Introduction

In June 2008, a man wearing 'an oversized t-shirt with a very large fish on the front, lightweight slacks and loafers with no socks and a lot of jewelry' appeared in the office of the head librarian at the Folger Shakespeare Library.[1] He brought with him a box of cigars and a book. The cigars were Cuban and the book was a copy of the 1623 first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays, conventionally known as the 'First Folio' (F1). The oddly dressed visitor was Raymond Scott and he claimed that he had discovered the volume in the family villa of some friends in Cuba, where 'it had been kept in a wooden bible box and had been in the family since 1877', having originally been brought to Cuba from Spain.[2] Scott had come to the Folger because he wished to have the book authenticated, and he later indicated that his intention was that, if it turned out to be a genuine copy of F1, he would sell it at auction, splitting the proceeds with his Cuban friends.

Scott left the volume (and, indeed, the cigars) in the care of the Folger librarian, Richard Kuhta, who called in Stephen Massey, formerly of Christie's auctioneers, to help verify whether the book was an original copy of F1.[3] Massey was quickly able to do so, but he also noticed certain peculiarities in the volume which called its supposed Cuban provenance seriously into question. The book that Scott brought to the Folger had had its covers and spine stripped away and had been scoured of all identifying marks, but, nevertheless, Massey was able to recognise that the volume was almost certainly the Durham University copy of the Folio, which had been stolen from the University while on exhibition ten years earlier. Scott, who had brought the book to the Washington library, was, as it happens, from Washington – not Washington DC, however, but Washington, Tyne and Wear, less than half an hour's drive away from Durham. Massey phoned the FBI, who in turn contacted the British authorities, and Scott soon found himself 'helping the police with their enquiries'.

In the run-up to his subsequent trial, Scott became something of a tabloid celebrity. An eccentric fantasist, he enjoyed an extravagant lifestyle, sometimes turning up at court in a chauffeur-driven limousine and spraying journalists with champagne, though all the while he was living in the very modest house of his eighty-two-year-old mother. Scott had something of a record with the local police, mostly for petty crime and identity theft. At the trial, the Crown Prosecution Service called in the renowned British Shakespeare scholar Anthony James West to give expert evidence with regard to the provenance of the supposed Cuban copy of F1. West was the world's leading authority on the First Folio. The author of the multi-volume study *The Shakespeare First Folio: The History of the Book*, he was, at the time of the trial, working (with a number of collaborators) on the monumental *The Shakespeare First Folios: A Descriptive Catalogue*, which aimed to log full bibliographic and provenance details of all known surviving copies of the volume. West had, as it happened, examined the Durham Folio back in 1994, and at the time had made notes on some of the volume's particular distinguishing features.[4]

West subjected Scott's book to twelve separate tests, arranged into three categories, ordered by the degree of certainty of identification that they would yield: tests of necessity, borderline tests and tests of sufficiency. The checks included examining the placement of sewing supports for the missing binding; cross-referencing press variants against known variants in the Durham copy; checking for a match with particular creases on individual pages that were clearly recorded in photographs of the Durham text; and checking for a set of distinctive oddly shaped holes that were documented as having been cut through a particular set of pages in the Durham Folio – this damage being entirely unique to the volume. West concluded 'with certainty' that the Scott folio was indeed the stolen Durham volume. Having doggedly stuck to his Cuban tall tale all along, Scott finally conceded that what he had brought to the Folger was the volume that had been taken from Durham, but he insisted that he himself had not been the one who had actually stolen it; it had simply come into his possession and he had tried to sell it. In the absence of clear evidence tying him directly to the theft, Scott was convicted of the lesser charges of handling stolen goods and of removing stolen property from the UK, and he was sent to prison for sentences of six years and two years respectively for each crime.[5] The chief prosecutor welcomed the verdict, observing:

> Raymond Scott is a dishonest conman and serial thief who found himself in possession of a national treasure. The sentence reflects the seriousness of his crime, handling a book recognised across the world as one of the most

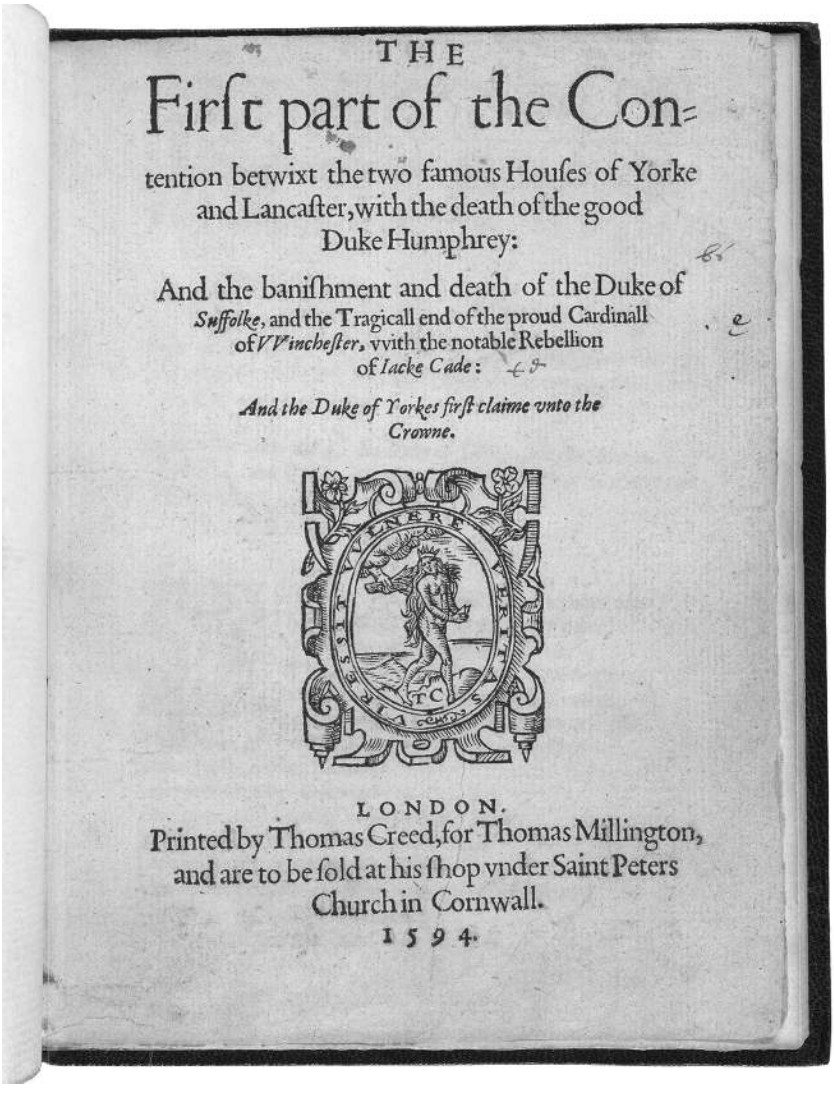
> important literary works ever published and removing it from the UK with a view to selling it.[6]

As for the Folio itself, it was eventually handed on to the conservation unit at Durham University's Palace Green Library, who laid out plans for a careful restoration of the book, aiming

> to repair the sewing by laying new cords over those that remain [with] the damaged pages [to] be repaired with Japanese paper and wheat starch paste and re-sewn on to the new cords. New boards . . . will be made and laced on to the cords and the First Folio will then be re-bound in dark blue goatskin. Finally, the title will be lettered directly on to the spine with gold leaf and a drop back box, suitable for storing and protecting valuable books, will be made to protect the binding.[7]

The saga of the loss and recovery of the Durham Folio is an intriguing story in its own right. But it also emblematises in various ways the status that Shakespeare's works – and their specific instantiation in a particular, iconic edition – have achieved within contemporary culture. By contrast, during the course of Shakespeare's own lifetime, the idea that a collected volume of his plays would eventually come to be seen as 'a national treasure', 'recognised across the world as one of the most important literary works ever published' – worth stealing, and worth going to jail for stealing – would likely have seemed, well, implausible. And the idea that the edition would have been so closely studied by scholars that specific individual copies from its print run would be readily identifiable four hundred years after publication would surely have seemed nothing short of astonishing.

To help bring this disjunction a little more clearly into focus, I would like to suggest that, for a moment, we let our 'imaginary forces work', and conjure up an early modern book buyer wanting, in the mid-1590s, to purchase copies of *2* and *3 Henry VI* – contemporary plays that she might possibly have seen in the theatre. Had she come across the title pages of the printed plays posted around town as adverts (a common enough practice at the time), she would have seen that *2 Henry VI* had been printed by Thomas Creede and that the companion play had been produced by 'P. S.' – the initials of the printer Peter Short. Both plays were, according to the title pages, being sold by the publisher Thomas Millington 'at his shop vnder Saint Peters Church in Cornwall' (§3; see Figure i.1).[8] Had our book buyer purchased other plays, she might have known that both Creede and Short were actually London printers: Short had produced an edition of *The Taming of a Shrew* (a text related in an uncertain manner to



THE
First part of the Con=
tention betwixt the two famous Houſes of Yorke
and Lancaſter, with the death of the good
Duke Humphrey:

And the baniſhment and death of the Duke of
Suffolke, and the Tragicall end of the proud Cardinall
of *VVincheſter*, vvith the notable Rebellion
of *Iacke Cade*:

And the Duke of Yorkes firſt claime vnto the
Crowne.

LONDON.
Printed by Thomas Creed, for Thomas Millington,
and are to be ſold at his ſhop vnder Saint Peters
Church in Cornwall.
1594.

Figure i.1 Title page of the first edition of *2 Henry VI* (1594), giving the place of sale as 'Cornwall', in error for 'Cornhill'. Shakespeare's name is nowhere mentioned, nor is 'Henry VI' included in the title. STC 26099 leaf A1 recto: title page. Used by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Shakespeare's *The Shrew*) for Cuthbert Burbie in 1594 (STC 23667) and Creede had produced an edition of *The True Tragedie of Richard the Third* (a text with no direct relationship to Shakespeare's *Richard III*) for William Barley in the same year (STC 21009), also printing the apocryphal Shakespearean *Locrine* in 1595 (§8). One way or another, our book buyer might well have been shrewd enough to know that it was highly unlikely that purchasing the two Shakespeare plays would have required her to venture all the way to distant Cornwall, some 400 kilometres from London. Instinctively, she might instead have headed to St Paul's Churchyard, the centre of the London publishing trade in the early modern period. There, she could have enquired about where exactly she might best go to find copies of the *Henry VI* plays. Publishers at the time were a close-knit community, regulated and overseen by the Stationers' Company trade organisation, and individual publishers would have come to know each other from venturing, on a regular basis, to the Company's offices at Stationers' Hall in St Paul's, where they were required to register their ownership of texts in advance of publishing them. At one of the shops in the Churchyard, then, our book buyer would have had a good chance of encountering someone who could have told her that Thomas Millington, supposedly of Corn*wall*, was actually to be found at the top of Corn*hill*, about a kilometre from the Churchyard itself. Following the directions that might have been given to her, she would have exited north from the precincts of St Paul's, turning right onto Little Conduit Street, heading east along Cheapside to Great Conduit Street, thence along the Poultry and on up to St Peter's Church.[9]

If, having reached the shop at St Peter's, our book buyer had found Millington himself in attendance there, and had asked him specifically for his two Shakespeare texts, it is possible that he might not have known exactly what it was that she wanted. Millington had published the two titles without including an author's name anywhere in the editions. Indeed, when he had registered his rights to *2 Henry VI*, in March of 1594, and had then paid the additional sum required to have a record of his ownership of the play formally entered in the *Stationers' Register*, he did not specify the name of the author in the text of the entry, providing only the play's title. In the case of *3 Henry VI*, he had not even gone to the trouble and additional expense of having his ownership of the text formally entered in the *Register*.[10] It is entirely possible that Millington's omission

of Shakespeare's name in the *Register* entry for *2 Henry VI* and on the title pages of his editions of both plays may not have been an oversight on his part: he may actually simply not have known who had written the plays.[11] From a business perspective, Millington may just have recognised that the commercial theatre – which was still a relatively new cultural phenomenon at the time – seemed to be growing in popularity with each passing year, and that it was, at the time, driving a market not for plays by particular authors, but, specifically, for printed versions of the especially popular historical plays that were being performed in the theatre. So Millington may well have bought the rights to publish *2* and *3 Henry VI* as little more than a speculative venture, without enquiring (or, indeed, caring very much about) who had written them. Had our book buyer clarified that she was looking for the two plays about Henry VI, this might not have been much greater help to Millington, since both plays were published under rather discursive, rambling titles, with Henry VI mentioned only in passing in the title of *3 Henry VI*, and not at all in the title of the other play.

Supposing, then, that Millington – if he were indeed puzzled by what his customer was wanting to purchase – had invited our book buyer to look through his stock to see whether she could herself find what it was that she was seeking. What would she have encountered in his shop? Certainly, for one thing, many stacks of ballads, since these were Millington's primary stock-in-trade as a publisher. The titles she might have come across would likely have included *The Pitifull Lamentacon of Rachell Merrye*; *The Poore Widowe of Clopthall in Kent*; *The First Parte of the Wanton Wyfe of Westminster*; *A Wofull Ballad of a Knightes Daughter in Scotland* [*Who*] *Was Murdered by her Husband*.[12] Millington appeared, our book buyer might have registered quietly to herself, to be rather heavily invested in narratives of female distress and waywardness. Beyond these stacks of single-sheet publications, she would also likely have encountered more substantial topical and sensationalist works published by Millington, such as *A most certaine report of a monster borne at Oteringham* (STC 18895.5) and *The true lamentable discourse of the burning of Teuerton* (STC 24093).

If our book buyer did finally, in her persistence, unearth the texts she was looking for, and if she then glanced through them before purchasing, she might or might not have recognised them as the plays she had seen performed in the theatre. The texts that Millington had published were, in fact, attenuated versions of the plays, which were quite different from the longer versions that would subsequently be included in the First Folio

collection. Whether the process of attenuation was reflective of contemporary theatrical practice (with longer authorial originals being shortened and modified for performance) or else was evidence of some other process of textual reconfiguration remains unclear to this day. If the former, then our book buyer actually would have felt that she had finally found the texts she was seeking; if the latter, she might have been deeply puzzled as to why the printed plays differed so markedly from what she had seen on stage. Either way, it is possible that she might have experienced a certain sense of disappointment as she finally stood there in Millington's shop with the slim theatrical pamphlets in her hands, one of them (*3 Henry VI*) published, unusually, in the reduced octavo size, at a time when other play texts (including Millington's own *2 Henry VI*) were generally published in the more generously proportioned quarto format. Both texts would have felt rather flimsy, with simple stab-stitching down the side (see Figure 1.1) – as disposable, in fact, as the other publications that Millington offered his customers, and probably all of a piece with them from the publisher's own point of view.[13] It would not have been surprising if – as she walked back down from Cornhill – our imagined book buyer had asked herself whether the game had, in the end, been worth the candle, or, indeed, the shoe leather.

It is a long journey, we might say, from Thomas Millington's shop at the top of Cornhill to the chief librarian's office at an institution on Capitol Hill dedicated primarily to honouring Shakespeare's work – or, indeed, to Newcastle Crown Court, where Raymond Scott was sentenced for a crime that was viewed as being as much one of cultural vandalism as of theft. How do we get, we might ask, from Millington's anonymous, attenuated, disposable Shakespeares to the Durham Folio, gratefully recovered, and set out on the conservator's table, ready to be carefully – and expensively – restored? In a way, it is exactly this question that *Shakespeare in Print* sets out to answer – the question, we might say, of how Shakespeare, textually, *became* Shakespeare. In attempting to answer this question, I offer here a set of intertwined textual histories. First of all, there is the history of Shakespeare publishing: logging how exactly we go, century by century, from the very earliest editions – including Millington's – to the very latest texts, many of them offered now not (or not only) as printed books but as digital resources of one kind or another. This, in a sense, is the material history of Shakespeare in print (and beyond print). The focus in this strand of the book is on publishers and their marketing strategies, on formats and *mise-en-page*, on sales and prices, on copyright disputes and on emerging and shifting readerships.

But all of this is, of course, only part of the story. There is also another history to be mapped out here too: the history of the interventions that have been made in the texts as they have been brought to publication. In the first century or so of Shakespeare in print these interventions happen anonymously, with printing-house functionaries and other agents adjusting the text silently as it moves from edition to edition. A clear example is the set of four folios which appear over the course of the seventeenth century. In an extensive comparative analysis of these editions, published in 1937, M. W. Black and Matthias Shaaber register that whoever was responsible for preparing the Second Folio for publication in 1632 had demonstrated 'considerable alertness, ingenuity, and tact', restoring defective metre, adding entrances and exits and showing a clear knowledge of classical mythology – 'Hiperion' is, for instance, retrieved from the garbled 'Epton' in V.iii of *Titus Andronicus*.[14] With the Third Folio, Black and Shaaber register a total of 943 editorial changes, around 300 of which had, they reckoned, been accepted by editors up to the early twentieth century.[15] Those involved in bringing the final folio (F4) to print were, in Black and Shaaber's view, less concerned with the text itself, having their minds 'fixed on the job of printing under their superintendence, not on Shakespeare's plays', and so their interventions in the text itself are much more circumscribed.[16] At the beginning of the eighteenth century we witness a significant shift, with Jacob Tonson recruiting the playwright Nicholas Rowe to serve as editor for his firm's first edition (of many), and with Rowe's name now appearing prominently on the title page of the edition. From here, the modern editing tradition begins and *Shakespeare in Print* seeks to offer an account of this history through to the present day.

One further historical strand is covered here. The editorial process involves not just interventions in the text – emending 'Epton' to 'Hiperion', for instance – but it also extends to theorising about origins, processes and mechanics. So this volume attempts to attend also to the history of the manner in which we have come to track, in various ways, exactly how Shakespeare was brought to print in his own time. The cardinal example here is Charlton Hinman's unsurpassed analysis of the many copies of F1 held in the Folger collection, which allowed him to map out exactly how the book passed through the Jaggards' printshop, to a very precise level of detail.[17] Hinman proceeded largely through a physical examination of a great number of copies of F1, aided by a collating machine of his own design. But in some instances, assumptions about early printed editions are based on more speculative theories such as, for instance, whether an authorial or a theatrical manuscript may have served

as printer's copy. The history of these theories and methods is also covered in this volume.

These, then, are the primary objectives of *Shakespeare in Print*, but there are some limitations to what is attempted here that must also be registered. As indicated in the first edition, no substantial attention is given to translations of Shakespeare's texts. An early attempt to provide a broad-brush account of some of the major translated editions proved to be unsatisfactory, given the sheer scope and complexity of the topic. One of the original press readers for the volume suggested simply cutting this material and this sensible advice was followed in the first edition and is followed again here. Thus, *Shakespeare in Print* focuses exclusively on English-language texts. Beyond this, it should also be noted that this study largely confines itself to editions produced in Britain, Ireland and the United States, without paying sustained attention to Shakespeare publishing in, for instance, Canada, Australia or the Indian subcontinent. One further limitation I would register is that the focus of the book is on the printed texts of Shakespeare's own plays, and I have little to say here about, for instance, Restoration adaptations, beyond logging a limited number of 'players' quartos' in the chronological appendix. As in the case of the first edition, discussion of illustrations is also relatively limited, though this topic is now thoroughly covered in Stuart Sillars' excellent studies of the subject.[18] In the first version of *Shakespeare in Print* I gave some little attention to early readers of the plays, but I have cut back this material here, as the topic is now mapped out expertly and in detail in Jean-Christophe Mayer's *Shakespeare's Early Readers*.[19]

The main body of this book is supplemented by a chronological appendix which attempts to list all major editions from Shakespeare's own time through to the early decades of the twenty-first century, with complete coverage of single-text editions up to 1709 and of collected plays or collected works editions up to 1821. A separate introduction is provided for the appendix, which indicates the scope and rationale of the entries included. Each text logged in the chronology is assigned its own number and, in the main body of this volume, references to editions are keyed to this numbering system, signalled by the use of the symbol '§'. In revising the chronological appendix, it has not been possible to retain the original numbering system, so first edition numbers do not map onto the new series of numbers generated for this second edition.

In an article entitled 'On Being a General Editor' Stanley Wells reflected on his wide-ranging experience of producing and overseeing editions of

Shakespeare over an extended period of time. Wells had been a general editor of the New Penguin Shakespeare, had served as general editor of the individual editions of the Oxford Shakespeare series, and, with Gary Taylor and others, had co-edited the controversial single-volume Oxford Shakespeare, first published in 1986. In his article, Wells noted that the 'task of a General Editor has its trials and tribulations, but it has its rewards, too, as the row of books grows along the shelves and one envisages the possibility of living to see it complete'.[20] Wells also registered that 'there is, as I constantly but with little success try to persuade publishers to acknowledge, no such thing as a definitive edition'.[21] The long history of Shakespeare publishing comprehensively offers support for this latter contention, as edition has succeeded edition from decade to decade and from century to century. It seems highly unlikely, as Wells indicates, that there is ever going to be an end to this process. Edition will continue to succeed edition, so long as men and women can breathe, or eyes can see, to coin a phrase. The row of books, as Wells puts it, will continue to grow along the shelves – and grow, now, also, on digital storage systems. There is no end to it. My aim in this new edition of *Shakespeare in Print* is to attempt, once again, to map as much of the history of this process as I possibly can.