

Shakspeare: Seventeenth Century Biographical References to Shakespeare as Author

By *Richard Malim*

The more the period before 1642 is studied – when the theatres were closed, and the Roundhead cultural Taleban enforced its views – the more the conviction grows that the literary and theatrical establishment knew that William Shakspeare of Stratford-upon-Avon had nothing to do with the writing of the plays. By way of example are these lines from Brome’s *Antipodes* in 1638:

I will tell thee that
These lads can act the Emperors’ lives all over
And Shakespeare’s Chronicled histories to boot.
And were that Caesar, or [otherwise] that English earl¹,
That loved a Play and players, now living,
I would not be outvysed in my delight. (Recto C2 ll.32-37).

Then there is Leonard Digges, whose praise of ‘Shake-speare’ is much relied on in ‘orthodox’ circles, and who in 1632 visits Stratford without apparently visiting the Church or its monument and writes to his roommate at Cambridge: “*I could write you mad relations of the Town of Stratford where I was last week, but they are too tedious...*”² Indeed. And though aristocrats who had an interest in the suppression of the real authorship died off, the Roundhead success meant that the true position was effectively concealed.

The Stratfordians, by contrast, have to produce evidence that Shakspeare was well-known as the author, though there are enough subtle and hidden apparent references to sustain at least the argument. Professor Nelson on his website asks us to accept that the clear use by



Harvey, Buc – though disregarding the evidence that Harvey and Buc knew of Oxford and his literary standing – Dyson, Robert Burton and John Rous of the pseudonym William Shakespeare or variants, and all incorporating the first E in the name, are clear evidence that these gentlemen accepted William Shakspeare of Stratford upon Avon as the author, despite the discrepancy between the names and little of biographical significance. While Sir John Harington lists in his library a new copy of the 1608 *King Lear* quarto as “of Shackspear,” the quarto has on its title page the author as “M. William Shak-speare,” the hyphen an indication of a pseudonym, which Harington, as an eminent scholar, would have been aware. Sir William Drummond did attribute *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* to “Shaksp,” but Sir William was miles away from London up in Scotland and may have just been uninformed.

Professor Wells tried to produce some evidence in the recent book *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt*, but even up to 1616, when Shaksper died, he has to admit that there is not one reference to the author which “explicitly and incontrovertibly identifies him with Stratford-upon-Avon.”³ For the later period, i.e. 1616 to 1642, he relies on the *1623 folio* and various memorial odes etc., for which Oxfordians can employ glosses and interpretations to reduce them to the same non-referential level as that for the earlier period, and in certain cases to afford further support for Oxfordian contentions. A full list of the references that we have repeatedly considered is set out in the list of Commendatory poems and Prefaces (1599-1640) in the Wells and Taylor edition of *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (Oxford U.P. 1988):

The Preface to *Troilus and Cressida* 1609: in fact, an Oxfordian piece of evidence. Alexander Waugh suggests that once it is realised that Oxford wrote it himself before it had been performed publicly, this once difficult piece becomes clear;

John Davies: *To Our English Terence, Master Will Shake-speare* (Wells omits the hyphen) 1610: Oxfordians have long recognised that the reference to Terence is a nod to the contemporary belief that Terence was a front for an aristocratic Roman author;

Thomas Freeman: poem 1614 is thought biographically valueless, although it does contain a cut at writers plagiarising from Shakespeare;

The Inscriptions on the Church Monument: not evidence for the deceased's cultural superiority – see Jack Goldstone's essay on the Latin inscription⁴, which is generally far from apposite to the works of Shakespeare, as Nestor, Socrates and Virgil are not particular comparisons with Shakespeare;

William Basse: *On the death of William Shakespeare*, which is biographically valueless but following Jonson's *Ode*, contains a pointer to Oxford as the real author;

Thomas Walkley letter prefacing the 1622 *Othello*, also biographically valueless;

Dedication letters: biographically useless and Graham Holderness has a valuable insight "The prefatory material gathered to open the *First Folio* ... acts in a completely contrary way to anonymise the author of the plays"⁵ for Oxfordians, evidence that he died in harness or unexpectedly as he was unable to be 'executor of his own writings.'

Other References:

Sir William Davenant: *In Remembrance of Master William Shakespeare* 1637. This poem is highly ambiguous, as it warns poets not to "...tread /The banks of Avon" for:

The piteous river wept itself away
 . Long since, alas to such swift decay
 That, reach the map and look
 If you a river there can spy,

And for a river your *mocked eye*
Will find a shallow brook (my italics)

Both **Thomas Fuller** (d.1661) and Milton's nephew Edward Phillips⁷ (in 1675) record Shakespeare's birth in Stratford upon Avon without comment. By the time they wrote the information, it seems to be received and uncritiqued general knowledge.

David Kathman adduces nine items of evidence in his website⁸ connected to Shakespeare's memorial in Stratford church:

The *first* is doggerel referred to by Wells and which forms part of the monument ("Stay, passenger, ..."). The *second* is the even worse doggerel on the grave slab ("Good Friend. For Jesus' sake forbear ...")

The *third* is from a copy of the *1623 Folio*, wherein in the manuscript are these two pieces, accompanied by a third, which is double-edged:

Heere Shakespeare lyes whome none but death could Shake
 And here shall ly till judgment all awake;
 When the last trumpet doth unclose his eyes
 The wittiest poet in the world shall rise.

The last two lines can readily be construed disjunctively from the first two, to refer not to Shakespeare, but to the "*wittiest poet*" and his eyes with everyone else's shall be opened to the truth at the last judgment.

The *fourth* reference is to jest no.259 in *A Banquet of Jestes* (1630):

On travelling through Stratford upon Avon a Towne most remarkeable for the birth of famous William Shakespeare, and walking through the Church to doe his devotion, espied a thing there worthy observation, which was a tombstone laid more that three hundred years agoe, on which was ingrave an Epitaph to this purpose, I Thomas such a one and Elizabeth my wife here under lye buried, and know Reader I.R.C. and I. Christoph. Q. are alive at this houre to witnesse it.

Now this is a jest (“*A Towne most remarkeable ...*”), a leg-pull in the same vein as Digges, and probably did not countenance on his 1632 visit referred to above; however, the three-hundred-year-old tombstone inscription was a “*worthy observation.*”

Chambers (*William Shakespeare* II,242) quotes the *fifth* reference as the visit of a Lt. Hammond of a military company from Norwich in 1634, where he apparently saw “*A neat monument of that famous English poet, Mr. William Shakespeer who born here. And an old Gentleman A Batchelor, Mr. Combe, upon whose name, the sayd poet did merrily fann up some witty, and facetious verses, which time did not give us leave to sacke up.*” The military man to whom no further reference is known, let alone any academic achievement, was easily entertained by old Mr. Combe, who no doubt had his tongue in his cheek. Alexander Waugh points out the reference comes from a late seventeenth century manuscript purporting to copy an earlier record and must be suspect. Nina Greene’s investigations seem to show there was no member of the Combe family who was an old bachelor in 1634.

Next is the *sixth* reference, and Kathman quotes from a poem to Dugdale, the Warwickshire archivist and historian, by Sir Aston Cokain dated 1658, by which time that older generation of scholars was thin on the ground:

Now Stratford upon Avon, we would choose
 Thy gentle and ingenious Shakespeare Muse,
 (were he among the living yet) to raise
 T’ our Antiquary’s merit some just praise ...

Thin stuff I suggest as biographical evidence, and likewise this poem of limited (and again, questionable and even ambiguous) biographical value, which does provide some link with *The Taming of the Shrew*:

Shakspeare (sic) you Wincot – Ale hath much renown
 That foxed a beggar so (by chance was found
 Sleeping) that there needed not many a word

To make him believe he was a lord
 But you affirm (and in it seem most eager)
 "I will make A Lord as drunk as any Beggar
 But Norton brew such ale as Shakspeare fancies
 Did put Kit Sly into such Lordly trances;
 And let us meet there (for a fit of gladness)
 And drink ourselves merry in sober sadness.

For his *seventh*, Kathman also quotes the record in 1693 of a visitor who saw "the effigies of our English tragedian mr. Shakespeare." With that late date, Kathman must be scraping hard at the bottom of a very empty barrel.

I have left the final two more serious references to last:

Kathman's reference to Dugdale represents a stronger challenge. In 1634 it is said William Dugdale made a sketch of the memorial in Stratford upon Avon Church and this was substantially copied by Wenceslas Hollar whose engraving appears in Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire* 1656.⁹ Curiously, the actual representation gives no impression of Shakespeare as a writer, and (perhaps) had to be corrected for subsequent consumption. There is, however, some confusion in 'orthodox' ranks. Sir Sidney Lee in the 1909 (second) edition of his *Life of Shakespeare* writes:

Before 1623 an elaborate monument by a London sculptor of Dutch birth Gerard Johnson was erected to Shakespeare's memory in the chancel of the parish Church ... "

But 14 pages later writes:

The bust [in Stratford Church] was by Gerard Johnson or Janssen, who was a stonemason or tomb maker settled in Southwark. It was set up in the church before 1623 and is a rudely carved specimen of mortuary sculpture. It was first engraved for Dugdale's "Antiquities of



Warwickshire” 1656 from a crude sketch which cannot be credited with authenticity.¹⁰

Lee in his original edition suggested that the original “crude sketch” was by Dugdale himself on a visit to Stratford on 12 July 1634 but seems to have changed his mind. I cannot find the reference for that date but in Hamper’s edited account from Dugdale own manuscript autobiography:

The said Mr.Dugdale therefore receiving encouragement from Sir Christopher Hatton [remote kinsman of Queen Elizabeth’s favourite] before mentioned, then a member of the House of Commons, who timely foresaw the approaching storm [i.e. the forthcoming civil war and with it the – generally unfulfilled - fear of destruction by the extremists of many ancient Churches and their records], in Summer anno 1641, taking with him one William Sedgwick a skilful arms painter, repaired first to the Cathedral of St. Pauls in the City of London, and next to the Abbey Church of Westminster and there making exact draughts of all the monum(ent)s in each of them, copyed the epitaphs according to the very letter as also all Arms in the windows, or cut in stone. And having so done, rode to Peterborough in Northampton, Ely, Norwich, Lincoln, Newark upon Trent, Beverley, Southwell, Kingston upon Hull, Yorke, Selby, Chester, Lichfield, Tamworth, Warwick and did the like in all those Cathedral, Collegiate, Conventual and divers other Parochial Churches wherein any tombes or monuments were to be found.¹¹

However, on the 1st June 1642 Dugdale was commanded to go visit the king at Oxford and remained with him for the rest of the war. From there while in Worcestershire:

... where having the perusal of the Registers of both the B(isho)p and Dean and Chapter, he thence extracted the like Collections in order to his Historical worke of Warwickshire (afterwards made public to the Press as he had done at Litchfield within which Diocese the rest



of the said county is) as by his Quotations in that volume may be seen.¹²

Thus, it would appear that the date of the sketch, possibly by Sedgwick, is somewhere between 1641 and 1644. The engraving was by Wenceslaus Hollar who did all the engravings for Dugdale's book. The matter seems to be settled by the entry in Dugdale's diary (it is the first for 1653 and must be in the period 1st to 12th January as the first dated entry is for 13th January 1653):

Shakespeares and John Combes monum(ent)s at Stratford supra Avon made by one Gerard Jonson.¹³

It seems of course essential from the 'orthodox' point of view to destroy the authenticity of the sketch and the Hollar engraving, as it contains not one ounce of a semblance of cultural pre-eminence; the diary entry makes this a hopeless task. Even if the Stratfordians were ever to be completely successful in that endeavour, they are still left with the forgery/caricature of the monument, which has to be dated prior to Dugdale's book in 1656. We need an explanation of why at that time anyone would want to make such forgery/caricature of the monument to the finest ornament of English culture, and what the point of it, unless of course to point up the contrast between Hollar's engraving and the actual cultural icon of the age. The actual description from the Church in the 1656 book contains no reference to Shakspeare as a writer, but right at the end of the account of Stratford upon Avon there appears: "One more thing in reference to this ancient town is observable, that it gave birth and sepulture to our late famous poet Will. Shakspeare, whose monument I have inserted in my discourse of the church,"¹⁴ and whose biographical value is depreciated by the Hollar engraving.

Fortunately, there has been preserved in the Dugdale family archives at Merevale in Warwickshire, the author's manuscript note books for the



1656 edition (but maybe a fair copy for the printer from the original notes). There is this entry:

Stratford sup. Avon ix^o
Iuly A^o 1634

In the North wall of the Chancell is set up betwixt
Two columes, the basse / or half statue / of W^m Shake-
speare one of the famous Poets of these later times, wth
this in/cripcon on a tablet below the same.¹⁵

There then follows the two lines of Latin and six lines of doggerel with date of death and age, and the reference to the “plaine free stone,” with its inscription as in the book recorded - save that the bland word “In/cripcon” becomes the more grandiose word “*Epitaph*” in the book. Important is the almost slighting reference to Jonson’s “*Soul of the Age*” in the phrase “*one of the famous Poets of these later times.*” Either this shows Dugdale’s lack of interest in the culture of the time, or more likely his doubt, at least, of the veracity of the inscriptions.

As to the date of the drawing, consideration of the manuscript notes and the autobiographical note quoted above, this would seem to mean that the drawing was made by Sedgwick on a second visit to record the monument. Note that the drawing is of a half statue from the waist upwards and appears much smaller in the niche than the current version.

In addition, one should note the two highly competent epitaphs to Sir Thomas Stanley (d. 1576) the uncle of Oxford’s son-in-law in Tong Church, Shropshire stated by Sir William Dugdale to be “*by William Shakespeare, the late famous tragedian.*” The description is rather more ‘confident’ than that in Dugdale’s earlier work quoted above and the 1576 date would preclude the involvement of William Shakspere, and has modern critical support.¹⁶

The most concentrated appreciation of the monument and what may be read into it by way of concealed criticism, let alone vicious

caricature comes from Alexander Waugh who shows the dimensions of the half statue approximate to those of a monkey (“poet-ape”), and this allied to the ambiguities of the inscriptions make this item a most questionable element for the Stratfordians to rely on as evidence for William Shakspeare’s authorship.¹⁷

Kathman’s last reference, on the face of it, provides a much clearer example of a connection which might be relied on by Stratfordians. The young poet John Weever 1576-1632 wrote an ode in his *Epigrams* 1599: *Ad Gulielmum Shakespeare*, beginning:

Honey-tongued Shakespeare, when I saw thine issue
I swore Apollo got them ... ”

There is no connection with Stratford there. Nevertheless, David Kathman suggests it shows that Weever knew the author personally. It does not - as Wells tacitly admits: none of the pre-1616 references “explicitly and incontrovertibly identifies him with Stratford – upon – Avon.”¹⁸ Alexander Waugh has subjected Weever’s poetry to a comprehensive analysis to establish his attachment to the real author and mockery of “one Spurious.” (*DVSNL* May 2014)

Weever devoted virtually the rest of his life to the collection of epitaphs in Churches. In the manuscript notes for Stratford upon Avon, there are transcribed the two inscriptions to William Shakespeare, with a marginal note, “*Willm Shakespeare the famous poet.*” This is prima facie evidence that William Shakespeare was recognised as the poet dramatist and author of the works. David Kathman says it is clear evidence that the poet Weever knew in 1599 was the same man whose epitaphs Weever transcribed some 30 years later.¹⁹

Weever finally published his book “Ancient Funerall Inscriptions” in 1631, the year before he died. Apparently, they were owned in the 18th century by a relative of the Weever family who passed them to William

Southouse, a fellow of the Society; he presented them to the Society in 1792. With them were kept in similar writing on paper of a different size and on a Commonwealth paper watermark (I credit Alexander Waugh with this discovery) some thirty pages of further notes entitled “Diocese of Lichfield and Coventrie,” and in red is added “contains the whole of the County of Stafford (except.....and.....[illegible to me]) all Derbyshire the bottom part of Warwickshire and one half of Shropshire.”²⁰

The reference to the “bottom part of Warwickshire” is incorrect. Warwickshire is divided, not administratively but for reference, into the Arden or forest part, which survives in a number of place names, to the North and West, and the Felden or fields part to the East and South. While the Arden was then part of the Diocese of Lichfield and Coventry, the Felden was inside the diocese of Worcester, and one would expect no places in it to appear in the notes for the Diocese of Lichfield and Coventry. Stratford-upon-Avon is in the Felden: in 1582 William Shakspeare had various dealings with the Worcester diocese over his wedding.²¹ I suppose Stratfordians would have to say that being so close to Stratford, while researching in the Arden part of Warwickshire, the annotator was tempted into the Felden to record the epitaphs to “the famous poet.” This might have been a possibility had it not been for the obvious and quite clumsy falsehood to the effect that the Diocese of Lichfield and Coventry covered “the bottom of Warwickshire,” i.e. the Felden and with it Stratford, which the subsequent annotator puts in, without, in the three lines quoted above, recording that the Diocese of Lichfield and Coventry included the Arden or upper part of Warwickshire.²²

In 1815 the Society of Antiquaries published a printed catalogue of its Library. This states that it owned copies of Dugdale’s “Antiquities of Warwickshire”: first edition 1656, second edition 1730. The Weever

manuscripts have been annotated by a subsequent hand in red – perhaps that of Mr. Southouse – with frequent references, in Volume 2 of the manuscripts, to Dugdale. The annotator puts in the 1730 edition references, and the librarian could not say when the 1656 edition was acquired save that it has an early library mark c. 1800. It appears that the annotator had only the 1730 edition to work from, perhaps at a date earlier than 1792.

The first volume of the Weever notes (SAL 127) covers the four dioceses of the printed book. The second volume (SAL 128) is frankly a mess although each page has been nicely mounted by the Society, and contains a great deal extraneous to the collection of epitaphs. Somewhere in the middle there is bound in the block of some thirty pages on the non-contemporary watermark.

Earlier pages in that block of thirty record the anonymous contributor's notes for *Coventrie* (372R), *Warwick* (373R) – below which there is a large blank space - and *Claverdon* (374V) just west of Warwick. 375R begins with a reference to a monument in Guy's Cliff, which is a hamlet on the North side of Warwick city. The next entries are for "*Stratford upon Avon*" The back of this page records a new entry not from Stratford, which I cannot read, and lower down deals with "*Bromicham*" i.e. Bromwicham, now known as Birmingham. So the scribe on his horse seemingly has to backtrack across Warwick city to go southwest to Stratford – not far but across the diocesan border – and then double back again through Warwick city to go on to Birmingham.

There is just one further factor which ought to be noticed. The Weever manuscripts were donated to the Society in 1792; in 1830 John Payne Collier, the famous Shakespearean forger, was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, subsequently rising to vice-President in 1849, before his come-uppance began in 1853. Thus, he had ample opportunity to tamper with the manuscripts and perhaps insert the thirty

pages having doctored them as well, but obviously whoever did it was ignorant of the watermark paper give-away. The error over the description of the Diocese of Lichfield and Coventry is suspicious if it is intended to take away attention from the inclusion of Stratford (in the Worcester Diocese) in Lichfield and Coventry. The putative convoluted journey round Warwick may be caused by the need to use the space on the sheet of paper with the Guy's Cliff entries at top.

Dr. John Rollett²³ (to whom the credit will go for first casting suspicions on the authenticity of the Stratford entries) pointed out some years ago the errors on the next line : “Judcio” for “Judicio”, a piece of carelessness we could all make; and then “Pilum” which is a shocker. Nestor was the king of Pylos, and the phrase “Judicio Pylum” means that the deceased was in judgment the “Pylia” i.e. Nestor, the legendary veteran adviser of the Greeks at Troy. The Latin inscription is a true Elegiac couplet as used by Virgil and others.²⁴

No Elizabethan scholar would have written “Jud(i)cio Pilum”. Perhaps this is an instance – there are others - of Collier (if it be he) being too clever by half²⁵: if there is any meaning it might mean “In judgment a *spear*.”

Otherwise apart from one or two minor mis-transcriptions, the two inscriptions are accurately reproduced: in the fifth line, however, the monument's “Shakspeare” appears in the transcript as “*Shakespeare*”.

In the right-hand margin appears the phrase “Willm Shakespeare the famous poet” underlined in red, again a departure from the annotator's practice. For what it is worth I draw attention the small spiky ‘w’ as opposed to the more generous effort three lines higher in the same margin. Lower down the marginal note “Shakespeare's Epitaph” with the pointing finger appears in red, again a departure from the annotator's earlier practice. In two places “Dugdale's Warwickshire,” with the 1730

page reference, also appears in red; noticeably the other annotations use the abbreviation “Warwicks” in red in the manuscript.

Finally, on the page, there is six lines of a poem to “John Combes, a burges ...” This poem does not appear to have ever been in the Church: there is however a plaque with a list in prose of his munificence. Where the poem comes from I have not been able to ascertain, but Collier was not above adding his own compositions.²⁶

The reason for dealing so fully with this document is this: the paper is too late because of the Commonwealth watermark for the notes to be Weever’s effort. If there was no contradiction, it would however be possible for Kathman and his friends still to say: “All right, it is not by Weever, but it is by a slightly later scribe who in effect evidences the acceptance of Shakespeare as the great dramatist.” The analysis above makes that argument impossible too. It is work in progress, but perhaps we can build on the John Rollett’s doubt and declare this once essential piece of pro-Stratfordian evidence an irrelevance.

There are other contemporary references that are of little value, as Chambers puts it: “And it must be admitted there is much here which throws less light upon Shakespeare than upon the mental processes which lead to the development of myth.”²⁷

My aim to see if we can destroy the Stratfordian assumption that the literary and theatrical establishment up to the period to 1642 was in agreement that William Shakspere of Stratford upon Avon was the author known as William Shakespeare. After 1642, the literary generation that comes next, but not into any prominence until the Restoration in 1660, has no mentors to remind it of Oxford.

By contrast Oxfordians can point to a list of contemporary writers from 1600 on, from whose products we can infer that they well knew that Oxford (or “William Shakespeare” in distinction to Shakspere) was the author: Anton, Barnfield, Basse, Beaumont, Benson, Bodenham,

Brome, Christopher Brooke, Camden, Chapman, Chettle, Covell, J.Davies, Sir J. Davies, Digges, Joseph Hall, Gabriel Harvey, Thomas Heywood, Holland, Howes, 'I.M.' (perhaps James Mabbe), Jonson, Lane, Marston, Meres, Nashe, H.Peacham jnr, Riche, Ronsard, Scott, Southwell, Vicars, the Parnassus plays' author(s) and the author of Ratseis Ghost²⁸.

Endnotes:

1. i.e. an Earl who was dead by 1638, unlike say Derby who lived on to 1642.
2. Hotson: *I, William Shakespeare*.... (Jonathan Cape, London 1937) p.251
3. Edmondson and Wells: *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt* (Cambridge U.P. 2013) p.81
4. Goldstone: De Vere Society Newsletter July 2012
5. Holderness: *Nine Lives of William Shakespeare* (Bloomsbury Academic London 2013) p.184
6. Malim: *The Earl of Oxford and the Making of 'Shakespeare'* (McFarland 2011)
7. Edward Phillips – Milton's nephew – spells the name "Shakspeare", which may be significant. What is more so is that he says, "Christopher Marlowe, a kind of second Shakspeare (whose contemporary he was)...."(*Theatrum Poetarum* 1675). For this opinion he is roundly castigated by Marlowe's editor Robert Bell in 1856 writing nearly 200 years later for denying that Marlowe had been the predecessor of Shakespeare both in time and more especially as an exemplar (ed. *Poems of Robert Greene and Christopher Marlowe*: Parker and Son, London 1856 p.140)
8. Kathman website: Shakespeare Authorship Page: Shakespeare Eulogies: 17th Century references to Shakespeare's Stratford Monument
9. Dugdale: *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* 1656 p.520
10. Lee: *Life of Shakespeare* 1909 edition pp.285, 298
11. Hamper: *The Life, Diary and Correspondence of Sir William Dugdale* (London 1789) p.14



12. Hamper p.21

13. Hamper p.99. The engraving was copied perhaps by the actor Betterton and re-engraved for Rowe's *Some Account of the Life of William Shakespeare*. Charles Nicholl shows it in his edition (Pallas Athene pp.74,75n.) and writes; "This not very accurate representation is based on Dugdale's *Antiquities*: in particular it omits the pen, making Shakespeare more of a wool merchant than a poet." There is no representation of a pen until 1727 (even Nicholl's edition p.78 has a copy of this later engraving dated 1737 *with* a pen): the Rowe engraving follows Hollar quite accurately enough. For Hollar's engraving see Pointon: *The Man Who Was Never Shakespeare* (Parapress 2011 p.105).

14. Dugdale 1656: pp. 523, 520. The 1730 edition repeats the passage (Vol II p.697) and retains the Hollar pen-less engraving (p.688). Kathman (see n.8) says the 1656 engraving is "on the page facing" p.523: it is not – in fact it is on p.520.

15 Dugdale m/s VII p.10, where Dugdale's initial versions appear which are crossed out and so far as can be deciphered under the crossings out reads:

"Neither must it be in silencing

And having now thus redeemed from the jaws of devouring time, whatsoever I have rak'd from the depth of Antiquity for the honour credit of this antient towne is place I must not neglect further to observe, that how much further that it hath bin further honoured by being the birth place and the (*illegible*) and sepulture giving birth and sepulture to the one late eminent and (*illegible*) famous Tragedian Witte.....

Where unto let give me leave here to add that wch was composed for him by an elegant pen.

[Dugdale then adds a slightly shortened version of the poem by Basse which appears in full in Benson's *Shakespeare's Poems* 1640: "Renowned Spenser, lye a thought more nigh...."]

And the printed passage in the book appears round and in the manuscript. Perhaps Dugdale was told there was a doubt whether William Shakespeare's reputation was entitled to the deleted references



16. Dugdale *Baronage of England* 1675; Wells and Taylor: *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* p. 457 (Norton 1998)
17. Shahan and Waugh: *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt ?* (Llumina Press, Tamarac, Fla. 2013) p.139
18. Waugh: *Thy Stratford Monument: De Vere Society Newsletter* October 2014 pp.28ff. In it he ties the ‘monkey’ representations to Jonson’s poem, “Poor poet Ape... (*Epigrammes* LVI), but I am satisfied that the original poet- ape was Fletcher –see Malim pp.204, 204 and 286 n.21.
19. *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt* p.81
20. Kathman website: *ibid.*
21. Honan: *Shakespeare, A Life* (Oxford U.P.1998) pp. 81ff
22. The details as to the extent etc. of the Dioceses are taken from articles in Wikipedia on the internet.
23. the late Dr. John Rollett (who kindly read an early version of this essay in advance) quoted by Diana Price: *Shakespeare’s Unorthodox Biography* (2nd edition Shakespeare-authorship.com) 2012 p. 170.
24. Yes, I do know Socrates has a long ‘o’ (ω) in Greek, but whether it does in Latin is not known either to me or (perhaps) the composer of the epitaph !
25. Schoenbaum: *Shakespeare’s Lives* (Oxford U.P. 1970) p. 345, 333
26. Schoenbaum: *id.* p. 336
27. Chambers: *William Shakespeare: Facts and Problems* II pp.237ff. (XXXX)
28. Ingleby: *The Shakespeare Allusion Book:* (Chatto and Windus, London 1899)