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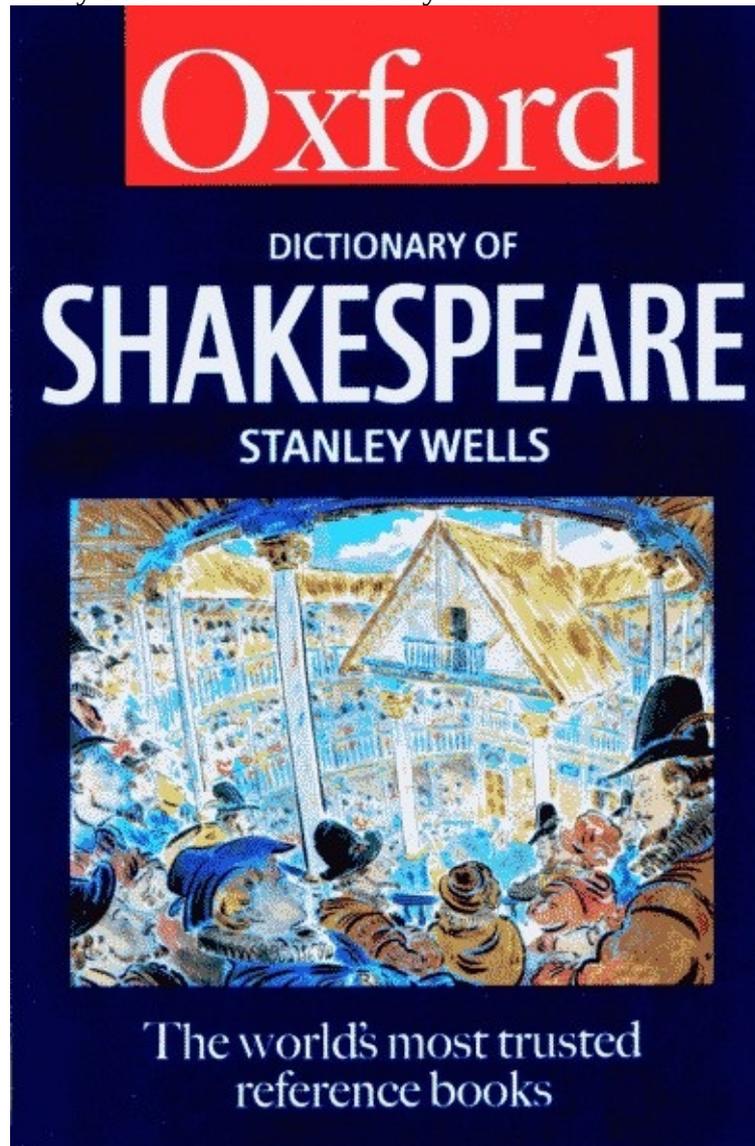
DICTIONARY OF

# SHAKESPEARE

STANLEY WELLS



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EN Oxford University Press Oxford University Press  
A Dictionary of Shakespeare

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## A

### act-and-scene divisions

None of the [quarto](#) editions of Shakespeare's plays issued before the [First Folio](#) appeared, in 1623, is divided into scenes, and only one, [Othello](#), printed in 1622, is divided into acts.

In the Folio, six plays are undivided; [Hamlet](#) is only partially divided; eleven plays are divided into acts only; the remaining eighteen are divided into acts and scenes. Some of the divided plays are ones which had been printed without divisions in quarto.

For most of its career, Shakespeare's company seems not to have observed act-breaks, though they may have been introduced after the acquisition of the [Blackfriars Theatre](#). Evidence such as the placing of the [Choruses](#) in [Henry V](#) and [Pericles](#) shows that Shakespeare was conscious of the conventional five-act structure.

The divisions marked in modern editions are basically those established by the early eighteenth-century editors, Nicholas [Rowe](#) and Alexander [Pope](#).

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### ACTER (A Center for Theater, Education and Research)

Founded in 1967 by Homer Swander , producing small-scale productions, often featuring [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) actors, touring throughout the USA.

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### actresses

No professional actresses appeared on the English stage until after the Restoration, in 1660. Female roles in Shakespeare's plays were written for male actors, usually, if not invariably, boys. (See [BOY ACTORS](#).)

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### Admiral's Men

A theatre company, known first as Lord Howard's Men, under the patronage from 1576/7 to 1603 of Charles, Lord Howard , first Earl of Nottingham, who became Lord High Admiral in 1585. On [James I's](#) accession, they became Prince Henry's Men (1603–12), and after that the Elector Palatine's, or Palsgrave's, Men (1613–25).

They were the main rivals to Shakespeare's company, the [Lord Chamberlain's \(later King's\) Men](#). From about 1589, perhaps earlier, to 1597, and 1600 to 1605, their leading actor was Edward [Alleyn](#), Richard [Burbage's](#) chief rival. Their principal financier was Philip [Henslowe](#), who owned the Rose Theatre, built in 1587, where the company mainly played from 1594 till they moved to his [Fortune Theatre](#) in 1600. This burned down in 1621. The company, greatly harmed, survived only till 1625.

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### advice to the Players, Hamlet's

Hamlet's speeches to the actors, III. ii. 1–45.

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### Age of Kings, An

A BBC television serial based on Shakespeare's English history plays ( see

[HISTORIES](#)), directed by Peter Dews , and transmitted in 1961.

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### **Aldridge , Ira**

(c. 1807–67)

The USA's first prominent black actor: he achieved international success, being acclaimed as the 'African Roscius'. He excelled as Othello, Aaron, Richard III, King Lear, and Macbeth.

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### **Alexander , Bill**

(1948–)

British director, whose productions with the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) 1980–92 include [Henry IV](#), Parts 1 and 2 (1980), [Richard III](#) (1984), [The Merry Wives of Windsor](#) (1985), [A Midsummer Night's Dream](#) (1986), [Twelfth Night](#), [The Merchant of Venice](#), [Cymbeline](#) (1987), [Much Ado About Nothing](#) (1990), [The Taming of the Shrew](#) (1992). After a short period of working in the USA, he became artistic director of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre in 1992, where he has directed [Othello](#) (1993), [The Tempest](#) (1994), [Macbeth](#) (1995), and [The Merchant of Venice](#) (1997).

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### **Alexander , Peter**

(1894–1969)

British scholar whose edition of Shakespeare appeared in 1951.

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### **Alleyn , Edward**

(1566–1626)

Leading actor of the [Admiral's Men](#) and founder of Dulwich College. He was famous particularly as [Marlowe's](#) Faustus, Tamburlaine, and Barabas. He retired from 1597 to 1600, then returned to the stage till 1605, after which he continued as theatre manager. He was married first to Philip [Henslowe's](#) stepdaughter, Joan, then (in 1623) to John Donne's daughter, Constance.

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### **All for Love**

See [DRYDEN , JOHN](#); [ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA](#).

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### **All is True (Henry VIII)**

This play was first published in the [First Folio](#) (1623). It is generally, though not unanimously, believed that Shakespeare collaborated in its composition with John [Fletcher](#). There is no external evidence about this. The [Globe Theatre](#) burned down during one of the early performances of the play, on 29 June 1613. The event was described in a letter by Sir Henry [Wotton](#), who refers to the play as *All is True*. His account, along with those of the other contemporary writers, names the play *All is True*. The title *Henry VIII* probably derives from the editors of the First Folio. The main source is [Holinshed's Chronicles](#), supplemented by [Halle's Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York](#).

The second recorded performance was given at the second Globe Theatre on 29 July 1628, at the request of the then Duke of Buckingham, who left after the Buckingham of the play went to his execution.

After the Restoration, Thomas [Betterton](#) played the King, giving the role up only in 1709, the year before he died. The play was frequently revived during the eighteenth century. A [Drury Lane](#) production of 1727 celebrated George II's coronation with an elaborate procession which was repeated for many years afterwards. John Philip [Kemble](#) revived the play at [Drury Lane](#) in 1788 with Sarah [Siddons](#) as Queen Katherine, a role in which she excelled and continued to appear till 1816. Kemble frequently played Wolsey, as, later, did W. C. [Macready](#), Samuel [Phelps](#), and, in 1855, Charles [Kean](#) in his own spectacular production at the Princess's, with a real barge and an elaborate panoramic view of London. Henry [Irving](#) also played Wolsey, with Ellen [Terry](#) as Katherine, in 1892.

Nineteenth-century productions generally cut the play heavily, especially in the last two acts. Beerbohm [Tree](#) acted Wolsey in 1910. Since then, less emphasis has been placed on this character. Sybil [Thorndike](#) excelled as Katherine at the Empire in 1925. Tyrone [Guthrie](#) directed the play at [Sadler's Wells](#) in 1933, with Charles Laughton as Henry, in 1949 at Stratford-upon-Avon, with Anthony [Quayle](#) as Henry, and in 1951 at the [Old Vic](#), in honour of the coronation of Elizabeth II. Michael [Benthall's](#) Old Vic production in 1958 had John [Gielgud](#) as Wolsey and Edith [Evans](#) as Katherine. The Stratford-upon-Avon productions of 1969, directed by Trevor [Nunn](#) (with Donald [Sinden](#) as Henry and Peggy [Ashcroft](#) as Katherine), and 1983, directed by Howard Davies, were both influenced by Brechtian staging methods. There was a lavish restaging by Ian Judge (Chichester, 1991), and a strong revival by Greg Doran at the [Swan, Stratford-upon-Avon](#) (1996).

*All is True* is not one of Shakespeare's most popular plays, but its fine acting roles and opportunities for spectacle have kept it alive in the theatre.

Jane Austen (1775–1815): Henry Crawford and Edmund Tilney discuss Henry the Eighth; from *Mansfield Park* (1814)

*'That play must be a favourite with you, 'said he; 'you read as if you knew it well.'*

*'It will be a favourite, I believe, from this hour,' replied Crawford; 'but I do not think I have had a volume of Shakespeare in my hand before since I was fifteen. I once saw Henry the Eighth acted,—or I have heard of it from somebody who did—I am not certain which. But Shakespeare one gets acquainted with without knowing how. It is a part of an Englishman's constitution. His thoughts and beauties are so spread abroad that one touches them everywhere; one is intimate with him by instinct. No man of any brain can open at a good part of one of his plays without falling into the flow of his meaning immediately.'*

*'No doubt one is familiar with Shakespeare in a degree,' said Edmund, 'from one's earliest years. His celebrated passages are quoted by everybody: they are in half the books we open, and we all talk Shakespeare, use his similes, and describe with his descriptions; but this is totally distinct from giving his sense as you gave it. To know him in bits and scraps is common enough; to know him pretty thoroughly is, perhaps, not uncommon; but to read him well aloud is no everyday talent.'*

*'Sir, you do me honour,' was Crawford's answer, with a bow of mock gravity.*

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### **All's Well that Ends Well**

Shakespeare's comedy was first printed in the [First Folio](#) (1623). Though it was not directly mentioned by Francis [Meres](#) in 1598, it has sometimes been identified with his

[Love's Labour's Won](#), but resemblances to [Measure for Measure](#) cause it most often to be dated 1602–3. It is based on a story from [Boccaccio's Decameron](#), probably in [Painter's](#) translation.

It has never been a favourite with audiences. Its first recorded performance is in 1741. Subsequent performances tended to emphasize the role of Parolles (or Paroles). J. P. [Kemble](#) tried, with little success, to restore the balance of the play at [Drury Lane](#) in 1794. A musical version was played at [Covent Garden](#) in 1832, and Samuel [Phelps](#) presented the original at [Sadler's Wells](#) in 1852. Barry [Jackson](#) produced a modern-dress version at Birmingham Repertory Theatre in 1927, with the young Laurence [Olivier](#) as Parolles. Tyrone [Guthrie](#) directed a brilliant, if eccentric, production at [Stratford](#), Ontario, in 1957; this was repeated in 1959 at Stratford-upon-Avon, where in 1981 Trevor [Nunn](#) directed a highly successful version in an Edwardian setting and, in 1992, Peter Hall chose the play for his return to the RSC after a twenty-five-year break ( [Swan Theatre](#)). Elijah Moshinsky's production for the [BBC television series](#) was also much admired.

*All's Well that Ends Well* has perhaps suffered by being labelled, since about 1900, a [problem play](#). It has excellent acting roles, good comedy, and fine, if rarefied, poetry.

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### Animated Shakespeare

Thirty-minute adaptations by Leon Garfield preserving Shakespeare's lines in abbreviated form, and using a variety of animation techniques. The project was run by S4C and the Russian State Animation Studio and was first screened in 1992. It has been much used in schools.

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### Anne Hathaway's Cottage

See [HATHAWAY, ANNE](#). The house was bought by the [Shakespeare Birthplace Trust](#) in 1892, and is maintained as a showplace.

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### Antony and Cleopatra

Shakespeare's Roman tragedy was first printed in the [First Folio](#) (1623). It had been entered in the [Stationers' Register](#) in 1608, and is usually dated 1606–7. The main source is [Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans](#). Shakespeare's wording is often close to [North's](#) translation. No early performance is recorded.

[Dryden](#) treated the subject in his *All for Love* (1678), with some debt to Shakespeare, and this probably had the effect of keeping Shakespeare's play off the stage. David [Garrick](#) revived it in a version prepared by Edward [Capell](#), in 1759, without success. J. P. [Kemble's](#) acting version of 1813 incorporated passages from *All for Love*. It too failed, as did W. C. [Macready's](#) performances in 1833. The play had little success generally on the nineteenth-century stage.

Beerbohm [Tree](#) presented a spectacular revival in 1906. Robert [Atkins's Old Vic](#) production of 1922 successfully abandoned realistic settings in favour of a bare stage. The play has continued to prove intractable, though Stratford-upon-Avon productions by Glen Byam [Shaw](#) (1953) with Michael [Redgrave](#) and Peggy [Ashcroft](#), by Trevor [Nunn](#) (1972) with Richard Johnson and Janet [Suzman](#), and the St James's, London, production (1951) with Laurence [Olivier](#) and Vivien Leigh, have enjoyed some success, as did a New York production of 1947 with Godfrey Tearle and Katharine

Cornell. Helen [Mirren](#) was a fine Cleopatra in Adrian [Noble's](#) production at The [Other Place](#) in 1982. Peter [Hall](#) directed Judi [Dench](#) and Anthony Hopkins at the [National Theatre](#) in 1987 and Richard Johnson took the lead again in 1992 in John [Caird's](#) production at Stratford-upon-Avon.

The fact that the play lags behind the 'great' tragedies in theatrical popularity may be attributed to its structural peculiarities, to the difficulty experienced by directors in finding a workable style for its presentation, and to challenges posed by the role of Cleopatra. Critically, it has aroused much interest, and it contains some of Shakespeare's greatest dramatic poetry, along with some of his most fascinating touches of characterization.

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### Apocryphal works

A number of works attributed to Shakespeare in his own time and later are now not generally accepted as his. These include six plays added to the second issue (1664) of the [Third Folio](#): *The [London Prodigal](#), [Thomas, Lord Cromwell](#), [Sir John Oldcastle](#), [The Puritan](#), [A Yorkshire Tragedy](#), and [Lochrine](#)*. Other plays attributed to Shakespeare in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries include *The Birth of Merlin*, *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, *Mucedorus*, *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, *Fair Em*, and *Arden of Faversham*. More recently, claims have been made for the lyric '[Shall I die?](#)', the manuscript play *Edmund Ironside*, and 'A [Funeral Elegy](#).' It has been long believed that passages in the manuscript play *Sir Thomas More* are by Shakespeare and certain scenes in *Edward III* have often been attributed to him; more recently the whole of the latter play has been claimed as his. It is printed in the New [Riverside edition](#) (1997) and is to appear in the [New Cambridge](#) series.

Performances of the apocryphal plays are rare, but *Arden of Faversham* has been successfully staged, notably in Terry [Hands's](#) production of 1982, and is the subject of an opera (*Arden Muss Sterben – Arden Must Die*, 1967) by Alexander Goehr .

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### Apollonius of Tyre

The hero of a romantic tale, well-known in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, and often retold. Shakespeare uses it in the framework of *The [Comedy of Errors](#)* and as the main tale of [Pericles](#).

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### Arcadia, The

A lengthy prose romance by Sir Philip [Sidney](#), based on Greek romances. It exists in two forms: the 'old' *Arcadia*, and an incompleted revision, the 'New' *Arcadia*. Shakespeare drew on it for the Gloucester sub-plot of [King Lear](#).

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### Arden edition

A multi-volume edition of Shakespeare which first appeared under the General Editorship of W. J. Craig , from 1891 to 1906, then of R. H. Case , from 1906 to 1924. A plan to revise the original volumes was soon scrapped in favour of entirely new editions which began to appear in 1951 under the General Editorship of Una Ellis-Fermor , succeeded in 1958 by Harold F. Brooks and Harold Jenkins , later joined by Brian Morris and Richard Proudfoot . This series, unofficially known as the New Arden, included some distinguished and highly influential volumes such as *Macbeth*

and *King Lear* edited by Kenneth [Muir](#), *Hamlet* edited by Jenkins, and *Coriolanus* edited by Philip Brockbank . A new series, known as Arden 3, began to appear in 1995 under the General Editorship of Proudfoot, Ann Thompson , and David Scott Kastan . Each volume of all the series has full scholarly apparatus, including an extended introduction, collations, detailed annotations, and reprints of source material.

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### **Arden , Mary**

(d. 1608)

Youngest daughter of Robert Arden of Wilmcote near Stratford-upon-Avon; married Shakespeare's father, [John](#), about 1557. See [MARY ARDEN'S HOUSE](#).

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### **Armin , Robert**

(c. 1568–1615)

An actor and writer who seems to have joined Shakespeare's company, the [Lord Chamberlain's Men](#), by 1599. The author of a book called *Foole upon Foole* (1600), he specialized in comic roles, and may have succeeded Will [Kemp](#). No Shakespearian roles can certainly be assigned to him, but it seems likely that he played Dogberry, Touchstone, Feste, and Lear's Fool.

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### **arms, Shakespeare's**

Shakespeare's father approached the Heralds' Office about a coat of arms shortly after becoming bailiff of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1568, but did not proceed far. He (or perhaps his son on his behalf) renewed the application in 1596. Sir William Dethick , Garter King-of-Arms, granted the request. Two rough drafts survive.

The shield was to be 'gold on a bend sables, a spear of the first steeled argent, and for his crest or cognizance a falcon, his wings displayed argent, standing on a wreath of his colours, supporting a spear gold, steeled as aforesaid, set upon a helmet with mantles and tassels as hath been accustomed and doth more plainly appear depicted on this margin'.

A rough sketch of the shield and crest appears on both drafts. The motto, which Shakespeare is not known to have used, is 'Non Sans Droit'—'Not Without Right'. The grant of arms gave to John [Shakespeare](#) and his family the status of gentlefolk.

In 1599, John Shakespeare applied for the right to impale his arms with those of his wife's family, the Ardens, but this seems not to have been allowed. His right to arms was challenged in 1602, but the official reply was that he was 'a magistrate in Stratford-upon-Avon. A Justice of Peace, he married a daughter and heir of Arden, and was of good substance and habilitie.'

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### **Arne , Thomas**

(1710–78)

Composer of delightful settings of songs from several of Shakespeare's plays, and of the music for [Garrick's](#) Ode for the Jubilee of 1769.

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### **arras**

A curtain or wall-hanging which appears to have been used on the Elizabethan stage, as for the eavesdropping Polonius ( [Hamlet](#), III. i), and the snoring Falstaff ( [1 Henry](#)

[IV](#), II. iv).

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### Ashcroft , Dame Peggy

(1907–91)

British actress who had a strong influence on company approach to theatre, notably with the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) which she joined at its inception in 1960. Her many roles included Margaret of Anjou in the 1963 [Wars of the Roses](#), which involved ageing sixty years and earned a major revaluation of the role. Other roles included Desdemona (Savoy, 1930, with Paul Robeson ), Imogen ( [Old Vic](#), 1932, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1957), Juliet (Old Vic, 1932, New Theatre, with Laurence [Olivier](#) and John [Gielgud](#), changing roles in mid-run, as Romeo and Mercutio), Portia (Queen's, 1935, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1953), Viola (Phoenix, 1938 and Old Vic, 1950), Ophelia ( [Haymarket](#), with Gielgud, 1944), and (all at Stratford-upon-Avon) Beatrice (1950, etc.), Cordelia (1950), Cleopatra (with Michael [Redgrave](#), 1953), Rosalind (1957), Katherina (1960), Paulina (1960), Queen Katherine (1969); and the Countess in [All's Well that Ends Well](#) (1981).

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### Ashland , Oregon

See [OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL](#).

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### As You Like It

Shakespeare's pastoral comedy, first printed in the [First Folio](#) (1623), is first heard of in the [Stationers' Register](#) in 1600, and was probably written not long before. It is based directly on Thomas [Lodge's](#) prose romance *Rosalynde*, first printed in 1590. Shakespeare adapted the story and added the characters of Jaques, Touchstone, Audrey, William, and Sir Oliver Martext.

No early performances are certainly recorded. In 1723 parts of the play were used in an odd compilation by Charles Johnson , *Love in a Forest*, which also draws on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and other plays. Shakespeare's play was revived in 1740 by Charles [Macklin](#), with songs by Thomas [Arne](#). Since then it has been regularly performed, usually in picturesque settings, and often during the past hundred years in the open air. Many leading actresses, including Dorothea [Jordan](#), Ada [Rehan](#), Mary Anderson , Edith [Evans](#), Peggy [Ashcroft](#), Margaret Leighton , Vanessa [Redgrave](#), and Juliet [Stevenson](#) have excelled in the demanding role of Rosalind. In 1967 Clifford Williams directed an all-male version with the [National Theatre company](#) at the Old Vic, a concept repeated with great success by [Cheek by Jowl](#) (1991, 1994). The play was filmed in 1992 by Christine Edzard , who chose an inner-city wasteland to represent the forest.

*As You Like It* is a play in which ideas are never far below the surface. It portrays contrasting attitudes to life, using an original technique of tolerant juxtaposition rather than presentation by intrigue or argument. The style of both its verse and its prose is exceptionally limpid and unforced, and though Rosalind is the dominating character, other roles, especially Jaques, Touchstone, Audrey, Corin, and William, offer opportunities for creative acting.

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### Atkins , Robert

(1886–1972)

English actor and director much associated with Shakespeare's plays at the [Old Vic](#), Stratford-upon-Avon, the [Regent's Park Open-Air Theatre](#), and elsewhere.

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## **Aubrey , John**

(1626–97)

His posthumously published *Brief Lives* include gossip about Shakespeare, some of it from William Beeston , son of Christopher, a member of Shakespeare's company. He describes Shakespeare as ‘a handsome, well-shaped man: very good company, and of a very ready and pleasant smooth wit’, and says that he was ‘the more to be admired [because] he was not a company keeper ... wouldn’t be debauched, and if invited to, writ he was in pain.’ From him comes the statement that Shakespeare ‘had been in his younger years a schoolmaster in the country’, as well as the suggestion that William [Davenant](#) was Shakespeare's natural son.

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## **authorship**

The first suggestion that Shakespeare did not write the plays attributed to him appears to have been made by the Revd James Wilmot , who ascribed them to Francis Bacon around 1785. He did not publish his conclusion. The next appearance of the idea is in a book called *The Romance of Yachting*, published in 1848 by an eccentric New York lawyer, Colonel Joseph C. Hart . He was influenced by a denigratory life of Shakespeare in Dionysius Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopaedia*, which found that the plays ‘absolutely teem with the grossest impurities,—more gross by far than can be found in any contemporary dramatist.’ Hart fantasized that Shakespeare ‘purchased or obtained surreptitiously’ other men's plays which he then ‘spiced with obscenity, blackguardism and impurities’. He did not identify the original author.

The first extended attempt to prove Bacon's authorship was in an article by Delia Bacon , also an American, published in 1856. Later that year she spent a night in [Holy Trinity Church](#) with the intention of opening Shakespeare's grave, but abandoned the plan. Her theory was elaborated in her book *The Philosophy of the Plays of Shakespeare Unfolded* (1857).

The ‘anti-Stratfordian’ movement, as it has come to be called, developed. An English Bacon Society, producing a periodical, was founded in 1885, and an American Society followed in 1892. Much intellectual effort and learning have been expended in the attempt to find cryptograms and other clues to authorship in the texts and other places, such as the [Droeshout](#) engraving. The movement has had some distinguished adherents, including Mark Twain and Sigmund [Freud](#).

In more recent years splinter groups have attempted to replace Shakespeare with many different names, including those of the Earl of Derby, the [Earl of Essex](#), Queen [Elizabeth](#), Christopher [Marlowe](#), the Earl of [Oxford](#), and the Earl of [Rutland](#). An excellent account of the whole topic is given in Part Six of S. [Schoenbaum's Shakespeare's Lives](#) (1970, revised 1991).

All alternative claims depend on conspiracy theory: that, for example, Marlowe's death—one of the best authenticated episodes in literary history—was a cover-up, and that he lived on writing plays for another twenty years, otherwise leaving no trace of his previously colourful personality, and generously giving credit for his work to

Shakespeare (whose supposedly early works have to be redated), and that Shakespeare co-operated in the conspiracy by pretending to be the author of works he had not written, and by somehow concealing their authorship from all his theatrical and literary colleagues, and from those who published them.

Evidence that the plays were written by someone called William Shakespeare (occasionally in collaboration with, for example, John [Fletcher](#)) abounds, occurring in title-pages, in printed tributes and allusions, in manuscripts not intended for publication, and elsewhere. Evidence that the Shakespeare who wrote the works was the Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon includes the references in his will to [Heminges](#) and [Condell](#), who were closely involved with the publication of the First Folio; the inscriptions on Shakespeare of Stratford's [monument](#), one in Latin comparing him to great figures of antiquity, the other in English specifically praising him as a writer; Ben [Jonson's](#) verses in the First Folio calling him 'sweet Swan of Avon'; and the lines in the same volume by Leonard [Digges](#) referring to his 'Stratford monument'.

Evidence for authorship may be both external or internal. External evidence is not completely reliable. Both *A Yorkshire Tragedy* and *The London Prodigal* were clearly attributed to Shakespeare on the title-pages of their first publication and on their reprinting in 1619, but this evidence is generally discredited, helped by the fact that they were not included in the First Folio. Internal evidence based on stylistic analysis, aided in recent times by computerization, has had limited success. There is fairly general agreement about the passages in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* and *All is True (Henry VIII)* for which Shakespeare and Fletcher respectively were primarily responsible, but elaborate stylistic tests on *Edward III* and 'A [Funeral Elegy](#)' have not won general assent.

Attempts to discredit Shakespeare's authorship seem to be based mainly on snobbery—the idea that a man of relatively humble origins without a university education could have written works of genius; or on the desire for notoriety; or on mere folly.

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### **Bacon , Delia**

See [AUTHORSHIP](#).

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### **Bacon , Francis**

See [AUTHORSHIP](#).

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### **bad quarto**

A technical term devised by the bibliographer A. W. Pollard to refer to certain early texts of Shakespeare's plays which he believed were not printed from an authoritative manuscript. These include the first [quartos](#) of *Romeo and Juliet* (1597), *Henry V* (1600), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602), and *Hamlet* (1603). The theory, forwarded by Pollard, that all these texts were reconstructed from memory by some of the actors is now under attack. Alternative theories are that some or all of them are early versions by Shakespeare, or abbreviations made either for Shakespeare's company or for other companies. There are two new editions including reprints of the early quartos, *New Cambridge Shakespeare: the Early Quartos* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), and *Shakespearean Originals: First Editions* (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992). Though they have no textual authority they may assist in the effort to establish a true text, especially in their [stage directions](#) which sometimes give us our only evidence as to pieces of stage business.

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### **Balakirev , MilyAlexeievich**

(1837–1910)

The Russian composer wrote an overture (1859) *King Lear* and published an extended suite of incidental music for the play in 1904.

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### **baptism, Shakespeare's**

The baptism of 'Gulielmus filius Johannes Shaksper' is recorded in the Stratford-upon-Avon Parish Register on 26 April 1564. The register, a transcript dated 1600, is now in the custody of the [Shakespeare Birthplace Trust](#).

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### **Barker , Harley Granville**

See [GRANVILLE-BARKER , HARLEY](#).

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### **Barry , Elizabeth**

(c. 1658–1713)

English actress, mistress of the Earl of Rochester; she acted with Thomas [Betterton](#), and played Cordelia in Nahum [Tate's](#) version of *King Lear*, Mrs Ford in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Queen Katherine in *Henry VIII*, and Lady Macbeth. *Ham.* To be, or not to be, I there's the point,

To Die, to fleepe, is that all? I all:  
No, to fleepe, to dreame, I mary there it goes,  
For in that dreame of death, when wee awake,  
And borne before an euerlafting Judge,  
From whence no paffenger euer retur nd,  
The vndifcouered country, at whole fight  
The happy fmile, and the accurfed damn'd.  
But for this, the joyfull hope of this,  
Whol'd beare the fcornes and flattery of the world,  
Scorned by the right rich, the rich curfled of the poore?  
The

#### *Prince of Denmarke*

The widow being opprefled, the orphan Wrong d,  
The taft of hunger, or a tirants raigne,  
And thoufand more calamities beides,  
To grunt and fweate vnder this weary life,  
When that he may his full *quietus* make,  
With a bare bodkin, who would this indure,  
But for a hope offomething after death?  
Which puffes the braine, and doth confound the fence,  
Which makes vs rather beare thofe euilles we haue,  
Than flie to others that we know not of.  
I that, O this confcience makes cowardes of vs all,  
Lady in thy orizons, be all my finnes remembred.  
Hamlet's 'To be or not to be ...' as it appeared in the 'bad quarto' of 1603.

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### **Barry , Spranger**

(1717?–77)

Irish actor, chief rival of David [Garrick](#), with whom he acted in his later years; most successful as Romeo, Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, Lear, and Richard III. A female admirer, comparing him with Garrick as Romeo, said, 'Had I been Juliet to Garrick's Romeo-so ardent and impassioned was he, I should have expected he would have *come up* to me in the balcony; but had I been Juliet to Barry's Romeo-so tender, so eloquent, and so seductive was he, I should certainly have *gone down* to him!' In Lear, however, Barry was said to be 'every inch a King', but Garrick 'every inch King Lear!'

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### **Bartlett , John**

(1820–1905)

American compiler of a *Complete Concordance to Shakespeare's Dramatic Works and Poems*, published in 1894, standard until the publication of [Spevack's](#) more truly 'complete' work.

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### **Barton , John**

Associate director of the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) 1964–91, and advisory director 1991–, whose work includes distinguished productions of *The [Taming of the Shrew](#)*

(1960), [Love's Labour's Lost](#) (1965 and 1978), [All's Well that Ends Well](#) (1967), [Coriolanus](#) (1967), [Troilus and Cressida](#) (1968, 1976), [Twelfth Night](#) (1969), [Measure for Measure](#) (1970), [Othello](#) (1971) and [Much Ado About Nothing](#) (1976), and [The Merchant of Venice](#) (1978 and 1981). He adapted the texts of the early history plays to make [The Wars of the Roses](#) (1963 etc.), which he directed with Peter [Hall](#), and also adapted [King John](#) (1974). In 1992 he directed [Measure for Measure](#) and [As You Like It](#) at National Theatret, Oslo. His television series [Playing Shakespeare](#), and book of the same name, appeared in 1984.

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### **Basse , William**

(1583?–1653?)

English poet, author of a manuscript sonnet-epitaph on Shakespeare written before 1623, beginning:. Renowned Spenser, lie a thought more nigh  
To learned Chaucer, and rare Beaumont, lie  
A little nearer Spenser to make room  
For Shakespeare in your three-fold, four-fold tomb.

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### **Baylis , Lilian**

(1874–1937)

See [OLD VIC](#).

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### **BBC Television Shakespeare**

In 1978 the BBC, which had sporadically televised a number of Shakespeare's plays, embarked on a plan to produce all of them at the rate of about six a year. Cedric Messina was originally in charge of the project; Jonathan [Miller](#) took over after two years, to be succeeded by Shaun Sutton . Directors include Miller himself, Elijah Moshinsky , Jane Howell , David Jones , etc. Some cuts are made ( [The Taming of the Shrew](#) loses the Christopher Sly scenes), though the early histories, for example, are given in exceptionally full texts. The costumes are mostly of Shakespeare's time or of the historical period represented, and settings are generally representational. They include distinguished performances by e.g. John [Gielgud](#), Celia Johnson , Claire Bloom , Derek [Jacobi](#), Richard [Pasco](#), Helen [Mirren](#), Michael Hordern , and others, sometimes repeating roles they have played on stage. Production styles have been criticized as unadventurous; some of the less popular plays (e.g. [All's Well that Ends Well](#), [Henry VIII](#)) have succeeded best. The series was completed in 1985 with [Titus Andronicus](#) and has had an international distribution. An account of the venture is provided by [The BBC Shakespeare Plays: Making the Televised Canon](#) (1991) by Susan Willis . Plays have subsequently been commissioned and filmed by the BBC, e.g. [Measure for Measure](#) (1994), [Henry IV](#) (1995, and the Bard on the Box season of programmes in 1995 included documentaries, workshops, and performances.

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### **bear**

One of the more surprising stage directions in Shakespeare occurs in [The Winter's Tale](#), III. iii. 59, when Antigonus is required to 'Exit, pursued by a bear', which devours him.

## Beaumont , Francis

(c.1584–1616)

English dramatist, collaborator with John [Fletcher](#) and author of independent plays. *The Woman Hater* (c. 1606) quotes a phrase from [Hamlet](#) in a comic context, and in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (c.1607) are lines which appear to be an early allusion to [Macbeth](#). They are spoken by Jasper ‘with his face, mealed’, and evidently refer to the appearance of Banquo's ghost, and to record a piece of stage business—the dropping of the cup—used by many later actors. They are: When thou art at thy table with thy friends,

Merry in heart, and filled with swelling wine,

I'll come in midst of all thy pride and mirth,

Invisible to all men but thyself,

And whisper such a sad tale in thine ear

Shall make thee let the cup fall from thy hand,

And stand as mute and pale as death itself. (v.i. 26–32)

## bed-trick

The deceptive substitution of one woman in a man's bed for another, a common motif of romance literature, used by Shakespeare in both [All's Well that Ends Well](#) and [Measure for Measure](#).

## Beerbohm , Max

(1872–1956)

English satirical writer and artist who reviewed many productions of Shakespeare's plays (see Stanley Wells, ‘Shakespeare in Max Beerbohm's Theatre Criticism’, [Shakespeare Survey](#) 29 , 1976, and drew several cartoons featuring Shakespeare, including one alluding to the [authorship](#) controversy.

## van Beethoven , Ludwig

(1770–1827)

Beethoven's overture *Coriolan* (1807) was written for a play ‘after Shakespeare’ by a Viennese playwright, H. Collin , but he may have had Shakespeare's play in mind. The slow movement of his first string quartet, Opus 18 No. 1, is said to have been inspired by the last scene of [Romeo and Juliet](#), and when asked the meaning of the first movement of his piano sonata in D minor, Opus 31 No. 2, he replied ‘Read Shakespeare's *The Tempest*’.

## Bell , John

(1745–1831)

A London publisher who brought out an edition of Shakespeare's plays (printed 1773–5) based on the prompt-books of the Theatres Royal, edited and introduced by Francis [Gentleman](#), which is invaluable to the theatre historian. The plays not in the theatres’ repertoires are also printed, in complete texts with Gentleman's suggestions for omissions. The edition is accompanied with two plates for each play, one illustrating

an actor as one of the characters, the other portraying a scene from the play. The plates were published separately, and are not necessarily included in sets of the plays. Bell also published a conventional edition, based on the text of Samuel [Johnson](#) and George [Steevens](#), in 1788.

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### **Belleforest , François de**

(1530–83)

French writer; his continuation of Pierre Boaistuau's translation of Matteo Bandello's *Novelle*, as *Histoires Tragiques* (1559–82), includes a version of a legend from [Saxo Grammaticus](#) which influenced [Hamlet](#) (perhaps indirectly), and a story which may have influenced [Much Ado About Nothing](#).

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### **Belott , Stephen**

See [MOUNTJOY , CHRISTOPHER](#).

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### **Benson , Sir Francis (Frank) Robert**

(1858–1939)

Actor-manager whose first appearance was at the [Lyceum](#), in 1882, under Henry [Irving](#). From 1883 to 1919 he managed a company which presented most of Shakespeare's plays, mainly in the English provinces, including Stratford-upon-Avon. He produced the plays singly, with few cuts. He gave a full text of [Hamlet](#) at the Lyceum in 1900. In 1906 his company gave the English history plays (omitting *1 Henry IV*) at Stratford-upon-Avon, where from 1888 to 1919 he managed the Festival. His own best roles included Hamlet, Richard II (finely reviewed by C. E. Montague ), Richard III, Petruchio, and Caliban.

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### **Benson , John**

(d. 1667)

A London publisher who brought out an edition of Shakespeare's *Poems* in 1640. It omits [Venus and Adonis](#) and [The Rape of Lucrece](#) and includes many non-Shakespearian poems along with inauthentic versions of most of the [Sonnets](#).

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### **Benthall , Michael**

(1919–74)

English director who worked at Stratford-upon-Avon (1947–51) and directed the [Old Vic Theatre](#) from 1953 to 1958, during which time all Shakespeare's plays were put on, many of them under the direction of Benthall.

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### **Bergman , Ingmar**

(1918–)

Swedish director who mounted a series of impressive productions at the Royal Dramatic Theatre, Stockholm, including [King Lear](#) (1984), [Twelfth Night](#), [Hamlet](#) (1986), and [The Winter's Tale](#) (1992).

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### **Berlioz , Hector**

(1803–69)

French composer greatly influenced by Shakespeare, especially in his fantasia for chorus and orchestra on *The Tempest* (1830, incorporated into *Lelio*, 1832); his concert overture *King Lear* (1831); his dramatic symphony *Romeo and Juliet* (1839); his choral and orchestral pieces *The Death of Ophelia* (originally for voice and piano) and 'Funeral March for Hamlet' (1848); his comic opera *Beatrice and Benedict* (1862), and, less directly but no less profoundly, his opera *The Trojans* (1858).

Hector Berlioz on the impact of Shakespeare; from his *Memoirs* (1870), translated by David Cairns

*Shakespeare, coming upon me unawares, struck me like a thunderbolt. The lightning flash of that discovery revealed to me at a stroke the whole heaven of art, illuminating it to its remotest corners. I recognized the meaning of grandeur, beauty, dramatic truth, and I could measure the utter absurdity of the French view of Shakespeare which derives from Voltaire: That ape of genius, sent By Satan among men to do his work*

*and the pitiful narrowness of our own worn-out academic, cloistered traditions of poetry. I saw, I understood, I felt... that I was alive and that I must arise and walk...*

*As I came out of Hamlet, shaken to the depths by the experience, I vowed not to expose myself a second time to the flame of Shakespeare's genius.*

*Next day the playbills announced Romeo and Juliet. I had my pass to the pit. But to make doubly sure of getting in, just in case the doorkeeper at the Odéon might have had orders to suspend the free list, I rushed round to the box office the moment I saw the posters and bought a stall. My fate was doubly sealed.*

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### **Bernard , Sir John**

(1605–74)

Second husband of Shakespeare's granddaughter, Elizabeth [Hall](#).

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### **Bernhardt , Sarah**

(1834–1923)

French actress who made an early success as Cordelia in a translation of [King Lear](#), and later played Hamlet. She was 54 at the time. Max [Beerbohm](#), reviewing the performance, wrote, 'Her friends ought to have restrained her. The native critics ought not to have encouraged her. The custom-house officials at Charing Cross ought to have confiscated her sable doublet and hose ... the only compliment one can conscientiously pay her is that her Hamlet was, from first to last, *très grande dame*.'

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### **Bestrafte Brudermord, Der**

See [FRATRICIDE PUNISHED](#).

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### **Betterton , Thomas**

(1635–1710)

The leading actor of the Restoration period, also involved with theatre management. After a short period with Thomas [Killigrew](#) and the King's Men, he joined William [Davenant](#) and the Duke's Men, and in 1661 played Hamlet with them 'beyond imagination', according to [Pepys](#). He went on playing Hamlet until he was over

seventy, and his other Shakespeare roles included Brutus, Macbeth, Mercutio, Sir Toby Belch, Lear, Henry VIII, Othello, and [Falstaff](#).

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### **Betty , Master William**

(1791–1874)

A child prodigy, known as the ‘Young Roscius’, he had a period of sensational popularity from 1803 to 1808, playing Romeo, Hamlet, Richard III, and Macbeth, among other roles. His fame was such that the Prime Minister, William Pitt , adjourned the House of Commons in order to see Betty's performance as Hamlet.

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### **Bevington edition**

A one-volume edition of the Complete Works, with annotations and other editorial material, prepared under the supervision of the American scholar David Bevington. Originally published in 1973 as a revision of an edition by Hardin [Craig](#), it has itself undergone radical revisions in 1980 and 1997.

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### **Bible**

Shakespeare's plays show a familiar acquaintance with both the Geneva Bible (1560) and the Bishops' Bible (1568). The most complete study is Naseem Shaheen's multi-volume study of biblical references in Shakespeare's plays, 1987–.

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### **Birmingham Shakespeare Library**

See [SHAKESPEARE MEMORIAL LIBRARY, BIRMINGHAM](#).

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### **birthday, Shakespeare's**

Shakespeare was baptized on 26 April 1564, probably only a few days after his birth, traditionally celebrated on St George's Day, 23 April, the date of his death. The annual celebrations at Stratford-upon-Avon include a flag-unfurling ceremony, a procession including diplomatic representatives of many nations, a luncheon at which the Immortal Memory of William Shakespeare is toasted by a distinguished speaker, a performance of one of the plays, a church service with a special sermon, and a lecture.

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### **birthplace, Shakespeare's**

When Shakespeare was born, in 1564, his father owned two adjacent houses in Henley Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, and another in Greenhill Street. Legal records show that he was living in Henley Street in 1552 and as late as 1597. There is no reason to suppose that he lived elsewhere during this period, so the Henley Street property is likely to be that in which Shakespeare was born.

When Shakespeare died, his sister, Joan Hart, was living in the western part of the property, and he left her a life-tenancy in it for an annual rent of one shilling. His granddaughter left both houses to Joan's descendants, who lived in the western one and rented the other. They sold the property in 1806, when the western wing became a butcher's shop. The property was bought as a public trust ( see [SHAKESPEARE BIRTHPLACE TRUST](#)) in 1847.

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### **Bishop , Sir Henry Rowley**