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978-1-107-04064-9 - The Shakespearean Archive: Experiments in New Media from the Renaissance to Postmodernity

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## *The Shakespearean Archive*

Why is Shakespeare so often associated with information technologies and with the idea of archiving itself? Alan Galey explores this question through the entwined histories of Shakespearean texts and archival technologies over the past four centuries. In chapters dealing with the archive, the book, photography, sound, information, and data, Galey analyzes how Shakespeare became prototypical material for publishing experiments and new media projects, as well as for theories of archiving and computing. Analyzing examples of the Shakespearean archive from the seventeenth century to today, he takes an original approach to Shakespeare and new media that will be of interest to scholars of the digital humanities, Shakespeare studies, archives, and media history. Rejecting the idea that current forms of computing are the result of technical forces beyond the scope of humanist inquiry, this book instead offers a critical prehistory of digitization read through the afterlives of Shakespeare's texts.

ALAN GALEY is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Information at the University of Toronto. His research focuses on intersections between textual scholarship and digital technologies. He has published in journals such as *Shakespeare Quarterly* and *Archival Science*, and his article "The Enkindling Reciter: E-Books in the Bibliographical Imagination," in *Book History* (2012), was awarded the Fredson Bowers Prize by the Society for Textual Scholarship. He is also the co-editor of *Shakespeare, the Bible, and the Form of the Book: Contested Scriptures* (2011).

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# The Shakespearean Archive

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*For Gerry and Joan Galey  
and in memory of Evelyn Galey, 1919–2006*

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## Preface

The inspiration for this book came from a rare opportunity I was given a few years ago to create a digital interface for the Electronic New Variorum Shakespeare (ENVS), the Modern Language Association's continuation of Horace Howard Furness's series of variorum editions begun in 1870, itself a descendant of the work of Malone, Boswell, Capell, Johnson, and other eighteenth-century editors. As I worked with the meticulously crafted XML code of the ENVS editions created by Julia Flanders and Kitto Weikert, I became distracted (productively, one hopes) by the rich cultural history of the project in which I found myself working, whose edges kept receding into the shadowy space of what I came to think of as the Shakespearean archive. That curiosity took shape in 2009 as a project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) titled *Archive and Interface in Digital Textual Studies*. That project had a twofold rationale: first, that we cannot build and study digital archives without giving serious thought to interfaces as cultural artifacts; and second, that such inquiry might profitably be carried out by a multi-modal project that combines hands-on digital experimentation with a reconsideration of the cultural history of archival interfaces. The digital experimentation has taken the form of my online project [www.VisualizingVariation.ca](http://www.VisualizingVariation.ca), and the cultural history has primarily taken the form of this book. A shorter version of Chapter 6 and a few passages in Chapter 7 were published as "Networks of Deep Impression: Shakespeare and the History of Information," in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 61.3 (2010), 289–312, and two paragraphs in Chapter 1 are taken from "The Human Presence in Digital Artifacts," in Willard McCarty (ed.), *Text and Genre in Reconstruction: Effects of Digitalization on Ideas, Behaviours, Products, and Institutions* (Cambridge: Open Book, 2010), pp. 93–117.

I wish first to express thanks to SSHRC, the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information, and the University's Connaught Fund for

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financial and other forms of support. I am also grateful to Julia and Kitto for the opportunity to learn from them, and to Kathleen Fitzpatrick, David Nichols, Judith Altreuter, and the members of the MLA's Committee on the New Variorum Shakespeare (past and present) for their encouragement. My chief scholarly debt is to Paul Werstine, whose intellectual generosity, time, enthusiasm, and wisdom made this project possible, and who contributed more to this book than I can record.

At Cambridge University Press I am especially grateful to Sarah Stanton for her encouragement, patience, and guidance, and to Rosemary Crawley, Caroline Drake, Fleur Jones, Anna Lowe, and Tom O'Reilly for their attention to detail at every stage in the process. To Noeline Bridge I am grateful for her careful work on the index. I also wish to thank the anonymous readers for the Press, who in many ways understood the book better than I did, and whose insights and detailed advice saved me from many mistakes. Any remaining errors are my own.

Over the past several years I have accumulated an archive of debts to others. For their help in the form of information, conversation, critique, and encouragement I am grateful to Jon Bath, Michael Best, Peter Blayney, Christie Carson, Anne Coldiron, Terry Cook, Travis DeCook, Peter Donaldson, Gabriel Egan, Julia Flanders, Suzanne Gossett, Jonathan Hope, Paul Israel, Christopher Keep, Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, Eric Ketelaar, M. J. Kidnie, Matthew Kirschenbaum, Ian Lancashire, Chaya Litvack, Kathleen Lynch, Bonnie Mak, Daniel Martin, Sonia Massai, Jeff Masten, Scott McLaren, Randy McLeod, Barbara Mowat, Martin Mueller, Andrew Murphy, Edward Pechter, Scott Schofield, Sydney Shep, Bill Sherman, Peter Stallybrass, Carlene Stephens, Sarah Werner, and Michael Whitmore. I am deeply grateful to those who took time to read chapter drafts, especially Fiona Coll, Jennifer Esmail, Jenny Kerber, Zachary Lesser, Randy McLeod, Heather MacNeil, Katherine Rowe, and, again, Paul Werstine and the anonymous readers for the Press.

I also wish to thank the many overlapping scholarly communities that encouraged this project in various ways: my co-editors on the Architectures of the Book project; the other members of the Floating Academy blog; the Folger Institute, especially the members of the 2013 Early Modern Digital Agendas seminar, led by Jonathan Hope and supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities; and audiences and seminar groups at the conferences of the Canadian Association for the Study of Book Culture, the Modern Language

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Association, the Renaissance Society of America, the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing, the Society for Textual Scholarship, and especially the Shakespeare Association of America. I am also grateful to the organizers and audiences of the many invited talks that helped me develop the ideas in this book over the past several years.

I am fortunate to be part of so many stimulating intellectual communities at my home institution, such that they require their own paragraph. At the University of Toronto I am especially grateful to the students, faculty, and other members of the Book History and Print Culture collaborative graduate program, the Jackman Humanities Institute, the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, and the McLuhan Coach House Institute. I owe a special debt to the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information (iSchool), not only for its institutional support but also for the adventurous, interdisciplinary, and intellectually hospitable community created by its students, faculty, staff, and alumni. I hope that a great many of my colleagues will see their influence reflected in this book, and I particularly wish to thank Joan Cherry, Wendy Duff, Patricia Fleming, Steve Hockema, Lynne Howarth, Heather MacNeil, Matt Ratto, Seamus Ross, Brian Cantwell Smith, and my students over the past several years. I was also privileged to work with outstanding research assistants on this project, namely Peter Gorman, Sarah Lubelski, Emily Monks-Leeson, Rebecca Niles, and Matthew Wells.

The staff of several libraries and archives made all the difference in this research, and I am grateful to those at the Bodleian Library, the Horace Howard Furness Memorial Library at the University of Pennsylvania, the Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Massey College Library at the University of Toronto, the National Library of Scotland, the New York Public Library, the Smithsonian National American History Museum, the State Library of New South Wales, George Eastman House at the International Museum of Photography and Film, and the Thomas A. Edison Papers Project at Rutgers University. Special thanks go to Nancy Shawcross of the University of Pennsylvania Library for granting permission to use the image of H. H. Furness's annotated copy of the Cambridge *Romeo and Juliet* for the cover. My warmest gratitude goes to the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library at the University of Toronto and the Folger Shakespeare Library, the two quiet yet sociable havens where much of this book

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was written, whose staff have been unstintingly generous with their knowledge and energy.

On a personal note, I wish to thank the many friends and family who supported me in this project through good times and bad. My parents, Gerry and Joan Galey, to whom this book is dedicated, provided moral and material support beyond reckoning and without reservation. This book is also dedicated to my grandmother, Evelyn Galey, whose struggle with Alzheimer's disease taught me new respect for memory's fragility and durability alike. Most of all, I would not have finished this project were it not for Jenny Kerber's wisdom, enthusiasm, advice, patience, impatience, and humour. I cannot repay the debt I owe her, but look forward to trying anyway.

## Abbreviations

All parenthetically cited Shakespeare quotations are from Jowett, *et al.* (eds.), *The Oxford Shakespeare*.

F1	<i>Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, &amp; Tragedies</i> (London, 1623)
F2	<i>Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, &amp; Tragedies</i> (London, 1632)
<i>Bell Family Papers</i>	Alexander Graham Bell Family Papers, 1834–1974, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, <a href="http://www.loc.gov/collection/alexander-graham-bell-papers/">www.loc.gov/collection/alexander-graham-bell-papers/</a>
<i>Furness Family Papers</i>	Furness Family Papers (Ms. Col. 481), University of Pennsylvania, Rare Book and Manuscript Library
NVS	<i>New Variorum Shakespeare</i>
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary Online</i> , <a href="http://www.oed.com">www.oed.com</a>