



# CONTESTED WILL

When and Why people started questioning authorship

# NO ONE QUESTIONED TWO HUNDRED YEARS

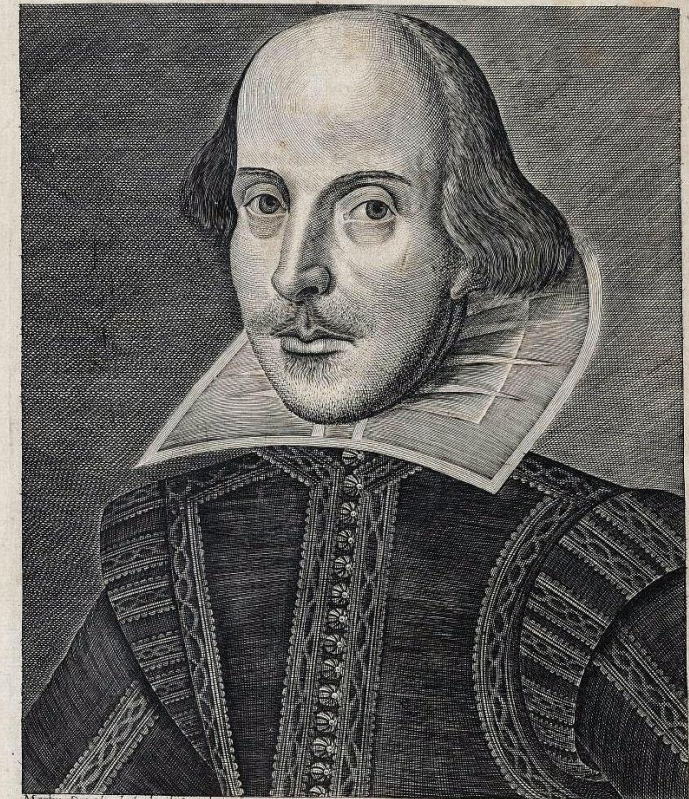
Only Elizabethan playwright whose fellow actors assembled and published his plays.

Eighteen of them never published before

Peers spent years gathering bits and pieces of scripts.

MR. WILLIAM  
**SHAKESPEARES**  
COMEDIES,  
HISTORIES, &  
TRAGEDIES.

Published according to the True Originall Copies.



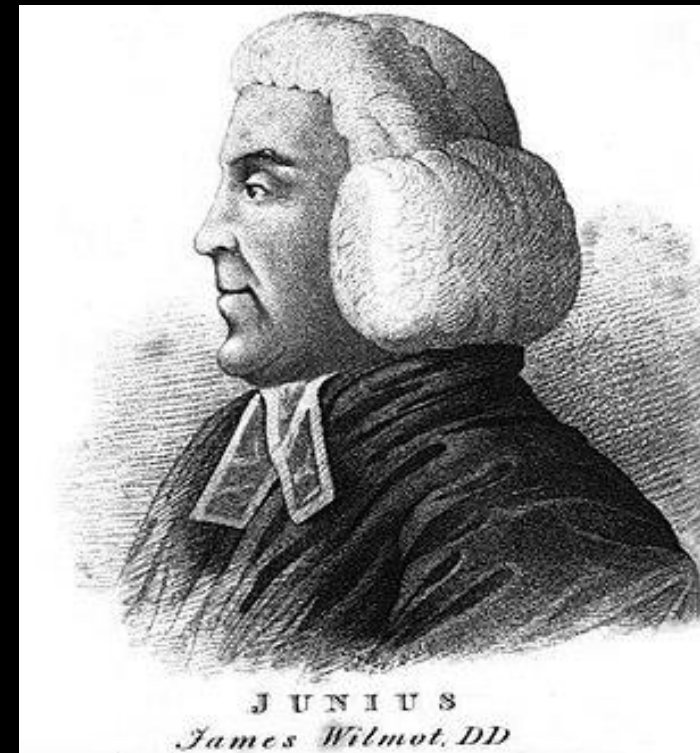
L O N D O N  
Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1623.

# JAMES WILMOT, 1785

Oxford trained scholar who lived a few miles outside of Stratford.

Looked for Will's books, papers or any indication that he had been "an author".

Never published by told fellow quaker and member of the Ipswich Philosophical Society. James Corton Cowell.



# JAMES CORTON COWELL, 1805

“There is nothing in the writings of Shakespeare that does not argue the long and early training of the schoolman, the traveler, and the associate of the great and learned.

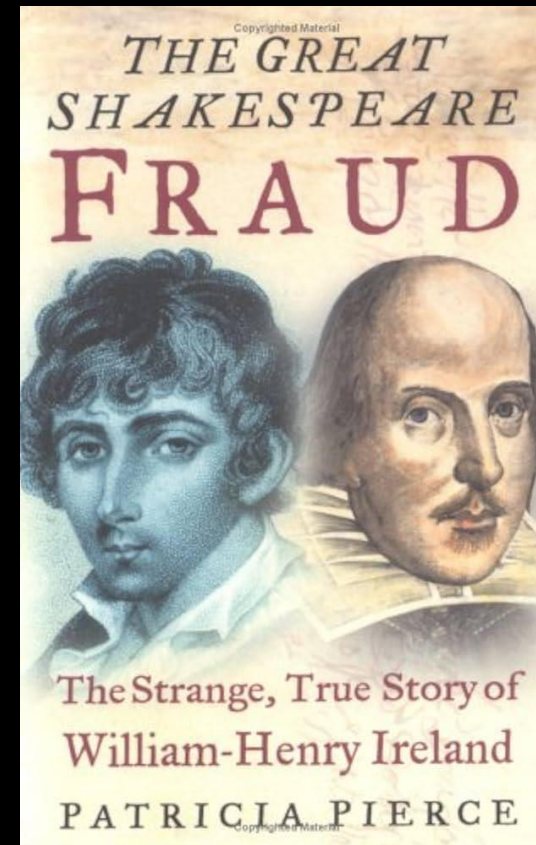
“Yet there is nothing in the **known** life of Shakespeare that shows he had anyone of the qualities.”

Supposed manuscript in University of London's Senate House Library



# WILLIAN HENRY IRELAND, 1775-1835

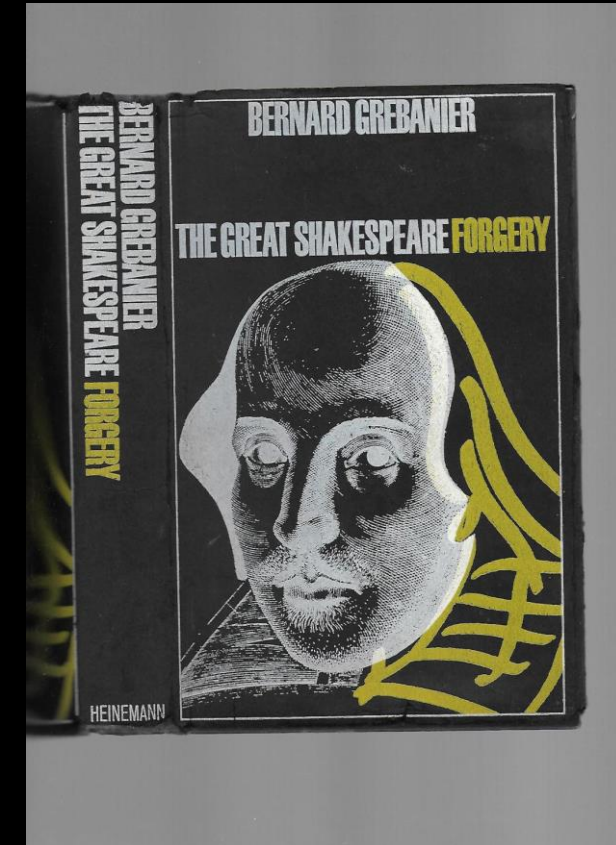
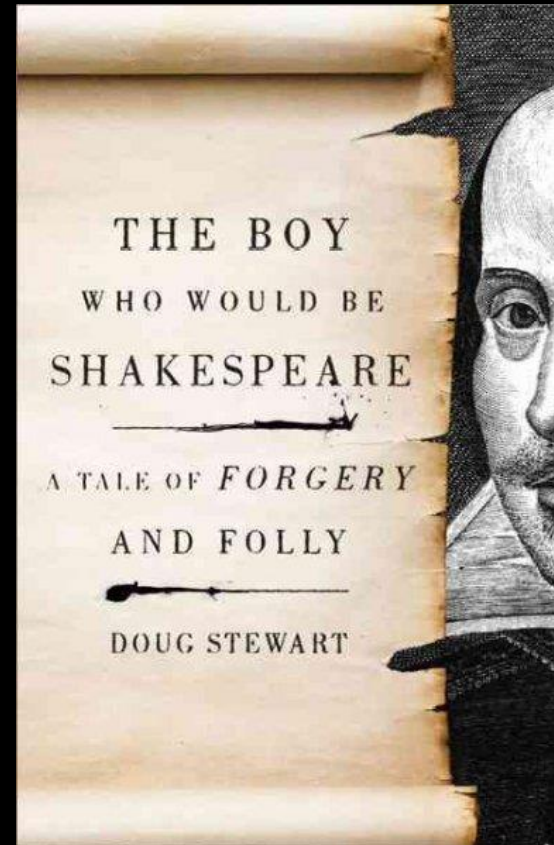
- Desperate to please his father, found first a deed mortgage deed.
- Francis Webb “not only the signature of his hand but the stamp of his soul, and the traits of his genius”



# FORGERIES FOR PARENTAL APPROVAL

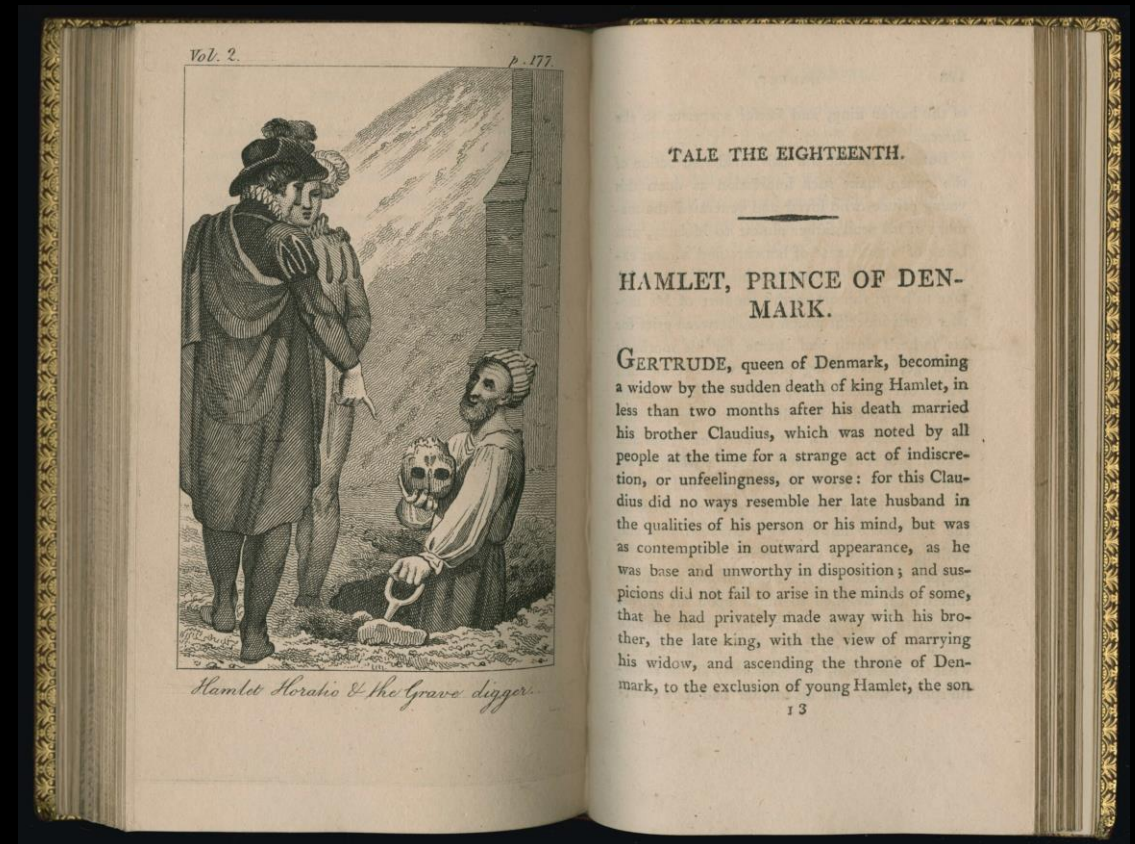
Found trove of documents, letters, books with Will's annotations, a drawing, exchanges with printers, early letter from his wife, literary manuscripts, copy of King Lear, brief account of Will's life in his own hand.

He finally confessed. His father refused to believe his son was capable of masterminding such a hoax but never spoke to him again.



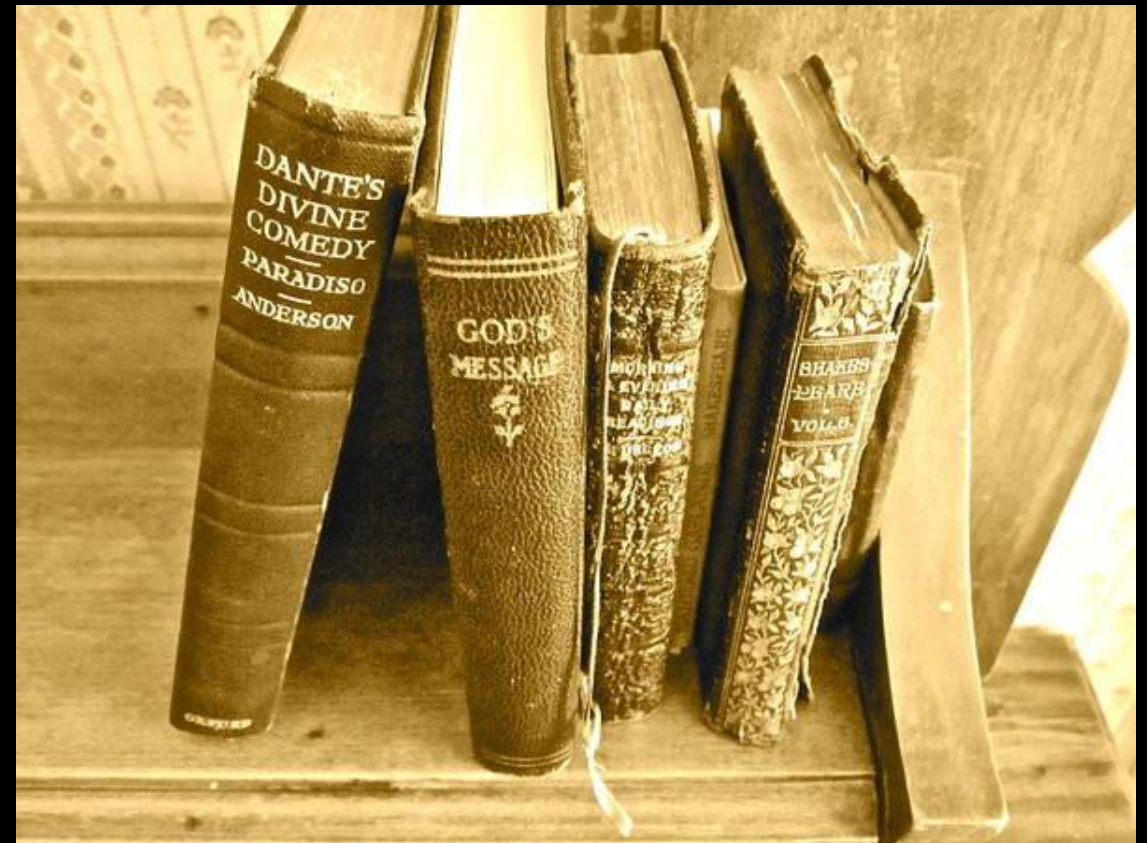
# AUTHORSHIP QUESTION TURNS ON BIOGRAPHY OR WORKS AS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

- “the authorship questions has turned on a handful of ideas having little directly to do with Will but profoundly altering how his life and works would be read and interpreted.
- Emerging notions of the autobiographical self.
- A few powerful ideas that took hold in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



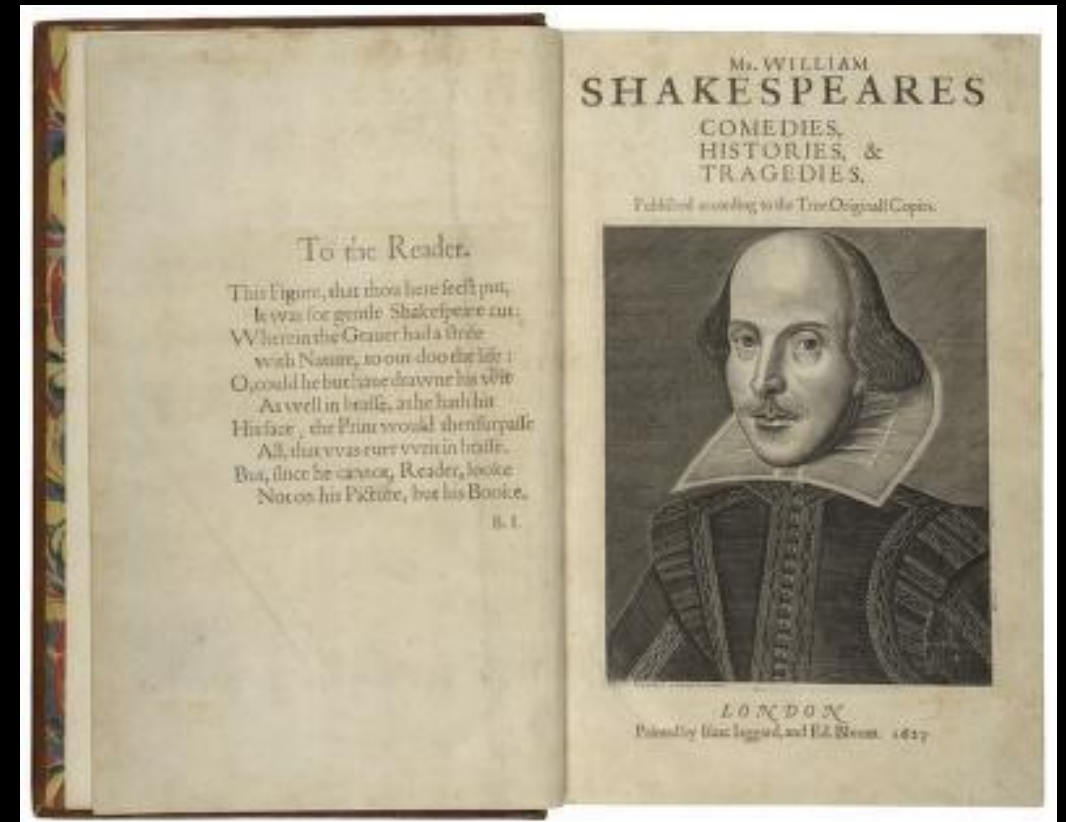
# SHAKESPEARE DEIFIED

- In his own day, Will was compared to rivals, both classical and contemporary.
- Ranked AMONG the best.
- Posthumously Will was “unyoked from the company of rival or mortals.”



# JOHN HEMINGES AND HENRY CORDELL

- Will's fellow actors created the First Folio in 1623.
- Others playwrights weren't so honored.



# VOLTAIRE, WILL IS DEVINE



- “Shakespeare is rarely called anything but ‘divine’ in England”  
1728
- Arthur Murphy retorted “with us islanders, Shakespeare is a kind of established religion in poetry.

# DAVID GARRICK 1717-1779

- Overnight success, naturalistic style, 1741
- Three day Jubilee with religious tones, at Stratford-on-Avon 1769. Rain soaked, lost \$2,000
- Local historian said Jubilee “marks the point at which Shakespeare stopped being regarded as an increasingly popular and admirable dramatist and became a God.



- Buried at the foot of Shakespeare's statue at Westminster Abbey, first actor
- Built a temple to Will on his estate,
- Available for arts and cultural events



# READING THE PAST THROUGH CONTEMPORARY IDEAS

## Early Modern world

- Plays not autobiographical
- Wrote in familiar genres, Revenge, Satire
- Elizabethan playwrights likely read Ovid, Cicero, Virgil, Quintilian grammar school.

## Modern world

- Literature expected to be possibly or probably autobiographical

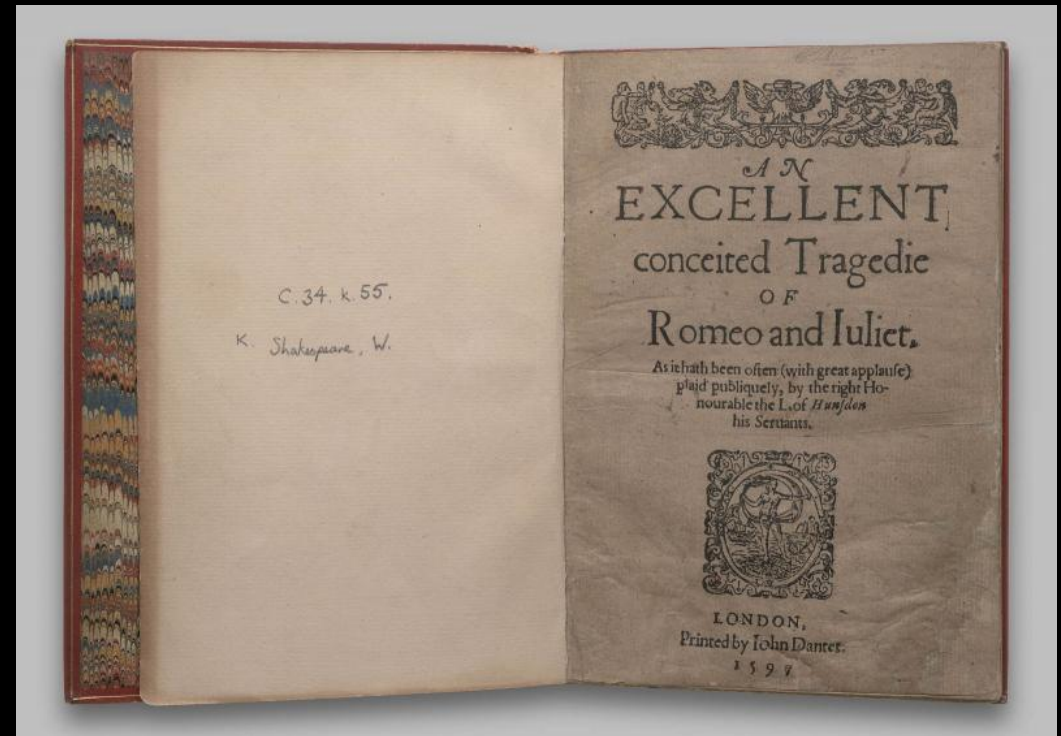


# READING THE PAST THROUGH CONTEMPORARY IDEAS

Shakespeare used Chronicles of Holinshed, Plutarch's "Lives of the Noble Grecians and Roman"

Hamlet, King Lear, Taming of the Shrew, know stories

Arthur Brooke's poem "The Tragic History of Romeus and Juliet", moral lesson to obey your parents



Miranda Sherwin



## "Confessional" Writing and the Twentieth-Century Literary Imagination



## What is Confessional Poetry?

Confessional poetry is a poetic style that is characterized by the poet's personal and often autobiographical exploration of intense and private emotion.

## Modern Confessional Writing

New critical essays

Edited by  
Jo Gill



Routledge Studies in Twentieth-Century Literature

## WHAT SYLVIA PLATH TAUGHT ME.



## The Poet's Toolbox: What is Confessional Poetry?

Manuela Williams



**I don't write  
confessional  
poetry anymore  
mainly because  
I have nothing  
left to confess**

## WRITING CONFESSIONAL POETRY

[www.inklingcreative.work](http://www.inklingcreative.work)

# ALVIN SARGENT, SCREEN WRITER,

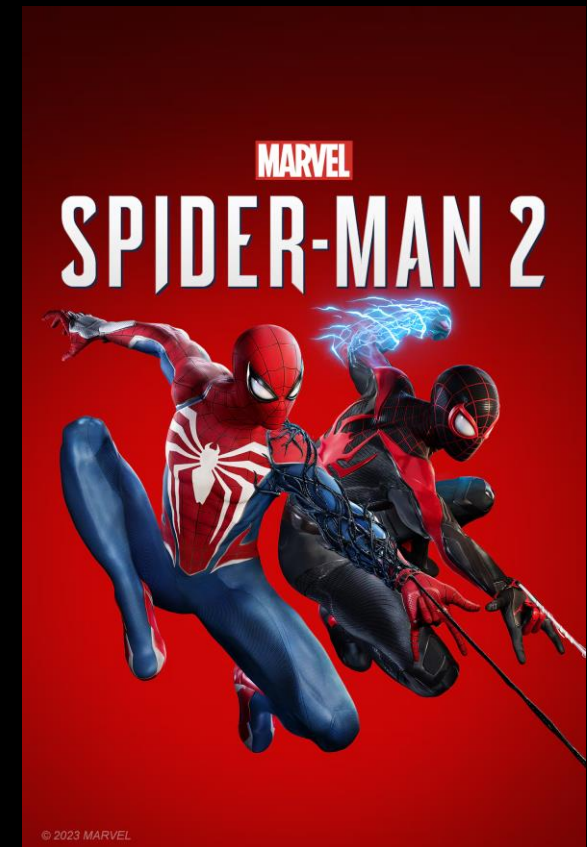
1927-2019

TV series, Ben Casey, Naked City, Route 66, The Doctors and the Nurses,

Movies: Love and Pain and the Whole Damn Thing, 1973 .What about Bob? Other People's Money,

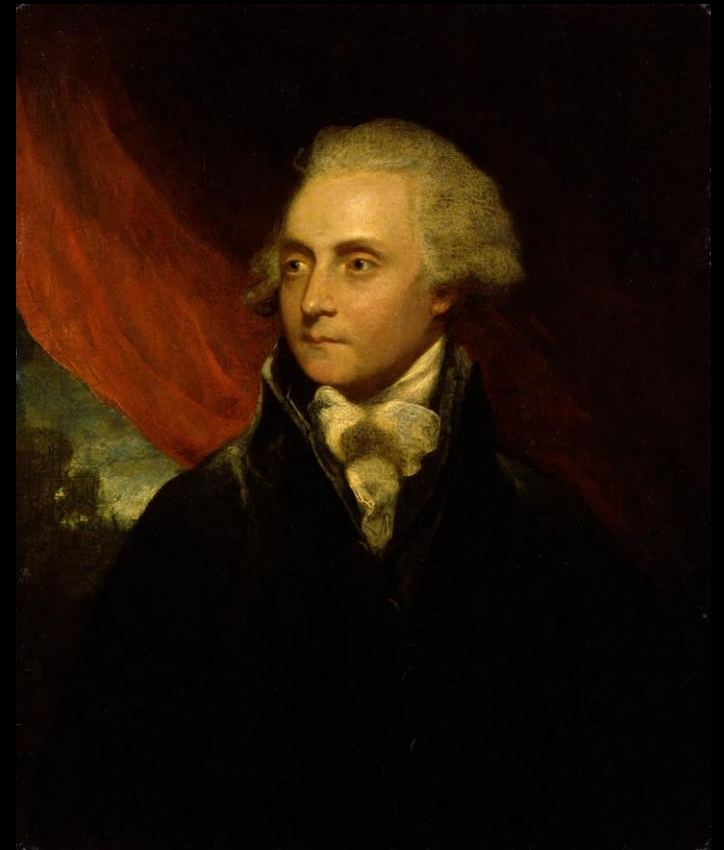
Oscars: Ordinary People, Julia, Paper Moon

Three Spiderman movies for his wife Laura Ziskin, producer. Spider-Man 2, Spider-Man 3 and The Amazing Spider-Man



# ENTER EDMOND MALONE 1741-1812,

- Serious scholar with George Stevens
- Desperately wanted to find papers, biography,
- He arranged plays chronologically
- 
- He added the poems to the plays



# ENTER EDMOND MALONE 1741-1812,

- He looked for biography in works
- He fused Will's life and work
- He introduced idea of reading Will's life through the plays.



# ENTER EDMOND MALONE 1741-1812,

- After Henslowe's death in 1616, Alleyn inherited and deposited Henslowe's papers into the library at Dulwich College, where they lay unmolested until their discovery in 1780 by Edmond Malone, a scholar preparing a variorum edition of Shakespeare.
- Before Malone could make academic use of the diary, it was mislaid.

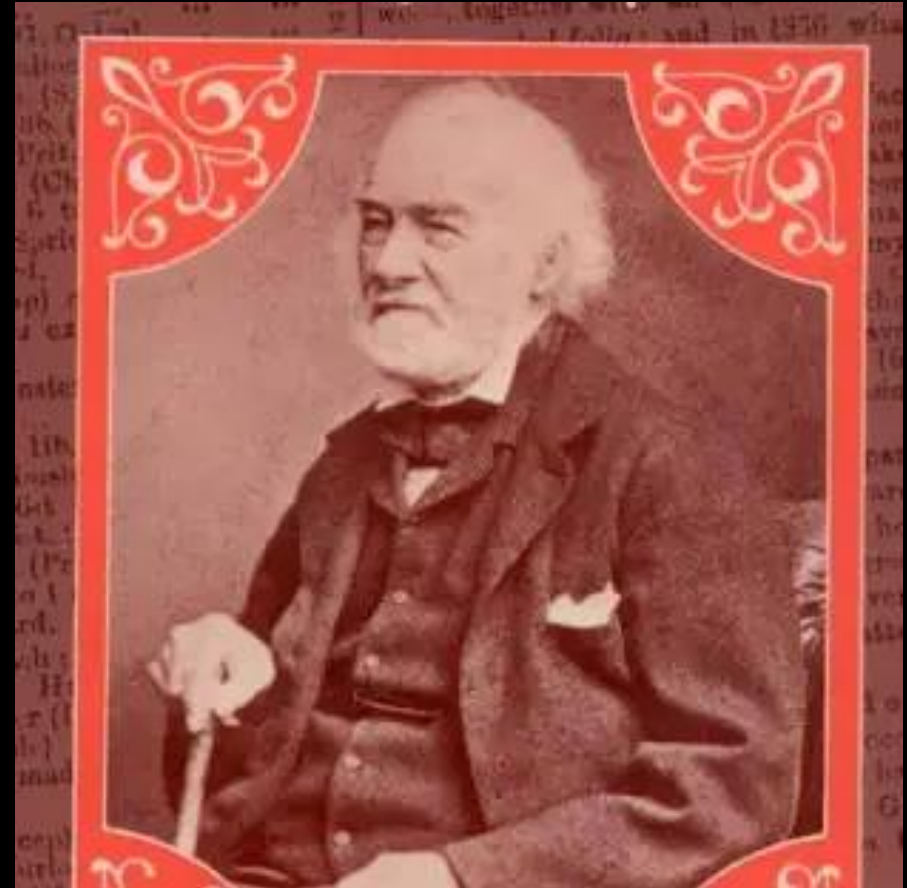


# POOR GEORGE STEVENS 1736-1800



# JOHN PAYNE COLLIER 1789-1883

- In 1852, John Payne Collier (1789-1883), a respected Shakespeare scholar and editor, announced that he had discovered a Second Folio of Shakespeare - referred to as the Perkins Folio, for an ownership inscription in the book - that was heavily annotated and corrected in a mid-seventeenth-century hand.



WHO WROTE HOMER?  
WHO WROTE THE BIBLE?

