
OXMYTHS AND STRATMYTHS: SECTION VI

The 'myths' below involving Sir Henry Neville are arranged chronologically.

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

Sir Henry Neville's mother, Elizabeth Gresham (d.1573), was the daughter of Sir John Gresham (d.1560), the eldest son of Sir Richard Gresham (c.1485–1549) and Frances Thwaytes (d. October 1580), the daughter and coheir of Sir Henry Thwaytes of Lownd, Yorkshire.

References:

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

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

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

Sir Henry Neville's mother, Elizabeth Gresham (d.1573), was the niece of Sir Thomas Gresham (c.1518–1579), but not his heiress, as she predeceased him.

References:

(1) James, Brenda and William D. Rubinstein, *The Truth Will Out*, (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 51.

(2) Will of Sir Thomas Gresham at:

http://umb-www-01.u-strasbg.fr/lexis/a992000/frame_txt_fichiers/F3_fichiers/gresham/lwill_ward_ok.html.

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) Entry for Sir Francis Bacon in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

(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) Entry for Sir Henry Neville (1561/2-1615) in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

(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:

<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 after the death of his father in 1592.

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 1592.

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.

<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 without foundation. Sir Robert Cecil married Elizabeth Brooke (1562–1597), the daughter of William Brooke (1527–1597), 10th 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) Entry for Sir Robert Cecil in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

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, 3rd 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) Entry for Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

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

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=VbKM-1eXuBkC&pg=PA32&lpg=PA32&dq=%22Sir+Francis+Walsingham%22+%22Scotland%22+%22return%22+%22Durham%22&source=bl&ots=Kl-kF-R1qk&sig=6xTQ-rKwJLO85IHtB5t0i4pqpnA&hl=en&sa=X&ei=EkKfVJzrNZHpoASJu4GIBA&ved=0CB0Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22Sir%20Francis%20Walsingham%22%20%22Scotlan d%22%20%22return%22%20%22Durham%22&f=false>

(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.

This claim is without foundation. 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) Entry for Charles Paget in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

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.

This claim is without foundation. *The Encomium of Richard III* was written by Sir William Cornwallis the younger, and was not dedicated to Sir Henry Neville. A manuscript once owned by Charles Yarnold and now in the British Library entitled 'Praise of K. Richard' 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.

(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=WtARAAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA182&lpg=PA182&dq=%22Praise+of+K.+Richard%22&source=bl&ots=fgIX-yCK0q&sig=dfaQrdO4kNexZKylpMrVJj8vUyo&hl=en&sa=X&ei=35qhVILVDsGwogSRxICwAg&ved=0CCIQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=%22Praise%20of%20K.%20Richard%22&f=false>

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

MYTH: 'Praise of K. Richard' was dedicated to Sir Henry Neville, knight, by the Earl of Southampton.

This claim is without foundation. 'Praise of K. Richard' (see above) 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 never have been used by an earl to a knight.

References:

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

(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=WtARAAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA182&lpg=PA182&dq=%22Praise+of+K.+Richard%22&source=bl&ots=fgIX-yCK0q&sig=dfaQrdO4kNexZKylpMrVJj8vUyo&hl=en&sa=X&ei=35qhVILVDsGwogSRxICwAg&ved=0CCIQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=%22Praise%20of%20K.%20Richard%22&f=false>

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

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 'Praise of K. Richard' (see above) could have been dedicated to Sir Henry Neville in the early 1590s.*

This claim is without foundation. 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=WtARAAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA182&lpg=PA182&dq=%22Praise+of+K.+Richard%22&source=bl&ots=fgIX-yCK0q&sig=dfaQrdO4kNexZKylpMrVJj8vUyo&hl=en&sa=X&ei=35qhVILVDsGwogSRxICwAg&ved=0CCIQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=%22Praise%20of%20K.%20Richard%22&f=false>.

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

It does not. 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.

(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: *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.

(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) Entry for Thomas Neville in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 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.

On pp. 231 of *The Truth Will Out*, the authors write that:

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.

On pp. 238-9 the authors write that:

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.

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

The claim that the copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* is missing are completely without foundation. An imperfect copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* formed part of 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>.

Moreover a facsimile of the copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* in question, 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 copy of Leicester's Commonwealth in the Lincolnshire Archives, 1 Worsley 47, is the 'missing' copy of Leicester's Commonwealth which once formed part of the Northumberland manuscript.

There is no evidence of this. The Lincolnshire Archives makes no such claim. Moreover the imperfect copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* which once formed part of the Northumberland manuscript is still with it (see above).

References:

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

(2) Entry for 1 Worsley 47 in the National Archives online catalogue:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/7a27a59e-0fa8-4459-9f5d-811121936914>.

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

There is no evidence of this. The Lincolnshire Archives makes no such claim.

References:

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

(2) Entry for 1 Worsley 47 in the National Archives online catalogue:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/7a27a59e-0fa8-4459-9f5d-811121936914>.

MYTH: *The copy of Leicester's Commonwealth in the Lincolnshire Archives, 1 Worsley 47, is in the handwriting of Sir Henry Neville.*

There is no evidence of this. The Lincolnshire Archives makes no such claim.

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) Entry for 1 Worsley 47 in the National Archives online catalogue:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/7a27a59e-0fa8-4459-9f5d-811121936914>.

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).

References:

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

(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.

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 such claim. Moreover the Tower Notebook is not in Sir Henry Neville's handwriting.

References:

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

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

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

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.

This claim is without foundation. Because the Tower Notebook is concerned solely with sergeancies, i.e. feudal tenures held on condition that personal services would be rendered

to the monarch, there is no relationship 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.

References:

(1) *Oxford English Dictionary*: Sergeanty: 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.

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.

This claim is without foundation. 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 was a fat man, like Sir John Falstaff, and was known to his friends, including Southampton, as 'Falstaff'.

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), 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.

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.
- (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.

(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.

(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.

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) Entry for Thomas Vicars in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

(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.