

FOUR LETTERS OF HENRY NEVILLE AND SEVEN SHAKESPEARE PLAYS

If Henry Neville was the writer of the works of Shakespeare we could expect to find Shakespearean vocabulary in his extant letters. Indeed Brenda James (2008, 246) has already shown this to be the case with words and phrases such as ‘contumely’, ‘distemperature’, ‘conveniency’, “with a pretence” and “cold comfort”. William from Stratford left no letters so it is impossible to do this in his case. This paper looks in more detail at four letters written by Neville that are contemporary with seven plays and explores the possibility that he unconsciously used vocabulary from the play he was writing in letters written during the same period. I also look at four contemporary letters as controls.

The Four Neville Letters and Shakespeare’s plays:

Of 1113 words to be found in Neville’s letter of 1/8/1599, 329 words (29.5%) occur in *Henry V*. I first noticed the word ‘**inconveniencies**’, which is to be found in the letter and was only used once by Shakespeare, in *Henry V*. Neville also uses the French word ‘**pettit**’: ‘petit’ occurs only in *Henry V*. We can date the play accurately because of a reference to the Earl of Essex being in Ireland. He left England at the end of March 1599 and returned on 28th September. The play was therefore probably written in (or before) the period April – August. Neville was a supporter of Essex and enquired about his progress in his letters. Neville was chosen as Ambassador to France in November 1598. He left England himself, taking with him Ralph Winwood “at my Lord of Essex command” (McClure, 1939, 51, 65), and arriving in France in May 1599. He returned in August 1600, arriving in Dover on the 2nd and London on the 6th (James & Rubinstein, 2005, 135). *Henry V* was registered on August 4th and again on the 14th; a first quarto printed later that year (Gurr, 2000, 6). The letter was written from Blois, France. I therefore suggest it was written towards the very end of the period of writing *Henry V* or indeed after the bard had finished the play.

Of 1273 words to be found in Neville’s letter of 29/7/1600, 372 words (29%) occur in *Twelfth Night*. I first noticed the word ‘**implacable**’, which was only used once by Shakespeare, in *Twelfth Night*. The play was probably performed at court during the Christmas period of 1600 (perhaps on Twelfth Night, January 6th 1601), during the visit of Count Don Virginio Orsino, who is mentioned in Neville’s correspondence with Winwood. *Twelfth Night* was certainly performed at the Middle Temple on February 2nd 1602. The letter therefore pre-dates *Twelfth Night*, though it may have been written whilst Neville was beginning work on the play.

Of 1004 words to be found in Neville’s letter of 8/12/1604, 253 (25%) are to be found in *All’s Well That Ends Well* and 256 (25.5%) occur in *Measure for Measure*. I first noticed the word ‘**exempted**’, which was only used once by Shakespeare, in *All’s Well That Ends Well*. The earliest recorded performance of *Measure for Measure* took place on December 26th 1604, just 18 days after this letter. *Measure for Measure* is believed to date from the summer of 1604. “In rare vocabulary, *All’s Well* is linked most closely” to *Measure for Measure*. Various tests suggest *All’s Well That Ends Well* was written after *Measure for Measure* (Snyder, 1993, 20).

Of 447 words to be found in Neville's letter of 18/6/1613, 144 words (**32.2%**) occur in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (the bard's very last play co-written with John Fletcher). I first noticed the word '**nullity**', which uniquely occurs in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Furthermore this letter includes two other rare words: '**irresolute**' which occurs only once, in *Henry VIII* (in a scene believed by scholars to have been written by Shakespeare: 1.2.209) and '**presumptions**'¹ which is uniquely to be found in *Double Falshood* (in a speech believed by Oliphant to be by Shakespeare: 3.2.11, Hammond, 2010, 95). All three of these late plays were co-written with Fletcher. *Cardenio*, the original of *Double Falshood*, was probably on stage for Christmas 1612; it was certainly performed on May 20th and June 8th 1613, this last performance being just ten days before Neville's letter. It was during a performance of *Henry VIII* that the Globe burned down on 29th June, 1613², just 11 days after Neville's letter. There are 113 words found in the letter which are also to be found in *Henry VIII* (**27%**). There are 89 words found in the letter which are also to be found in *Double Falshood* (**21.3%**). This lower figure may possibly reflect the fact that the text of *Double Falshood* has definitely been cut by editors from the original *Cardenio*, or simply that as it is the earliest of the three final collaborative plays it is more remote from this letter.

The *Two Noble Kinsmen* is dated to 1613-4. The high percentage of words used in the letter and this play, coupled with the large number of near misses (see below), would suggest the letter was written during the writing of the play (indeed this may help date the play to the summer of 1613). Furthermore this research has uncovered the political background to the play (see below) which suggests it was written between May - August 1613: Neville's letter was written on the 18th June 1613. It is in fact Neville's last letter in Winwood's *Memorials* (Winwood, 1725, Vol 3, 462-3).

The Control Letters:

I offer four letters as controls so readers can compare the incidence of Shakespeare's vocabulary in other writers' letters of the same period. These are:

- 1) Robert Cecil's letter to Henry Neville, written on 7/12/1599, and thus dates from the period between the writing of *Henry V* and *Twelfth Night*.
- 2) Edward De Vere, the Earl of Oxford's letter of July 1600 to Robert Cecil, written before *Twelfth Night* was staged.
- 3) John Chamberlain's letter to Ralph Winwood dated 18/12/1604, written just 8 days before the first recorded performance of *Measure for Measure*.
- 4) John Chamberlain's letter to Ralph Winwood dated 10/6/1613, during the period when *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was probably written.

I will now look at each of these letters in detail. The full text of the letters can be seen in the appendices. It might be argued that many of the words in the letters are commonplace: it is the combination of particular words in one document that is crucial, showing a possible relationship between the authorship of both.

Shared Vocabulary in Neville's letter of 1/8/1599 and *Henry V*:

In listing the words used by Neville in his letter I have retained the original spelling and italics. These lists offer the opportunity to see the variety and specific nature of

¹ The singular 'presumption' occurs in four plays: *Henry VI*, 1,2,3 and *All's Well That Ends Well*.

² As recorded in a letter from Mr. John Chamberlain to Sir Ralph Winwood, 8/7/1613 (Winwood, Vol 3, 469).

the vocabulary used by Neville and Shakespeare. Many words are common but when they occur together with more specialised words such as ‘articles’, ‘yoke’, ‘Roüen’, ‘preservation’ and ‘unprovided’ they appear to be a unique combination shared only by Neville and Shakespeare at that time. The letter is in Winwood’s *Memorials* (1725, Vol 1, 82).

In Neville’s letter the unique word ‘inconveniencies’ occurs in a context of international negotiations in France. He writes, “we spake of the *Article* of the *Treaty or Reglement of Depradations*, which I desyred might be changed, and quallified in some sort, as her Majestie might be freed from such **Inconveniencies** as had thereby already happened, and were dayly like to happen...”

In *Henry V* this word occurs in relation to international negotiations in France. Burgundy says,

my speech entreats
That I may know the let, why gentle Peace
Should not expel these **inconveniencies**
And bless us with her former qualities. (5.2.)

The passages are parallel in situation and language: instead of “we spake” in the letter we have “my speech” in the play. The word ‘quallified’ is in the letter, ‘qualities’ in the play. Both are concerned with the inconveniences to a female (the Queen in the letter, personified Peace in the play).

In the letter Neville writes, “such **pettit** respects of **Profit**”. In the prologue to Act 3 of *Henry V* there is, “Some **petty** and un**profitable** dukedoms”. James (2008, 251) also noticed that Shakespeare used the word ‘petit’ in *Henry V* when a French soldier asks “Petit monsieur, que dit-il?” This is the only time Shakespeare used the word ‘petit’. At this time Neville was the English Ambassador in France.

In the letter the following words occur which are also found in the play:

Single words:

Honourable, yesterday, Monsieur, proposed, first, Things, before, presented, receive, Answer, what, weight, Reason, poore, witts, Answeres, very, good, Words, many, Favours, already, entered, Satisfaction, Answer, last, *First*, touching, done, Dispatch, convenient, Speed, themselves, Particulars, Cause, desired, Inconveniencies, particular, enter, other, Course, shewing, equall, indifferent, both, more, proceeding, therein, Majestie, proposed, certaine, Articles, taken, execution, redd, Occasion, ever, think, thrust, upon, told, just, Prince, Sea, besydes, required, nothing, content, contented, secure, eyther, way, purpose, greatest, *all*, Man’s, Preservation, Queen, *herself*, Estate, Enemie, armed, against, *such*, Friends, *pettit*, urge, anything, saw, Prooffe, rather, Nature, *true*, bear, little, good, thing, wherein, hitherto, Friendship, until, charge, without, returne, reasonable, seemed, Syde, Yoke, Servitude, themselves, Course, never, great, Wrong, Admirall, Officers, Matters, thereupon, Ambassador, Counsaill, since, received, *Spaine*, fresh, withal, Fleet, assembled, Sail, Men, Opinion, possess, send, Way, otherwise, leave, Island, follow, prey, Part, Ireland, England, therefore, unprovided, better, Copy, favour, Kingdom, expressly, because, came, moment, Post, hast(e), consider, looke, Money, hence, till, Year, doubt, Somme, Crownes, fail, ready, paid, Roüen, Army, purpose, Fort, Bridge, Action, House, taken,

gone, Isle, meet, having, left, Foot, Horse, labour, means, theirs, joyne, hoped, Person, every, humbly, leave.

Pairs of words:

the same, I might, so long, full of, That they, to give, that very, I should, in Charge, they would, with all, I should, might be, like to, the Matter, only *in*, much more, our Preservation, any longer, and therefore, out of, their own, thought not, put in, were made, a tyme, when they, jealous of, but that, yeald them, Law of, be assured, Power to, the only, between us, should be, could not, the King's, hold the, his whole, will come, your Honor, of Warre, Parts of, the rather, seems to, may make, Yt may, please your, the next, some certaine, shall be, The *Germain*, have built, to defend, The Princes, the rest, the Camp.

Phrases of three words:

were able to, in some sort, therefore we must, according to the, the King will, they seem to, some part of, the Duke of.

10 Special words in Neville's letter of 1/8/1599 and *Henry V*:

I have selected ten words to see how frequently they are used by other writers at the same time: 'inconveniencences', 'preservation', 'yoke', 'servitude', 'unprovided', 'proceeding', 'assembled', 'convenient', 'particulars', 'indifferent'.

According to LION (the Literature on Line database):

'**Inconveniencences**' was used by John Rainolds in *The Overthrow of Stage Plays* in 1599.

'**Unprovided**' was used by no other writer at this time.

'**Preservation**' only occurs in an anonymous text about Henry VII, 1599.

'**Yoke**' was used by Thomas Nash in *Lenten Stuffe* and by George Peele in *David and Bethsabe* in 1599.

'**Servitude**' was used by John Hoskins in *Directions for Speech and Style* in 1599.

'**Proceeding**' was used by John Rainolds in *The Overthrow of Stage Plays* and in Robert Greene's *James IV* and *Alphonsus* in 1599.

'**Assembled**' was used by John Rainolds in *The Overthrow of Stage Plays*; by Thomas Storer in *Between Two Muses* and by Emanuel Ford in *Parismus* in 1599.

'**Convenient**' was used by John Rainolds in *The Overthrow of Stage Plays* and by John Hoskins in *Directions for Speech and Style* in 1599.

'**Particulars**' was used by John Rainolds in *The Overthrow of Stage Plays* in 1599.

'**Indifferent**' was used by six writers in 1599, including John Rainolds in *The Overthrow of Stage Plays*, by John Hoskins in *Directions for Speech and Style*, Thomas Nash in *Lenten Stuffe*, Thomas Heywood in *Edward IV*.

In other words, whilst Rainolds and Hoskins used several of these words only Shakespeare and Neville used them all at this time. Only one of these words, 'Particulars' occurs in the Cecil control letter.

Near misses:

Furthermore there are some phrases which, while not identical, are very close and some words that are near misses. For example, in Neville's letter we have 'impeach' and in the play 'impeachment'. In the letter I find, "this Action", in the play, "this fair action"; in the letter "my poore witts", in the play, "my wits"; in the letter, "to defend

their Bridge” whilst in the play Fluellen reports that the Duke of Exeter “keeps the bridge most valiantly”; there is “by all means” in the letter and “by the means” in the play. Instead of “we thought not good to” in the play there is “I thought good to...” in the letter.

Shakespeare never used the following words which occur in the letter: ‘related’, ‘secondly’, ‘concerned’, ‘strengthened’, ‘assented’, ‘Spaniards’.

Neville’s Life and Characters in Shakespeare’s Plays:

As Neville was in France when he wrote this letter and had been there since May, it cannot be argued that he was subliminally influenced by seeing Shakespeare’s play. Whilst writing *Henry V* Henry Neville was negotiating with Henry IV of France. He met Marshall Biron, whom he mentions in his letter dated 24/4/1600. Neville had probably previously encountered Biron when in France during his European travels of 1578-83. Biron had stayed at Neville’s father’s house in Blackfriars (James & Rubinstein, 2005, 124). Charles de Gantaut, duc de Biron (or his father Armand), is thought by scholars to be the model for Berowne in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, just as Henry IV (of Navarre) is thought to be portrayed by King Ferdinand of Navarre in the play (Woudhuysen, 2001, 68). *Love’s Labour’s Lost* was probably written in 1594 and offers evidence of the playwright’s knowledge of the French court and Oxford University: both of which Neville knew from his youth. Indeed his previous knowledge of France and its court may have been a reason for him being chosen as English Ambassador in 1599. Brenda James has explored the connections between Neville’s life and *Henry V* (James & Rubinstein, 2005, 118-122).

Shared Vocabulary in Neville’s letter of 29/7/1600 and *Twelfth Night*:

In this letter Neville uses the unique word ‘implacable’ in the context of the threat posed to Elizabeth I by too close a relationship between the French King and the Pope:

*“what cause of jealousy it giveth to the Queen, to see him combine himself so much more strictly with the Pope, then any of his Predecessors have done, **considering** how **implacable** an Enemy he is unto her.”*

In *Twelfth Night* the word occurs in a comic context of the threat posed by Sir Andrew Aguecheek to Viola (disguised as Cesario). Sir Toby Belch warns,

He is knight, dubbed with unhatched rapier and on carpet **consideration**; but he is a devil in private brawl: souls and bodies hath he divorced three; and his incensement at this moment is so **implacable**, that satisfaction can be none but by pangs of death and sepulchre. (3.4.237)

I note that in the letter there is the word ‘considering’ and in the play ‘consideration’ close by. In the letter the following words occur that are to be found in the play:

Single words:

Our, Business, End, twice, already, yesterday, Ship, Truth, action, among, continue, Days, Queen, whither, induced, Town, case, refuse, chuse, cases, Countrey, courtesy, Presence, point, all, way, neither, think, yield, while, besides, first, directly, own, part, meet, now, send, unless, before, Notwithstanding, willing, conceived, otherwise, partly, reason, grown, time, place, next, Meeting, upon, Sides, withal, Breach, sooner, War, Opinion, new, well, turn, small, Assurance, finds, least, certain, Enemies, finds,

Friends, take, occasion, conceived, cut, off, Trade, very, either, three, Months, therein, directly, Honour, Policy, Copy, Letter, lately, sent, meantime, best, solicit, Order, write, stay, Pleasure, further, known, therefore, instant, fair, manner, good, present, either, follow, Court, advise, about, matter, yourself, down, cause, need, promise, satisfy, pains, little, halting, Fellow, deal, Mind, constant, Nature, always, found, ready, find, bethink, means, build, Argument, King, thing, Alliance, jealousy, *himself*, implacable, observe, return, after, Speech, News, nothing, last, Count, from, before, Action, Strength, lately, slew, sent, Charges, else, Sir, dead, receive, letters, Friend.

Pairs of words:

here is, went away, my part, there be, it shall, which time, if the, will be, to enter into the, some of, any other, sending into, of these, so that, to come, in question, like of, she is, she shall, Continuance of, I suppose, these two, *being in*, Point of, of Honor, hath been, all this, having been, *and then*, And for, I see, they will, therefore I, we are, to have, therefore I, to give, of late, the other, should be, for all, *you find*, you may, tell him, and Safety, to touch, late Arrest, the wrong, between the, let fall, the better, desire to, the first, make some, till the, may be, know what, hath made, seems to, for our, with him, Name is, have seen, come with, I wish, you should, with some, would I, *out of*, to embrace, with all, she may, of state, her will, As if, chance to, fall into, hard a, *see him*, to hold, much more, than any, have done, an Enemy, *unto he*, leave to, with her, from me, a Month, hear of, favour to, of mine.

Phrases of three or four words:

fit for the, with the same, the Opinion of, of your self, be drawn in, I pray you, in all these, you shall hear more, I pray you.

According to LION no other writer used the phrase “You shall hear more” at this time.

10 Special words to be found in Neville’s letter of 29/7/1600 and *Twelfth Night*:

‘jealousy’, ‘induced’, ‘halting’, ‘alliance’, ‘implacable’, ‘continuance’, ‘assurance’, ‘solicit’, ‘notwithstanding’, ‘observe’.

According to LION:

‘**Jealousy**’ was used by no other writer at this time.

‘**Induced**’ was used by Nicholas Breton in *The Strange Fortunes of Two Excellent Princes* 1600.

‘**Halting**’ was used by John Egerton in *England’s Hope Against Irish Hate* in 1600 and by H.R. (Haigh?) in *A pleasant discourse of six gallant merchants*, 1600.

‘**Alliance**’ was not used by any writer in 1600 but by Thomas Nash in *Lenten Stuffle*; by John Weever in his *Epigrammes*; John Hoskins in *Directions for Speech and Style* in 1599.

‘**Implacable**’ was used by the anonymous writer of *The Weaker Go To The Wall*, in 1600, and by Thomas Nash in *Lenten Stuffle*, 1599.

‘**Continuance**’ was used by the anonymous writer of *The Weaker Go To The Wall*; by H.R. in *A pleasant discourse of six gallant merchants*; Nicholas Breton in *The Strange Fortunes of Two Excellent Princes*; Robert Kittowe in *Loves Load-Starre*; Cyril Tourneur in *The Transformed Metamorphosis* in 1600. The word also appeared in Shakespeare’s Quarto of *The Merchant of Venice* in 1600.

‘**Assurance**’ was used by John Dowland in his song *Tosse not my soule*; by Edward Fairfax in *Godfrey of Bulloigne*; Nicholas Breton in *The Strange Fortunes of Two*

Excellent Princes; H.R. in *A pleasant discourse of six gallant merchants*; the anonymous writer of *The Weaker Go To The Wall* and in two Shakespeare Quartos, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Much Ado About Nothing* in 1600.

'**Solicit**' was used only in the Shakespeare Quarto of *Much Ado About Nothing* in 1600.

'**Notwithstanding**' was used by Thomas Nash in *Summer's Last Will and Testament*; John Norden in *Vicissitudo rerum*; Nicholas Breton in *The Strange Fortunes of Two Excellent Princes*; H.R. in *A pleasant discourse of six gallant merchants*; the anonymous writer of *The Wisdom of Doctor Dodypoll*; Robert Kittowe in *Loves Load-Starre*; Robert Chambers in *Palestina*; William Vaughan in *Whether Stageplayes ought to be suffred in a Commonwealth?* and in the Quarto of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* in 1600.

'**Observe**' was not used by any writer in 1600 but was used by John Rainolds in *The Overthrow of Stage Plays*, by John Hoskins in *Directions for Speech and Style* and Francis Thynne's *Animadversions* (on Chaucer) in 1599.

In other words, whilst Nicholas Breton, H.R. and Thomas Nash used several of these words only Shakespeare and Neville used them all at this time. Two of these words, '**Induced**' and '**Observe**' occur in the Cecil control letter; De Vere in his letter used just one: '**Alliance**'.

Near misses:

Furthermore there are some significant near misses for example: 'Memorials' in *Twelfth Night* (the only instance in Shakespeare) instead of 'Memorial' in Neville's letter; 'restraint' in the play instead of 'restraints' in the letter; 'commission' in the play instead of 'commissioners' in the letter: the only time Shakespeare used 'commissioners' was in *Henry V*.

In Neville's letter we find "for my own part, I see no other way": in *Twelfth Night* we have "my part" and "no way"; in the letter, "that partly", in the play, "that I partly"; in the letter, "so would I not" in the play, "Would I or not". Furthermore, in the letter there is "you may ease yourself", in the play:

you can separate yourself
you do usurp yourself;
you must confine yourself
you yourself were saved.

In the letter there is, "you may very seriously urge": this is echoed in the play by, "**You may have very fit occasion for't**". In the letter we find, "the setting down"; in the play 'down' is used 7 times, three of which are with the word 'set' (all in the second half of the play):

set 'em down
sets down
I will set down

In the letter we find "three or four Months", in play "three months" is mentioned twice; in the letter there is "ready to embrace", in the play: "apt to embrace"; in the letter, "small assurance", in the play, "modest assurance". Looking at one sentence in the letter I have found close correspondences with words in the play:

“In both which cases, her Majesty sending into their Countrey, is of courtesy to have the *Preseance*, and so that **point** not to come **in question** at all. If she like of neither of these, she is to propose any other way that she shall think fit for **the Continuance** of the Treaty.”

The words ‘point’ and ‘presence’ occur within ten lines in the play, indeed the word ‘presence’ occurs in a letter read out by Malvolio. Earlier in the play Viola says, “you call **in question the continuance** of his love”.

Other rare words are used by Neville in this letter before Shakespeare used them: ‘distasted’ occurs in the letter and appears uniquely in *Troilus and Cressida* which dates from 1602. ‘Remonstrance’ is in the letter and Shakespeare used it just once in *Measure for Measure*, 1604. Likewise ‘dependance’ is only found in *Measure for Measure*. ‘Pretending’ is to be found in *Measure for Measure* and *Cymbeline*. In his letter Neville also used vocabulary that Shakespeare did not use, including ‘contentment’, ‘discontentment’, ‘occurs’, ‘revocation’ and ‘suspending’.

Neville’s correspondence and the names of characters in *Twelfth Night*:

Brenda James has already shown that *Twelfth Night* provides evidence of Neville’s authorship and that there is material in the letters relevant to the play, including that Winwood informed Neville that Don Virginio Orsino was coming to London in a letter dated 20/11/1600 (James & Rubinstein, 2005, 132). In a later letter of 4/12/1600, Winwood, informing Neville that he had given Orsino a letter of introduction to him, asked Neville to present Orsino to the Queen. Finally in a letter dated 29/1/1601 Neville wrote to Winwood that “Don Virginio Orsino hath been here and very graciously and honourably entertained by her Majesty; he is gone hence to the Archduke” (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 292).

James pointed out that Winwood also wrote about a Don Antonio (whom he describes as the “natural brother” of the new French Queen in a letter dated 29/10/1600, Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 267). I noticed that Neville was especially interested in a mysterious Sebastian who had “been so long a prisoner at Venice, is now believed to be the true Sebastian, by many secret tokens upon his Body; confirmed out of Portugal by those which knew him both Child and Man” (15/11/1600, Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 274). John Chamberlain, in two letters of 8/11/1598 and 17/1/1599 explains the identity of this man: “The newes now comes very hot that Sebastian the king of Portingale that was said to be slaine in the battell in Barbarie is at Venice” and “sayes he was not slaine... but taken prisoner, and concealed himself till he might conveniently get away” (McClure, 1939, 51, 63). King Dom Sebastian was reportedly killed at the battle of al-Qasr al-Kabir in 1578. Winwood wrote to Neville in a letter dated 2/1/1601 that Sebastian had been released, deported from Venice and might be sent to England. Their correspondence about Sebastian continued into February. In 1601 Jose Teixeira and Antony Munday published an account of *The Strangest Adventures ... of Dom Sebastian*.

Thus Neville is concerned with an Orsino, Antonio and Sebastian just before Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* was first performed.

Another Neville letter dated 19/2/1601, includes the word ‘notoriously’, which Shakespeare only used in *Twelfth Night* (see Casson, 2010, appendix 8). This letter, written as Neville hastened back to France following the Essex Rebellion, was composed after the first performances of *Twelfth Night*. Neville was arrested in Dover

after his involvement in the aborted uprising was revealed. In the play Malvolio complains, “There never was a man so notoriously abused”. Malvolio is unjustly locked up in a dark room. Just after writing this letter Neville found himself likewise imprisoned and a darkness entered Shakespeare’s plays. There are no letters from Neville until after his release in 1603. Brenda James has explored the connections between Neville’s life and *Twelfth Night* (James & Rubinstein, 2005, 132-135). This letter is in Winwood’s *Memorials* (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 232).

Shared Vocabulary in Neville’s letter of 8/12/1604, *All’s Well That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*:

The title *All’s Well That Ends Well* particularly fits Neville’s release from the Tower of London on 10th April 1603 and *Measure for Measure* contains scenes in prison where one character narrowly escapes being executed (Neville had avoided this fate in 1601). This letter is to be found in Winwood’s *Memorials* (1725, Vol 2, 37).

***All’s Well That Ends Well*:**

In his letter Neville writes, “the *Scottish* Men have a Priviledge in *France*, where by they are **exempted from** paying of the Custome that the *English* and other Forreigners pay...”

I have noted that the word ‘exempted’ is only ever used once by the bard, in *All’s Well That Ends Well*. The passage in the play includes the words **France** and **from**. Helena says,

Then shalt thou give me with thy kingly hand
What husband in thy power I will command:
Exempted be **from** me the arrogance
To choose from forth the royal blood of **France**... (2.1.191)

When John Chamberlain reported that Neville had been chosen as ambassador to France, in letter written in November 1598, he stated, “We hear the French king is sicke of a caruncle or carnositie in his yard which is thought wilbe a very difficult cure...” (McClure, 1939, 51). *All’s Well That Ends Well* begins with the French king being cured of a ‘fistula’. Neville therefore went to France with the knowledge of a problem of curing the French king, which 5 years later is shown in the play. The major source for the play was Boccaccio’s *Decameron*. Wright argued that Shakespeare used a French translation (Snyder, 1998, 1). Neville could read both French and Italian.

The following words occur in the letter and also in the play:

Single words:

Length, Concluded, Majestie’s, Satisfaction, unto, made, Speech, Instrument, under, Justice, hereafter, each, free, between, without, except, Caution, given, said, foreign, Parts, one, used, lawfull, because, Men, Priviledge, exempted, pay, therefore, except, less, than, French, brought, either, natural, Place, common, Nation, Company, those, already, either, born, since, Queen, Death, Intents, Purposes, before, Voice, three, thought, good, perfect, things, time, Debate, touched, particular, Side, seek, won, Acts, send, short, kind, Oath, taken, purpose, modest, answered, part, far, Among, Lord, Reputation, somewhat, about, Monsieur, some, hope, *ill*, besides, nothing, become, poor, upon, Days, brought, back, sell, Credit, reason, long, Restraint, betake,

making, make, abundance, ever, furnish, better, little, Peace, State, Affairs, begins, cool, Affection, carried, some, even, amongst, greatest, short, Service, Passage, cold, receive, sometimes, knowledge, worthy, remain, evermore, assured, Friend.

Pairs of Words:

We have, very good, when we, which we, That all, shall be, out of, for all, to bring, the other, in France, the English, so much, such as, we here, to carry, of our, the same, where the, Judges have, *to bear*, Office of, the Crown, till the, be done, The last, the principall, both Sides, most in, very well, the Matter, have been, of late, a great, these Wars, many of, able to, to buy, rather than, themselves to, now in, care not, we can, of any, so strongly, will be, I understand, very lately, Regiment of, under the, the Charge, best Wishes.

Phrases or three or more words:

as great as, all the rest, in the End, It is reported, Reference to your, I find that, at this time.

The following words occur in Neville's letter and in *Measure for Measure*:

Single words:

Length, Satisfaction, under, Seales, agreed, shortly, Laws, likewise, Justice, hereafter, free, Trade, without, paying, except, Sheep, sufficient, given, said, Parts, lawfull, subjects, paying, Custom, used, appears, Men, English, pay, therefore, whatsoever, less, here, French, River, either, natural, Place, common, Subject, free, one, Company, Sort, *bear*, already, Judges, either, born, since, Death, Intents, Purposes, before, Voice, Office, Crown, three, thought, good, till, perfect, things, Article, touched, both, particular, Side, Form, forced, taken, send, short, kind, Oath, purpose, sufficiency, answered, part, far, permit, others, Lord, Reputation, somewhat, about, Value, Ambassador, hope, some, mitigation, Rigour, reported, besides, nothing, expected, partly, become, poor, able, upon, Days, play'd, brought, back, rather, sell, Credit, reason, long Restraint, themselves, making, care, ever, better, now, ours, cheap, little, fruit, Peace, regard, Affairs, Affection, carried, strongly, some, even, greatest, short, Proof, understand, Service, Charge, complaine, cold, Answers, receive, sometimes, proceeded, worthy, wishes, remain, evermore, assured, Friend.

Pairs of Words:

We have, he made, when we, which we, shall be, That there, between the, about the, very good, the Speech, according to, for all, so as, to transport, any of, for all, to bring, the other, where they, because it, than we, much more, such as, it appears, but so, of our, to carry, as those, the same, this time, be done, most in, The last, to seek, very well, the End, the Matter, have been, of late, a great, to buy, many of, do make, of any, of State, will be, under the, I find, your knowledge, this time.

Phrases or three or more words:

out of the, as great as, all the rest.

10 Special words in Neville's letter of 8/12/1604, *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*:

In both plays: reputation, restraint, intents, purposes.

In *All's Well That Ends Well*: privalidge, exempted, debate.

In *Measure for Measure*: sufficiency, mitigation, proof.

According to LION, in both plays:

‘**Reputation**’ was used by John Davies in *Microcosmos* 1603; Samuel Rowlands in *Phisitions of the Quacksaluers crew* 1604; John Marston in *The Malcontent* 1604.

‘**Restraint**’ was used by Elizabeth Grymeston in *Miscelanea* 1604.

‘**Intents**’ was used by John Davies in *Microcosmos* 1603; William Leighton in *Vertue Triumphant* 1603; John Florio in *Essayes of Montaigne* 1603.

‘**Purposes**’ was used by by John Davies in *Microcosmos* 1603; William Leighton in *Vertue Triumphant* 1603; Thomas Lodge in *A Treatise of the Plague* 1603; John Norden in *A pensive Soules delight* 1603; Robert Dallington in *The View of France* 1604.

All’s Well That Ends Well:

‘**Privelidge**’ was used by John Florio in *Essayes of Montaigne* 1603.

‘**Exempted**’ was used by Edward Wilkinson in *Isahacs Inheritance* 1603; Thomas Lodge in *A Treatise of the Plague* 1603.

‘**Debate**’ was used by Richard Mulcaster in *A Comforting Complaint* 1603; Edward Wilkinson in *Isahacs Inheritance* 1603; William Herbert in *A Prophecie of Cadwallader* 1604.

Measure for Measure:

‘**Sufficiency**’ was used by Nicholas Breton in *Grimellos Fortunes* 1604; Samuel Daniel in *The Vision of the 12 goddesses* 1604.

‘**Mitigation**’ was used by no other writer at this time.

‘**Proof**’ was used by no other writer at this time.

In other words, whilst John Davies used three of these words only Shakespeare and Neville used them all at this time. None of these words occur in the Cecil, De Vere or John Chamberlain control letters, though De Vere does use ‘insufficiencie’.

Near misses:

‘Witness’ in both plays instead of ‘witnessed’ in the letter.

‘Minister’ in both plays instead of ‘ministered’ in the letter.

‘Commodity’ in both plays instead of ‘commodities’ in the letter.

“It is reported comonly that” in the letter and “It is reported that” in *All’s Well That Ends Well*.

“have Reference to your” in the letter and “hath reference to your” in *All’s Well That Ends Well*.

‘Discourse’ in *Measure for Measure* instead of ‘discourses’ in the letter.

‘Privileges’ in *Measure for Measure* instead of ‘privelidge’ in the letter.

‘Furnished’ in *Measure for Measure* instead of ‘furnish’ in the letter.

‘Proofs’ in *Measure for Measure* instead of ‘proof’ in the letter.

‘Transport’ in *Measure for Measure* instead of ‘transportation’ in the letter.

“Lawful trade” occurs in *Measure for Measure* whilst ‘lawful’ occurs 3 times and ‘trade’ 5 times in the letter. This is the only time Shakespeare used these words together.

Shakespeare never used the following words that occur in the letter: ‘witnessed’, ‘abolished’, ‘ministered’, ‘intercourse’, ‘prohibited’, ‘transportation’, ‘freight’,

‘enabled’, ‘corporation’, ‘attaining’, ‘judicature’, ‘begat’, ‘freehold’, ‘exclude’, ‘Archduke’s’, ‘check’.

In a letter dated 24/4/1600 Neville used the word ‘emblem’ which Shakespeare only used once in *All’s Well That Ends Well*. Again Neville’s vocabulary anticipates Shakespeare’s.

The Politics of *Measure for Measure* and Neville’s letter:

Lever (1989, xxxi) suggested that *Measure for Measure* contains echoes of the effect of a treaty with Spain, negotiated and ratified, May-August, 1604, (just the period when the play was probably written). In Neville’s letters we see he was involved in negotiating a treaty with Spain in 1600 and in this particular letter he is concerned with a report of “our Merchants are ill used in Spaine”. In this period Neville was being considered for the role of ambassador to Spain. John Chamberlain wrote in a letter dated 18/12/1604, ten days after Neville’s letter, that “Here is speech that... Sir *Henry Neville*” was a possible Ambassador “for Spaine”.

It has been suggested that the Duke in *Measure for Measure* is modelled on James I. The letter shows that Neville was in direct touch with the King over negotiations about the Union of the kingdoms. He opens the letter with:

“We have at length concluded the Conference about the Union, to his Majestie’s very good Satisfaction, as he witnessed by the Speech he made unto us, when we presented him the Instrument under our Seales.”

Neville’s letter is much concerned with Law, Justice and judges. *Measure for Measure* is concerned with the balance of Law, Justice and Mercy. The duke grants clemency to Angelo at the end rather than rigorously applying the law. James I wanted to be known for balancing justice and mercy. Neville had benefited from James I’s clemency just the year before: one of the King’s first acts in April 1603 was to send a warrant for the release of Southampton and Neville from the Tower of London.

In 1605 James I was present when Neville was awarded an M.A at Oxford. They had met in 1583 when Neville had travelled to Scotland with Walsingham and Essex on a diplomatic mission. Brenda James has explored the connections between Neville’s life and *Measure for Measure* (James & Rubinstein, 2005, 165-169). This letter is to be found in Winwood’s *Memorials* (Vol 2, 37).

Shared Vocabulary in Neville’s letter of 18/6/1613 and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*:

This is the last Neville letter in Winwood’s *Memorials* (Vol 3, 462). The play was Shakespeare’s last, co-written with John Fletcher. In the letter Neville writes, “The other great **Busyness** which filleth Mens Mouths now is *the Separation intended between myn Lord of Essex and his Lady; a Matter no less desired by my Lord and his Friends, then by her and hers; and yet I doubt there is scarce Matter enough confessed or proved to induce a Nullity in the Marriage...*”

In the play a school master laments their troupe of dancers has been let down by Cicely, the seamstress’ daughter, who has not shown up:

Our **business** is become a **nullity**
Yea, and a woeful, and a piteous **nullity**. (3.5.51)

Neville used the word 'business' twice in the letter, including in the same sentence as the words, "a nullity". Neville had previously used this word in a letter dated 19/11/1599 referring to the French King's divorce (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 131).

The following words occur in Neville's letter and in the play:

Single words:

Comes, than, somewhat, Proceedings, when, last, strong, long, Busyness, likewise, Interest, would, Cause, doubt, Delay, grown, two, against, some, hand, Sir, other, held, Intelligence, Since, *from*, Truth, never, impediments, Friends, Advice, write, well, Majestie, Purpose, yet, Liberty, Power, left, here, turn, Suit, another, way, deliver, sooner, effect, willing, even, Course, over, want, uphold, neither, our, Reputation, both, without, Love, among, Those, come, Things, present, himself, heard, granted, great, Mens, Mouths, myn, Lord, less, scarce, enough, induce, Marriage, affect, because, marry, againe, ere, Issue, remain.

Pairs of words:

that this, the one, the Matter, *so far*, between us, the King, no longer, so long, the Point, may do, before your, about the, *but for*, a sharp, I fear, give them, *when they*, leave us, The other, his Lady, a Nullity, desire to, take my, Service to.

Phrases of three words:

I think you, to take a, so much as, the mean time.

10 Special words in Neville's letter of 18/6/1613 and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*:

nullity, proceedings, busyness, intelligence, impediments, liberty, reputation, induce, issue, sharp.

Since this play was co-authored with Fletcher I have marked these words (F.) or (Sh.) according to whether they occur in sections of the play agreed by scholars to have been written by Fletcher or Shakespeare. In fact only one of the words falls into a section believed to be by Fletcher and this would not rule out a word being suggested by the bard to his junior colleague. Indeed since I did not know the authorship of these words before selecting them, this congruence between Neville's vocabulary and words to be found in sections of the play believed to have been written by Shakespeare is startling and offers further evidence for his authorship.

According to LION:

'**Nullity**' (F) was used by no other writer at this time.

'**Proceedings**' (Sh.) was used by Thomas Middleton in *The Manner of his Lordships Entertainment on Michaelmas day*; John Stephens in his *Cynthia's Revenge*; Gervase Markham in *The English Arcadia* and Robert Dallington in his *Aphorisms* in 1613.

'**Busyness**' (Sh.) was used by Francis Beaumont in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, the first quarto of which was published in 1613, though it had been performed from 1607.

'**Intelligence**' (Sh.) was used by John Stephens in *Cynthia's Revenge*; Gervase Markham in *The English Arcadia*; John Davies in *The Muses-Teares*; John Webster in *A Funeral Elegy* and by Robert Anton in his *Moriomacha* in 1613.

‘Impediments’ (Sh.) was used by John Stephens in *Cynthia’s Revenge* in 1613 and by Arthur Gorges in his *Lucan’s Pharsalia* in 1614.

‘Liberty’ (Sh.) was used by Francis Beaumont in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*; John Stephens in *Cynthia’s Revenge*; Robert Anton in *Moriomacha*; Gervase Markham in *The English Arcadia*; Thomas Heywood in *The Silver Age* and by William Leighton in *The Eight Lamentations in distress* in 1613.

‘Reputation’ (Sh.) was used by Nicholas Breton in *The Answer to Machiavel’s Uncasing*; Gervase Markham in *The English Arcadia*; John Davies in *The Muses-Teares*; John Webster in *A Funeral Elegy*; Elizabeth Cary in *The Tragedy of Mariam*; John Marston in *The Insatiate Countess* and by Henry Parrot in two works *Vera filia* and *Sequitur fortuna* in 1613.

‘Induce’ (Sh.) was used by Thomas Campion in his *Maske on the marriage night of Count Palatine and Lady Elizabeth* and by John Stephens in *Cynthia’s Revenge* in 1613.

‘Issue’ (Sh.) was used by Robert Anton in his *Moriomacha*; Francis Beaumont in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*; Nicholas Breton in *The Answer to Machiavel’s Uncasing* and his *Instruction to his Sonne*; Elizabeth Cary in *The Tragedy of Mariam*; George Chapman in *The Revenge of Bussy D’Ambois*; Joseph Fletcher in *Christes Bloody Sweat*; Thomas Heywood in *The Silver Age*, *A Funeral Elegie* and *Marriage Triumph*; William Leighton in *Teares or Lamentations*; Gervase Markham in *The English Arcadia*; John Davies in *The Muses-Teares*; John Webster in *A Funeral Elegy*; Elizabeth Cary in *The Tragedy of Mariam*; John Marston in *The Insatiate Countess*; Henry Parrot in his *Quam sequitur deteriora* and by John Stephens in *Cynthia’s Revenge* in 1613.

‘Sharp’ (Sh.) was used by Robert Anton in his *Moriomacha* and Robert Dallington in his *Aphorisms* in 1613.

In other words whilst Markham and Stephens used several of these words only Shakespeare and Neville used them all at this time. None of these words are to be found in the Cecil or De Vere control letters, though Cecil did use ‘induced’ instead of ‘induce’. John Chamberlain used just one of these words: ‘business’.

Near misses:

There are a great many near misses in Neville’s letter of words to be found in the play: “our Proceeding” in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* instead of “our Proceedings” in the letter; ‘depend’ in the play instead of ‘depending’ in the letter; “in prison” in the play instead of ‘imprisonment’ in the letter; “this business” in the play instead of “this long depending Busyness”; ‘confessors’ instead of ‘confessed’; ‘despatch’ instead of ‘dispatched’ or ‘dispacht’; “no such cause” instead of “no cause”; ‘discovered’ instead of ‘discover’; ‘late’ instead of ‘later’; ‘suggested’ instead of ‘suggestions’; ‘secret/s’ instead of ‘secretly’; ‘allow’ instead of ‘allowed’; ‘commit/ed’ instead of ‘commitment’; ‘charge’ instead of ‘charged’; ‘clear’ instead of ‘cleared’; ‘continually’ instead of ‘continual’; ‘appliance’ instead of ‘apply’; ‘mention’ instead of ‘mentioned’; “another’s way” instead of “another way”; ‘bold/est/ly/er’ instead of ‘Boldness’; ‘enforce’ instead of ‘inforced’; “our ancient Reputation” instead of “our Reputation”; ‘desire’ instead of ‘desired’; “things desire” instead of “desired to Things”; ‘fill’d’ instead of ‘fillesh’; “my Lord” instead of “myn Lord”; ‘approved’ instead of ‘proved’; “I’th mean time” instead of “In the mean time”.

Neville uses 'hath' three times in this letter. In disentangling what parts of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* were written by Shakespeare and which by Fletcher, it has been noticed by scholars that Shakespeare used 'hath' whilst Fletcher preferred the more modern 'has' (Hammond, 2010, 99).

Neville's correspondence and the Politics behind *The Two Noble Kinsmen*:

This letter throws light on the politics behind *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Neville writes about the delays in his appointment as secretary of state ("this long depending Busyness"). He reports that he has discovered, "that the Delay hath grown upon two Suggestions secretly made to the King against me; the one that I had some hand in the Matter wherewith Sir Robert Maxwell and Mr. Whitlock were charged, which is already cleared, the other, that I have held continual Intelligence with Overbury since his Imprisonment: A matter so far from Truth, as I protest there never passed between us so much as a Message since his Commitment." (Italics in the original.)

He also writes that, "The other great Busyness which filleth Mens Mouths now is the Separation intended between myn Lord of Essex and his Lady; a Matter no less desired by my Lord and his Friends, then by her and hers; and yet I doubt there is scarce Matter enough confessed or proved to induce a Nullity in the Marriage, which is that which they both affect, because they desire to marry againe."

These two events were connected. Thomas Overbury was sent to the Tower ostensibly for refusing to go as the King's ambassador to Moscow. However his arrest also suited Robert Carr, Lord Rochester, who was in love with Lady Essex (née Frances Howard). At this time she was still married to Robert Devereux, the 3rd Earl of Essex. Overbury, fearing his displacement in Rochester's affections and the growing influence of the Catholic Howards at court, was opposed to this relationship between Rochester and Frances. As Neville states, the unhappy Essex couple were seeking "a nullity" to free them from their loveless and unconsummated marriage. The occurrence therefore of the repeated words "a nullity" in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is topical, though they are carefully placed as a throw away comic line to avoid causing offence. The audience however would spot the allusion. The nullity of the Essex marriage was granted on September 26th 1613, Overbury having died on September 14/15th. I will argue that the play was written before these events, whilst the nullity was still in question and Overbury alive.

Overbury was arrested and sent to the Tower on 21st April 1613. The next day John Packer (who had been Neville's secretary and was now working for Rochester) wrote to Winwood of Overbury's arrest: "That evening my Lord of Pembroke and Sir Henry Nevill were with him (i.e. Lord Rochester) and so were againe this Morning; who have given him so good Advice that if he follow it, as I hope he will, all will be well with him, and no hurt to his Friend" (i.e. Overbury; Winwood, 1725, Vol 3, 447). John Chamberlain also wrote to Winwood, on May 6th 1613, about Overbury's refusal to go to Moscow and added that, "the King apprehends the Busyness very earnestly, and hath caused Sir Henry Nevill to conferr with some of the Councill about it diverse times; wherein they say he showed great Sufficiency, and discoursed at large what commodity might arise by bringing the whole trade of Persia, and the inland Parts of the *East Indies* up the River Hydaspes..." (McClure, 1939, 448). Furthermore on June 10th 1613 (just a week before Neville's letter) Chamberlain reported that "two lame hexameter verses" had been found in Grey's Inn:

Curans, Lord Compton, Whitlocke, Overburie, Mansfield:
Nevill, Starchamber, Sutton, Scot, Baylie, divorcement.

Thus the nullity or 'divorcement' was connected in the popular mind with Overbury and Neville (McClure, 1939, 459).

In the notebook which includes Neville's copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* (Worsley MSS 47 in the Lincoln archives: see Casson, 2010), there is a handwritten copy of the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Abbott's report to James I on the divorce of Frances and the Earl of Essex Earl and his Majesty's response, dated 15/7/1613. This is just one month after the letter we are examining. Indeed there is another extant letter written by Neville on 16/7/1613³, the day after he wrote the notes in Worsley MSS 47, concerning the nullity. Neville, having been an ally of the 2nd Earl of Essex, was supportive of his son. Indeed Neville was deeply involved in the annulment of Essex's marriage, as is clear in the papers from the subsequent trials following Overbury's death, in which it is revealed that Neville had warned the Archbishop in July 1613, that Frances had "a new husband... readily provided for her". He knew this from "a speech of Overbury's once to me in that kind..." (Somerset, 1997, 128).

In 1611 Rochester, at Overbury's urging, had suggested to James I that he employ Neville in managing Parliament (Somerset, 1997, 66). When Overbury realised the King's dislike of him blocked his own ambition to be secretary of state, "he urged Rochester to persuade the King to give the job to their long-established political ally, Sir Henry Neville" (Somerset, 1997, 91). Neville was also supported by the Earls of Southampton and Pembroke. However Overbury's arrogant behaviour alienated the King. This in effect tarnished Neville, whose candidacy for the secretary of state Overbury had supported. Towards the end of 1612 Neville had written, "There hath been much poison cast out of late unto the King both against him (Overbury) and me..." (Somerset, 1997, 92).

Neville's letter is dated June 18th, 1613. Overbury died in the Tower on the night of September 14/15th. What evidence is there that *The Two Noble Kinsmen* refers to the events surrounding Overbury's arrest? Overbury must still have been alive when the play was conceived because the play has scenes in prison and both prisoners leave prison: Arcite is released and Palamon escapes. The play is about compassion and release from prison, not about death in prison. Arcite does die but not in prison. As an ex Ambassador who had repeatedly requested to come home, Neville would have understood Overbury's reluctance to go abroad. Overbury's arrest must have reminded Neville of his own period in the Tower with Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton. A story about two friends imprisoned together would have resonated with Neville. Shakespeare elaborates on the mutual dependence and affection of the two men during their imprisonment which is not in Chaucer's original tale. As an ex prisoner in the Tower, Neville would also have had compassion for Overbury. The word 'compassion' is used four times in the play (more than in any other Shakespeare play).

My case is that the choice of Chaucer's *Knights Tale* was deliberate: it enabled Neville to write a play about chivalry, compassion, imprisonment, the long struggle of

³ In Stowe 174, folio 116, British Library

a man in love to win his bride from another man. I suggest this reflects Rochester's struggle to win Frances from Essex. The two noble kinsmen, who begin as firm friends and become deadly rivals over a woman, may also be Overbury and Rochester. The play shows one of these men left in prison, just as Overbury was in prison at the time of the letter. Previous studies of the play have suggested that the political background to the play was the death of Prince Henry (in November, 1612) and the marriage of Princess Elizabeth (in February 1613). Neville was close to the martial Henry who might be recalled in Arcite, the worshipper of Mars, who dies before he can be married. Neville was a supporter of the Prince's revival of chivalric values which are celebrated in the play. This death and marriage however are more properly to be seen as behind the plot of *Cardenio/Double Falshood* which was probably staged during Christmas 1612 and was also performed in May and June 1613.

Double Falshood:

This letter's vocabulary is also related to that of *Double Falshood*. At least 89 of the words in the letter occur in *Double Falshood* (21.3%). I have previously shown the connections between Neville and *Double Falshood* (Casson, 2009, 217-226).

Single words:

Somewhat, Proceeding, Business, Interest, Wrote, Cause, Discover, Delay, grown, Suggestion, Against, Hand, already, Continual, Impediment, Truth, Never, Between, Resolve, Wherein, Dispatch, Mention'd, Require/s, Advice, Purpose, Power, Letter, Another, Linger, Join, effect, Suit, Willing, Sharp, Course, over, Boldness, Means, Resolve, Satisfaction, Leave, Without, Love, Things, enough, scarce, marry, marriage, Service.

'Mention'd' only occurs one other Shakespeare play, *Titus Andronicus*. Likewise 'mentioned' occurs just once, in *The Winter's Tale*.

Pairs of words:

The Matter, I protest, No longer, So long, I think, Your friends, Before your, To take, I fear, desire to.

Phrase of three words:

For want of.

Near misses:

We find 'deliver'd' in the play instead of 'deliver' in the letter; 'Inforces' in the play instead of 'inforced' in the letter; 'Grant' in the play instead of 'granted' in the letter; 'Confess' and 'confessors' in the play instead of 'confessed' in the letter; 'Prove/s' in the play instead of 'proved' in the letter; "to the Point" in the letter; "to th' Point" in the play.

In the letter there is: "no **Cause** much **to doubt** it" whilst in *Double Falshood* there is the line: "Some formal **Cause to qualify my Doubts**" (in a scene believed to have been written by Shakespeare: 1.1.31).

Henry VIII:

There are 112 words found in the letter which are also to be found in *Henry VIII* (27%).

Single words:

expected, somewhat, Proceedings, strong, long, Busyness, forthwith, Cause, doubt, Delay, grown, Suggestion, against, hand, Intelligence, already, charged, Continual, Truth, never, between, removed, Friends, confident, write, Majestie, Wherein, dispatch, required, Purpose, Liberty, Power, left, Suit, Letter, another, way, deliver, sooner, effect, willing, even, Course, over, Boldness, Means, want, our, Leave, without, Love, Things, present, himself, heard, council, granted, great, Mens, Mouths, Separation, mine, Lord, Lady, less, scarce, enough, induce, Marriage, affect, because, marry, againe, ere, Issue, remain, Service.

Pairs of words:

the Matter, his Imprisonment, between us, the King, so long, the Point, before your, a sharp, I fear, leave us, The other, desire to, Service to, to take, Your friends.

Phrases of three words:

I think you, take my leave.

A near miss:

“I’ll take my leave” in the play instead of “I will take my leave” in the letter.

The only time the word ‘secretary’ occurs in the canon is in *Henry VIII* where it is used five times, especially about new secretaries taking over the role: at least one of these is in a scene accepted as by Shakespeare (as opposed to Fletcher). This matches Neville’s political ambitions in 1613. Many people expected Neville to become the Secretary of State that year. Ralph Winwood became Secretary in March 1614. He became a key figure in the enquiry into Overbury’s death. Overbury and Rochester had codenamed Neville ‘Similis’ because he looked like Henry VIII (Somerset, 1997, 90), as did Sir Edward Neville, his grandfather. Indeed Edward was mistaken for King Henry during a masque at Wolsey’s house. This masque is in *Henry VIII*, but Shakespeare altered the scene to remove Edward Neville (see Casson, 2009, 176). Neville lived at Wolsey’s mansion in Mayfield from 1589.

The control letters:**1) Robert Cecil’s letter to Sir Henry Neville**

Of the 1478 words in Cecil’s letter, 229 are to be found in *Henry V* (15.5%) and 233 are in *Twelfth Night* (15.7%). In Cecil’s letter there are the words ‘**Commissioners**’ and ‘**Dissensions**’ which were only ever used once by Shakespeare, in *Henry V*, though the play must have been written before Cecil wrote his letter. The first of these words was important between the two men and the words ‘commissioners’ and ‘commission’ occur in Neville’s letter of 29/7/1600, a letter I have connected with *Twelfth Night*, in which play the word ‘commission’ occurs. ‘Commission’ also occurs in Cecil’s letter. The letter is to be found in Winwood’s *Memorials*, (1725, Vol 1, 137-9).

The choice of this control letter may be viewed as problematical: after all it is not just any neutral letter but a letter between two men who were working together who might be expected to share vocabulary as they were involved in the same issues. This however is a possible bonus to the study as it allows for the possibility of mutual influence. What is apparent however is that Cecil’s vocabulary is simpler than Neville’s. Cecil and Neville shared courtly language which we also find in

Shakespeare: i.e., Cecil in his letter writes: "...*please her*. So her Majestie..." In *Henry V* we find, "please your Majesty". In Cecil's letter we find, "give him this Assurance", in *Twelfth Night*, "give me modest assurance".

Cecil uses the following vocabulary to be found in both *Henry V* and *Twelfth Night*:

Henry V:

Single words:

Received, both, neither, returne, sooner, Answer, intend, concerning, Majestie, perswaded, True, contented, ground, Mercy, seeke, promises, Warrant, Name, arrived, knowen, directed, Place, Courte, appoint, Admirall, thither, assure, Passeport, Ambassador, coming, Pardon, Concerning, littell, Demaunds, Charge, therefore, alone, except, accord, bring, further, only, tyme, besides, generall, Stay, whole, Yeare, longer, hope, doth, worke, small, difference, seeing, respect, Estate, Wisdome, please, joyne, proceed, next, Commissioners, God, spoken, withal, severall, Places, because, another, suche, Justice, tymes, appeare, should, draw, away, wryte, againe, taken, like, Poynte, Cloathes, called, deliver, divers, playnely, rype, Dissensions, betweene, England, beginner, play, Parts, severall, quarter, particular, thoughte, serve, without, Lyfe, Hart, against, opinion, Faith, Eare, good, wherein, blood, saved, passe, hitherto, hard, enter, until, kept, making, already, Promise, manner, cary, Conditions, understand, stand, avoid, yeald, State, Debts, fynd, ancient, believe, quick, Payment, payd, Pounds, Yeare, tenne, hundred, necessitie, Speche, Discretion, Uncle, power, Reasons, nor, hardly, busy, Kinsman, first, broken.

Pairs of words:

from you, of late, and therefore, the Matter, my Lord, be assured, the matter, must leave, presently to, you know, Courte of, the second, the World, every one, to sow, And therefore, you know, firme and, the French, send to, tell him, how things, dare not, as yet, the particular, he thincks, be required, heare yt, seeme to, shall be, some of, somme (ie sum) of, the Offer, blame you, although I, unlesse yt, my Cosen.

Phrases of three or more words:

as much as.

Of the ten special words found in Neville's letter and *Henry V*, Cecil used just one: 'particulars'.

Twelfth Night:

Single words:

both, neither, returne, sooner, Answer, Letter, concerning, perswaded, True, practising, ground, Mercy, seeke, promises, deserve, Warrant, Name, Assurance, arrived, knowen, Place, Courte, assure, coming, going, Pardon, Concerning, littell, Charge, therefore, alone, except, bring, Circumstance, further, only, besides, Stay, whole, Yeare, longer, contrary, hope, doth, worke, small, Estate, leave, Wisdome, please, presently, proceed, next, God, Poynts, Commission, withal, Places, Subjects, because, above, another, suche, often, tymes, appeare, should, draw, away, wryte, againe, taken, like, Poynte, Cloathes, bearer, called, deliver, Report, divers, playnely, rype, betweene, England, beginner, Parts, heare, serve, turnes, observe, dealing, without, hate, Injuries, Lyfe, Hart, against, opinion, Faith, good, wherein, passe, firme, above, send, hard, understand, stand, yeald, deceived, forbear, tryall, Fayth, kept,

already, first, Promise, Personns, manner, heare, State, fynd, some, easily, induced, believe, quick, Payment, surely, Debt, necessitie, Speche, Offer, deale, followed, Uncle, blame, although, allow, Reasons, nor, served, hardly, Kinsman.

Pairs of words:

from you, of late, and therefore, the Matter, som Service, send for, the matter, I protest, this tyme, respect of, you know, as much, the second, the contrary, delivered to, Parts of, the World, to play, every one, thoughe you, delivered to, And therefore, you know, sufficient to, give Eare, be saved, tell him, dare not, as yet, may cary, lett fall, he thincks, seeme to, avoid yt, shall be, be payd, a Yeare, that Nature, I protest, my Cosen.

Phrases of three or more words:

a great while, so mucche blood, unlesse yt be.

Cecil used two of the list of ten special words words found in Neville's letter and *Twelfth Night*: 'induced' and 'observe'.

Cecil also used some words that Shakespeare only used once: the vast majority of this rare vocabulary occurs in plays written after the date of this letter, suggesting perhaps that Neville acquired at least some of his vocabulary from his boss!

'Solid': Shakespeare only used 'solid' in three plays, all written post 1600: *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *Troilus and Cressida*.

'Vindicative': Shakespeare used 'vindicative' once, in *Troilus and Cressida*.

'Voluntarily': Shakespeare used 'voluntarily' once, in *Troilus and Cressida*.

'Concur': Shakespeare used 'concur' once, in *Troilus and Cressida*.

'Confidently': Shakespeare used 'confidently' once, in *All's Well That Ends Well*.

'Reconciliation': Shakespeare used 'reconciliation' once, in *Othello*.

'Cautions': Shakespeare used 'cautions' once, in *King Lear*.

'Affectionate': Shakespeare only used 'affectionate' once, in *King Lear*.

'Entry': Shakespeare only used 'entry' once, in *Macbeth*.

'Indisposition': Shakespeare uses 'indisposition' once, in *Timon of Athens*.

'Whitehall': is only used once, in *Henry VIII*.

"having heard" is only used once, in *Henry VIII*.

'Secretary': Shakespeare only used 'secretary' in *Henry VIII*.

Other vocabulary used once in earlier plays are merely commonplaces:

'Meaneth': Shakespeare only used 'meaneth' once, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

"Coming and going": Shakespeare used "coming and going" in *Titus Andronicus*.

"to treat": Shakespeare used "to treat" just once in *King John*.

'Intendeth': Shakespeare used 'intendeth' only in *King John*.

Phrases:

In Cecil's letter the phrase "as you shall like of" occurs. Despite the title of Shakespeare's play this phrase does not occur in the canon.

In Cecil's letter there are fewer two/three word phrases that occur in the Shakespeare plays than we find in Neville's letters.

Near Misses:

In *Henry V* the Archbishop of Canterbury says, “A thousand pounds by the year”. Cecil writes, “100000 Pounds a Yeare”. We find “particular ends” in Cecil’s letter and “particular endings” in *Henry V*. ‘Seeing’ is used by Cecil meaning since, whereas in *Henry V* it is used as the opposite of blind. Whilst the word ‘Stay’ occurs in Cecil’s letter it is “the stay”, meaning delay, a usage not found in the plays in question.

In *Twelfth Night* Malvolio asks, “Is there no respect of **place, persons, nor time** in you?” Cecil writes, “her Majestie for the present canne presse them noe further; but will send over now, to agree of the **Tyme, Place, and Personns** for her selfe to Treate.”

Shakespeare never used some of Cecil’s vocabulary: ‘disunited’, ‘bruits’, ‘November’, ‘irresolution’, ‘Commitment’, ‘consultation’, ‘administered’, ‘advertisements’, ‘correspondency’, relatively’, ‘propound/ing’, fraudulent’, ‘hardened’, ‘broadly’, ‘narratively’, ‘demission’, ‘archduke’, ‘reimbursement’, ‘ratible’.

Finally the lower percentages of words used by Cecil that occur in *Henry V* (**15.5%**) and *Twelfth Night* (**15.7%**) compared to the Neville letter scores of *Henry V* (**29.5%**) and *Twelfth Night* (**29%**), speak for themselves.

However Cecil’s influence on Neville’s writing, and therefore Shakespeare, cannot be ruled out and further research may show that Cecil did trigger some of Neville’s ideas: for example in a letter dated 2/3/1599, in other words just as Shakespeare would have been writing *Henry V*, Cecil referred to Neville’s letters, saying, “the Queene was exceeding well satisfied: saying, that you were too like somebody in the World (who is now in Heaven) to whom she is afrayed you are a little kin, to be content to **carry Coales** at any Frenchman’s Hand.” Cecil is referring to Neville’s coming ambassadorship in France and perhaps to a number of his ancestors who travelled to France, such as Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, the Kingmaker, (who we see in France in *Henry VI* part 3), possibly even to Henry V (to whom Neville was “a little kin”). The words “carry coals” are used by a boy in Shakespeare’s *Henry V*, who refers to Nym and Bardolph in France, stealing: “in Calais they stole a fire-shovel: I knew by that piece of service the men would **carry coals**.” (The phrase was used by Shakespeare in just one other play: *Romeo and Juliet*).

The full text of Cecil’s letter is in appendix 5 below.

2) Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford’s letter to Sir Robert Cecil, July 1600

Of the 365 words in de Vere’s letter of July 1600, 117 words (**32 %**) occur in *Twelfth Night*. This is indeed a high percentage, compared with just **29%** in Neville’s letter. However Neville’s letter contains 372 words to be found in the play compared with de Vere’s 117: over three times as many.

Edward de Vere has been regarded by many as the leading Shakespeare authorship candidate and this letter has already been analysed by Fowler (1986) who finds many parallels with Shakespeare’s plays, though none with *Twelfth Night*. Fowler offers a scatter gun approach, finding parallels with fragments of plays across the whole canon. I have chosen to focus on one or two plays contemporary with a letter and on this measure de Vere’s letter is weak because, despite the high percentage of words to be found in the play, most of these are commonplace. When we examine the vocabulary

de Vere's is clearly much simpler than Neville's. Of the ten special words found in Neville's letter that are also in *Twelfth Night*, only one, 'alliance' is also found in de Vere's letter.

Single words:

Although, bad, former, suits, attempt, vain, words, golden, believe, always, true, word help, itself, brought, forth, fair, also, yield, Wherefore, lately, office, Sir, stands, now, disposition, best, please, most, desire, first, good, ear, houses, alliance, last, nothing, upon, some, other, already, yet, such, many, call, remembrance, ought, equal, lighter, myself, by, what, better, means, opportunity, hopes, attend, all, unless, receive, rather, assure, doubt, both, honourable, friend, Brother.

Pairs of words:

cause to, my hopes, bottom of, rather than, of fair fruits of, I cannot, hath been, a little, about the, to bestow, this present, I know, doth give, the matter, a thing, debt of, to embrace, part from, of time, of men, good turns,.

Phrases of three words:

have given me, the death of.

'**Correspondence**': Shakespeare only used 'Correspondence' once in Sonnet 148.

'**Chargeth**': Shakespeare only used 'Chargeth' once in *The Comedy of Errors*.

'**Extraordinarily**': Shakespeare only used 'Extraordinarily' once in *Henry IV* part 2.

At least two of these unique words were certainly written before de Vere's letter and their occurrence here can be seen simply as chance.

The letters share a common political context: de Vere is asking Cecil for his help in gaining the Governorship of the Isle of Jersey. Both Neville and de Vere mention the death of the previous Governor, Sir Anthony Paulet, who died on July 22nd. This helps to date de Vere's letter which must therefore be after July 22nd. Neville's letter, written at the end of the month, shows that he knew Cecil was supporting Sir Walter Raleigh for this post. Edward de Vere died in 1604. The letter is to be found in the Hatfield MSS, CP 251/28 (Fowler, 1986, 540) and in appendix 6 below.

3) John Chamberlain to Ralph Winwood dated 18/12/1604.

Of the 582 words in Chamberlain's letter, 127 (21.8%) are to be found in *All's Well That Ends Well*; 160 (27.5%) are in *Measure for Measure*. Of 1004 words to be found in Neville's letter of 8/12/1604, 253 (25%) are to be found in *All's Well That Ends Well* and 256 (25.5%) occur in *Measure for Measure*. Neville's letter is twice as long.

Single words used in *All's Well That Ends Well*:

Novelty, since, last, like, send, Letter, back, presently, after, makes, againe, further, towards, called, great, Marriage, Sir, Lady, Day, Queen, hand, delivered, Brother, still, methinks, little, *good*, come, neither, hear, going, *France*, Thought, Busyness, greatest, Imployment, Charge, speech, say, *ill*, *especially*, *Authority*, *Lord*, mend, till, carries, *Title*, besides, two, best, present, certaine, Horses, rich, heavy, very, hundred, sorts, nothing, well, sent, took, Possession, Presence, Lords, late, Action, twice, exceeding, whether, unfit, played, Life, time, generally, held, spoken, quick, wishing, merry, Year, commit, God.

Pairs of words: Here is, to keep, though I, The King, a place, at home, against the, the Duke, of Men, to carry, *a Man, no more*, And though, to bear, *no part, the King's*, The Prince, a piece, the whole, the matter, with Child, many a.

Single words used in *Measure for Measure*:

Manner, Novelty, since, last, Journey, forbear, though, send, empty, Letter, back, wearie, satisfied, presently, reckoning, againe, further, towards, place, called, great, entertaine, Masks, Marriage, Sir, Day, likewise, delivered, still, Hungary, methinks, little, *good*, Ambassador, newly, come, neither, hear, after, going, though, thought, Busyness, greatest, Countenance, imposed, bear, Charge, speech, appointed, *complaine, ill, especially, notice, tyed, Authority*, perswaded, *Lord*, mend, till, *Title, Excellence*, allowed, besides, two, best, Prince, present, certaine, rich, hot, heavy, very, eight, hundred, pounds, piece, whole, nothing, well, sent, took, Possession, late, elected, Action, twice, People, whether, handled, unfit, Stage, Life, time, held, spoken, quick, merry, Year, God.

Pairs of words: Here is, to keep, ready for, be like, The King, after the, he makes, at home, against the, the Lady, in hand, Her Brother, the Duke, of Men, to carry, *a Man, no more*, his Errand, some say, *the King's*, sends a, the matter, much displeased, with Child, wishing a, many a.

Phrases:

to transport him, in the Presence of the.

'Procuring': Shakespeare only used 'Procuring' once, in *Cymbeline*.

'Jurisdiction': Shakespeare only used 'Jurisdiction' once, in *Henry VIII*.

'February': Shakespeare only used 'February' once, in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

'Embroidery': Shakespeare only used 'Embroidery' once, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

'Saddles': Shakespeare only used 'Saddles' once, in *The Taming of the Shrew*.

'Improper': Shakespeare only used 'Improper' once, in *King Lear*.

These rarely used words are scattered across the whole canon from early to late and therefore can simply be regarded as the result of random coincidence.

In *Measure for Measure* Lucio says, "If the duke with the other dukes come not to composition with the King of **Hungary**, why then all the dukes fall upon the king." (1.2.) Chamberlain writes in his letter, "**the Duke** of *Holst* is here still, procuring a Levy of Men to carry into **Hungary**". The only time Shakespeare mentions Hungary is in *Measure for Measure* and indeed Chamberlain's letter throws light on this reference by his own mention of troops being levied for Hungary.

In this letter Chamberlain notes a rumour that James I had chosen "Sir *Henry Neville* for *Spaine*", as ambassador. He also mentions the performance of a play:

"The Tragedy of *Gowry*, with all the Action and Actors hath been twice represented by the King's Players, with exceeding concourse of all sorts of People. But whether the matter or manner be not well handled, or that it be thought unfit that Princes should be played on the Stage in their Life-time, I hear that some great Councillors are much displeased with it, and so 'tis thought shall be forbidden."

This is of interest because Clark (1981) in a thorough study of *Macbeth*, found that Shakespeare had been influenced by the story of the Gowry Conspiracy of August 1600, during which Alexander Ruthven attempted to assassinate James VI. Neville was aware of the Gowry Conspiracy soon after it had happened and mentioned it in a letter dated 2/11/1600 (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 271). Clark showed that Shakespeare had special knowledge of Scotland and must have visited the country. Neville had been in Scotland, indeed at Glamis castle, in 1583. Furthermore his father-in-law, Henry Killigrew had been English Ambassador to Scotland.

Duncan (1974, 191) reported that Neville and Southampton were arrested on June 24th 1604 on suspicion of involvement in an assassination plot. They were released the next day when it became clear there was no evidence against them. This was just six months before this letter.

Shakespeare never used the words ‘Ledgier’, ‘capitulation’, ‘represented’, ‘concourse’. The letter is to be found in McClure (1939) and in appendix 7 below.

4) **John Chamberlain to Ralph Winwood dated 10/6/1613.**

Of the 830 words in this second letter from Chamberlain, 181 (21.8%) are to be found in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, compared with 32.2% in Neville’s letter of 18/6/1613. The letter is to be found in McClure (1939, 458-60) and in appendix 8 below.

Single words:

Very, goode, Lord, towne, May, glad, well, great, care, charge, long, upon, return, found, little, here, frends, rather, then, forward, reason, among, many, others, only, every, body, loth, leave, hold, advantage, himself, favor, eare, Sir, lies, still, ought, heare, against, geven, committed, officers, two, first, speaking, boldly, authoritie, opinion, law, though, gave, under, hand, twixt, Lady, foote, twice, thrise, before, certain, greatest, willing, towards, libertie, marrie, any, being, only, serve, thought, bones, presuming, never, suspected, three, together, within, somewhat, thincke, compasse, ends, neither, respect, after, much, brought, last, chamber, case, generall, spoken, fowre, went, all, world, kepe, expectation, next, day, man, full, seem, charitie, less, because, sometimes, side, cast, abroad, found, without, head, foot, what, make, carie, away, hearing, yet, come, home, delights, countrie, sports, great, pleasure, thought, King, night, play, Lord, fayre, purpose, old, monie, payed, court, dead, Doctor, begins, about, holds, New, stay, nights, again, best, service, yours.

Pairs of words:

I met, wold have, the turne, a second, I know, makes me, the rest, the same, I know, at once, The Quene, from the, very well, I commend.

Phrases of three words:

and God knows.

‘**Valuing**’: Shakespeare only used ‘Valuing’ once, in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

‘**Ingeniously**’: Shakespeare only used ‘Ingeniously’ once, in *Timon of Athens*.

‘**Divorcement**’: Shakespeare only used ‘Divorcement’ once, in *Othello*.

Shakespeare’s use of all these words predate Chamberlain’s letter.

Shakespeare did not use ‘animating’, ‘ventilating’, ‘hexameter’, ‘progresses’.

John Chamberlain knew Neville, mentioning him a number of times in his letters. In this letter Neville is referred to at the start, when Chamberlain refers to the delays in appointing Neville to the role of secretary of state: “our frends affayres go rather backward then forward...”. He later mentions ‘Nevill’ by name. He refers to Overbury’s imprisonment and to “The divorce twixt the earle of Essex and his Lady” (he does not use the word ‘nullity’). He also states that James I plans to visit “the earle of Southampton where he meanes to stay twelve nights”. Chamberlain is the sole source who reported Neville’s death in 1615.

Other letters

In *Shakespeare’s Letters* Alan Stewart (2008, 4) pointed out that 111 letters appear on stage in Shakespeare’s plays and his characters allude to many more. He is of course not able to offer a single extant letter by William from Stratford, as none exist. Neville’s letters however offer us windows into the life and mind that created the plays. These four letters demonstrate not only how Neville’s vocabulary matched Shakespeare’s, indeed anticipated it, but also how the concerns, names and politics of the letters illuminate Shakespeare’s works.

Further research might well reveal more letters which are connected with plays: for example I found that in Neville’s letter of 20/3/1599 there were two words that Shakespeare only used once, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, which Melchiori (2000, 20) dated to late 1599 or 1600. These are ‘fidelity’ and ‘divulge’ (though the latter is spelt ‘divulgate’ in Neville’s letter). In the same letter Neville used the word ‘extraordinary’ which Shakespeare used just four times including in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Falstaff is the speaker), twice in *Henry IV* part 2, *As You Like It* and *The Winter’s Tale*: the first three date from 1596-1600. Furthermore in this same letter Neville used other words that also occur in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*: ‘purpose’, ‘despise’, ‘intelligence’, ‘infinite’, ‘notwithstanding’. Neville used two of these words, ‘extraordinary’ and ‘infinite’ in another letter he wrote on 14/5/1600, in which he also used ‘jealousy’ and ‘conclusion’ which occur in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 183). From 1593 - 97 Neville was M.P. for New Windsor. He lived at Billingbear about six miles from Windsor.

Hamlet has been dated to 1599 – 1601. The play, “latelie Acted by the Lord Chamberleyne his servantes”, was registered in July 1602. In a letter dated 24/4/1600 Neville used the word ‘inhibition’ which Shakespeare only used once, in *Hamlet*. In the same letter he also reported the recruitment of ‘Suissers’ as mercenaries. The only time Shakespeare uses this word is when Claudius calls for his Switzers (4.5.). In this letter Neville also used the word ‘postscript’ which Shakespeare only used twice: in *Hamlet* and *Titus Andronicus*. Furthermore, Neville used the words ‘ministers’, ‘study’, ‘conversation’, ‘conference’, ‘employment’, ‘speedier’, ‘devise’, ‘choler’, ‘conscience’, ‘dangerous’, ‘globe’ and ‘petty’ which occur in *Hamlet*. Just three days later on 27/4/1600 Neville wrote another letter in which he used the following words that occur in the play: ‘pastime’, ‘audience’, ‘innovation’, ‘distinguish’, ‘satisfaction’, ‘commission’, ‘marble’, ‘chamber’, ‘prize’, ‘troubles’, ‘remedy’, ‘pangs’, ‘passionate’, ‘partial’. Perhaps the most remarkable of these words is ‘innovation’: used just three days after he had used the unique word ‘inhibition’, it is interesting to see that in the play Rosencrantz says, “I think their **inhibition** comes by the means of the late **innovation**.” (2.2.) Two weeks later, on 9/5/1600, Neville again referred to ‘Suissers’: the French King had paid one and a half million to the ‘Suissers’ whilst failing to pay

any of his debt to Elizabeth I: “she might as **well look** to be regarded in her so just **demaunds** as the Suissers.” (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 181). Neville was writing from Paris and in this letter mentioned Denmark. In *Hamlet* Polonius refers to Danskers (Danish) in Paris and uses the words ‘well’, ‘look’, ‘demands’ whilst talking about his son’s expenses (2.1.6-12). Neville wrote “stepp first into England”: Hamlet is “sent **into England**”. He also used the words ‘warning’, ‘patience’, ‘signify’, ‘surprised’, ‘discourse’, ‘speedy’, ‘frankly’, ‘dislike’, ‘furnish’, ‘ordnance’, ‘necessaries’, ‘pleasure’, ‘contrary’, ‘yesternight’, ‘certainty’, ‘afternoon’, ‘dalliance’, ‘proceeding’, ‘bonds’ which are in the play. Concerning Denmark, where Shakespeare set *Hamlet*, (the only time he ever named that country), Neville wrote:

“The Ambassador of Wirttemberg told me lately, that he had received Advertisement from a Friend of his in Hambourg, that the King of Denmark makes very great Preparation by Sea” (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 183).

It is possible that Neville was referring here to Württemberg, which could be spelt Wirtemberg or Wirtenberg. Wittenberg is the University that Hamlet attended. The word ‘preparation’ is also used by an Ambassador in *Hamlet*, about war (Fortinbras’s intended invasion of Poland, 2.2.63). In the first scene Horatio and Marcellus discuss Denmark’s ‘preparations’ for a war, including ships and cannons, against Norway (1.1.108). In 1574 and 1578 Sir Thomas Gresham received licences to export cannons to Denmark. One of his ships, containing cannons, sank in the Thames and was rediscovered in 2003 (James, 2008, 213). Neville inherited Gresham’s iron foundry and exported cannons during the 1590s.

Five days after this last letter, on 14/5/1600, Neville used another word that occurs uniquely in *Hamlet*, ‘questionable’; he also used ‘indifferently’, ‘jealousy’, ‘controversy’, ‘consequence’ and ‘infinite’, which occur in the play. Furthermore in *Hamlet* ‘questionable’ occurs just 7 lines before the word ‘marble’ which Neville had used in a letter written just two weeks earlier (27/4/1600).

Taking ten of these words used by Neville in his April-May 1600 letters and by Shakespeare in *Hamlet*, I now explore their use by other writers published between 1599 - 1601, according to LION:

‘**Inhibition**’ was used by no other writer at this time.

‘**Denmark**’ was used by no other writer at this time.

‘**Ordnance**’ was used by no other writer at this time.

‘**Jealousy**’ was used by no other writer at this time.

‘**Wittenberg/Wirttemberg**’ was used by no other writer at this time.

‘**Innovation**’ was used by Andrew Willet in *A Christian Letter*, 1599.

‘**Switzers/Suissers**’ was used by Edward Fairfax in *Godfrey of Bulloigne*, 1600.

‘**Questionable**’ was used by Andrew Willet in *A Christian Letter*, 1599 and by Antony Munday in poems from *England’s Helicon*, 1600.

‘**Controversy**’ was used by John Hoskins in *Directions for Speech and Style*, 1599.

‘**Afternoon**’ was only used by Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet*, 1599.

In other words only Shakespeare and Neville used this combination of words at this time.

Neville signed off his letter dated 16/2/1604 ‘Your entirely affectionated Friend’. Shakespeare used ‘affectionate’ only once, when Goneril signs her letter to Edmund

in *King Lear* “**Your affectionate** servant” (in the 1608 Quarto: 4.6.257, Weis, 2010, 294). Neville’s word ‘entirely’ also occurs in this Quarto edition, when it is used by Gloucester, about his son’s love, when referring to the forged letter from Edgar. *King Lear* was written between 1604 - 06. During this period Neville was involved in negotiations concerning the unification of the kingdom so the dangers of a divided kingdom were in his mind. In a letter dated 21/6/1605 (Winwood, 1725, Vol 2, 78) he wrote asking “to understand how the world goeth with you”. In *King Lear* we find “...you see how this world goes” and “A man may see how this world goes with no eyes”. In a letter dated 11/3/1606 Neville complained that his eyes were bad (Winwood, 1725, Vol II, 199).

Furthermore Neville used the word ‘entangled’ in the letter of 21/6/1605 (Winwood, 1725, Vol 2, 77). Shakespeare only used this once, in *Antony and Cleopatra* which was written in between 1604 - 1607. The words in the letter are: “**entangled in some other business. But I am out of my proper orb when I enter into state matters...**” All these words occur separately in *Antony and Cleopatra*. The two words “State matters” occur together only in *Othello* which was written by 1604. Indeed in Neville’s letter of 19/8/1604 he used the word ‘sufficieny’ which Shakespeare used just 4 times: including in *Othello* and *Measure for Measure*, both of which date from 1604.

Conclusion

Craig and Kinney (2009) used computers to analyse the vocabulary, and thus elucidate the authorship, of disputed plays. They divided words into lexical and function words: I have mostly looked at the former, though I have included some function words. They point out that it is the unique habits in using the humbler function words (such as ‘had’, ‘who’, ‘me’) that offer us the hidden signature of an author. Had I included all these function words the percentage scores of the words shared by the letters and plays would have risen. My work, which follows Brenda James’ groundbreaking discoveries, is a modest contribution to the study of Neville’s letters in relation to Shakespeare’s plays. We must await a more thorough computer aided exploration to confirm or challenge my findings.

Nevertheless, these four letters, spanning a period of 14 years, offer powerful evidence supporting Neville’s authorship of the works of Shakespeare. Each letter contains at least one word used just once by the bard in a play written in the same year. Furthermore these letters contain 40 special words only to be found in such a combination in Shakespeare and Neville’s writings. Whilst some of these findings might be dismissed as simply the result of coincidence and the shared vocabulary of the time, the occurrence of special vocabulary with specific political content, such as the Wirttenberg Ambassador’s report on the King of Denmark’s preparations for war, in a letter contemporary with *Hamlet*, provide new evidence for Neville’s hidden identity as the bard.

Appendices: the letters.

I have retained the use of italics and old spellings but changed the long Elizabethan *ſ* into a modern *s*. The italicising of certain words/passages may be the printers attempt to represent Neville's tendency, shown in Worsley MSS 47 (Casson, 2010), of switching from secretary script to italic for emphasis and proper names.

I have underlined all the words used by Shakespeare (though I have not researched all the minor, common 'function' words). If a word occurs twice I have only counted it once.

Appendix 1: Neville's letter 1/8/1599, with words used in *Henry V* underlined.

To Cecyll

Right Honourable

I was yesterday in *Conference* with the Counsaile, viz. the *Chancellor*, the *Archbishop of Bourges*, Monsieur de Villeroy, Monsieur de Messe, and Monsieur de Rhosni, and proposed unto them, fyrst the same Things I had before presented in Wryting at *Orleans*, "desyring I might after so long Attendance at length receave an Answer; and in the Matter of the Mony, adding what weight of Reason and Perswasion my poore witts were able to afford. Their Answeres were full of very good Words, acknowledging the Queen's many Favours, and the King's great Obligation to her: That they were already entered into Consultation which way to give her Satisfaction, and that very shortly I should receave an Answer." Afterwards we entered into Conference of the Points I had last in Charge: First touching the Matter of Marseilles, which I related unto them, as I had done before to Monsieur de Villeroy, and certified in my last Dispatch. They answered, "they would with all convenient Speed inform themselves of the Particulars of the Cause, and then I should receave Satisfaction. Secondly, we spake of the Article of the Treaty or Reglement of Depradations, which I desyred might be changed, and quallified in some sort, as her Majestie might be freed from such Inconveniencies as had thereby already happened, and were dayly like to happen; which I declared in particular, shewing that the Matter imported us much more then yt did them; for yt concerned them only in Profit, but yt concerned us in our Preservation, and that the Queen was resolute not to suffer so notable a Prejudice any longer; and therefore wished they would enter into Consultation of some other Course, more equall and indifferent for us both; and for the more speedy proceeding therein, I said her Majestie had proposed unto Monsieur Boisisse, certaine Articles taken out of their own Ordonances, which she thought not impertinent to be put in execution on both Sydes. Which being redd, were absolutely refused by them all, alleading that those Ordonances were made for a tyme, and on a speciall Occasion, ever resisted by their Allies as unreasonable, therefore we must not think to thrust them upon them now. I told them yf they were just then when they made them, they were just now, no Prince having ever had more occasion to be jealous of that which is don at Sea, then her Majestie hath now; besydes, we required nothing of them but that we were content to yeald them, which would be no disadvantage; and therefore they must be contented to secure her Majestie eyther that way, or some other way to the same purpose; for the greatest Law of all, was that of a Man's owne Preservation; and they might be assured, the Queen would not betray herself or her Estate, nor suffer her Enemie to be armed and strengthened against her, when she had Power to impeach yt; and yf they were such Friends to us as they pretended, they would not upon such pettit respects of Profitt, urge anything that they saw by evident Proofe so

prejudiciall unto us; but would rather according to the Nature of true Amitie, bear or suffer little for the good of their Friends; and this was the only thing wherein we had hitherto had occasion to make tryall of their Friendship towards us; all that both passed until now between us having bin burden and charge unto us, without any returne on their part. They answered, yt was not reasonable they should presse anything that should be so prejudiciall unto us as yt seemed this might be; yet on the other Syde, they could not any way endure that Yoke of Servitude, to have their Ships searched; assuring themselves that Course would never pass without great Wrong and Injustice to the weaker; but they would consult of yt, and conferr with their Admirall and other Officers, who understood more of these Matters than they did, and thereupon advise of som Course which might be more to our Contentment; and advertise their Ambassador of yt, to impart unto her Majestie and her Counsaill.”

I understood since by Monsieur de Villeroy That he had received fresh Advertisements out of Spaine, contayning Confirmation of the taking of the *Great Canaries* by the *Hollanders*, and withall that the *King's Fleet* is assembled at *Ferrol*, consisting of 250 *Sail* or thereabouts and 12000 *Men*. His *Opinion* is, yf the *Hollanders* possess and hold the *Island*, then the *King will send his whole Fleet that Way*; otherwise if they leave the *Island* and follow after prey and gaine, he believes that a great Part of this Fleet will come for *Ireland*, or some part of *England*, and therefore wisheth the *Queen not to be unprovided in both*. Of the *Matters* of the *Low-Countries* your Honor is better, and more speedily advertised than they be here, therefore I forbear. I send you a Copy of the *King's Letters of Prohibition*, to receive, harbour or favour any Ships of Warre in the *Parts* of this *Kingdom*. I thought good to send this Bearer expressly, the rather, because this Advertisement out of *Spaine* seems to be of Importance. I send your Honour a Copy of the Advertisements that came yesterday out of *Spaine*, which because they seem to be of much moment, I have willed the Messenger to take Post that he may make hast. Yt may please your Honour to consider of his Allowance accordingly. You must looke for no Money hence till the next Year, and then, without all doubt, you may make some certaine Account, to receive some good Somme. The 20000 *Crownes* will not fail to be ready at *Michaelmas*, and shall be paid at *Rouen* or *Diepe*, which her Majestie will.

The *Germain Army* is already com to the *Rhine*, with a purpose to attempt the *Fort* the *Spaniards* have built at *Rees*, to defend their *Bridge*. The *Princes* that deal in this *Action* are, the *Duke of Brunswick*, the *Landgrave of Hess*, and the *Marquis of Onoburk* of the *House of Brandenburg*, the rest have retired themselves. We told they have already taken *Berk*. The *Spaniards* are gone out of the *Isle* of *Bomell* to meet with them, having left in the *Fort* 3000 *Foot* and 400 *Horse*. The *States* labour by all means to joyne the *Germain Army* with theirs, whereunto most of the *Germain* Commanders have assented, and yt is hoped yt will be effected, though some be unwilling. The *Duke of Brunswick* and the *Landgrave* are looked for in *Person* in the *Camp* every Day. And so I humbly tak my leave

Your Honor's &c.

HENRY NEVILLE

Appendix 2: Neville's letter 29/7/1600, with words used in *Twelfth Night* underlined.

Sir Henry Neville to Mr. Winwood

Mr. Winwood,

Bulloigne 29 July 1600

Our Business here is an End, as I have twice already written unto you. The *Spanish Commissioners went away yesterday*, and we account to Ship upon *Tuesday or Friday*. The Truth is for my part I account this action for dissolved, altho' there be a verball Agreement among us, that it shall continue in Dependance 60 Days, in which time the Queen is to resolve whither (if the *States will be induced to enter into the Treaty*) she will treat in some Town of Holland; or in case they refuse, in some of the Archduke's Towns, as *Borboroug, Winowbergen*, or any other which her Majesty will chuse: In both which cases, her Majesty sending into their Countrey, is of courtesy to have the Preseance, and so that point not to come in question at all. If she like of neither of these, she is to propose any other way that she shall think fit for the Continuance of the Treaty. Now I suppose the Queen will accept of neither of these two, being in effect to yield the same Point of Honor, which hath been all this while debated; and besides, having been the cheif Subject of Mr. *Edmonds's first Negotiation at Brussels, and then directly rejected by her*: And for my own part, I see no other way how we can meet, but with the same Difficulty, which hath now separated us, unless they will send into England, which they absolutely refuse, therefore I conclude as before. Notwithstanding, we are willing for some Causes to have it conceived otherwise, that partly by reason of some difficulty grown about the Precedency, but chiefly to give both time and conveniency to the Hollanders to resolve whither they would enter into the Treaty, having of late discovered some Inclination unto it, it was proposed by the other Side, and could not well be refused by ours, to adjourn the Treaty for 60 Days, and in the mean time a Place for the next Meeting to be agreed upon, which should be convenient for all Sides. But withal, if you find that the Opinion of our Breach may the sooner imbarck the King into the War with Savoy, you may confidently tell him as of your self, that the Proceeding hitherto hath so distasted her Majesty, as you are of Opinion she will not be drawn into any new Conference: But if he be already entred into War, you shall do well to turn your Language clean the other way, and accermare, that the small Assurance and Contentment she finds here, will enforce her in all reason to provide for her Repose and Safety some other way; at least to disburthen herself of certain Enemies, seeing she finds so uncertain Freinds. And thereupon you may take occasion, to touch the Discontentment the Queen hath conceived of the late Arrest of the Privy Council, which is like to cut off the cheif Trade of our Nation in this Realm; and you may very seriously urge either the Revocation of it, or at least the suspending of the Execution for three or four Months, till there may be some Conference had of it, and his Council may be thoroughly informed of the wrong therein done to the Amity and Treaties between the two Crowns. And if it be refused, you may directly let fall some Speeches, that the Queen will be very sensible of it, and will be enforced, both in Honour and Policy, to make the like Restraints upon the Subjects and Commodities of France, as this Arrest hath made upon those of England. And that you may be the better avowed in all the Sollicitation hereof, I send you a Copy of the Council's Letter lately written unto me about it, and likewise a Memorial sent me by the Merchants how they desire to have it qualified; which being compared with the Arrest, and the Difference noted, will best declare what they do particularly complain of. And in the mean time whilst you sollicit some Order there for the

suspending of it, I have adventured to write to the First President of Roüen, to make some stay of it in that *ressort*, till the King's Pleasure may be further known; therefore I pray you be instant in it, an at least let us know what the King answers. The *Ambassador* hath been dealt with in *England* about it, and hath made fair Promises, as his manner is. The Merchant's Memorial seems to be in the Manner of a Petition to the King, which you may present either to the King or to the Council. The *Advocat* who hath dealt in all these Causes for our Nation, doth now follow the Court: You shall do well to advise with him about your Proceeding in this matter, and you may ease yourself much by him, in the setting down of any Remonstrance that you shall think good to present. I will cause Orme to write unto him to assist you, as you shall need him, and to promise him to satisfy him for his Pains: His Name is Clervaux a little halting Fellow that you have seen sometime come with Orme to me. You shall do well to deal particularly with the *Chancelour* about it, and to make him capable of the Reason of our Complaint: for it belongs chiefly unto him, *and I think he carrieth the best Mind*. As I wish you should prosecute *this Matter with some Vehemency*, *so would I not, that you should give them any cause to despair of the Queen*; but that you should entertain them in that Concept, *that out of her own constant Nature she will always be found ready to embrace the King's Amity with all Sincerity, so as she may find any real Correspondency on his Part; otherwise reason of State will enforce her (tho' against her Will) to bethink her self of some means, where upon she may build more assurance*. As if at any time you chance to fall into that Argument with the King, you may touch *the incompatibilitie between the two Amities of Rome and England, and how hard a thing it will be to hold fast and strict Alliance with both, and what cause of jealousy it giveth to the Queen, to see him combine himself so much more strictly with the Pope, then any of his Predecessors have done, considering how implacable an Enemy he is unto her*. Hereupon it will be good to observe very precisely what he will answer. For the present this is all that occurs; when I came into *England* (whither I have leave to return for a Month) after I have had some Speech with her Majesty and Mr. Secretary, you shall hear more from me.

For News we have is utterly nothing, that of *Ireland* I wrote you in my last. Count Maurice is risen from before the *Fort Isabella*, and hath taken down his edge for more Action this Year, as it is supposed. The King of *Scotland* is upon the Borders with some Strength, pretending to do Punishment upon some Families there, who lately slew Carmichill one of the Wardens of the Marches: Hereupon my Lords *Willoughby* and *Scroop* are sent down to their Charges, but nothing else done that I hear of. Sir Anthony Pawlet is dead, and Mr. Secretary engaged for *Sir Walter Rawleigh*, reserving his Favour to me in somewhat else. Write I pray you as often as you may, and let me know what Letters of mine you receive. As so, Etc.

Your very loving Freind

HENRY NEVILLE

Appendix 3: Neville's letter of 8/12/1604, with words that occur in *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*, underlined. When in bold it signifies the word occurs in both plays; when in just *All's Well that Ends Well* it is simply underlined; when in *Measure for Measure* it is underlined and followed by the superscript ^{MfM}. I have only counted the first occurrence of a word. When two words occur in *All's Well That Ends Well* and one of these is in *Measure for Measure* I have annotated the pair with a superscript ^{AW}, putting the word used in both into bold: e.g. "the **speech**^{AW}".

Sir Henry Neville to Mr Winwood

SIR,

London, 8th Dec. 1604

We have at **length** **concluded** the Conference **about** the^{MfM} Union, to his **Majestie's** **very good Satisfaction**, as he witnessed by **the Speech**^{MfM} **he made**^{MfM} **unto** us, **when we** presented him the **Instrument** **under** our **Seales**^{MfM}. The Points **which we** **agreed**^{MfM} upon are **shortly**^{MfM} these: **That all Hostile Laws**^{MfM} made between either Kingdom, shall be abolished, That the *Border Laws* and *Customs* **shall be** likewise^{MfM} abolished, and **Justice** ministred **hereafter** according to^{MfM} the ordinary Laws of each Kingdom. **That there**^{MfM} be **free** Intercourse of **Trade**^{MfM} **between** the Kingdoms **without** paying^{MfM} **any**^{AW} Customs **for all** Commodities, (except **Sheep**^{MfM}, Wool, Wool-fells, Cattle, Hides, and Leather, which are wholly prohibited) so as^{MfM} there be **sufficient**^{MfM} **Caution given**, not to transport^{MfM} **any of**^{MfM} the **said** Commodities into any **foreign Parts out of the**^{MfM} Kingdom. That it shall be **lawfull for all** Subjects^{MfM} of the **one** Kingdom **to bring** into **the other** any foreign Commodities, paying^{MfM} the **Custom**^{MfM} **used** in that Kingdom where they^{MfM} arrive. But **because it**^{MfM} **appears**^{MfM} that the *Scottish Men* have a **Privelidge in France**, whereby they are **exempted** from paying of the Custome that **the English**^{AW} and other Forreigners **pay** upon Transportation, it is **therefore** agreed, that whatsoever^{MfM} they pay **less than we**^{MfM} there, they shall pay **so much**^{AW} (much) more^{MfM} than **we here**^{AW} for **French** Comodities, **except such as** are **brought** out of the **River**^{MfM} of *Bourdeaux*, where it appears^{MfM} that our Privelidge is **as great as** theirs. That it shall be lawfull for the Subjects of **either** Kingdom, **to carry** out of the other, the **natural** Commodities thereof, paying the ordinary Custome; **but so**^{MfM}, as the *Scottish Men* trade not with any **of our** Commodities, to any **Place** where our Companies are established, in any other sort then the **common** Subject^{MfM} of *England* may do which hath no Privelidge. That it shall be lawfull for either **Nation** to freight the Ships of the other. That either Nation shall be enabled to be free of any **Company** or Corporation of the other, serving for it, or attaining it by purchase, in such **Sort**^{MfM} **as those**^{MfM} of **the same** nation do, **where the** Company or Corporation is. *That it shall be declared by Parliament, that the Law already is, (for so the Judges have*^{AW} *declared it) that all the Subjects of either Kingdom, born since Queen Elizabeth's Death, are naturalized in the other to all Intentions and Purposes;* and for those born **before**, it is agreed that they shall be naturalized to all Purposes, and enabled to all Capacities, each in the other, *except to have Voice and Seance in Parliament, and to bear*^{AW} *any Office of*^{AW} *the Crown*^{AW}, or *Judicature*: Which **three** Points we have **thought good** to reserve **till the**^{AW} Union be made **perfect** in other **things**, which could not **be done** at **this time**^{MfM}. *The last Article*^{MfM} *begat more Debate and Contestation then* **all the rest**, as that which **touched** the Freehold of **the principall of both Sides**^{AW}, and imported them **most in** their **particular**, *the one Side to seek*^{MfM}, *the other to exlude*. But **in the End**^{AW} the King was **won** to our Side, and so it was concluded in the **Form**^{MfM}. This is the Substance of the **Acts** of this Conference, which I am **forced**^{MfM} to **send** you in this **short** and imperfect **kind**, *because copies are utterly forbidden till the*

Parliament, and an **Oath** hath been **taken** of the Clerks of both sides to that **purpose**. The *Scottish Men* have given us very good Satisfaction during this Conference, as well for their **sufficiency**^{MfM}, as their **modest** and respective Carriage, which hath been **very well answered** on our **part**, as **far** as **the Matter** would **permit**^{MfM}. Among others^{MfM}, the **Lord Secretary of Scotland** hath gotten much **Reputation**.

We **have been somewhat** troubled **of late about** a Seizure made at Roüen of our *English Cloth* to **a great Value**^{MfM}, and the King's *peremptory Answer* made to our *Ambassador*^{MfM}, when he dealt with him in it: But upon a late Conference with *Monsieur de Beaumont*, there is **some hope** given of a **mitigation**^{MfM} of that **Rigour**^{MfM}.

It is **reported**^{AW} comonly that *our Merchants are ill used in Spaine by the Inquisition*; and **besides**, that the Trade proves **nothing** so beneficial as was **expected**^{MfM}; partly^{MfM} by reason that the Merchants there are **become poor** by **these Wars**, and not **able to**^{AW} **(to) buy** but **upon Days**, and **many of** these that have been trusted have **play'd**^{MfM} Bankrupts, insomuch, as some of ours have **brought back** their Commodities, **rather then**^{AW} they would **sell** upon **Credit**; and partly, by **reason**, that in this time of **long Restraint** of Trade, they have been forced to **betake themselves to**^{AW} the **making** of Cloth there, and **do make**^{MfM} it **now in**^{AW} that Quantity, as they **care not**^{AW} much for ours, which was wont to be our chiefest Trade **thither**. And as for Corn, the *French*, both by reason of their nearness and **abundance** will **ever furnish** them **better** cheap^{MfM} than we can. So as there appears **little** hope **of any fruit**^{MfM} of our **Peace** in that regard^{MfM}; *which joyned with som other Considerations of State*^{MfM} that have **Reference to your**^{AW} **Affairs** there, *begins to cool that ardent Affection* which **carried us so strongly**^{AW} to that Treaty, and begets **some Discourses** (**even amongst** our **greatest** Governours) that this **will be but a short** Peace. And for a **Proof**^{MfM} that we intend not to abandon your Busyness, I **understand**^{AW} very lately that there is a **Regiment of Scottish Men** to be levied shortly for the *States Service under the* (the) **Charge**^{AW} of the Lord Burleigh; and I **find** that^{AW} they which **complaine**^{MfM} here, that the *States* impeach their Trade and **Passage** to the *Archduke's Countreys*, have but **cold Answers**^{MfM}, and **receive** **sometimes** a Check for their forwardness that way, as if it **proceeded**^{MfM} of no good Affection. And this being so much as I think **worthy your knowledge**^{MfM} at **this time**^{AW}, I will here conclude with my **best Wishes**^{AW} unto you and Mrs. Winwood, and **remain evermore**

Your very **assured Friend** to be disposed of

HENRY NEVILLE

Appendix 4: Neville's letter of 18/6/1613, with words that occur in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* underlined.

Sir Henry Neville to Sir Ralph Winwood

Sir,

18th June 1613

If my letter comes later than you expected, let me be somewhat excused by the slowness and irresolution of our Proceedings. When I wrote last I had strong Presumptions that this long depending Busyness, wherein you have likewise an Interest, would be forthwith despatched, and I yet see no Cause much to doubt it; for I discover that the Delay hath grown upon two *Suggestions secretly made to the King against me; the one* that I had some hand in the Matter wherewith Sir Robert Maxwell and Mr. Whitlock were charged, which is already cleared, the other, *that I have held continual Intelligence with Overbury since his Imprisonment: A matter so far from Truth, as I protest there never passed between us so much as a Message since his Commitment.* These impediments being removed, my Friends are confident the King will no longer defer what he hath so long resolved. But to apply this to the Point wherein you required my Advice; I think you may do well to write to his Majestie to that Purpose which you mentioned in your Letter; yet with this Liberty and Power to be left to your Friends here, that is our Business be dispacht before your Letter comes, they may suppress it if they see Cause, and turn their Suit another way; but if they see it linger then to deliver it, and joyn their Mediation unto your Suite the sooner effect it. We are here busy in Consultation about the Irish Busyness willing even to take a sharp Course to check this over Boldness of theirs, but for want of Means, inforced as I think to resolve upon a milder; But I fear it will be the Via di Mezzo, what will neither uphold our Reputation nor give them Satisfaction, and so leave us both without Awe or Love among them. Those who are come over from them to the King have desired to Things of him; That he will present himself when they are heard, and that they may be allowed Council; both which he hath granted.

The other great Busyness which filleth Mens Mouths now is *the Separation intended between myn Lord of Essex and his Lady; a Matter no less desired by my Lord and his Friends, then by her and hers; and yet I doubt there is scarce Matter enough confessed or proved to induce a Nullity in the Marriage, which is that which they both affect, because they desire to marry againe.* It will not be long ere we see some Issue in both. In the mean time I will take my leave and Servuice to you, and remain &c.

HENRY NEVILLE

Appendix 5: The first control letter: Mr. Secretary Cecyll to Sir Henry Neville with words occurring in *Henry V* and *Twelfth Night* underlined. When in bold it signifies the word occurs in both plays, when in just one it is simply underlined with a superscript ^{HV} (*Henry V*) or ^{TW} (*Twelfth Night*) to identify the play. I have only counted the first occurrence of a word.

Sir Henry Neville

7th December 1599

I have received^{HV} diverse letters **from you of late, both** of the 13th, 19th, and 20th of November, to **neither** of which I could **returne** you **sooner** any direct^{TW} **Answer**, **and therefore** do intend^{HV} to lapp them all up in one Letter^{TW}. In that of the 13th, **the Matter** that requireth fyrst Answer is **concerning** Eliott, of whom her Majestie^{HV} understandeth, that you were **perswaded** he may do som Service^{TW}. **True** yt is that he hath bin a practizing^{TW} Fugitive a great while^{TW}, and yet her Majestie is not so

vindicative, as not to be contented^{HV} to take any good colour whereupon to ground
Mercy, especially to one who doth voluntarily seeke yt, and promises to deserve^{TW}
 yt: So as her Majestie hath commaunded me to give you Warrant in her Name to
 give him this Assurance^{TW}, that yf he doe com into *England*, and as soone as he is
arrived, make yt known that he is come from you, and directed^{HV} unto me, that I
 will send for^{TW} him to some other Place then to the Courte, where she will appoint^{HV}
my Lord Admirall^{HV} and my selfe to conferre with him, for she would not have him
 come thither^{HV} at first; And in the sort you may assure him, and give him *your*
Passeport^{HV} as her Majestie's Ambassador^{HV} for his comming and going^{TW}, which
 her Majestie meaneth to make good, and so you may be assured^{HV} by this letter, but
 she will send him no Pardon over. Concerning the *Spaniards* Offers, they are of
littell vawle, and yet his Demaunds^{HV} are of Charge, and therefore her Majestie
 meaneth to lett them alone, except he will come of his owne accord^{HV}, which yf he
 will doe he shall come and goe safely, so be bring *your Pasport*.

Concerning the bruits of our *forwardness in Treaty*, I know you cannot stopp
 your Eares to them, but for the matter, you may assure your selfe confidently (for I
protest^{TW} yt is true) that there is no one Circumstance^{TW} of yt further then you know,
only now Mr. *Caron* is arryved from *the States*, who have refused for this tyme^{TW} to
enter into any Treaty, pretending (besydes their generall^{HV} Indisposition) that the
Stay of the *Spaniards* for one whole Yeare longer in the *disunited Provinces*
 (whereof they had contrary^{TW} hope) doth worke in them no small difference^{HV}; but
seeing^{HV} her Majestie intendeth in respect of^{TW} her owne Estate, to enter into Treaty,
they must leave^{HV} yt to her owne Wisdome to do what yt shall please her. So as her
 Majestie doth resolve presently to^{HV} make answere to the *Archeduke*, that she hath
 now hard from the *States*, whom she invited to joyne^{HV} with her in the Treaty, which
 they having refused for this tyme, she will proceed alone; and by my next I shall
 advertise you what place she will treat in, and what Commissioners^{HV} she will send:
 Of which (I protest before God) you know yet as muche as^{HV} I doe.

For the other Poynts^{TW} of the *double Commission*^{TW}, her Majestie hath commaunded
 the *Embassador* to be spoken^{HV} withall, who pretendeth that he did conceive, that
 Commissions in severall^{HV} Places, would have bin most beneficiall for her Majestie's
Subjects^{TW}, especially because the Jealousies of one Courte of^{HV} Parlament above^{TW}
another is suche, as Justice^{HV} would often^{TW} tymes be the harder administred, when
 yt should appeare that one Place should draw away the Resorte to the other. But he
 concluded, that he would wryte againe thither in suche sorte, that any suche Course
 may be taken as you shall like of. For the second Poynte that you suspected,
 concerning the *Bannishment of our Cloathes*, the contrary^{TW} is assured here by him,
 so as that matter is at an end. For the matter of *Marseilles* the Bearer^{TW} hereof Mr.
Winwood was called to the Consultation, who can so well deliver you all Particulars,
 as I will leave yt to his Relation.

And now Sir to come to the Report^{TW} of the *Low Countries Agent* delivered to^{TW} your
 Secretary and to divers other Advertisements from divers Parts of^{TW} the World
 where I hold correspondencie; Yt may playnely appeare, *that now they think the*
matter groweth rype, all States that have Interest relatively in these late Dissensions
^{HV} betweene *Spaine and England*, doe beginne to play^{TW} their Parts, every one
in their severall^{HV} quarter^{HV}; and to that end, do seek to sow^{HV} suche bruits, as they
 may thinck may best concurre with their owne particular^{HV} ends. But I doe see, and
 so doth her Majestie, that thoughe you^{TW} must heare and advertise all, yet you can
 well make judgement, what is probable and what is delivered to^{TW} serve turnes^{TW}.
And therefore her Majestie hath commaunded me to let you know, that she likes

well that you should have *Conference* with the *Spanish Ambassador*, so that you do cary the same in suche forme, *as that the World may see that yt is not you that seeke him, but rather he you*. You must therefore observe^{TW} in dealing^{TW} with him these Cautions, fyrst to hear him what he would propound and what he would reveale, without propounding any thing unto him, more than to confirme unto him this, *that her Majestie doth hate*^{TW} *fraudulent Dealing*; and *thoughe her Injuries*^{TW}, *even personall to her Lyfe*, might have bin sufficient to^{TW} *have hardened her Hart against all Reconsiliation*, yet *seeing she hath gone thus farre, upon an opinion that there is Faith* meant to her, she will give Eare^{TW} and *Faythe* in respect of the publick good of *Christendome*, wherein so much blood^{TW} may be saved^{TW}; and you may assure him she meaneth all *Sinceritie*. Yf he shall seeke to speake broadly of the *Frenche King* unto you, you shall pass^{TW} yt over, and only conclude, *that the amitie of Burgundie*^{HV} *hath ever bin formerly more firme and*^{HV} *sollide then the French*^{HV}, and that so we may be dealt withall, *as we shall esteeme yt above*^{TW} *any Frenche in the World*. Yf he shall ask what her Majestie meaneth to doe, and when she will send to^{HV} *Treat*, or upon what *Conditions*^{HV} she will conclude; you may narratively tell him how things^{HV} have hitherto^{HV} past, and that her Majestie having hard from her *Confederats that they dare not as yet enter* into any *Treaty*, because they have bin soe often *deceived*^{TW}, but will forbear^{TW} a while untill^{HV} they see some tryall^{TW} what *Fayth* will be kept with her, (making^{HV} already how at fyrst they have broken^{HV} Promise for the *Demission for the Spaniards* now at the *Entry of the Archduke*;) That in respect of this *Answer*, her Majestie for the present canne presse them noe further; but will send over now, to agree of the *Tyme*, *Place*, and *Personns*^{TW} for her selfe to *Treat*. In this manner you may cary^{TW} your selfe, and for the particular^{HV} *Conditions*^{HV}, *yf he will lett fall*^{TW} *any thing to you what he thinks will be required*^{HV}, you may heare yr^{HV}; but to seeme to understand what the *Queene* will stand upon, you may avoid yr^{TW}: Only this, *that she will never yeald to any thing that shall be dishonourable*.

Concerning the point of *Reimbursement*, I have perused the State of *Debts*^{HV}, and I do fynd some of^{HV} good ancient^{HV} *Date*, and therefore am easily^{TW} induced^{TW} to believe he will not be very quick in Payment; but surely^{TW} yf the *Debt*^{TW} might be payd^{TW} by 100000 *Pounds*^{HV} a Yeare^{TW}, I would her Majestie had geven after tenne^{HV} in the hundred^{HV} to receive yt so, or yf a lesse Somme of^{HV} necessitie, then so ratible for any *Somme* she shall receive. Wherein, (according to your *Secretarie's Speeche* with me) I fynd her Majestie well inclined to referre the Offer^{HV} to your Discretion^{HV}) and with whom to deale^{TW} in that Nature^{TW}, she knowing that suche *Fashions* must be followed^{TW} in that *Place*.

I saw a particular *Letter* written to your Uncle^{HV} *Killegrew*, wherein I see you have *animum revertendi*, for which I cannot blame you^{HV}, but will to my power^{HV} assist you; although I^{HV} may not allow^{TW} all your Reasons, *for where you thinck you are of no use to her Majestie, nether she nor the World hath cause to thinck so, unlesse yt be of noe use to be well served*^{TW}, *when of necessitie she must be served*. Thus have you answer to the maine *Poynts* of your *Letters*, which I protest^{TW} I could not sooner send you, *thoughe you will hardly beleeve yt*. But I am of *Opinion* your owne *Secretary* will report unto you how busy^{HV} a *tyme* we fynd yt. And thus with my affectionat *Commendations* to my Cosen I take my leave.

From the Court
at *Whitehall*,

Your affectionate Kinsman &c.

RO. CECYLL

Appendix 6: The second control letter: Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford's letter to Sir Robert Cecil, July 1600 with words to be found in *Twelfth Night* underlined. This is taken from Fowler (1986, 540) who has modernised the spelling.

Although my bad success, in former suits to her Majesty, have given me cause to bury my hopes in the deep abyss and bottom of despair, rather than now to attempt, after so many trials made in vain & so many opportunities escaped, the effects of fair words or fruits of golden promises, yet for that, I cannot believe, but that there hath been always a true correspondence of word and intention in her Majesty, I do conjecture, that with a little help, that which of itself hath brought forth so fair blossoms will also yield fruit. Wherefore having moved her Majesty lately about the office of the Isle, which by the death of Sir Antony Paulet stands now in her Majesty's disposition to bestow where it shall best please her, I do at this present most heartily desire your friendship and furtherance, first for that I know her Majesty doth give you good ear, then for that our houses are knit in alliance: last of all, the matter itself is such, as nothing chargeth her Majesty, sith it is a thing she must bestow upon some one or other. I know her Majesty hath suitors already for it, yet such as for many respects her Majesty may call to remembrance ought in equal balance to weigh lighter than myself. And I know not by what better means or when her Majesty may have an easier opportunity to discharge the debt of so many hopes, as her promises have given me cause to embrace, than by this which give she must & so give as nothing extraordinarily doth part from her. If she shall not deign me this in an opportunity of time so fitting, what time shall I attend which is uncertain to all men unless in the graves of men there were a time to receive benefits and good turns from princes. Well, I will not use more words, for they may rather argue mistrust than confidence. I will assure myself and not doubt of your good office both in this but in any honourable friendship I have cause to use you. Hackney.

Your loving and assured friend and Brother
EDWARD OXFENFORD

Appendix 7: The third control letter: John Chamberlain to Ralph Winwood dated 18/12/1604, with words that occur in *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*, underlined. When in bold it signifies the word occurs in both plays; when the word occurs in *All's Well that Ends Well* it is underlined with the superscript ^{AW}; when in *Measure for Measure* it is underlined and followed by the superscript ^{MfM}. I have only counted the first occurrence of a word. When two words occur in *All's Well That Ends Well* and one of these is in *Measure for Measure* I have annotated the pair with a superscript ^{AW}, putting the word used in both into bold: e.g. "And though^{AW}". The letter is to be found in Winwood's *Memorials* Volume 2.

London 18th December 1604

SIR,

Here is no manner^{MfM} of **Novelty** or Alteration since my last; and yet being to keep Christmas out of Town and even ready for^{MfM} my Journey^{MfM} I cannot forbear^{MfM} though^{AW} be like^{MfM} to send out an empty^{MfM} **Letter**. **The King** came **back** from *Royston* on *Saturday*, but so far from being wearie^{MfM} and satisfied^{MfM} with those Sports, that **presently after** the^{MfM} Holydays **he makes**^{MfM} reckoning^{MfM} to be there **again**, or as some say, to go **further towards** *Lincolnshire*, to a place^{AW} **called**

Ancaster Heath. In the meantime here is **great** Provision for Cockpit, to **entertaine**^{MfM} him **at home**, and of **Masks**^{MfM} and Revells **against the Marriage** of **Sir Phillip Herbert** and the **Lady**^{MfM} *Susan Vere*, which is to be celebrated on *St. John's Day*. The **Queen**^{AW} hath **likewise**^{MfM} a great Mask **in hand**^{MfM} against Twelfth Tide, for which there was 3000*l* **delivered** a Month ago. **Her Brother**^{MfM} **the Duke** of *Holst* is here **still**, procuring a Levy **of Men to carry** into *Hungary*^{MfM}: But **methinks** they should have **little** to do, that would adventure them so far, with **a Man able to do them no more good**. Here is an Ambassador^{MfM} **newly**^{MfM} **come** out of *Denmark*, but I **neither hear** nor enquire **after his Errand**^{MfM}.

The Duke of *Lenox* is presently **going** in Ambassage for *France*^{AW}. **And though**^{AW} it be **thought** that his own **Busyness** is his **greatest Employment**^{AW}, yet for Countenance^{MfM} this Place is **imposed**^{MfM} on him, and 3000*l* **to bear**^{AW} his **Charge**. Here is **speech** that *Sir Henry Maynard* is or shall be **appointed**^{MfM} Ledgeier for *France*, and *Sir Richard Spenser*, or as **some say**^{MfM}, *Sir Henry Neville* for *Spaine*. *Our men complaine*^{MfM} **of ill Usage there, especially of the Inquisition; who will take no notice**^{MfM}, **nor be tyed**^{MfM} to any Capitulation that shall restraints their **Authority**, as being **no part**^{AW} of **the King's Jurisdiction**: But we are still **perswaded**^{MfM}, that the **Lord Admiralls** going will **mend** all, which will not be **till February** at the soonest. I hear he **carries**^{AW} the **Title of Excellence**^{MfM}, and hath 15000*l* **allowed**^{MfM} for his Expence, **besides** the Charge of **two** of the King's **best Ships to transport him**^{MfM}. **The Prince**^{AW} sends a^{MfM} **present** of **certaine Horses**^{AW} and hunting Geldings, with two rich Saddles, and eight or ten Horse-cloths of several colour'd Velvets with **rich Embroydery**, whereby they are **hot**^{MfM} and **heavy**, and so, **very** improper for that Place, valued at **eight**^{MfM} **hundred pounds**^{MfM} **a piece**^{AW}; as like-wise **the whole**^{AW} sorts^{AW} **methinks nothing well**, being as if we **sent** Trees to the Wood.

The Archbishop **took Possession** of his Sea of *Canterbury* the 10th of this Month, and was confirmed **in the Presence of the**^{MfM} Prince, and all the great **Lords**^{AW} and Councillours about this Town. *Vaughan late* Bishop of *Chester* was **elected**^{MfM} to *London* on Fryday last.

The Tragedy of *Gowry*, with all the **Action** and Actors hath been **twice** represented by the King's Players, with **exceeding**^{AW} concourse of all sorts of **People**^{MfM}. But **whether the matter** or **manner**^{MfM} be not well **handled**^{MfM}, or that it be thought **unfit** that Princes should be **played**^{AW} on the **Stage**^{MfM} in their **Life-time**, I hear that some great Councillours are **much displeas'd**^{MfM} with it, and so 'tis thought shall be forbidden.

It is generally^{AW} **held** and **spoken**, that the Queen is **quick with Child**. And so **wishing** a^{MfM} **merry** Christmas and **many a good Year** to you and Mrs. Winwood, I **commit**^{AW} you to **God**.

Yours most assuredly,

JOHN CHAMBERLAINE

Appendix 8: John Chamberlain's letter to Sir Ralph Winwood dated 10/6/1613
with words that occur in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* underlined.

TO SIR RALPH WINWOOD
London, June 10, 1613

My very goode Lord:

At my comming to towne I met with your letter of the 24th of May, wherby I was glad to understand how well you were discharged of that great care and charge had lien so long upon you. At my return I found little alteration here, saving that our friends affayres go rather backward then forward, one reason wherof (among many others) is that those businesses beeing parted among divers that were wont to have recourse only to one, every body is loth to leave his hold, or the advantage of valuing himself in the Kings favor, and having accesse to his eare. Sir Thomas Overburie lies still by yt and for ought I heare is like to do: Sir Robert Maunsell hath bin in the Marshalsee this fortnight for animating the Lord Admirall against a commission geven to review and reforme the disorders committed by the officers of the navie: and Whitlocke the lawier is in the Fleet for two causes, first for speaking too boldly against the authoritie of the marshall-court, and then for giving his opinion that this commission was not according to law, though he gave yt but in privat to his client, and not under his hand. The divorce twixt the earle of Essex and his Lady is on foote, and hath ben argued twise or thrise at Lambeth before certain commissioners, but *a huis clos*. The greatest difficultie is that though he be willing to confesse his insufficiencie towards her, yet he would have libertie to marrie with any other, as being maleficiatus only ad illam. Yet some lawyers are of opinion that yf she will take her oath that he is impotent towards her, yt will serve the turne, wherof yt is thought she will make no bones, as presuming that she is provided of a second, which I shold never have suspected, but that I know he was with her three howres together within these two dayes, which makes me somewhat to stagger and to thincke that great folks to compasse theyre owne ends have neither respect to frends nor followers. The matter of Suttons hospital after much ventilating is brought at last to be a checquer-chamber-case where yt must be argued by all the judges: the attorney generall hath spoken excellently for yt, and the Solicitor as wittily and ingeniously against yt but on Saturday last the fowre puisne judges Hawten, Nicholls, Winch and Dodderidge went all cleerly with yt, which hath much revived the world hoping the rest of the bells will kepe the same tune, which came so much against expectation that the next day a great man asked the Lord Chancellor yf those puisne judges were as full of law as they would seem to be of charitie, and yt was the less looked for because Hawten is a Norfolk man and sometimes recorder of Norwich and lately advanced and knighted by the contrarie side. There be divers ydle papers and riddles (as I heare) cast abroade and there were found in Grayes Ynne two lame hexameter verses, without head or foot to my understanding, for I know not what construction to make them, and they go thus as I could carie them away at once hearing.

Curans, Lord Compton, Whitlocke, Overburie, Mansfield:
Nevill, Starchamber, Sutton, Scot, Baylie, divorcement.

The Quene is not yet come home from the Bath where and at Bristow and thereabouts she hath ben so well entertained with varietie of delights and countrie sports, that she

hath taken great pleasure in the journey and yt is thought she will make more of these progresses. In the meantime the Ambassador of Savoy takes his pleasure and is very well entertained by the King; on Sunday night Sir Robert Rich made him a great supper with a baket and a play in Holborn; and on Tewesday he was at the Lord Mayors where he had likewise great entertainment. Sir Henry Wooton leaves him not an ynch, and I thincke yt is the greatest business he hath to do, and sure I am of opinion that his blowing the cole to find himself worke in matters of Savoy, hath cost the King many a fayre penny; and God knows to what purpose. Our Aldermen have new privie seales for 200^{li} apiece, though theyre old monie be not yet payed in. Hare of the court of wards is lately dead, and so is Sir George Gifford, and Doctor Rive warden of New College. The Kings progress begins about the 12th of next moneth, and holds on from Windsor to Farnham to basing to Andover to Salisburie, so to the New Forrest and the earle of Southampton where he meanes to stay twelve nights and then homeward again. So with the remembrance of my best service to my goode Lady, I commend you and all yours to the protection of the Almighty. From London this 10th of June 1613.

Your Lordships to command
JOHN CHAMBERLAIN.

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