the late summer of 1612 events seemingly played into Northampton’s hands when Rochester and Pembroke quarrelled. Northampton was delighted, and did all he could to make the rift permanent. When he heard that Pembroke was seeking a reconciliation, Northampton begged Rochester not to listen, telling him that it was impossible for one of his ‘noble heart and spirit’ to trust in the goodwill of a ‘Welsh juggler’. To his chagrin, however, the two men overcame their differences that autumn, after Sir Henry Neville volunteered to act as an intermediary.*

*Northampton next tried to turn Rochester against Neville. . . . Doubtless, Northampton was largely responsible for the fact that, by early 1613, Rochester was pushing less hard for Neville’s appointment as Secretary.*

Rochester and Overbury essentially severed their relationship over Overbury’s opposition to Rochester’s proposed marriage to Frances Howard.

(p. 105)

*In the event, however, Rochester did not sever all connections with Overbury. Overbury would later relate that, following their quarrel, Rochester gave him an assurance ‘that I should live in court, [that he] was my friend’, and Overbury accepted this. Although for the time being the warmth had gone out of their relationship, Rochester’s apparently conciliatory behaviour seemed to vindicate Overbury’s assumption that the Viscount was too dependent on him to dispel with his services. When acquaintances questioned whether Rochester could really be so forgiving, Overbury had no hesitation in telling*

*them they were wrong. Sir Dudley Digges later recorded that about his time he had suggested to Sir Henry Neville 'that my Lord of Rochester was desirous to be rid of Overbury'. Neville contradicted this, explaining 'that Sir Thomas Overbury was confident, and said often that my Lord of Rochester would not dare to leave him'.*

*In reality, Overbury's confidence was misplaced, for Rochester was now infuriated with him.*

(p. 120)

*By this time people were starting to suspect that Frances and Rochester were in love, and there was speculation that they would marry as soon as she was free to do so. Obviously this would entail additional humiliation for Essex, for if his wife at once found happiness with another man, it would merely underline his own shortcoming as a husband. From Southampton's point of view, however, there were other reasons why the union would be undesirable. For the last few months he and Rochester had worked together to try to obtain Sir Henry Neville's appointment as secretary. By mid-1613, however, it was becoming apparent to informed observers that Sir Henry's chances of securing the job were dwindling. Southampton's own political career was also at a standstill: at the end of June it was reported that he was becoming increasingly resentful about the fact that he had never been made a Privy Councillor. Almost certainly Southampton attributed these failures to the fact that Rochester had started to align himself with the Howards, and he feared that if they forged a closer alliance, it would only worsen his own political isolation.*

(p. 128)

Archbishop Abbot was disinclined to grant an annulment of Frances Howard's marriage to her first husband, Robert Devereux (1591-1646), 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Essex, and his view was strengthened by input from Sir Henry Neville.

*[Abbot] was alerted to the fact that Frances and Rochester were already close and planned to marry. In July Sir Henry Neville warned Abbot that Frances had 'a new husband . . . readily provided for her'.*

By 1613 Frances Howard had obtained an annulment and had married Rochester.

(p. 211)

*The continuing absence of a Secretary of State meant that much business relating to the conduct of foreign affairs was left in the hands of [Rochester, now Earl of Somerset]. . . . The King still refused to consider employing Sir Henry Neville and the Earl of Suffolk took the view that the best alternative would be Sir Thomas Lake, who had extensive administrative experience. Suffolk may have assumed that, now that [Rochester] was his son-in-law, he would not oppose Lake's candidacy, but the favourite proved to have different ideas on the subject. He was determined that the post should go to his protégé*

*Sir Ralph Winwood, who currently was serving as English agent to the States-General in Holland. It was not a popular choice: Winwood was a 'harsh and austere' man, who lacked affability, and who had antagonised 'the tender ears of this age' by being 'too plain a speaker'. Somerset, however, felt sure that he could depend upon his loyalty, for Sir Ralph had been a client of his since 1612, or even earlier. Despite Winwood's reputations for abrasiveness, he had made slavish professions of devotion to his patron.*

Sir Ralph Winwood (1562/3–1617) was appointed Secretary of State on 29 March 1614

Sir Thomas Overbury was arrested on 21 April 1613 and died in the Tower on 15 September 1613. It was not until two years later that an inquiry began into his death. Sir Henry Neville was not a figure in the inquiry in any way, and is merely mentioned by Somerset as member of the court faction to which Overbury belonged, and which supported Neville's candidacy for the position of Secretary of State.

#### References:

(1) Casson, John, 'Four Letters of Henry Neville and Seven Shakespeare Plays' (2010), p. 18, available as a pdf file online at:

[www.creativepsychotherapy.info/wp-content/.../05/FOURLETTERS7PLAYS-1.pdf](http://www.creativepsychotherapy.info/wp-content/.../05/FOURLETTERS7PLAYS-1.pdf)

(2) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), p. 274.

(3) Somerset, Anne, *Unnatural Murder: Poison at the Court of James I*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997).

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville was a fat man, like Sir John Falstaff, was known to his friends, including Southampton, as 'Falstaff', and was called 'similis' because of his resemblance to Henry VIII.***

James and Rubinstein write (p. 54) that:

*Neville was increasingly fat, and was apparently known as 'Falstaff' to his friends. 'Oldcastle', Falstaff's original name, is an obvious pun on Neville's name. Neville apparently looked on Falstaff as an alter ego. . . .*

A similar claim is made on p. 86:

*Probably Neville's most notable physical characteristic, however, was a tendency to put on weight, so that by the 1600s he was fat. He possibly looked like Henry VIII without Henry's grossness. Falstaff was a deliberate and central component of his persona, one of his main alter egos, and was apparently his nickname among his close friends such as*

*Southampton. Neville suffered from gout and chronic arthritis, making him somewhat lame in later life.*

Casson writes (p. 18):

*Overbury and Rochester had codenamed Neville 'Similis' because he looked like Henry VIII (Somerset, 1997, 90).*

Casson and Rubinstein write (p. 274):

*Overbury and Rochester codename Neville 'Similis' because he looked like Henry VIII. (Somerset, 1997, 90). Sir Edward Neville, his grandfather, also looked like the king.*

No evidence that Sir Henry Neville was known to his friends as 'Falstaff' is offered, nor is any evidence offered for the claim that Neville had a 'tendency to put on weight'. Surviving portraits of Sir Henry Neville do not depict him as overweight. The *ODNB* mentions four likenesses:

*oils, 1600, Audley End, Essex*

*W. N. Gardiner, stipple (after unknown artist, 1600), BM, NPG; repro. in F. G. Waldron, The Biographical Mirrour, 3 vols. (1795–1810)*

*attrib. B. Rebecca, portrait, oils, Audley End, Essex  
portrait, priv. coll.*

For the 1596 portrait of Sir Henry Neville by George Gower, see:

[http://www.artnet.com/artists/george-gower/portrait-of-sir-henry-neville-o3CeEbiZ-f2C4sgwnO1\\_Xg2](http://www.artnet.com/artists/george-gower/portrait-of-sir-henry-neville-o3CeEbiZ-f2C4sgwnO1_Xg2)

Two other portraits of Sir Henry Neville are found in James and Rubinstein's *The Truth Will Out*. Neither depicts him as 'fat'.

Ken Feinstein claims that Sir Henry Neville was overweight late in life, citing as evidence a letter from John More to Sir Ralph Winwood dated 29 October 1611:

*Being the other day with Mr. Levinus [Munck], talking of divers occurrents, he fell suddenly from another matter to this speech: 'I wonder from whence should grow so much discourse of Sir H. Nevill to be a Secretary of State, or at the least a Privy Councillor.' I answered him (and that truly) that for my part I never heard any such discourse, neither did I see much reason to believe it; for, besides his unwieldy body and giving himself to a mere country life . . . .*

Being fat would hardly have disqualified Sir Henry Neville for political office in Munck's mind. What would have been a disqualification, and is what Munck undoubtedly had in mind when he referred to Sir Henry Neville's 'unwieldy body', is the fact that in his latter years Neville was weakened by disease. See Owen, p. 270:

*Chamberlain wrote sadly to Carleton that this was “a bad medicine for a man [=Sir Henry Neville] that hath at this instant three dangerous diseases upon him, that is the jaundice, the scurvy, and the dropsy, which have brought him to a very weak case and will utterly overthrow him if he find not present remedy.*

Moreover James and Rubinstein themselves (see above) state that Sir Henry Neville suffered from gout and chronic arthritis which made him somewhat lame in later life, again suggesting that Munck’s comment in 1611 about Neville’s ‘unwieldy body’ may have had as much to do with disease as with corpulence.

Thus, although Sir Henry Neville was corpulent late in life, there is no authority for the claim that he was corpulent all his life, or that his corpulence had anything to do with Shakespeare’s Sir John Falstaff.

While Somerset’s statement that Sir Henry Neville was called ‘similis’ by Overbury and Rochester, is no doubt accurate, it should be noted that Somerset merely cites BL Add. Mss. 15476, fo. 94v, and BL Harleian 7002, fo. 281, but does not quote from either document.

#### References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), pp. 54, 86, 114.

(2) Rubinstein, William D., ‘The Case for Sir Henry Neville as the Real Shakespeare’, *The Oxfordian*, Vol. XIV, 2012, pp. 121-9 at p. 126, available online at:

<https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/the-oxfordian/>

(3) Casson, John, ‘Four Letters of Henry Neville and Seven Shakespeare Plays’ (2010), p. 18, available as a pdf file online at:

[www.creativepsychotherapy.info/wp-content/.../05/FOURLETTERS7PLAYS-1.pdf](http://www.creativepsychotherapy.info/wp-content/.../05/FOURLETTERS7PLAYS-1.pdf)

(4) Casson, John and William D. Rubinstein, *Sir Henry Neville Was Shakespeare: The Evidence*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016), p. 274.

(5) Duncan, Owen Lowe, ‘The Political Career of Sir Henry Neville: An Elizabethan Gentleman at the Court of James I’, 1974, Ph.D. thesis, p. 270.

(6) Feinstein, Ken. Private e-mail 27 March 2019.

(7) *Report on the Manuscripts of the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, K.G., K.T., Preserved at Montagu House, Whitehall*, Vol. I, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1899), pp. 101-2 at:



<https://archive.org/details/bucleuchqueensb01greauoft/page/n145>

(8) McClure, Norman Egbert, ed., *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, Vol. I, (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939), p. 577.

(9) Somerset, Anne, *Unnatural Murder: Poison at the Court of James I*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), p. 90.

**MYTH:** *‘Oldcastle’, Falstaff’s original name, is an obvious pun on Sir Henry Neville’s name.*

James and Rubinstein write (p. 54) that:

*Neville was increasingly fat, and was apparently known as ‘Falstaff’ to his friends. ‘Oldcastle’, Falstaff’s original name, is an obvious pun on Neville’s name. Neville apparently looked on Falstaff as an alter ego. . . .*

And on p. 114:

*It seems likely that Falstaff was one side of Neville’s own alter ego and an important autobiographical persona. Falstaff’s name was, of course, originally Oldcastle, which was an obvious pun on Neville’s name (from ‘old castle to ‘new town’, although ‘ville’ also itself has the implication of being a fortress).*

There are three obvious flaws in this spurious claim. Firstly, no part of the surname ‘Neville’ corresponds to the word ‘new’. Secondly, according to the *OED*, the first use of ‘ville’ in English to mean ‘a town or village’ is from 1837. Thirdly, the *OED* records no usage in English of ‘ville’ to mean ‘a fortress’.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006).

(2) *OED*, online edition, entries for ‘ville’.

**MYTH:** *In June or July 1599 Southampton wrote to his wife, alluding to Sir Henry Neville as Sir John Falstaff, that ‘All the news I can send you [is]...that Sir John Falstaff is by mrs-dame pintpot made father of a godly millers thumb, a boye that’s all heade and little body—but that is a secret.’*

This claim is without foundation. It is well-known that the letter, dated 8 July 1599, was written by Southampton's wife, Elizabeth (nee Vernon), not by Southampton. Moreover the wording given by Bill Rubinstein above is inaccurate, since it omits the crucial word 'his' in 'his mistress', which clarifies that the child spoken of by the Countess of Southampton is illegitimate. According to Stopes, the postscript reads:

*All the news I can send you that I think will make you merry is that I read in a letter from London that Sir John Falstaff is by his mistress, Dame Pintpot, made father of a goodly miller's thumb, a boy that's all head and very little body, but this is a secret.*

References:

(1) Rubinstein, William D., 'The Case for Sir Henry Neville as the Real Shakespeare', *The Oxfordian*, Vol. XIV, 2012, pp. 121-9 at p. 126, available online at:

<https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/the-oxfordian/>

(2) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), pp. 114-15.

(3) Stopes, Charlotte Carmichael, *The Life of Henry, Third Earl of Southampton, Shakespeare's Patron*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), p. 160.

**MYTH:** *The 'boy that's all head and very little body' (see above) was Sir Henry Neville's son because Neville wrote to Sir Robert Cecil on 26 September 1599 from Paris, where he was serving as English ambassador, of 'some domestical misfortune in my son lately born'.*

Firstly, it is clear that the child was illegitimate, having been born of Sir John Falstaff's mistress, Dame Pintpot, and Neville would not have termed him his 'son' in a formal dispatch to Sir Robert Cecil. Moreover in the Countess of Southampton's letter (see above), the child's birth is said to be 'a secret', whereas Sir Henry Neville openly acknowledges to Cecil the death of his son.

Secondly, the postscript in the Countess of Southampton's letter refers to having had news of the birth of this illegitimate child in a letter from London, whereas Neville was residing in Paris in 1599.

Thirdly, the wording of Neville's letter given by Bill Rubinstein above is inaccurate. The actual wording, as given in Sawyer (see below), is 'some domestical misfortune in **the loss of** my son lately born'. By omitting the words 'the loss of', Rubinstein conveys the impression that Neville is speaking of a son with a physical deformity, whereas Neville is speaking of his son's death.

## References:

(1) Rubinstein, William D., 'The Case for Sir Henry Neville as the Real Shakespeare', *The Oxfordian*, Vol. XIV, 2012, pp. 121-9 at p. 126, available online at:

<https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/the-oxfordian/>

(2) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), pp. 114-15, 335.

(3) Sawyer, Edmund, *Memorials of Affairs of State in the Reigns of Q. Elizabeth and K. James I*, (London: T. Ward, 1725), Vol. I, p. 115.

<https://archive.org/stream/memorialsaffai01winw#page/114/mode/2up>

(4) Duncan, Owen Lowe, 'The Political Career of Sir Henry Neville: An Elizabethan Gentleman at the Court of James I', 1974, Ph.D. thesis, p. 134.

***MYTH: Sir Henry Neville's wife was a short, dark woman.***

This claim is without foundation, and no evidence has been offered for it. The portrait said to be of Sir Henry Neville's wife in *The Truth Will Out* is half length, obviously allowing no estimate to be made of her height.

## References:

(1) Rubinstein, William D., 'The Case for Sir Henry Neville as the Real Shakespeare', *The Oxfordian*, Vol. XIV, 2012, pp. 121-9 at p. 126, available online at:

<https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/the-oxfordian/>

(2) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 114.

***MYTH: 'Oldcastle' is an obvious pun on the name 'Neville' (from 'old castle' to 'new town').***

This claim is without foundation, and no evidence has been offered for it.

## References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 114.

**MYTH:** *The speeches of John of Lancaster and the Epilogue in 2 Henry IV contain 'plainly autobiographical commentary' about Sir Henry Neville's forthcoming appointment as English ambassador to France in 1599.*

This claim is without foundation, and no evidence has been offered for it. In Act V, Scene V, John of Lancaster forecasts war with France, not a peaceful ambassadorship:

*I will lay odds that ere this year expire,  
We bear our civil swords and native fire  
As far as France. I heard a bird so sing,  
Whose music, to my thinking, pleas'd the King.*

The Epilogue contains nothing which could possibly refer to Sir Henry Neville's appointment as English ambassador to France:

*One more word, I beseech you. If you be not too much cloy'd with fat meat, our humble author will continue the story, with Sir John in it, and make you merry with fair Katherine of France, where (for anything I know) Falstaff shall die of a sweat, unless already 'a be kill'd with your hard opinions; for Oldcastle died martyr, and this is not the man.*

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), pp. 120-1.

(2) Evans, G. Blakemore, ed., *The Riverside Shakespeare*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), pp. 922-3.

**MYTH:** *Since Thomas Vicars married Sir Henry Neville's daughter in 1622, his reference to Shakespeare in the third edition of his manual of rhetoric in 1628 as 'that famous poet who takes his name from 'shaking' and 'spear' indicates knowledge that Shakespeare was a pen-name for his father-in-law, Sir Henry Neville.*

This claim is without foundation. In the second edition of his manual of rhetoric in 1624, Vicars makes no mention of Shakespeare in his list of outstanding English poets, which would be inexplicable had he been Shakespeare's father-in-law.

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Moreover, after mentioning Shakespeare in the third edition of his manual of rhetoric published in 1628, Vicars states that his own favourite poet is Michael Drayton, and includes two of his own poems in praise of Drayton, followed by a poem in praise of George Wither. If Vicars' father-in-law, Sir Henry Neville, had been Shakespeare, Vicars would not have put it on record in print that his own favourite poet was Drayton, and failing Drayton, Wither.

References:

(1) Schurink, Fred, 'An Unnoticed Early Reference to Shakespeare', *Notes and Queries*, Vol. 53, Issue 1 (March 2006), pp. 72-5 at:

<http://nq.oxfordjournals.org/content/53/1/72.short>.

(2) Nelson, Donald Frederick, 'Schurink's Discovery of a Century', *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*, Vol. 44, No. 1, Spring 2008, pp. 10-11, available online.

(3) *ODNB* entry for Thomas Vicars.

(4) Rubinstein, William D., 'The Case for Sir Henry Neville as the Real Shakespeare', *The Oxfordian*, Vol. XIV, 2012, pp. 121-9 at p. 125, available online at:

<https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/the-oxfordian/>