

THE QUARTO OF THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR:

A CRITICAL STUDY

WITH TEXT AND NOTES

A Thesis

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PREFATORY NOTE

The following work falls into three parts. First, in the course of the Introduction I endeavour to explain the nature and provenance of the 1602 text of The Merry Wives of Windsor. Secondly, I reprint the said text and include along with it certain editorial symbols, the purpose of which will be explained in due course. Thirdly, to this text I append a series of line-by-line notes.

The problems raised by this text are various and complicated, and I should be the last to claim that I had dealt with them in anything approaching an exhaustive manner. This work, indeed, may be looked upon as a skeleton draft of a much longer work which I hope I may be able to produce at a future date.

References to the quarto text of the play are to the continuous line-numbers included with the text as here reprinted. References to the folio text of the play are to the act, scene, and line numbers in the New Shakespeare edition (edited by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and John Dover Wilson, 1921). Quotations from the folio are given with the original spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, but the line-division indicated is that of the New Shakespeare edition. References to passages in plays other than the Merry Wives are to the act, scene, and line numbers of the New Shakespeare, and, in the cases of plays not yet published in that edition, to the act, scene, and line numbers of the standard Globe edition of Shakespeare.

The following abbreviations are used.

<u>JEGP</u>	<u>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</u>
<u>MLR</u>	<u>The Modern Language Review</u>
<u>PMLA</u>	<u>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</u>
<u>RES</u>	<u>The Review of English Studies</u>
<u>TLS</u>	<u>The Times Literary Supplement</u>

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

THE QUARTO OF THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR: A REPORTED TEXT

It is my contention that those critics are right who hold that the Q text of the Merry Wives of Windsor is a reported text — that is, that some stage of its transmission was memorial. I certainly cannot believe that Q represents a Shakespearian first draft and F a Shakespearian revision,¹ or that Q is a farce interlude adapted from F.² Limitations of space prohibit discussion of the possibility that Q is a stenographic report. But the problem of Elizabethan shorthand has been thoroughly investigated by competent scholars,³ and their findings convince me that there was no contemporary system capable of reproducing the best reported parts of Q from performance in the theatre. Surely,

¹ Alexander Pope originally suggested that Shakespeare 'entirely new writ' the Merry Wives, a view that was long held by orthodox scholarly opinion, and still survives, admittedly with certain modifications, in the comments of some recent editors (Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare, edited by R. Nichol Smith (1903), p. 52). But the only undeniable evidence of revision in F lies in the substitution of 'Broome' for 'Brooke' as Ford's alias and the reformation of profane expletives in deference to the Jacobean statute of 1606. Unless Shakespeare was concerned in either of these alterations, there is no reason to believe that he ever revised the play (W.W. Greg, The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare, second edition (1951), pp. xcii, 72).

² See Vincent H. Ogburn, "The Merry Wives Quarto, a Farce Interlude," PMLA, LVII. 654-660.

³ See especially the following studies: W. Matthews, "Shorthand and the Bad Shakespeare Quartos," MIR, XXVII. 243-262; "A Postscript to 'Shorthand and the Bad Shakespeare Quartos'," MIR, XXVIII. 81-83; "Shakespeare and the Reporters," The Library, fourth series, XV. 481-498; "Peter Bales, Timothy Bright and William Shakespeare," JEGP, XXIV. 483-510; Letter in The Library, fourth series, XVII. 227-230. George Ian Buthe, Elizabethan Shorthand and the First Quarto of 'King Lear', 1949.

on the basis of the shorthand theory, we should have to assume an extraordinarily low standard of accuracy in the actors of Shakespeare's company to account for the wholesale memorial corruption also observable in Q. The only reasonable hypothesis seems to me to be that the 'gross corruption, constant mutilation, meaningless inversion and clumsy transposition'⁴ in Q are solely the result of inept memorial reconstruction. It is my further belief that Q is a report of an original in substantial agreement with the F text.

I propose now to adduce fresh evidence pointing to the conclusion that the Q text is indeed memorial; at the same time attempting to show that the theories which represent Q as a first sketch of the F text or a farce interlude adapted from F are untenable. For this study, we shall accept Sir Walter Greg's view that F was 'probably printed from a transcript by Ralph Crane, most likely of foul papers'.⁵

To begin the examination of evidence which indicates that the Q text is a report, we shall carefully analyze several passages in Q which show textual breakdown of such a nature that in my opinion only the theory of memorial reconstruction can explain it. The first of these passages is at II. ii. 130-143 (Q 538-549):

Q: Enter Bardolfe.
 Bar. Sir heer's a Gentleman,
 One M. Brooke, would speak with you,

540

⁴ Shakespeare's Merry Wives of Windsor, 1602, edited by W.W. Greg (1910), p. xxvi.

⁵ Greg, The Editorial Problem, p. 71n.

He hath sent you a cup of sacke.

Fal. M. Brooke, hees welcome: Bid him come vp,
Such Brookes are alwaies welcome to me:
A Iack, will thy old bodie yet held out?
Wilt thou after the expence of so much money
Be now a gainer? Good bodie I thanke thee,
And Ile make more of thee then I ha done:
Ha, ha, misteris Ford, and misteris Page, haue
I caught you a the hip? go too.

545

F: Fal. Saist thou so (old Iacke) go thy waies: Ile make
more of thy olde body then I haue done: will they yet
looke after thee? wilt thou after the expence of so much
money, be now a gainer? good Body, I thanke thee: let
them say 'tis grossely done, so it bee fairely done, no matter.

130

Bar. Sir Iohn, there's one Master Broome below
would faine speake with you, and be acquainted with you;
and hath sent your worship a mornings draught of Sacke.

135

Fal. Broome is his name?

Bar. I Sir.

Fal. Call him in: such Broomes
are welcome to mee, that ore'flowes such liquor:
ah ha, Mistresse Ford and Mistresse Page, haue
I encompass'd you? goe to, via.

140

(The alteration of Ford's pseudonym from 'Brooke' to 'Broome' throughout the F text will not concern us here.)

The Q version of Falstaff's 'old Iacke' soliloquy lacks the passage 'let them . . . no matter' (II. ii. 133-134), as well as short phrases in lines 130 and 132. In addition, Q locates the reverie after Bardolph's entry to announce the arrival of the disguised Ford. Did Shakespeare originally conceive the speech without these lines, and did he add them in the course of a revision which also affected the sequence of the text? I think not. Turning to the first line of the Q rendering of the speech,

A Iack, will thy old bodie yet held out?,
we find that the words 'Iack', 'thy old bodie', and 'will . . . yet'
occur in II. ii. 130-131 of F; 'held out' does not, and it may well be

that the person responsible for the Q line was influenced by an anticipation of IV. ii. 130,⁶ spoken by Master Ford, who is involved also in our present context:

F: Well said Brazen-face, hold it out: . . .

Q: Well sed brazen face, hold it out,

The next two Q lines correspond to II. ii. 132-133 of the F text, and the final line,

And Ile make more of thee then I ha done:,

to the F reading at II. ii. 130-131:

. . . Ile make / more of thy elde body then I haue done: . . .

A main point of the soliloquy, Falstaff's exultant crow of impending success, 'will they yet looke after thee?' (II. ii. 131-132), is omitted in Q, which, as we have seen, prints a quite different substitute. Since one can hardly imagine a writer of Shakespeare's attested facility painstakingly seeking new permutations and combinations of the same words, phrases, and lines during the course of a revision,⁷ I think we

⁶ Although the words are here used in a different sense, there is a possibility of linkage through similarity of situation: in each case the speaker believes that he has 'caught out' one or both of the 'merry wives'.

⁷ In his discussion of verbal variants in the Q and F texts of *King Lear*, W.W. Greg states: 'That Shakespeare should add or delete or recast or touch up is conceivable; but that he should rewrite a play in order to make a lot of verbal alterations is surely not in character, whereas to suggest that the many trivial and indifferent variants were deliberately inserted as corrections into the manuscript as it stood seems to me merely fantastic.' (*The Editorial Problem*, p. 89). He continues: 'Had structural recasting ever necessitated rewriting a play throughout, I have no doubt that in doing so Shakespeare would both consciously and unconsciously have made all sorts of small alterations

may safely assume that we are confronted with textual corruption in Q rather than a Shakespearian first draft. And since the Q version of the speech is corrupt, I also think we may safely assume that it is transposed in Q.

But Q shows still further evidence of corruption at this point. The first two lines of Bardolph's announcement in Q (539-540) are clearly contaminated by a recollection of a line earlier in the scene, at II. ii. 28, where Robin introduces Mistress Quickly to Sir John:

F: Sir, here's a woman would speake with you.

(Absent in Q)

The recollection, however, has 'woman', and the Q reference is to a 'Gentleman'. Where does the Q reading come from? It must surely be an anticipation of II. ii. 150:

F: Sir, I am a Gentleman that haue spent much,

Q: Ifaith sir I am a gentleman and a traueller,

Immediately following these memorial errors, Q lacks the passages 'and be . . . with you' (II. ii. 136) and 'Broome is . . . I Sir' (II. ii. 138-139) and gives a vapid parallel for the F reading 'and hath sent your worship a mornings draught of Sacke' (II. ii. 137):

He hath sent you a cup of sacke.

It is the Falstaff of the Henry IV plays (particularly 1 Henry IV) who

in the text, many of which would have seemed to us indifferent and unmotivated.' (Ibid., p. 89n). In my opinion there is no suggestion that any structural necessity has been made the basis of revision in the Merry Wives.

drinks his sack by the cup. His more depraved counterpart in the F Merry Wives talks only of quarts and pottles of the wine. The Q reading 'a cup of sacke' may be influenced by the other plays, but it may also contain a reminiscence of Mistress Quickly's protestation earlier in the scene, at II. ii. 71-72:

F: they could neuer get her so much as sippe on a cup with
the proudest of them all, . . .

(Absent in Q) ⁸

A Q omission blunts the point of Falstaff's pun at II. ii. 141, and there is more than a suggestion that the two preceding Q lines are also corrupt. 'M. Brooke, hees welcome' apparently anticipates Sir John's greeting to 'Brooke' at II. ii. 148:

F: You'r welcome, . . .

Q: Good M. Brooke your verie welcome.

We know from II. ii. 135 of the F version that the visitor must indeed 'come up'. But the order 'Bid him come vp' occurs only in Q, and most likely combines a recollection of I. i. 181:⁹

F: Wife, bid these gentlemen welcome: . . .

(Absent in Q)

and an anticipation of IV. v. 118, where Falstaff says

F: Come vp into my Chamber.

Q: Come goe with me into my chamber, . . .

⁸ Q sometimes anticipates or recollects an F passage which is altogether absent in its rightful place — a type of corruption common in undoubtedly reported texts.

⁹ The word 'welcome' could constitute a memorial link.

Finally, at line 549 of the Q text, which immediately follows the transposed 'old Iacke' soliloquy, we encounter what Alfred Hart¹⁰ regards as a borrowing from the Merchant of Venice, I. iii. 43:

If I can catch him once vpon the hip,
and cf. also IV. i. 330:

Now infidell I haue thee on the hip.

But I feel sure that the case is more complex than this, and that the person responsible for the corruption imported the Merchant of Venice borrowing via Falstaff's remark at III. iii. 40:

Q: Haue I caught my heauenlie Iewel?

F: Haue I caught thee, my heauenly Iewell?

where, as W.W. Greg notes, it is the Q text which correctly quotes this line from the second song of Sidney's Astrophel and Stella.¹¹

In the Q passage which corresponds to II. ii. 130-143 of the full play we have discovered a rapid succession of textual errors which are clearly due to defective memorial transmission. Can we hold responsible a negligent scribe with his eye wandering from his copy and his memory active? Surely not: we know from the study of surviving Elizabethan dramatic documents that a scribe occasionally did corrupt a text, but, where the ruin is so complete, such a scribe is out of the question. And although we are obviously dealing with a struggling mem-

¹⁰ Alfred Hart, Steale and Surreptitious Copies, a comparative study of Shakespeare's Bad Quartos (1942), p. 393.

¹¹ Shakespeare's Merry Wives, ed. Greg, p. 74.

ory, it is the memory of a person who is trying desperately to re-create the F text at this point with no authentic document to rely on. Since Q bears the earmarks of memorial reconstruction throughout, it will be convenient from now on to refer to this person as the memorial reconstructor.

Let us now glance at III. v. 18-31 (Q 973-979), where the two versions are as follows:

Q: Bar. I sir, there's a woman below would speake with you.

Fal. Bid her come vp. Let me put some Sacke among this cold water, for my belly is as cold as if I had swallowed snow-balles for pilles.

975

Enter Mistresse Quickly.

Now whats the newes with you?

F: Bar. Here's M. Quickly Sir to speake with you.

Fal. Come, let me poure in some Sack to the Thames water: for my bellies as cold as if I had swallow'd snowbals, for pilles to coole the reines. Call her in.

20

Bar. Come in woman.

Qui. By your leane: I cry you mercy? Give your worship good merrow.

25

Fal. Take away these

Challices: Go, brew me a pottle of Sacke finely.

Bard. With Egges, Sir?

Fal. Simple of it selfe: Ile no Pullet-Sperme in my brewage. How now?

30

The Q text of Bardolph's speech beginning at III. v. 18 obviously derives from the first set of parallel passages just examined above. We recall that the Q version of II. ii. 135-136 (Q 539-540) contained a recollection of II. ii. 28:

F: Sir, here's a woman would speake with you.

(Absent in Q)

Now we find that 'I sir, there's a woman below would speake with you'

is a complex of recollections of II. ii. 28 and II. ii. 135-136:

F: Sir Iohn, there's one Master Broome below
would faine speake with you, . . .

Q: Sir heer's a Gentleman,
One M. Brooke, would speak with you,

And Falstaff's reply, 'Bid her come vp', absent in F, recollects the Q reading at II. ii. 140:

Q: . . . Bid him come vp,

F: Call him in: . . .

suggesting that we are dealing with the same transmitter at both points. The possibility that Q may represent a Shakespearian first draft and F a revision is again rather remote; for, as we noted above,¹² revisers, particularly Shakespeare's, could hardly reasonably be expected to play variations on trivial words and phrases. And just how the corrupt Q readings are better suited to a farce interlude I do not quite understand.

The passage from 'to coole' to 'my brewage' (III. v. 22-31) is lacking in Q and the three lines immediately preceding vary in the two texts. I do not think it likely that the nine lines wanting in Q were added by Shakespeare during a revision. We have just observed that Q line 975 contains a memorial error. In addition, four of the missing Q lines (III. v. 28-31) turn up at the point in Q corresponding to III. v. 1-4, where F prints an entirely different command for sack. So there are good chances of discovering further memorial corruption in the Q

¹² Cf. ante, pp. 4-5.

version of Falstaff's speech. The clumsy repetition of the word 'cold' in Q line 976 and the absence in the next line of the phrase 'to coole the reines' hint at faulty memorial work. The Q reading 'cold water' is probably a reminiscence of mine Host's advice to the Doctor at II. iii. 78:

F: throw cold water on thy Cheller: . . .

Q: Throw cold water on your collar, . . .

The Q substitution of 'put' for F's 'poure', in the vicinity of the word 'Sacke', seems to me to be a result of the recollection of III. v. 3-4, where F juxtaposes 'Sacke' and 'put':

F: Go, fetch me a quart of Sacke, put a tost
in't. . . .

Q: Bardolfe brew me a pottle sack presently:

Finally, we find that Sir John's inquiry, 'Now whats the newes with you', at line 979 in Q, recollects a speech in the first buck-basket scene, III. iii. 20-21:

F: How now my Eyas-Musket, what newes
with you?

(Absent in Q)

As we noticed above, the F passage from III. v. 28 to 31 occurs in Q at III. v. 1-4 (Q 953-956). The Q version is as follows:

<u>Fal</u> : <u>Bardolfe</u> brew me a pottle sack presently:	
<u>Bar</u> : With Egges sir?	
<u>Fal</u> : Simply of it selfe, Ile none of these pullets	955
In my drinke: gee make haste.	(sperme

Here the words 'presently' and 'drinke' are more commonplace substitutions for F's 'finely' and 'brewage'; while 'gee make haste' (absent

in F) may represent a bit of actor's gag, which the memorial reconstructor would remember from performance.¹³ Since the entire Q passage corresponding to III. v. 18-31 in F is shot through with textual decay, I think that we may safely conclude that the location of III. v. 28-31 in Q at lines 953-956 is also due to corruption in Q.

The textual wreckage in Q in this passage is certainly too complete to be attributed to the vagaries of a careless scribe or compositor --- that goes without saying. Q cannot be a Shakespearian first sketch or an authentic adaptation of F as a farce interlude, for it bears throughout the obvious marks of inept memorial transmission; and I feel that the only sane assumption is that the utter confusion throughout the passage is all attributable to an attempt to reconstruct the F text at this point without documentary assistance.

To my mind the two sets of parallel passages which we have just analyzed give very strong indications that Q is a memorial reconstruction of the F text. Now that we have established the pattern of our argument, without more wearisome reiteration of our conclusions, we shall discuss in their proper order four additional passages which further support this hypothesis.

At I. iii. 74-77 (Q 208-213) the texts read as follows:

Q: Pist. Shall I sir Panderowes of Troy become?
And by my sword were steels.

¹³ For examples of gag incorporated in other reported Shakespearian texts see E.K. Chambers, William Shakespeare, a study of facts and problems (1930), I. 285, 288, 342, 391, 419.

Then Lucifer take all.

210

Nym. Here take your humor Letter againe,
For my part, I will keepe the hanier
Of reputation. And theres the humor of it.

F: Pist. Shall I Sir Pandarus of Trey become,
And by my side weare Steele? then Lucifer take all.

75

Ni. I will run no base humor: here take the humor-
Letter; I will keepe the hanier of reputation.

Nym's assertion, 'I will run no base humor' (I. iii. 76), is not found in the Q text at this point, but it is anticipated in the Q version of his threat to Master Slender at I. i. 155-157 (Q 58-59):

Q: But if you run base humors of me,
I will say mary trap. . . .

F: . . . I will say
marry trap with you, if you runne the nut-hooks humor
on me, . . .

What does remain of Nym's speech in Q lines 211-213 is by no means free of memorial corruption either. I suggest that the phrase 'For my part' (Q 212), here only in the Q text, is a recollection of Bardolph's remark at I. i. 162, where Corporal Nym is also present:

F: Why sir, (for my part) I say the Gentleman
(Absent in Q)

And I further suggest that the memorial reconstructor has gratuitously appended the characteristic tag, 'And theres the humor of it', to the Q version of Nym's speech. Now although this expression occurs five times in Q,¹⁴ it does not appear at all in the F text of the play. It is apparently a borrowing from Henry V; but, and this is an interesting

¹⁴ Nym's cliché appears in Q lines 59, 162-163, 213, 230, 375.

point, the cant phrase is reproduced in Q in the form in which it appears in the 'bad' quarto of Henry V, the folio consistently printing 'that is . . .' or 'that's the humor of it'.¹⁵ The Q form was very likely the one which was associated with performances of the play in the theatre.

The rather curious spelling of 'Panderowes' in Q line 208 has led M.R. Ridley to speculate whether it might not be 'an amusing auditory error' or 'Pistol's mispronunciation',¹⁶ but we need not press this. In any event, the Q text certainly makes utter nonsense of the first half of the next F line: 'And by my side weare Steele?' Admittedly, the meaningless reading by itself does not imply memorial reconstruction, but when, in addition, within a passage printed as four lines in modern editions of the play, we can discover an omitted phrase which has been anticipated, a recollection, and a borrowing — all symptoms of reporting — I think we may feel confident that our thesis is upheld.

Let us now examine III. iii. 101-114 (Q 871-879), where the texts run as follows:

Q: Mis. Pa. Why your husband woman is cōming,
With halfe Windsor at his heeles,
To looke for a gentleman that he ses
Is hid in his house: his wifes sweet hart.
Mis. For. Speak louder. But I hope tis not true
Misteris Page.

875

¹⁵ Alfred Hart, Stolne and Surrentitious Copies, p. 394.

¹⁶ The Merry Wives of Windsor, edited by M.R. Ridley (New Temple Shakespeare, 1935), p. 125.

Mis. Pa. 'Tis too true woman. Therefore if you
Have any here, away with him, or your vndone for
euer.

F: M. Page. Your husband's coming hether (Woman)
with all the Officers in Windsor, to search for a Gentle-
man, that he sayes is heere now in the house; by your
consent to take an ill advantage of his absence: you
are vndone.

105

M. Ford. 'Tis not so, I hope.

M. Page. Pray heauen it be not so, that you haue
such a man heere: but 'tis most certaine your husband's
coming, with halfe Windsor at his heeles, to serch for such
a one, I came before to tell you: If you know your selfe
cleere, why I am glad of it: but if you haue a friend here,
comney, comney him out. Be not amaz'd, call all your
senses to you, defend your reputation, or bid farwell to
your good life for euer.

110

Q lacks the passages 'by your . . . are vndone' (III. iii. 103-105), 'Pray heauen . . . of it' (III. iii. 107-111), and 'Be not . . . your reputation' (III. iii. 112-113), and shows considerable variation from the F text in the lines which it does print. The slight inversion in the opening line of the Q rendering is immediately followed by a clear case of anticipation (Q 872) from one of the missing passages, where the association-link is furnished by the similar phrase 'your husband's coming' and the word 'Windsor'. In the next Q line the variant 'looke' is most likely a synonym-substitution; but there is a possibility that Q anticipates a remark by Mistress Ford at IV. ii. 74-75, in the second buck-basket scene:

F: . . . Mistress Page
and I will looke some linnen for your head.

(Absent in Q)

and this possibility is increased by the presence of two credible anticipations from the later scene within our nine-line Q passage. At line 874 of the Q text, however, the memorial perversion becomes much

more complex. To begin with, we must explain the substitution of the word 'hid' in Q for the F's 'heere'. There is little doubt in my mind that the memorial reconstructor has confused this passage with Mistress Page's speech at III. iii. 120-122, a few lines later, where a part of the verb 'to hide' is used in a phrase containing the words 'in the house':¹⁷

F: . . . your husband's heere at hand,
bethinke you of some cunneyance: in the house you cannot
hide him. . . .

(Absent in Q)

and so he has written down 'hid in his house' in Q line 874. But the Q line has been further contaminated by an anticipation of III. v. 72-73, at which point Falstaff is reciting to Master 'Brooke' the misadventures of the first buck-basket scene:

F: . . . and (forsooth) to serch his house for
his wiues Loue.

Q: . . . to search for his wiues leue. . . .

We have now uncovered the probable derivation of the Q words 'his house' and 'his wifes'. The anticipation, however, has 'Loue', and the Q version has 'sweet hart'. And throughout the F text the only other analogous reference to the philandering knight is as 'his wiues Lemman' at IV. ii. 157-158. Where does the Q reading come from? It is presumably an anticipation of V. v. 22-23:

F: Mistris Page is come with me (sweet-

¹⁷ The words 'your husband's' could constitute an additional memorial link.

hart.)

(Absent in Q)

since the remark is addressed to Falstaff by Mistress Ford.

Mistress Ford's whispered command 'Speak louder', in Q line 875, is not found in F at this point, but it does appear in the full text at IV. 11. 16:

F: No certainly: Speake louder.

(Absent in Q)

As W.W. Greg points out, H.C. Hart has made a strong case for the 'greater propriety of the folio arrangement'.¹⁸ For, in the first encounter with the 'merry wives', Sir John ensconces himself 'behinde the Arras' at the approach of Mistress Page, and, says Hart, 'we may take it for granted Mrs. Page will speak loud enough without any instructions from the other woman, as that is the whole point of the situation. Falstaff is close at hand . . .'.¹⁹ The F version of the second buck-basket scene, however, has Sir John step 'into th' chamber'.²⁰ Hart makes it plain that the aside is misplaced in Q: 'When Falstaff was close by, "behind the arras," such an instruction was quite out of place; but here, where he has gone into another room, it is properly made use of'.²¹

¹⁸ Shakespeare's Merry Wives, ed. Greg, p. 74.

¹⁹ The Merry Wives of Windsor, edited by H.C. Hart (Arden Shakespeare, 1904), p. 135n.

²⁰ In both scenes in the Q text Falstaff is secreted behind the arras.

²¹ The Merry Wives, ed. H.C. Hart, p. 165n.

The remainder of Mistress Ford's Q speech is an expansion and inversion of III. iii. 106, with the substitution of the word 'true' for the F's 'so'.

Mistress Page's final speech in this Q passage has very few points of contact with its F counterpart. 'Tis too true woman' is not found in the F text, but it may be that the memorial reconstructor vaguely recalled the first line of the F speech, as well as the phrase 'but 'tis most certaine' in III. iii. 108, and rang in a variation on the line he had just written, repeating the vocative 'Woman' from III. iii. 101 (Q 871). The words 'Therefore if you haue any here' are clearly a paraphrase of the F's 'but if you haue a friend here' in III. iii. 111. And there is a second anticipation of the later buck-basket scene in the Q expression 'away with him', for at IV. ii. 40-41 we find:

F: . . . What a woman are you? Away
with him, away with him: . . .

(Absent in Q)

Finally, in III. iii. 113-114, where there is a phraseological similarity in the two texts, the Q reading is contaminated by a recollection of III. iii. 91-92:

F: . . . You'r sham'd, y'are ouerthrowne,
y'are vndone for euer.

(Absent in Q)

Next we shall consider III. v. 66-73 (Q 1009-1016):

Q: Fal. No M. Brooke, but you shall heare. After we
had kissed and imbraced, and as it were euen smid
the prelogue of our incounter, who should come,
but the iealous knaue her husband, and a rabble of
his companions at his heeles, thither prouoked and

instigated by his distemper. And what to do thinke
you? to search for his wiues loue. Euen so, plainly
so.

1015

F: Fal. No (M. Broome) but the peaking Curmuto
her husband (M. Broome) dwelling in a continual larm
of ieleusie, comes me in the instant of our encounter,
after we had embrast, kist, protested, & (as it were)
spoke the prelogue of our Comedy: and at his heeles, a
rabble of his companions, thither prouoked and instigated
by his distemper, and (forsooth) to serch his house for
his wiues Loue.

70

The two versions of Falstaff's speech do not materially vary in length, although the Q text lacks the F passage from '(M. Broome)' to 'our encounter' (III. v. 67-68), in addition to a few scattered words in lines 69, 70, and 72. But in the very first sentence of the Q version, the memorial reconstructor reveals his presence by conflating the F reading with an anticipation and inversion of the opening phrase from another of Sir John's narrative speeches at III. v. 88, just twenty-odd lines later in this same scene:

F: Nay, you shall heare (Master Broome) . . .

(Absent in Q)

Q continues:

. . . After we
had kissed and imbraced, and as it were euen amid
the prelogue of our incounter, who should come,
but the iealous knaue her husband, . . .

1010

temporarily resuming the F sequence at III. v. 69, but not, however, without a minor omission and an inversion in the first half of Q line 1010. Then once more the symptoms of inept memorial transmission become very apparent. The Q text substitutes the words 'euen amid' for the F's 'spoke', and in the next line conflates the F reading with a recollection

of the phrase 'of our encounter' (III. v. 68) from the omitted passage, thereby blunting the irony of Falstaff's reference to the 'Comedy' of his intended seduction of Mistress Ford. Furthermore, the arrangement of the speech in the Q rendering and this omission of the F passage (III. v. 67-68) containing the principal verb have made it necessary for the memorial reconstructor to introduce the words 'who should come' (not found in the F text) into Q at this point. The fat knight's disparaging allusion to 'her husband' (III. v. 66-67) finally turns up in the Q text at line 1012, though in a somewhat modified form: for, it seems to be memorially tainted by an anticipation of III. v. 93-94:

F: . . . met the iealous knaue their Master
in the doore; . . .

(Absent in Q)

and a recollection of II. ii. 244-245, in Falstaff's first interview with Master 'Brooke':

F: . . . for at that time the
iealious-rascally-knaue her husband will be forth: . . .

(Absent in Q)

Following the inversion in Q of the phrase 'and at his heeles, a rabble of his companions' (III. v. 70-71), the sequence of the F text is again resumed, and is maintained through the remainder of the speech. There is considerable expansion in the Q version of III. v. 72-73, despite the omission of the words '(forsooth)' and 'his house'. The phrases 'And what to do thinke you' and 'Euen so, plainly so' have no parallel throughout F. Now it seems conceivable that an actor playing the part of Falstaff might well add these expressions on his own responsibility

in order to create a more emphatic effect, and of course reported texts frequently preserve interpolations made in performances. Since the Falstaff-Ford portion of this scene is rather fully reproduced in the Q text, I think that we may reasonably explain the Q phrases as actor's gag.

Finally, let us look at IV. ii. 63-73 (Q 1168-1177), which runs thus in the two texts:

- Q: Fal. For Gods sake devise any extremitie,
Rather then a mischiefe. 1170
- Mis. Pa. Alas I know not what meanes to make,
If there were any womans apparrell would fit him,
He might put on a gowne and a muffler,
And so escape.
- Mi. Fer. Thats wel remembred, my maids Aunt
Gillian of Brainford, hath a gowne aboue. 1175
- Mis. Pa. And she is altogether as fat as he.
- Mis. For. I that will serue him of my word.
- F: Mist. Page. Alas the day I know not, there is
no womans gowne bigge enough for him: otherwise he
might put on a hat, a muffler, and a kerchiefe, and so 65
escape.
- Fal. Good hearts, devise something: any extremitie,
rather then a mischiefe.
- Mist. Ford. My Maids Aunt the fat woman of
Brainford, has a gowne aboue. 70
- Mist. Page. On my word it will serue him: shee's as
big as he is: and there's her thrum'd hat, and her
muffler too: run vp Sir Iohn.

The passage from 'is: and' to 'Sir Iohn' (IV. ii. 72-73) is lacking in the Q text, and there is appreciable variation in the two versions as well. In the Q arrangement, Falstaff's only speech is transposed with minor omissions from its F location (IV. ii. 67-68). Furthermore, the fat knight's mild expletive 'Good hearts', in line 67 of the F scene, appears as the more vigorous 'For Gods sake' in Q. Now, in this

particular case, the F reading may well have been subjected to reformation in compliance with the Act of 1606.²² But the Q oath could be attributed to the general vulgarization of the text through the process of reporting, for the Q version of Mistress Page's ensuing speech indicates that the memorial reconstructor was indeed working with difficulty at this point. The opening line:

Alas I know not what meanes to make,
seems to me to be contaminated by a repetition-recollection of a Q passage (Q 1159-1161) in this same scene — a passage which has no parallel in the F text —

Mis. Pa. Why then you'r vndane woman, vnles
you make some meanes to shift him away.

Mis. For. Alas I know no meanes, . . .

In the next line, the Q rendering becomes a loose paraphrase of its F counterpart, but there is a likely anticipation of V. v. 186-187:

F: (for all he was in womans apparrell) I would not haue
had him.

(Absent in Q)

and a slight possibility that the word 'fit' derives from a speech of Mistress Ford at II. i. 144:

F: Trust me, I thought on her: shee'll fit it.

Q: O sheele serue excellent.

where the women first plot the humiliation of Falstaff. The two con-

²² W.W. Greg believes 'that at some period, possibly not till the text was prepared for press in 1623, many of the oaths, which appear in the quarto, and were no doubt for the most part present in the original, were omitted or toned down in accordance with the Jacobean statute against profanity.' (Shakespeare's Merry Wives, ed. Greg, p. xxxvi).

cluding lines of Mistress Page's speech re-establish contact with the F text, but the words 'hat' and 'kerchiefe' are missing, and 'gowne' is imported from the preceding F line. It strikes me that the phrase 'Thats wel remembred', from Q line 1174, is rather awkwardly placed. What exactly is 'wel remembred'? Obviously, it must be the fact that there is a suitably voluminous 'gowne about'. But the exclamation, which is not found in F, precedes the remark which should evoke it. In addition, Q is quite specific in designating the owner of this garment.²³ Finally, the Q text inverts Mistress Page's second speech, and divides it between the two wives, with a further inversion in line 1177. The substitution of 'fat' in the Q version of IV. ii. 72 for the F's 'big' is probably brought about by a reminiscence of the phrase 'fat woman' in IV. ii. 69.

It seems to me that our preliminary analysis has uncovered strong evidence to support the theory that Q is a memorial reconstruction of the F text; for, in each of the six passages which we have discussed, 'the playhouse thief reveals himself . . . corrupting, mutilating, re-writing' F.²⁴ We have noticed, however, that some scholars account for

²³ W.W. Greg notes that 'the folio only calls her "mother Prat" [IV. ii. 176], "the fat (or "old",) woman of Brainford" [ii. 69-70, 79-80], "the witch of Brainford" [ii. 91]. It is doubtful whether Shakespeare intended to identify her with the notorious old Jyll whose obscene "Testament" was printed by William Copland. The mention of Brainford, or Brentford, would, however, inevitably suggest this character, and the reporter — if not the actor — appears to have boldly inserted her name.' (Shakespeare's Merry Wives, ed. Greg, p. 81).

²⁴ Ibid., p. xxvii.

the differences between the two versions by assuming that the Q text represents a Shakespearian first sketch or an intentional revamping of F along farcical lines, and we have already mentioned objections to these views.²⁵ Now the adherents of either theory might suggest that Q was set up from a transcript of a document which in certain passages had been mutilated or defaced, and that the transcriber did his best at these points to fill in the gaps from his recollection of the play in performance. But such a hypothesis fails to reckon with the fact that the indications of inept reporting are by no means confined to our select gobbets. At almost any point in the Q text one can readily find lines which contain readings of the same types as those we have seen to be characteristic of faulty memorial transmission in the passages just studied. One comes across lines containing: (a) exclamations, vocatives, connectives, etc. absent from the corresponding lines in F; (b) inversions; (c) anticipations and recollections; (d) borrowings from other Shakespearian plays; (e) substitutions of equivalent words and phrases much weaker than the parallel readings in the F version. In addition, one comes across: (f) short blocks of text which for no apparent reason are transposed from their F locations; and (g) omissions, a few of which cause sense lacunae. Now some of the less serious types of corruption [(a), (b), (c), and (e)] occur at many points in Q where there is otherwise no textual disturbance, and where a scribal or compositorial lapse might well have given rise to the variant. But these

²⁵ Cf. ante, pp. 3-5, 9, 11.

very types of corruption also occur in passages where the text is so debased that the theory of memorial reconstruction is clearly implied. Since there is no justification in conjecturing two agents where one will suffice, it seems reasonable to attribute all the corruption in Q²⁶ to the memorial reconstructor.

²⁶ The textual corruption in Q is fully listed in the Notes which follow the text.

II

VERSE PECULIAR TO THE MERRY WIVES QUARTO

There are in the Q text of the Merry Wives four scenes which contain passages of poor though metrically regular verse which bears little or no phraseological relation to the verse found at the corresponding points in F. Although the Q verse generally comprises more or less the same substance as the authorized version, the phrasing and the style are quite different. The presence of this verse in the Q text has been explained in various ways by the exponents of various theories of the quarto as a whole. We have just seen that there is good reason to regard the Q version of the Merry Wives as a memorial reconstruction of the full Shakespearian text. Indeed, as early as 1910, W.W. Greg had argued that the 'very best passages' of the quarto lay 'easily within the reach of an even inexperienced pirate' relying only on his memory,¹ and he had concluded that the whole of the text could be attributed to an actor of the Host's part.²

In 1919, however, the view that reporting alone would 'account for the facts' of a 'bad' quarto was challenged by A.W. Pollard and J. Dover Wilson. They joined forces in an elaborate investigation of the 'bad' quartos of Romeo and Juliet (1597), Henry V (1600), The Merry

¹ Shakespeare's Merry Wives of Windsor, 1602, edited by W.W. Greg (1910), pp. xxxvi-xxxvii.

² Ibid., p. xl.

Wives of Windsor (1602), and Hamlet (1603), and advanced a general theory as to their origin.³ The theory postulated that each of these quartos was primarily based on an authorized abridged transcript of a much earlier play with the same title and the same general plot; that these transcripts were hastily prepared for an extended provincial tour undertaken by Shakespeare's company in May, 1593, when the plays had been only partially worked over by Shakespeare; that passages of metrically regular verse peculiar to a 'bad' quarto represented portions of the old play which were as yet unrevised at the time the transcript was taken; and that passages of a 'bad' quarto in which the metrical structure breaks down were interpolations made from memory by a traitor-actor who attempted to bring the 1593 transcript into some kind of conformity with Shakespeare's final version.

Pertinent objections to the Pollard-Wilson theory have been enumerated by E.K. Chambers,⁴ who feels that the 'bad' quartos can be quite adequately explained by the hypothesis of 'a memorizing reporter',

³ A.W. Pollard and J. Dover Wilson, "The 'Stolne and Surreptitious' Shakespearian Texts: Why some of Shakespeare's plays were pirated," TLS, January 9, 1919, p. 18; "How some of Shakespeare's plays were pirated," Ibid., January 16, 1919, p. 30; "Henry V (1600)," Ibid., March 13, 1919, p. 134; "Merry Wives of Windsor (1602)," Ibid., August 7, 1919, p. 420; "Romeo and Juliet (1597)," Ibid., August 14, 1919, p. 434. The series had been envisaged in a lengthy dissertation on Hamlet published by Professor Wilson during the latter half of the previous year (see J. Dover Wilson, "The Copy for 'Hamlet,' 1603," The Library, third series, IX. 153-185; "The 'Hamlet' Transcript, 1593," Ibid., pp. 217-247).

⁴ See E.K. Chambers, William Shakespeare, a study of facts and problems (1930), I. 225-227, 342-345, 393-394, 420-421, 435-437.

capable of 'a little "faking"'.⁵ But one of Professor Dover Wilson's own former students, G.I. Duthie, has turned out to be the most successful assailant of this theory,⁶ for he has conclusively proved that the passages of metrically regular blank verse found only in the 'bad' quarto of Hamlet have 'no basis in any authentic manuscript of the play at any stage in its text-history'.⁷ According to Professor Wilson, these passages stood in the abridged transcript of the partially revised Ur-Hamlet;⁸ but Dr. Duthie's analyses establish beyond doubt that the verse peculiar to Q₁ was patched together by a memorial reconstructor, relying on his own invention supplemented by his reminiscences of fragments of text from other parts of the full play, and even from other plays.⁹

This type of patchwork composition has also been found in certain passages of metrical blank verse peculiar to the 'bad' quarto texts of Romeo and Juliet¹⁰ and the Taming of a Shrew (1594).¹¹ And I

⁵ Ibid., p. 226.

⁶ George Ian Duthie, The 'Bad' Quarto of 'Hamlet', a critical study, 1941; see especially pp. 90 ff., and 144 ff.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 130-131.

⁸ Wilson, "The Copy for 'Hamlet,' 1603," The Library, third series, IX. 167.

⁹ Duthie, The 'Bad' Quarto of 'Hamlet', p. 91.

¹⁰ See Harry R. Hoppe, "The First Quarto of Romeo and Juliet, II. vi. and IV. v. 43 ff.," RES, XIV. 271-284. Duthie claims, however, that an even stronger case can be made out for the passage in Q₁ V. iii. which begins 'I am the greatest . . .' and ends ' . . . rigor of the Law' (The 'Bad' Quarto of 'Hamlet', p. 51n).

propose to demonstrate that passages of non-Shakespearian verse found only in the Q text of the Merry Wives were composed in the same way. The result of the demonstration will be a refutation of the 1919 Pollard-Wilson theory that the metrical verse peculiar to this quarto is unrevised material from a much earlier play, and a further confirmation of our view that the Q version of the Merry Wives is a memorial reconstruction of the full Shakespearian text, or a text closely related to it.

I shall analyze only one specimen passage of the Q verse; but there are others which yield equally to the same kind of analysis. The passage I shall take is lines 1264-1278:

Mis. Pa. Let vs alone for that. Heare my deuice.	
Oft haue you heard since <u>Horne</u> the hunter dyed,	1265
That women to affright their litle children,	
Ses that he walkes in shape of a great stagge.	
Now for that <u>Falstaffe</u> hath bene so deceiued,	
As that he dares not venture to the house,	
Weele send him word to meet vs in the field,	1270
Disguised like <u>Horne</u> , with huge horns on his head,	
The houre shalbe iust betweene twelue and one,	
And at that time we will meet him both:	
Then would I haue you present there at hand,	
With litle boyes disguised and dressed like Fayries,	1275
For to affright fat <u>Falstaffe</u> in the woods.	
And then to make a period to the Iest,	
Tell <u>Falstaffe</u> all, I thinke this will do best.	

This speech corresponds to IV. iv. 28-65 in the F text. W.W. Greg has pointed out that 'While the substance of the two texts is the same, the language hardly even presents points of contact'.¹² He has

¹¹ See G.I. Duthie, "The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew," RES, XIX. 337-356.

¹² Shakespeare's Merry Wives, ed. Greg, p. 82.

not noticed, however, that the quarto contains phraseological contacts with various passages found elsewhere in F. Consider, for example, a seven-line F passage in the next scene but one, at IV. vi. 16-22:

. . . fat Falstaffe
 Hath a great Scene; the image of the iest
 He show you here at large (harke good mine Host!)
 To night at Hernes-Oke, iust 'twixt twelue and one,
 Must my sweet Nan present the Faerie-Queene:
 The purpose why, is here: in which disguise
 While other Iests are something ranke on foote,

It will be observed that Q lines 1271-1277 — also a mere seven lines — contain the following words and phrases found in the above F passage: 'Disguised', 'iust (betweene) twelue and one', 'present', 'disguised', 'fat Falstaffe', 'the Iest' (note also Q 'Fayries', F 'Faerie-Queene'). There is clearly some intimate connection between these two passages. Now one of the parallels between these Q and F passages is the phrase 'the Iest'. But the Q text has the line 'And then to make a period to the Iest', and the F passage parallels only 'the Iest'. However, 'the Iest' occurs in F also at IV. ii. 215-216; and, interestingly enough, we there have the phrase 'there would be no period to the Iest', the last four words of which are found, exactly, in our Q passage. But the line in our Q passage reads 'to make a period to the Iest'.¹³ We have not yet found in the folio a parallel to this 'to make'. Nevertheless there is one. At IV. iv. 14 in the F text we find the phrase '(to make vs publike sport)'. I am going to suggest that the Q passage which we are examining, far from being an authentic pre-Shakespearian or early Shakespearian version, is in fact a piece of

¹³ The underlining is mine.

composition by a memorial reconstructor who had at the back of his mind recollections of various passages of the play as we have them in the folio. At this point he remembered quite a number of phrases from IV. vi. 16-22 of the F text. One of these phrases happened to be 'the iest'. This phrase reminded him of F IV. ii. 215-216, where it also occurs. And, having imported into his own composition these various phrases from IV. vi. 16-22, he also, on account of this memorial association ('the iest'), imported from IV. ii. 215 the words 'period to'. Now this F passage at IV. ii. 215-216 reads, to quote it more fully:

. . . there would be no period to the
iest, should he not be publike sham'd.¹⁴

We have just seen that the word 'publike' occurs in F at IV. iv. 14. And it is remarkable to notice that there F has the phrase 'to make vs publike sport', and that in the Q passage we are analyzing the words 'to make' occur in line 1277. Q line 1277 was surely composed by someone in whose memory there was a close association between IV. vi. 17, IV. ii. 215, and IV. iv. 14. These three lines could easily be memorially associated on account of phraseological links; and Q 1277 appears to contain elements from all of them, brought together and combined in the same way as G.I. Duthie has postulated in connection with the 'bad' quarto texts of Hamlet and the Taming of a Shrew.¹⁵ We start with F IV.

¹⁴ Again, the underlining is mine.

¹⁵ See Duthie, The 'Bad' Quarto of 'Hamlet', p. 115, and "The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew," RES, XIX. 340-341.

vi. 16-22 as the original source of the person responsible for the Q passage we are examining, and from there, as regards one of the Q lines, we pass to two other isolated F lines, which we also postulate as sources; and we are able to point to memorial links connecting the three: what hypothesis can be more likely than that our Q passage is the work of a 'reporter' who used essentially the same technique as those responsible for Q₁ Hamlet and A Shrew.

But there is more to be said. Let us look at Q 1273:

And at that time we will meet him both.

There are parallels here with phrases thirty lines apart in IV. iv. of the F text. At IV. iv. 73-74 we have the phrase 'and in that time / Shall . . .'; and some thirty lines earlier, we have, at IV. iv. 41-42:

Marry this is our devise,
That Falstaffe at that Oake shall meete with vs.

Q 1273 parallels IV. iv. 42 in the words 'at that' and 'meet'. Again this indicates a connection between the Q and F lines. But Q's 'And at that time' clearly connects with IV. iv. 73 'and in that time / Shall . . .'. The obvious hypothesis is, surely, that a memorial reconstructor has confused IV. iv. 41-42 and 73-74 of F and used elements from both in a single line of his own — Q 1273. It is surely highly unlikely that, if Q were a version anterior to F, and F a Shakespearian revision, Shakespeare would have changed an original 'at that time we will meet' to 'at that Oake shall meete', and transferred 'that time' to a point some thirty lines later in his final version. It is surely much more likely that a reporter would conflate into a single line phraseological elements from two separate passages

in the version he was attempting to convey.¹⁶

We have just suggested that the memorial reconstructor whom we are postulating had in mind, at Q line 1273, IV. iv. 41-42 in the F play. These F lines contain the noun 'deuise' (device), which has contaminated the reporter's memory of IV. iv. 26 ff. where we have the verb 'deuise'. Q lines 1264-1265 — the first two lines of the passage we are examining — are composed of bits and pieces recalled from scattered F lines and combined by the reporter. From IV. iv. 26-27 he remembered not only 'deuise' (which he transmuted into 'deuice' by association with IV. iv. 41) but also the words 'let vs' (which he employed in a phrase of his own making). From IV. iv. 28 in F he recalled 'Herne the Hunter'.¹⁷ From IV. iv. 35 he remembered 'You haue heard' (he changes the word order in the phrase). In two contiguous lines of Q (1264-1265) we have four phrases ('Let vs', 'deuice', 'haue you heard', and 'Horne the hunter') which occur, scattered, at various points within a fifteen-line F passage (IV. iv. 26-41). Once again, it is surely much more probable that a memorial reconstructor manufactured a couple of lines out of stray scraps and fragments which he happened to remember, than that Shakespeare, revising an early version of the Merry Wives (whether by himself or by someone else), separated out four phrases and redistributed them at intervals within a fifteen-

¹⁶ See Duthie, "The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew," RES, XIX. 343.

¹⁷ Q consistently uses the form 'Horne'.

line passage.¹⁸

Our Q passage yields to still further analysis of this sort.

Consider line 1267:

Ses that he walkes in shape of a great stagge.

In the F text we have 'Walke' and 'great' in IV. iv. 31, and 'In shape' in IV. iv. 61: in this last connection, we note 'he dares' in F IV. iv. 60, and that phrase appears in our Q passage in line 1269.

Again, consider Q line 1270:

Weele send him word to meet vs in the field.

In F we have, at IV. iv. 18-19, 'send him word they'll meete him in the Parke'. The memorial reconstructor has remembered something of this; but he puts 'vs' beside 'meet' because he has simultaneously recalled IV. iv. 42:

That Falstaffe at that Oake shall meete with vs.

(Cf. 'That Falstaffe' in Q line 1268 and 'meet' in Q 1273)

It is surely abundantly clear with what kind of composition we are dealing here in Q; and I would suggest that in a case where we have two words occurring in close connection in an F passage, and the same two words occurring in close connection in Q, it is at least very possible that the Q reporter is remembering the F passage. For instance, in our Q passage the words 'deceiued' and 'house' occur at the ends of two contiguous lines (Q 1268-1269); and these same two words appear in

¹⁸ See Duthie, "The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew," RES, XIX. 342-343, 345.

quite close contact in F at III. iii. 121-122:

. . . in the house you cannot
hide him. Oh, how haue you deceiu'd me? . . .

As previous investigators of this type of composition have shown, a memorial reconstructor may remember a phrase from an authentic original, and may use that phrase in an entirely different context.¹⁹ We appear to have an example of this in the last line of the Q passage which we are examining, where we have the words 'Tell Falstaffe all'. I believe that the reporter has recalled IV. iv. 77 in F, where Ford uses the words 'Hee'l tell me all his purpose', the 'he' being Falstaff. But the reporter has applied the recollected words to a different situation.

The fifteen-line Q passage which we have just analyzed is composed in metrically regular verse and shows no errors in lineation. I think it is fair to assume, according to the theory advanced by Messrs. Pollard and Wilson, that this passage stood in the postulated 1593 transcript,²⁰ and was not reportorial. We have, however, had abundant evidence that the passage is reportorial — i.e., it was composed by someone who was relying, at least partially, on his memory of the F version, or a version closely related to that. I feel that the present section has disproved the 1919 Pollard-Wilson theory as conclusively as G.I. Duthie — by the same method — disproved

¹⁹ See Duthie, The 'Bad' Quarto of 'Hamlet', pp. 100, 104.

²⁰ Cf. ante, p. 26.

it in connection with the first quarto of Hamlet.²¹ Other passages of verse peculiar to the Q Merry Wives could be similarly analyzed; but, in a work of the scope appropriate to the present one, it seems advisable to rest the case on the single passage we have examined.

²¹ See Duthie, The 'Bad' Quarto of 'Hamlet', pp. 90 ff.

III

THE 'CARMOMBLES' PASSAGE AND OTHER MATTERS

We have already noticed the theory advanced in 1919 by Messrs. Pollard and Wilson as regards the Q text of the Merry Wives; and we have just seen that strong evidence of memorial reconstruction is furnished by the passages of metrically regular verse found only in Q — passages of verse which according to this theory stood in an abridged transcript taken from an earlier non-Shakespearian version of the play in 1593. But Pollard and Wilson cited other reasons for supposing that Q contained elements surviving from an earlier play than that preserved in F. It is my intention to deal with these in some detail.

(1)

Messrs. Pollard and Wilson believed that the postulated early play underlying Q was 'a drama of contemporary London middle-class society'.¹ They referred specifically to three points at which the Q text seemed to them to reflect this basic play. None of these appears to me to necessitate their theory.

To begin with, they referred to Q lines 1473-1476 — a passage which has no parallel in the F text —

Hy. Where is Pead? go you & see where Brokers
And Foxe-eyed Seriants with their mase, (sleep,

¹ A.W. Pollard and J. Dover Wilson, "The 'Stolne and Surreptitious' Shakespearian Texts: Merry Wives of Windsor (1602)," TLS, August 7, 1919, p. 420.

Goe laie the Proctors in the street,
And pinch the lowsie Seriants face:

and they noted H.C. Hart's claim that the lines 'sound pure London'.² But this by no means necessarily entails the view that there was ever a Merry Wives play that was 'pure London'. Indeed, E.K. Chambers speaks of these Q lines as 'a completely irrelevant passage about serjeants and proctors, which reads like a scrap from some popular London poem';³ and W.W. Greg has recently spoken more definitely of the last act in the Q text containing 'much reconstruction in un-Shakespearian verse with a fragment of a London ballad embedded in it'.⁴ It may well be, therefore, that in this Q passage our improvising reporter eked out his scanty memory of the full Shakespearian play (F) by importing lines which he happened to remember from a non-dramatic poem; and there need never have been a Merry Wives play that was 'pure London'.

Secondly, Pollard and Wilson sought support for their theory in the fact that in scene iv of the Q text Dr. Caius' closet is consistently called a 'Counting-house'.⁵ They took note of Greg's comment that 'a counting house, though suitable enough in the house of a London

² The Merry Wives of Windsor, edited by H.C. Hart (Arden Shakespeare, 1904), p. xix.

³ E.K. Chambers, William Shakespeare, a study of facts and problems (1930), I. 433.

⁴ W.W. Greg, The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare, second edition (1951), p. 71.

⁵ The term appears in Q lines 270, 272, 284, 287.

merchant, is inappropriate in that of a Windsor physician'.⁶ Does this mean that our memorial reconstructor had in mind an early play of city business life, or that he was trying to bring an abridged transcript of such a play into some kind of conformity with Shakespeare's final version (F)? Not necessarily: for in the Times Literary Supplement of December 4, 1919, James J. O'Neill pointed out that in Elizabethan times the term 'counting-house' was sometimes used in 'a much looser sense than even "The New Oxford Dictionary" implies'. O'Neill instanced the play Arden of Feversham, in which Arden 'was neither a merchant nor a shopkeeper. He says in the opening scene:

"I am by birth a gentle man of bloode."

His social position was therefore a peg above Dr. Caius', and yet the dramatist has furnished his mansion with a counting-house'. O'Neill argued that the author of Arden in fact 'used the term "counting-house" in the sense of a closet'.⁷ I would refer the reader to O'Neill's letter, on the basis of which I submit that the term 'Counting-house' in the Q Merry Wives does not necessarily imply the house of a London merchant, and is not necessarily inappropriate to that of a Windsor physician.

The third consideration upon which Pollard and Wilson based the view which we are trying to controvert was that 'Dr. Caius of the Quarto not only had a "counting-house" in his establishment, but a "stall" outside it, since he bids his servant Rugby look out "ore de

⁶ Shakespeare's Merry Wives of Windsor, 1602, edited by W.W. Greg (1910), p. xxxiii.

⁷ James J. O'Neill, Letter in TLS, December 4, 1919, p. 715.

stall" for the approach of the furious Sir Evan (sc. vii.). Dr. Caius would appear to have been originally a London shopkeeper'.⁸ I cannot, however, agree with this; and, as a small contribution to the study of this text, I am going to suggest the following explanation of the word 'stall' in Q. It occurs in line 646. In the vicinity we find the words 'looke' (Q 645) and 'comming' (Q 648). Now in the F text we have 'looke' at III. i. 8, and 'comming' at III. i. 26. Only half a dozen lines later in F we come across the phrase 'ouer the stile' (III. i. 32). I cannot help feeling that the memorial reconstructor's 'stall' in Q line 646, in the phrase, be it noted, 'ore de stall', represents in fact a memorial perversion of the F reading 'ouer the stile'. Q 646 and the neighbouring lines connect with III. i. of the F text in the words 'looke', 'comming', and 'ore de/ ouer the'; and the temptation is irresistible to postulate Q 'stall' and F 'stile' as likewise intimately connected. In Q line 646 it is Doctor Caius who is speaking; and, with his peculiar phonetic values, I have little doubt that 'stall' is meant to represent his pronunciation of 'stile', derived from III. i. 32 of the F play. Indeed, I do not think that in Q Doctor Caius has a 'stall', properly speaking, at all. As far as I can see, it must be respectfully suggested that the Pollard-Wilson play on London middle-class life was a chimera of their active imaginations.

⁸ Pollard and Wilson, "Merry Wives of Windsor (1602)," TLS, August 7, 1919, p. 420.

(11)

Messrs. Pollard and Wilson were convinced that the F text of the Merry Wives was a Shakespearian revision of the postulated early play on which Q was primarily based. They supposed that in this early play Sir John Falstaff had borne the name Sir John Oldcastle, and that Shakespeare, in the course of his revision, changed the fat knight's name from Oldcastle into Falstaff — just as he did in the case of the Henry IV plays⁹ (his reason or reasons will not concern us here). Pollard and Wilson further supposed that as their reporter memorially amplified the abridged transcript of the early play, he altered the word 'Oldcastle' into 'Falstaff' wherever the former appeared in the transcript, this being part of his endeavour to bring the early text into line with Shakespeare's final version.

It is certainly possible to suggest that the F text is a re-working of a version involving the name Oldcastle. For one thing, tenuous as the point perhaps is, J.M. Robertson has noticed that there is in F, at IV. vi. 16, a line which is metrically defective:

Without the shew of both: fat Falstaffe
and he has argued that '"Oldcastle" would make it scan more correctly'.¹⁰

⁹ The undoubted substitution of the name Falstaff for Oldcastle in the Henry IV plays has occasioned a great deal of study. This is conveniently summarized in the New Variorum Henry the Fourth, part I, edited by Samuel Burdett Hemingway (1936), pp. 447-456.

¹⁰ J.M. Robertson, The Problem of 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' (1917), p. 29. There is an analogous instance in 1 Henry IV, where, however, enough other evidence exists to make it certain that Oldcastle was in fact the original name of Falstaff in that play: II. ii. 105 is

Yet even if there ever was an Oldcastle Merry Wives play, I can find no evidence whatever that the Q text necessarily stands any closer to it than does F. There is, however, one Q passage which admittedly looks, at first sight, as if it might; but it seems to me that upon further examination the point proves illusory. At lines 1305-1307 Q has the following:

Host. Sir Iohn, theres his Castle, his standing bed,
his trundle bed, his chamber is painted about with
the story of the prodigall, fresh and new, . . .

W.W. Greg noticed the fairly close juxtaposition of the words 'Sir Iohn' and 'Castle' in line 1305, and it led him to suggest that 'there is here an allusion to the original name of the character we know as Falstaff'.¹¹ But 'Sir Iohn' does not occur in the corresponding F passage, at IV. v. 5-8:

Host. There's his Chamber, his
House, his Castle, his standing-bed and truckle-bed: 'tis
painted about with the story of the Prodigall, fresh and
new: . . .

and, as Alfred Hart points out, no one 'will maintain that the word "Castle" in the folio text conceals a guarded reference to "Oldcastle"; such an allusion would be so smothered in the context that it could reach neither ear nor eye'.¹² Now Pollard and Wilson noted Greg's

unmetrical — 'Away good Ned, Falstaffe sweates to death' — and would be perfectly metrical if 'Oldcastle' stood instead of 'Falstaffe' (Chambers, William Shakespeare, I. 381).

¹¹ Shakespeare's Merry Wives, ed. Greg, p. 84.

¹² Alfred Hart, Stolne and Surreptitious Copies, a comparative study of Shakespeare's Bad Quartos (1942), p. 90.

suggestion and they assumed that the Q text at this point represents a version of the play closer to the alleged Oldcastle version than F does. Yet the view is hardly tenable. We have seen in the preceding sections of this study that at many points throughout Q the text is a mere perversion of the corresponding passages in F. Q lines 1305-1307 may be nothing more than a perversion of F IV. v. 5-8, for E.K. Chambers finds that this F passage 'has a good enough meaning, without any such allusion'.¹³ In the F text 'his Castle' stands immediately after 'his House', as a synonym thereof, and we remember that an Englishman's house is proverbially his castle.¹⁴ (In the Merry Devil of Edmonton, at V. i. 130,¹⁵ we come across 'How now, my old Jennets, bauke my house, my castle?')¹⁶ In the Q passage under consideration we may have to do with nothing more than a memorial reconstructor's perversion of F, the perversion involving interpolation and alteration of word order. To put the position again finally: even if there was an Oldcastle Merry Wives, I can find no evidence that Q stands any closer to it than F does.

¹³ Chambers, William Shakespeare, I. 434.

¹⁴ See N.E.D. s.v. castle sb. II 3 e — 'An (English) man's house his castle' — where the earliest occurrence is: 1588 Lambard Eiren II. vii. 257, 'Our law calleth a man's house, his castle, meaning that he may defend himselfe therein'.

¹⁵ The reference is to the line-numbering of The Merry Devil of Edmonton, 1608, edited by William Amos Abrams (1942).

¹⁶ All the Merry Devil quartos read 'horse' at this point; but 'house' for 'horse' appears to be an emendatio certissima (see The Merry Devil, ed. Abrams, pp. 217-219).

(iii)

Messrs. Pollard and Wilson held the view that the F Merry Wives was a Shakespearian revision of an earlier version (c. 1592-1593) containing a sub-plot concerned with horse-stealing — a sub-plot which Shakespeare, in the course of his revision, 'imperfectly excised'.¹⁷ The full horse-stealing sub-plot also stood in the 1593 abridged transcript of this earlier version which was part of their reporter's equipment. The reporter, attempting to bring the obsolete transcript into conformity with Shakespeare's final version, not only interpolated passages but made excisions: he abridged the original horse-stealing sub-plot.

Now at this point we may admit the possibility that the F text is a revision of an earlier play. It may or it may not be. But, if F is a revision of an earlier play, then I hold that the Q memorial reconstructor was relying solely, or at any rate predominately, on the final Shakespearian version. I do not think it necessary to suppose that he laid the earlier play directly under significant contribution. In order to maintain this position it will be essential for me to make some remarks about the celebrated Mompelgart question.

In Q lines 1361-1369 Sir Hugh Evans delivers a warning to mine Host of the Garter:

Sir Hu. Where is mine Host of the gartyr?
Now my Host, I would desire you looke you now,

¹⁷ Pollard and Wilson, "Merry Wives of Windsor (1602)," TLS, August 7, 1919, p. 420.

To haue a care of your entertainments,
 For there is three sorts of cosen garmombles,
 Is cosen all the Host of Maidenhead & Readings,
 Now you are an honest man, and a scurvy beg-
 gerly lowsie knaue beside:
 And can point wrong places,
 I tell you for good will, grate why mine Host. Exit.

This speech corresponds to IV. v. 69-75 of the F text:

Bian. Haue a care of your entertainments: there is a
 friend of mine come to Towne, tells me there is three
 Cozen-Iermans, that has cosend all the Hosts of Reading,
 of Maidenhead; of Cole-brooke, of horses and money: I
 tell you for good will (lookeyou) you are wise, and full of
 gibes, and vlouting-stocks: and 'tis not conuenient you
 should be cozoned. Fare you well.

The variant Q 'cosen garmombles', F 'Cozen-Iermans' has given
 rise to a great mass of critical comment. The two phrases would appear
 to indicate the attendants of a personage referred to in Q as 'a
 Garmaine Duke' (1356) and in F as 'a Duke de Iamanie' (IV. v. 80).
 It was first suggested by Charles Knight that this duke is a reflection
 of an actual historical figure — Frederick, Duke of Wurttemberg and
 Teck, Count of Mompelgart.¹⁸ Various critics after Knight have concurred.
 The word 'garmombles', denoting the duke's servants, has been taken to
 be a kind of anagram of the name Mompelgart,¹⁹ and this is certainly
 possible.

Now Count Mompelgart visited England during the summer of 1592,
 from August 9th. until September 5th. On this visit he seems to have
 got the impression — whether justifiably or not, it is impossible to

¹⁸ The Works of Shakspeare, edited by Charles Knight (n.d.), I. 73.

¹⁹ See The Merry Wives, ed. H.C. Hart, p. xliii.

say — that he would soon be received into the Order of the Garter.²⁰ When he left England in the autumn he had not as yet been elected to the Order. And, once he returned home, he proceeded to pester the Queen from time to time, with letters and embassies, reminding her of her alleged promise to him. In 1595 she declared to Breuning, one of his ambassadors, that 'to speak truth, I have not the least recollection of ever having made any such promise'.²¹ But in 1597 she condescendingly nominated him. Late in the following year he began to complain that he had not received the insignia of the Order. His reiterated protests failed to move the Queen, however, and it was not until after the accession of James I in 1603 that the long deferred investiture was finally held.²²

In view of the foregoing, it is not unreasonable to claim that Count Mompelgart might well be topical in English court circles even as late as 1603. A reference to him might, it seems to me, quite

²⁰ I quote from William Branchley Rye's England as Seen by Foreigners in the Days of Elizabeth and James the First (1865), p. 1x: 'The Wirtemberg historian Sattler relates that, during this visit of the Count, Queen Elizabeth had promised to receive him into the Order of the Garter, and that this honour would have been conferred upon him on that occasion if the Queen had been minded to stretch the laws of the Order; for, according to these, the number of the Knights was limited to twenty-six; and as this number was already complete, it became necessary to defer the fulfilment of his cherished hopes till another time'.

²¹ Victor von Klarwill, Queen Elizabeth and Some Foreigners (1928), p. 388.

²² For a convenient summary of the historical incidents relating to Count Mompelgart see Chambers, William Shakespeare, I. 427-429.

easily be intended by Shakespeare in a play written by him once and for all in, say, 1601 — the date Chambers assigns to the Merry Wives.²³ I believe myself that the Q text was based by the memorial reconstructor on F, or on a text closely related to it. The 'Duke de Iamanie' of F may well be a reference to Mompelgart; and the 'garmombles' of Q may be a piece of actor's gag which the reporter happened to remember from the court performance.²⁴ The fact that the anagram (peculiar to Q) makes the allusion to Count Mompelgart more explicit in Q than in F does not necessarily mean that Q must depend upon a version of the play anterior to the F text and written only shortly after Mompelgart's English visit of 1592.

Now Pollard and Wilson made another point. The German duke in the Merry Wives is involved in a sub-plot concerned with horse-stealing. The two theorists suggested that this sub-plot reflects actual events in which Count Mompelgart was involved in England during the summer of 1592; and they argued that these events would be highly topical in a play written during the winter of 1592-1593 (that is, the postulated earlier version of the Merry Wives), but out of date and forgotten by the end of the century; so that a play written once and for all at that later time would not be likely to embody them. They found support in H.C. Hart for the claim that the horse-stealing plot contained references to events that took place in 1592. Among other

²³ See Chambers, William Shakespeare, I. 270, 434.

²⁴ See Chambers, William Shakespeare, I. 432.

things, Hart noticed that Count Mompelgart 'obtained authority, which would probably be freely abused by his servants, to have post-horses free of charge'. Hart admitted that the count's warrant 'comes in a little late for the cozenage, but he expected it, and its provisions may have been anticipated'.²⁵ The document in question runs as follows:

Theras this noblman Conmte Mombeliard is to passe ouer Contrye us England in to the lowe Contryes, Thise Schalbe to wil and command you in heer Maj^{te}. name for such, and is heer plensure to see him founnissed With post horses in his traual to the sen side, and ther to soecke up such schippinge as schalbe fit for his transportations, he pay nothing for the same, forwich tis schalbe your sufficient warranti soo see that you faile noth therof at your perilles, From Bifleete, the 2. of September 1592.

Your Friend

C. Howard.

(Locus Sigilli.)

To al Iustices of pence Maiors Bayliffes and al other her Ma^{te}. officers. in especial to my owne officers of te admyraltye.²⁶

But there is no suggestion here that the grant of free transport to Count Mompelgart would involve any postmaster in any financial loss; and certainly there is nothing here which could remotely suggest horse-stealing. As J. Crofts has pointed out, 'so far from exposing [Mompelgart] to trouble with the postmasters a free warrant of this kind had precisely the opposite effect. The posts simply entered particulars of the horses supplied under it and the sum due to them in their monthly accounts with the Comptroller, and the traveller was able to proceed on his way without haggling or argument of any kind'.²⁷ To

²⁵ The Merry Wives, ed. H.C. Hart, p. xliii.

²⁶ Rye, England as Seen by Foreigners, p. 47.

²⁷ J. Crofts, Shakespeare and the Post Horses, a new study of 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' (1937), pp. 15-16.

quote Crofts again: 'nobody has been able to produce one particle of evidence that this worthy Count or any of his attendants ever had the slightest misunderstanding with an English postmaster'.²⁸ There is no evidence to indicate that Mompelgart could be in any way connected with horse-stealing.

There is, however, some evidence suggesting that from time to time after his return home from England in 1592 Mompelgart may have been a source of annoyance to Queen Elizabeth and her court. During the winter of 1594-1595 there was present in London a certain Johann Heinrich Stamler who kept begging in Mompelgart's name for permission to export a thousand bales of cloth duty-free. It was regarded as a contemptible request and became the 'daily topic at table, on 'Change, and . . . at Court'.²⁹ Actually, the man was an imposter and had no connection with Mompelgart, a fact which eventually transpired; but we may perhaps conjecture that, before it did transpire, Elizabeth may well have felt some irritation over what she must have regarded as presumption on Mompelgart's part.

In the spring of 1595 Mompelgart dispatched an ambassador, one Johann Jacob Breuning von Buchenbach, to promote his campaign for the Garter at the English court. The Queen received Breuning in audience on April 6th. In a letter to Lord Burghley, written by the ambassador three days later, there seems to be evidence that, in Rye's words,

²⁸ Ibid., p. 15.

²⁹ Klarwill, Queen Elizabeth and Some Foreigners, p. 402.

'poor Breuning had been complained of for having appeared before the great Queen Elizabeth in a state of — must it be said — intoxication'.³⁰ The letter contains an explanation and apology to Burghley and then reiterates Mompelgart's request for the long deferred Garter — a request which Breuning took every possible opportunity to press.³¹ Now an accusation (albeit untrue) that his envoy had appeared drunk in the presence of the Queen would doubtless do Mompelgart little good in English court circles; and — may we conjecture? — Mompelgart's persistence in his inquiries after the Garter may perhaps have seemed irritating to Elizabeth and the court.

On August 14, 1598, the year after his election to the Order, Mompelgart wrote a letter to the Queen in which he refers to slanders against him which have come to her ears and which he here repudiates.³² Once more we may reasonably argue that (albeit innocently perhaps) Mompelgart has again been in disfavour with Elizabeth.

Further letters and embassies followed. In October, 1599, the Queen writes to Mompelgart courteously enough, explaining that the reason why he has not yet received his insignia is that others who have been elected to the Order have likewise not yet been invested 'owing to certain hindrances in our affairs'; they would be jealous if he were invested before them, but she hopes to be able to send him

³⁰ Rye, England as Seen by Foreigners, p. lxvi.

³¹ Breuning's account of his mission to the English court, written for the private perusal of his 'gracious Prince', Mompelgart, is translated in Klarwill, Queen Elizabeth and Some Foreigners, pp. 357 ff.

³² See Rye, England as Seen by Foreigners, pp. lxxiii-lxxiv.

the Garter soon.³³ As we have said, this is courteous, and it is no part of our purpose to suggest that Elizabeth was continuously annoyed with Mompelgart. What we are suggesting is: (a) that Mompelgart's name was familiar in the English court for years after his 1592 visit was over; and (b) that at certain times Elizabeth and the court regarded him with some disfavour. It seems to me quite possible to maintain that a play written for court performance as late as 1598, or even 1601, might quite well contain a gibe at Mompelgart. There is absolutely no need to connect the writing of the Merry Wives with the period of Mompelgart's 1592 visit. Wishing simply to draw a smile from a courtly audience by an allusion to the 'Duke de Iamanie', Shakespeare may have permitted himself to suggest, amusingly though doubtless libelously, that friend Mompelgart was the sort of person who might have servants capable of stealing horses for his convenience. In connecting the Mompelgart reference with a postulated early play (1592-1593) and in holding that it was understood that the count's servants had actually been guilty of cheating English postmasters, Pollard and Wilson mentioned Mompelgart's letter to Elizabeth of August 14, 1598 — a letter to which we have already referred on page 49 above. They remark that 'in one of his letters [Mompelgart] found it necessary to protest against certain charges connected with his name, and if he had dealt high-handedly with the post-horses of English innkeepers

³³ See Rye, England as Seen by Foreigners, p. lxxv.

these would be explained'.³⁴ The two theorists do not, however, mention that this letter was written six years after the count's visit to England: and if they had quoted the letter itself, their readers would have seen that the accusations Mompelgart is answering in it, so far from relating to horse-stealing, are concerned with political and religious matters on the continent. From Rye, I quote the relevant passage of the letter:

I have heard with extreme regret that some of my enemies endeavour to calumniate me, and prejudice your Majesty against me. I have given them no occasion for this. I hope that when your Majesty has discovered this report to be false, you will have greater reason to continue your affection towards me, and give neither faith nor credit to such vipers, &c. Stories have been told your Majesty that I have quarrelled with the Elector Palatine and other princes in matters of religion or otherwise, which are false.³⁵

To sum up: I agree that Shakespeare, in mentioning the 'Duke de Iamanie' may well have intended his audiences to bestow a thought on Count Mompelgart and to smile derisively. But I do not believe that Shakespeare meant to accuse Mompelgart of horse-stealing; and I believe that there is nothing in connection with these historical incidents to indicate that behind either F or Q there lies a play belonging to the period 1592-1593. It is my strong impression that the F text precedes that of Q in composition, and that Q is based on F.

It is of course only in the Q text that the word 'garmombles' appears: that is to say, it is only in Q that there is any indication

³⁴ A.W. Pollard and J. Dover Wilson, "The 'Stolne and Surreptitious' Shakespearian Texts: Why some of Shakespeare's plays were pirated," TLS, January 9, 1919, p. 18.

³⁵ Rye, England as Seen by Foreigners, pp. lxxiii-lxxiv.

of Mompelgart's name. An upholder of the Pollard-Wilson view might suggest that in the postulated early play the anagram 'garmombles' was used, and that in his re-working Shakespeare removed the word because he felt that Mompelgart's name would no longer mean anything to his audience. To this we reply: (a) that it has been shown above that Mompelgart's name was topical right up to the end of the century and beyond; and (b) that the word 'garmombles' may very well be a piece of actor's gag, a substitution for the F 'Iermans'.³⁶ It may at first sight appear unlikely that a gagging actor would be ingenious enough to produce an anagram of the count's name. But — interestingly enough — it may be that the anagram is accidental. J. Douglas Bruce has pointed out that in Wright's Dialect Dictionary there is a word 'jurmumple' which means 'bamboozle'.³⁷ It does not seem impossible to suppose that an actor, knowing this word, imported it into the text in performances, on his own responsibility, and that the Q reporter, recalling the performances, perpetuated it. Perhaps the actor in question, aware of the relevance of Count Mompelgart to this passage, was led to import 'garmombles', or 'jurmumples', not only because it referred to bamboozling, but because, at any rate, the 'mumble' or 'mumple' syllable might remind the auditors forcible of the count's name.

³⁶ See Chambers, William Shakespeare, I. 432.

³⁷ J. Douglas Bruce, "Two Notes on 'The Merry Wives of Windsor'," MIR, VII. 241.

(iv)

Further evidence in support of the 1919 Pollard-Wilson theory of the Merry Wives was suggested by Professor Dover Wilson in the New Shakespeare edition of the play (1921).³⁸ He found a certain number of what he regarded as bibliographical links between Q and F, which — 'faint and scanty' though he admitted they were — seemed to him to indicate that the copy for Q was 'at least in part transcribed from the same manuscript which, after revision, provided the materials for the authoritative text'.³⁹ The first of the allegedly linked passages is at II. ii. 5-12, where the texts run as follows:

Q: Fal. Not a pennie: I haue beene content you should lay my countenance to pawne: I haue grated vpon my good friends for 3. reprieues, for you and your Coach-fellow Nym, else you might a looked thorow a grate like a geminy of babones. I am damned in hell for swearing to Gentlemen your good souldiers and tall fellowes: And when mistrisse Bri- get lost the handle of her Fan, I tooked on my ho- thou hadst it not.

F: Fal. Not a penny: I haue beene content (Sir,) you should lay my countenance to pawne: I haue grated vpon my good friends for three Repreeues for you, and your Coach-fellow Nym; or else you had look'd through the grate, like a Geminy of Baboones: I am damn'd in hell, for swearing to Gentlemen my friends, you were good Souldiers, and tall-fellewes. And when Mistresse Briget lost the handle of her Fan, I took't vpon mine honour thou hadst it not.⁴⁰

³⁸ The Merry Wives of Windsor, edited by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and John Dover Wilson (New Shakespeare, 1921).

³⁹ Ibid., p. 95.

⁴⁰ In this F passage, and in this F passage only, I follow the lineation of the F text to avoid the charge of tampering with Professor Wilson's evidence.

Wilson remarked that 'the punctuation, apart from the commas, is practically identical', and that 'spellings and capitals coincide in words like "pawne," "Coach-fellow," "Gentlemen," "Briget," "Fan"'. He also found 'a striking similarity in the distribution of the lines'. Such variations between the two texts as do occur he attributed to scribal carelessness.⁴¹

But it seems to me that in this case the postulated resemblances between the texts are far too 'faint and scanty' to lead inevitably to the conclusion Professor Wilson suggested, for there are certainly as many differences in punctuation and capitalization as there are likenesses. The reader can see this by comparing the passages for himself. Now in 1941 G.I. Duthie pointed out a passage in Henry V⁴² in which the agreement between Q and F in punctuation is much more striking, and he argued that at that point the two texts were based on the same manuscript source.⁴³ But W.W. Greg regards this agreement as quite possibly the result of pure coincidence. He remarks that 'after all, the stops used are the most natural ones',⁴⁴ and Duthie indicates to me privately that he is now quite willing to accept this. I feel that we may quite safely accept a like explanation for the alleged biblio-

⁴¹ The Merry Wives, ed. Couch and Wilson, p. 96.

⁴² The passage is at III. iii. 12-18 in the Q Henry V and at III. iii. 44-50 in F.

⁴³ George Ian Duthie, The 'Bad' Quarto of 'Hamlet', a critical study (1941), pp. 30-31.

⁴⁴ Greg, The Editorial Problem, p. 70n.

graphical links in the above passage of the Merry Wives. E.K. Chambers thinks that Wilson 'perhaps exaggerates' the typographical resemblances.⁴⁵ I agree. Wilson makes similar claims for the Q and F versions of II. ii. 14-23 and III. v. 4-17.⁴⁶ Having examined the passages carefully, I feel that we may say again that the disagreements are as extensive as the agreements, and that the agreements themselves are not necessarily significant — they may be purely coincidental.

In this section and the preceding one I have endeavoured, point by point, to controvert the theory advanced in 1919 by Messrs. Pollard and Dover Wilson as regards the Q text of the Merry Wives. I honestly believe that their theory was a mistaken one, but, at the same time, I feel that some tribute should be paid to Pollard and Wilson for evolving it. Subsequent scholarship has shown that their general theory of the 'bad' quartos was wrong;⁴⁷ yet we must remember that in 1919 Pollard and Wilson were pioneers in the field of critical bibliography. They were filled with the spirit of adventure, and, on occasion, this won the mastery over scholarly prudence. What they observed they observed acutely; but they were both busy men, and perhaps they had not the leisure to observe everything that there was to be observed.

⁴⁵ Chambers, William Shakespeare, I. 430.

⁴⁶ See The Merry Wives, ed. Couch and Wilson, pp. 113 and 121.

⁴⁷ See especially the following studies: Harry R. Hoppe, "The First Quarto of Romeo and Juliet, II. vi and IV. v. 43 ff.," RES, XIV. 271-284; Duthie, The 'Bad' Quarto of 'Hamlet', pp. 90 ff.

A present-day scholar may pride himself on having upset their theory, but he cannot help feeling that their work has inspired him to his own later efforts. And, if what I hear from friends of Professor Wilson is true, he is the first to rejoice when later hands revise his early theories, in the interests of establishing truth.

IV

HOW THE MERRY WIVES QUARTO CAME INTO EXISTENCE

Having established — I hope — that the Merry Wives quarto is a memorial reconstruction of the F text or a text closely related to it, I come now to the question of the identity of the Q reporter, or reporters. I am strongly inclined to the view that the Q text was in fact compiled by one or more persons who had taken part in performances of the play by Shakespeare's company. As previous investigators of 'bad' Shakespearian quartos have more than once pointed out,¹ an actor attempting to reconstruct a play will probably succeed most markedly with his own lines: he will probably succeed at least fairly well with lines spoken by other characters while he himself is on the stage, or has just left it, or is waiting to go on: and he will probably succeed least with passages spoken while he himself is not involved at all. (I do not maintain that this must always be so; but it may be regarded as a general probability.) Thus a memorial reconstruction made by a person who had taken a particular part in a play might well show different standards of fullness and accuracy in accordance with this; and, conversely, where, in a given 'bad' quarto, we find such differences of standard, we may well feel tempted to adopt

¹ See especially the following studies: Hamlet: George Ian Duthie, The 'Bad' Quarto of 'Hamlet', a critical study (1941), pp. 132-143; Betty Shapin, "An Experiment in Memorial Reconstruction," MIR, XXXIX. 9-17. Romeo and Juliet: Harry R. Hoppe, The Bad Quarto of 'Romeo and Juliet', a bibliographical and textual study (1948), pp. 191-222.

the formula of a reporting actor, or reporting actors, as the case may be.

Now I am certainly not the first to maintain that in the Q Merry Wives there are such differences of standard. A careful examination of the text reveals that on the whole the parts of the Host and Falstaff are better reported than any other. This in itself is a strong reason for refusing to explain this text by means of the hypothesis advanced by Professor Leo Kirschbaum to account for the origin of the 'bad' quartos in general.² He has envisaged an agent who had, or was able to get, access to an authentic theatrical manuscript of the play, and who memorized the text therefrom. But, leaving aside the fact that this would surely be a prodigious memorial feat, one must assuredly ask why, in this case, such a person would pay any special attention to the Host's part. He might admittedly pay special attention to that of Falstaff, but why to that of mine Host? Kirschbaum speaks of his reporter, in a given instance, possibly supplementing his inspection of the manuscript by attendance at performances in the theatre,³ and perhaps the actor of the Host spoke with remarkable distinctness; but, even so, it is a very small role, and one would hardly suppose that it would have stood out in the memory of Professor Kirschbaum's reporter. Surely in a case in which we have two (on the whole) exceptionally good parts, we are on safer ground if we invoke the theory

² Leo Kirschbaum, "An Hypothesis Concerning the Origin of the Bad Quartos," PMLA, LX. 697-715.

³ Ibid., p. 715n.

of reporting actors.

In 1904 H.C. Hart remarked that 'the Host in the Quarto receives his full allowance of space. He is but slightly curtailed in any place from his proper position in the Folio, so that he is even more in evidence, comparatively, in the Quarto. He was undoubtedly a most popular character'.⁴ On the basis of the comparatively high standard of the Host's part in Q, W.W. Greg suggested, in 1910, that the whole text was reported by an actor who had taken this part.⁵ It is true, however, that eighteen years later Greg went so far as to declare that this suggestion was 'very likely mistaken';⁶ and in his Editorial Problem in Shakespeare he says: 'The Host's part is generally much the best reported, and the text as a rule improves when he is on or near the stage: he does not appear in Act V. I formerly suggested that the report was made by the actor of this part. It may be so, but there are difficulties'. He now feels that 'perhaps it would be safer to assume an independent reporter relying generally on mine Host's assistance'.⁷ Despite this latter-day caution, it will be noted that Greg still appears to cling to the belief that an actor of the Host's part was

⁴ The Merry Wives of Windsor, edited by H.C. Hart (Arden Shakespeare, 1904), p. xx.

⁵ Shakespeare's Merry Wives of Windsor, 1602, edited by W.W. Greg (1910), p. xl.

⁶ W.W. Greg, Note in RES, IV. 202.

⁷ W.W. Greg, The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare, second edition (1951), p. 71.

implicated in the work of reporting ('. . . relying . . . on mine Host's assistance').

Now there are also places in Q where the careful reader must surely be impressed with the comparative excellence of Falstaff's lines. True, they are not always even well reported; but often they are extraordinarily well reported. In his 1910 edition of the Q text, Greg explained this by suggesting that any reporter would naturally pay a good deal of attention to Falstaff, who is, after all, the prime attraction of the play. 'Falstaff . . . is the central character of the piece and some reasonably sufficient reproduction of his part was a sine qua non of any pirated edition'.⁸ In an important article published in 1930, however, Professor H.D. Gray, likewise noting the excellent reporting of some of the Falstaff passages in Q, felt it necessary, or desirable, to suggest that the Q text as a whole was memorially reconstructed by two actors, one of whom had played the part of the Host, and the other that of Falstaff.⁹

In the course of this article, Professor Gray suggests that the part of Falstaff in the Henry IV plays was taken by the famous comic actor William Kemp, since it seems to him quite 'probable that the greatest comedy role in all drama was intended for the outstanding comedian of [Shakespeare's] company'.¹⁰ Dover Wilson likewise feels,

⁸ Shakespeare's Merry Wives, ed. Greg, p. xl.

⁹ Henry David Gray, "The Roles of William Kemp," MIR, XXV. 261-273.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 265.

in connection with Henry IV, that it is 'natural to assume that the character of Falstaff was written for and, theatrically speaking, created by [Kemp]'.¹¹ Gray further suggests that Kemp in all probability played the part of Falstaff in the Merry Wives also. This conjecture seems to me to be not unreasonable.

We know that Kemp left Shakespeare's company sometime during 1599.¹² Gray supposes that the Merry Wives was written before his departure and that the play was in mid-rehearsal when Kemp suddenly left. Subsequently to leaving, Kemp, together with the actor of the Host (who, Gray surmises, left slightly before Kemp or along with him) reported the play. Since rehearsal had, according to Gray's thesis, proceeded only as far as III. ii., the two reporters did very much better before that point than after it.

Now, admittedly, there is a great deal of pure conjecture in all this. And I am well aware that in what I am about to say there are, equally, elements of pure conjecture.

I feel myself that it is entirely reasonable to hold that Kemp probably played Falstaff in Henry IV. Were he available, I have no doubt that he would have played the part in the Merry Wives also. Was the latter play in existence before Kemp left the company in 1599? Gray thinks so; but E.K. Chambers dates the play 1600-1601 — after

¹¹ J. Dover Wilson, The Fortunes of Falstaff (1945), p. 124.

¹² E.K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (1923), II. 326.

Hamlet.¹³ Now, even if we prefer Chambers' date, the theory that Kemp and another actor (the Host) reported Q is, it seems to me, tenable. In his Elizabethan Stage Chambers has noted that Kemp, after a period of continental travelling, was back in England by the beginning of September, 1601, and has ventured that 'possibly Kempe rejoined the Chamberlain's [company] for a while'.¹⁴ It is possible — is it not? — that he did rejoin the company, and that he did so in time to play Falstaff in the Merry Wives. But, Chambers has gone on to note, 'during the winter of 1602-3 [Kemp] was certainly one of Worcester's men'.¹⁵ I suggest — tentatively — that, having rejoined the Chamberlain's company for a short period, having learned the part of Falstaff in the Merry Wives during that period, and having then again left the Chamberlain's company, Kemp, with another actor (the Host) who left along with him, reported the Merry Wives, producing the text subsequently published in the quarto. This theory is essentially that of Professor Gray, though it differs from his as regards chronology. Once again, I am only too well aware of its conjectural nature; all I claim is that it is reasonable and not improbable.

There can be no doubt that at various points in Q the speeches of Falstaff and the Host are remarkable well reported. If the reader examines the reprint of the Q play which follows this Introduction,

¹³ E.K. Chambers, William Shakespeare, a study of facts and problems (1930), p. 434.

¹⁴ Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, II. 326.

¹⁵ Ibid., 327.

he will find that I have supplemented the text with a series of editorial symbols. These will be explained in full in due course. Meanwhile, it should be remarked that a red bar standing before a line indicates what I call a well reported line, or a 'good' line. A 'good' line I define as a typographical line of the Q text that reproduces any portion of the authentic text with no more than one important variant (noun, verb, adjective, or adverb), disregarding differences in particles and in singular-plural forms.¹⁶ Now Falstaff does not make his first appearance in Q until sig. A₃^v, at a point one third of the way down. There is no red bar until Sir John's first words, but then the sprinkling of red bars becomes quite impressive. On sig. A₄^v Falstaff is absent and the red bars are few and far between. Until the last line of sig. B there is only one red bar on the page; but then Falstaff enters — and the Host too — and thereafter, on sig. B₁^v, every line but five sports a red bar. On sig. B₂, with Sir John present (though not mine Host) there is a goodly sprinkling of red bars, as also on sig. B₂^v, until, with the fat knight's exit, they drop off;¹⁷ and on sig. B₃^v and sig. B₄ there is but one red bar in

¹⁶ Admittedly, at first sight, there appear to be several pertinent objections to such a definition of a 'good' line, e.g., some Q typographical lines contain only one, or perhaps two, words, in which case the classification is of no significance. It seems to me, however, that for assessing the quality of the lines of a play written almost entirely in prose (as is the Merry Wives) no more satisfactory definition of a well reported line can be devised.

¹⁷ It is interesting to note just how the good lines drop off. In the five lines immediately following Falstaff's exit, there are no less than three red bars; thereafter on this page and the following one (B₃) there is but one red bar. It is easy to suggest — as I do —

all. Again, on sig. C₁^V there are only two red bars up to the point where the Host enters, some three quarters of the way down; then on the rest of that page, throughout sig. C₂, and right on until the Host's exit on sig. C₂^V, there is a very considerable number of red bars. Yet again, in the second half of sig. C₂^V, where Falstaff is involved, there is a positive rash of red bars. Once more, on sig. D₃, there are seven red bars; three of these occur directly following the entrance of the Host, and three more mark his later speeches; and in the first third of sig. D₃^V, while the Host is still on stage, there is a steady display of red bars, while on the rest of the page, when he has gone off, there are no red bars whatsoever. These are by way of examples; the reader can examine the whole text in this way for himself — the red bars stand out clearly at even a superficial glance.

If the reader does examine the text carefully in this way, he will admittedly find that there is some bad reporting at certain points where Falstaff and/or the Host are involved. For instance, we have said that on sig. C₂^V there is 'a positive rash of red bars'; Falstaff is on stage: but on sig. C₃^V, while Falstaff is still on stage, there are but few. And it must be remembered that the only criterion of good reporting which we have considered in the above fragmentary analysis has been the incidence of red bars. Even in some of the passages where the red bars are most frequent, there are corruptions, sometimes

that the actor of Falstaff's part, having just left the stage, would overhear what was being said on it; whereas after a few lines he would be in the tiring-room and out of earshot.

(I admit that in the above analysis I have used one criterion only, and have not mentioned, e.g., omissions. Nevertheless, I submit that what has been said cannot be regarded as unimpressive.)

serious, such as omission, transposition, etc. Again, W.W. Greg points out that 'the superiority of the scenes in which [the Host] appears is not quite uniform'.¹⁸ And Falstaff appears in the fifth act, which in Q is wretched (but then, any reporting actor may quite reasonably be expected to be overcome by exhaustion as his work approaches its conclusion).

I certainly do not wish to exaggerate my case. Neither Falstaff nor the Host is reported on a completely consistent standard of fullness and accuracy. But I feel that it can definitely be claimed that a careful examination of the Q text, with my marginal sigla, indicates that on the whole these two parts stand out as far better than any other part. After all, a reporting actor need not be supposed to be utterly incapable of forgetting portions of his own part! The present writer was recently in conversation with an eminent English actor, Mr. Francis L. Sullivan, who, albeit a trifle reluctantly, though very charmingly, admitted that sometimes 'actors do dry up'! And, as a matter of fact, a certain degree of ineptitude in the postulated reporters is quite consistent with the conjectural theory which I have outlined above as to the circumstances of this reporting operation. Suppose that Kemp returns to the Chamberlain's company in the autumn of 1601. He hastily learns the role of Falstaff in the newly written Merry Wives, and takes part in a performance or performances. By the winter of 1602 he is out of the Chamberlain's company — he has joined

¹⁸ Greg, The Editorial Problem, p. 71.

Worcester's men. Under these circumstances he might very well never have grasped Falstaff's part in this play with full confidence at all points. And, as for the Host, who, we conjecture, left the Chamberlain's company along with Kemp before the winter of 1602, he — presumably a small-part hireling actor — may have had limitations as regards his conscientiousness. The general, though not invariable, superiority of Falstaff and the Host in our text seems to me sufficient to suggest the theory that the two actors who had taken these parts were the reporters of the Q text.

In this chapter, of course, I have not fully analyzed the Q text from this point of view. But in the Notes appended to the reprint of Q which now follows, the excellences and the corruptions of the parts of Falstaff and the Host will, inter alia, emerge.

CONCLUSIONS

The discussion embodied in the above four sections by no means exhausts the problems presented by the Q text of the Merry Wives. There are other difficult questions which would have to be faced in a work whose scope was larger than that of the present one. There is, for instance, the problem of abridgment. Were the reporters trying to reconstruct an abridgment of F? Or were they attempting to reconstruct the full F version, and did they, or someone else, subsequently make cuts? Or is abridgment not involved in Q at all? As far as I can see, there is no evidence which conduces to a definite decision as to which of these alternatives is the right one. All are possible. I am sure of only two things in this connection: (a) that Q depends either upon F or upon a text closely related to F (e.g., an abridgment of F); and (b) that when one is dealing with a memorial reconstruction, and finds oneself confronted with an omission, it is often very difficult to say whether that omission is a result of deliberate cutting or of failure of memory on the part of the reporter(s). In Q Merry Wives I have found no omission of which I should find it difficult to say that it could not have resulted merely from failure of memory on the part of the reporters.

Then there is the question of whether the Q version of the final act of the play represents a deliberate alteration intended to adapt a court play to the tastes of a popular audience. The tradition

is well known that the play was written by Shakespeare in obedience to a request by Queen Elizabeth that she should be shown Sir John in love. E.K. Chambers thinks that 'we may accept the story of Elizabeth's request, and suppose it motivated by Shakespeare's failure to redeem in Henry V the promise of a reintroduction of Falstaff suggested by the epilogue to 2 Henry IV'.¹ While Greg formerly believed that the conclusion of Q and that of F depended on different originals, he no longer does so. He now declares: 'I no longer feel convinced that in the last act Q goes back to an original different from F, though the latter assumes a courtly, the former a popular, audience: this would be a necessary alteration if the piracy was made for acting'.²

Were our reporters concerned to produce copy for acting or to produce copy for publication? I know of no evidence that would positively indicate a conclusion on this point; but the probabilities are all on the side of acting copy. More than twenty years ago, A.W. Pollard suggested that for a text memorially reconstructed a publisher would be inclined to pay a sum at most so small as to render the reporters' work financially not worth while.³ And, since the publica-

¹ E.K. Chambers, William Shakespeare, a study of facts and problems (1930), I. 434.

² W.W. Greg, The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare, second edition (1951), p. 72.

³ Alfred W. Pollard, Introduction to Shakespeare's Henry VI and Richard III (1929), by Peter Alexander.

tion, in 1922, of Greg's remarkable study of the 1594 quarto of Greene's Orlando Furioso,⁴ we have all been very familiar with the notion of actors illegitimately reconstructing plays for provincial performance. There is nothing to suggest that the Q version of the Merry Wives is not essentially a case in point.

⁴ W.W. Greg, Two Elizabethan Stage Abridgements: The Battle of Alcazar & Orlando Furioso, 1922.

T E X T

The text given in the following pages is an exact copy, line for line and page for page, of Q as it appears in W.W. Greg's reprint, published in 1910 (Shakespeare's Merry Wives of Windsor, 1602). The line-numberings, which are continuous throughout the play, are Greg's. There are only two minor departures from Greg, viz. (a) I have not used the long 's', and (b) in line 1025 I have omitted a hyphen which is absent from the Shakespeare Association facsimile of Q, produced much more recently by Greg himself.

To this text I have myself added certain editorial symbols.

These are as follows:

1. A red bar prefixed to a line of type indicates that that line is a 'good' line — i.e., a line which reproduces a continuous portion of the F text with no more than one important variant (noun, verb, adjective, or adverb), disregarding differences in particles and in singular-plural forms.
2. A green bar prefixed to a line of type indicates that that line reproduces a continuous portion of the F text with no more than two important variants.
3. Typed underlinings merely indicate italics in the original; but underlinings in blue ink indicate close phraseological resemblances to the F text.
4. Significant omissions are indicated by horizontal caret marks in the right-hand margins.
5. The letter 'T' indicates a transposition — i.e., it indicates a single line or group of lines derived from some other point in the F text; and the source of the relevant passage (act, scene, and line) is indicated beside the 'T'.
6. The letter 'I' indicates an inversion of the F word-order or phrase-

order.

7. The letter 'M' indicates a misassignment, it being assumed that F is correct in this respect.
8. The letter 'R' indicates a repetition of a passage previously rendered in the quarto itself.

A pleasant conceited Co-
medie, of Syr Iohn Falstaffe, and the
merry Wiues of W Windsor.

Enter Iustice Shallow, Syr Hugh, Maister Page,
and Slender.

Shal. Nere talke to me, Ile make a star-cham-
ber matter of it.

5 [REDACTED] The Councell shall know it. (mee. <

Pag. Nay good maister Shallow be perswaded by

Slen. Nay surely my vncle shall not put it vp so.

Sir Hu. Wil you not heare reasons M. Slenders?

You should heare reasons.

10 Shal. Tho he be a knight, he shall not thinke to
carrie it so away.

M. Page I will not be wronged. For you

Syr, I loue you, and for my cousen

He comes to looke vpon your daughter.

15 Pa. And heres my hand, and if my daughter

Like him so well as I, wee'l quickly haue it a match:

In the meane time let me intreat you to sojourne

Here a while. And on my life Ile vndertake

To make you friends.

20 Sir Hu. I pray you M. Shallowes let it be so.

A 3

The

A pleasaunt Comedie, of

The matter is pud to arbitarments.
The first man is M. Page, videlicet M. Page.
The second is my selfe, videlicet my selfe. (tyr.
And the third and last man, is mine host of the gar-

T I.i. 130-133

25 Enter Syr Iohn Falstaffe, Pistoll, Bardolfe,
 and Nim.

Here is sir Iohn himselfe now, looke you.

M

Fal. Now M. Shallow, youle complaine of me
to the Councell. I heare?

30 Shal. Sir Iohn, sir Iohn, you haue hurt my keeper,
Kild my dogs, stolne my deere.

Fal. But not kissed your keepers daughter.

Shal. Well this shall be answered.

Fal. Ile answere it strait. I haue done all this.

35 [REDACTED] This is now answered.

Shal. Well, the Councell shall know it.

Fal. Twere better for you twere knowne in

Youle be laught at. (counsell,

Sir Hu. Good vrdes sir Iohn, good vrdes.

40 Fal. Good vrdes, good Cabidge.

Slender I brake your head,

What matter haue you against mee?

Slen. I haue matter in my head against you and your cogging companions, Pistoll and Nym. They carried mee to the Tauerne and made mee drunke, and afterward picked my pocket.

Fal. What say you to this Pistoll, did you picke

Maister Slenders purse Pistoll?

50 Slen. I by this handkercher did he. Two faire
shouell boord shillings, besides seven groats in mill
sixpences. Fal.

1

I

the merry wiues of windsor.

Fal. What say you to this Pistoll?

Pist. Sir Iohn, and Maister mine, I combat craue
Of this same laten bilbo. I do retort the lie
55 Euen in thy gorge, thy gorge, thy gorge.

Slen. By this light it was he then.

Nym. Syr my honor is not for many words,
But if you run bace humors of me,
I will say mary trap. And there's the humor of it.

60 Fal. You heare these matters denide gentleme,
You heare it.

Enter Mistresse Foord, Mistresse Page, and her
daughter Anne.

Pa. No more now,
65 I thinke it be almost dinner time,
For my wife is come to meet vs.

Fal. Mistresse Foord, I thinke your name is,
If I mistake not.

Syr Iohn kisses her.

70 Mis. Ford. Your mistake sir is nothing but in the
Mistresse. But my husbands name is Foord sir.

Fal. I shall desire your more acquaintance.
The like of you good misteris Page.

Mis. Pa. With all my hart sir Iohn.
75 Come husband will you goe?
Dinner staies for vs.

Pa. With all my hart, come along Gentlemen.

Exit all, but Slender and
mistresse Anne.

Anne.

A pleasant Comedie, of

80 Anne. Now forsooth why do you stay me?

What would you with me?

85 Slen. Nay for my owne part, I would litle or nothing with you. I loue you well, and my vncle can tell you how my liuing stands. And if you can loue me why so. If not, why then happie man be his dole.

An. You say well M. Slender.
But first you must giue me leaue to
Be acquainted with your humor,
90 And afterward to loue you if I can.

Slen. Why by God, there's neuer a man in christendome can desire more. What haue you Beares in your Towne mistresse Anne, your dogs barke so?

95 An. I cannot tell M. Slender, I thinke there be.

Slen. Ha how say you? I warrant your afeard of a Beare let loose, are you not?

An. Yes trust me.

100 Slen. Now that's meate and drinke to me,
Ile run yon to a Beare, and take her by the mussell,
You neuer saw the like.
But indeed I cannot blame you,
For they are maruellous rough things.

An. Will you goe in to dinner M. Slendor?
The meate staies for you.

105 Slen. No faith not I. I thanke you,

I cannot abide the smell of hot meate

110 Nere since I broke my shin. Ile tel you how it came
By my troth. A Fencer and I plaid three venies
For a dish of stewd prunes, and I with my ward
Defending my head, he hot my shin. Yes faith.

T III. iv. 60-67

I <

I

T I. i. 265-270

Enter

the merry wiues of windsor.

Enter Maister Page.

Pa. Come, come Maister Slender, dinner staies for you.

Slen. I can eate no meate, I thanke you.

115 Pa. You shall not choose I say.

Slen. Ile follow you sir, pray leade the way.

Nay be God misteris Anne, you shall goe first,
I haue more manners then so, I hope.

An. Well sir, I will not be troublesome.

120

Exit omnes.

Enter sir Hugh and Simple, from dinner.

Sir Hu. Hark you Simple, pray you beare this letter
to Doctor Cayus house, the French Doctor. He is
twell vp along the street, and enquire of his house
125 for one mistris Quickly, his woman, or his try nurse,
and deliuer this Letter to her, it tis about Maister
Slender. Looke you, will you do it now?

Sim. I warrant you Sir.

Sir Hu. Pray you do, I must not be absent at the
130 grace.

■ I will goe make an end of my dinner,
■ There is pepions and cheese behinde.

Exit omnes.

Enter sir Iohn Falstaffes Host of the Garter,
135 Nym, Bardolfe, Pistoll, and the boy.

■ Fal. Mine Host of the Garter.

B

Host.

<
I <
<

] T 1.1.246-247

A pleasant Comedie, of

- Host. What ses my bully Rooke?
 Speake schollerly and wisely.
 Fal. Mine Host, I must turne away some of my
 140 followers.
 Host. Discard bully, Hercules cassire.
 Let them wag, trot, trot.
 Fal. I sit at ten pound a weeke.
 Host. Thou art an Emperour Caesar, Phesser and I
 145 Kesar bully.
 Ile entertaine Bardolfe. He shall tap, he shall draw. I
 Said I well, bully Hector?
 Fal. Do good mine Host.
 Host. I haue spoke. Let him follow. Bardolfe
 150 Let me see thee froth, and lyme. I am at
 A word. Follow, follow.
 Exit Host.
 Fal. Do Bardolfe, a Tapster is a good trade,
 An old cloake will make a new Ierkin,
 155 A withered seruingman, a fresh Tapster:
 Follow him Bardolfe. I T I.iii.16
 Bar. I will sir, Ile warrant you Ile make a good
 shift to liue.
 Exit Bardolfe.
 160 Pis. O bace gongarian wight, wilt thou the spic-
 ket willd?
 Nym. His minde is not heroick. And theres the
 humor of it.
 Fal. Well my Laddes, I am almost out at the
 165 heeles.
 Pis. Why then let cybes insue.
 Nym. I thanke thee for that humor. T I.iii.63
 Fal.

the merry wiues of windsor.

- Fal. Well I am glad I am so rid of this tinder Boy.
 170 ■ His stealth was too open, his filching was like
■ An vnskilfull singer, he kept not time. T I. iii. 25-30
■ Nym. The good humor is to steale at a minutes
■ rest.
■ Pis. Tis so indeed Nym, thou hast hit it right.
 175 Fal. Well, afore God, I must cheat, I must cony-
catch. I
■ Which of you knowes Foord of this Towne?
■ Pis. I ken the wight, he is of substance good.
■ Fal. Well my honest Lads, Ile tell you what
 180 ■ I am about.
■ Pis. Two yards and more.
■ Fal. No gibes now Pistoll: indeed I am two yards I
■ In the wast, but now I am about no wast:
Briefly, I am about thrift you rogues you, I
 185 ■ I do intend to make loue to Foords wife, I
■ I espie entertainment in her. She carues, she
■ Discourses. She giues the lyre of inuitation, I
And euery part to be constured rightly is, I am
■ Syr Iohn Falstaffes.
 190 Pis. He hath studied her well, out of honestie
Into English. I
■ Fal. Now the report goes, she hath all the rule
■ Of her husbands purse. She hath legians of angels.
■ Pis. As many diuels attend her.
 195 ■ And to her boy say I. I
Fal. Heree's a Letter to her. Heeres another to
misteris Page.

A pleasant Comedie, of

- Who euen now gaue me good eies too, examined
 my exteriors with such a greedy intentiō, with the
 beames of her beautie, that it seemed as she would
 200 a scorged me vp like a burning glasse. Here is ano-
ther Letter to her, shee beares the purse too. They
shall be Excheckers to me, and Ile be cheaters to
them both. They shall be my East and West Indies,
 205 and Ile trade to them both. Heere beare thou this
Letter to mistresse Foord. And thou this to mistresse
Page. Weele thriue Lads, we will thriue.
Pist. Shall I sir Panderowes of Troy become?
And by my sword were steele.
 210 Then Lucifer take all.
Nym. Here take your humor Letter againe,
For my part, I will keepe the hauior
Of reputation. And theres the humor of it.
Fal. Here sirrha beare me these Letters titely,
 215 Saile like my pinnice to the golden shores:
Hence slaues, avant. Vanish like hailstones, goe.
Falstaffe will learne the humor of this age,
French thrift you rogue, my selfe and scirted Page.
Exit Falstaffe,
 220 and the Boy.
Pis. And art thou gone? Teaster Ile haue in pouch
When thou shalt want, bace Phrygian Turke.
Nym. I haue operations in my head, which are
humors of reuenge.
 225 Pis. Wilt thou reuenge?
Nym. By Welkin and her Fairies.
Pis. By wit, or sword?
Nym. With both the humors I will disclose this
 229 loue to Page. Ile poses him with Iallowes,
 And

the merry wiues of windsor.

230 And theres the humor of it.

Pis. And I to Foord will likewise tell

How Falstaffe varlot vilde,

Would haue her loue, his doue would proue,

And eke his bed defile.

235 Nym. Let vs about it then.

(on.

Pis. Ile second thee: sir Corporall Nym troope

Exit omnes.

Enter Mistresse Quickly, and Simple.

Quic. M. Slender is your Masters name say you?

240 Sim. I indeed that is his name.

Quic. How say you? I take it hee is somewhat a weakly man:

And he has as it were a whay coloured beard.

Sim. Indeed my maisters beard is kane colored.

245 Quic. Kane colour, you say well.

And is this Letter from sir Yon, about Misteris An, Is it not?

Sim. I indeed is it.

250 Quic. So: and your Maister would haue me as it twere to speak to misteris Anne concerning him:

I promise you my M. hath a great affectioned mind to mistresse Anne himsel. And if he should know that I should as they say, giue my verdict for any one but himsel, I should heare of it throughly: For

255 I tell you friend, he puts all his priuities in me.

Sim. I by my faith you are a good staie to him.

Quic. Am I? I and you knew all yowd say so:

Washing, brewing, baking, all goes through my

Or else it would be but a woe house. (hands,

260 Sim. I beshrow me, one woman to do all this,

B 3

Is

] T I.iv. 101-102

T I.iv. 94-95

A pleasant Comedie, of

Is very painfull.

Quic. Are you auised of that? I, I warrant you,
Take all, and paie all, all goe through my hands,
And he is such a honest man, and he should chance
265 To come home and finde a man here, we should
Haue no who with him. He is a parlowes man.

Sim. Is he indeed?

Quic. Is he quoth you? God keepe him abroad:
Lord blesse me, who knocks there?
270 For Gods sake step into the Counting-house,
While I goe see whose at doore.

He steps into the Counting-house.

What Iohn Rugby, Iohn,
Are you come home sir alreadie?

275 And she opens the doore.

Doct. I begar I be forget my oyntment,
VWhere be Iohn Rugby?

Enter Iohn.

Rug. Here sir, do you call?

280 Doc. I you be Iohn Rugby, and you be Iack Rugby

Goe run vp met your heeles, and bring away

De oyntment in de vindoe present:

Make hast Iohn Rugby. O I am almost forget

285 My simples in a boxe in de Counting-house:

O Ieshu vat be here, a deuella, a deuella?

My Rapier Iohn Rugby, Vat be you, vat make

You in my Counting-house?

I tinck you be a teefe.

Quic. Ieshu blesse me, we are all vndone.

290 Sim. O Lord sir no: I am no theefe,

I am a Seruingman:

My

the merry wiues of windsor.

My name is Iohn Simple, I brought a Letter sir
From my M. Slender, about misteris Anne Page
Sir: Indeed that is my comming.

295 Doc. I begar is dat all? Iohn Rugby giue a ma pen
An Inck: tarche vn pettit tarche a little.

The Doctor writes.

Sim. O God what a furious man is this?

Quic. Nay it is well he is no worse:

300 I am glad he is so quiet.

Doc. Here giue dat same to sir Hu, it ber ve chalège
Begar tell him I will cut his nase, will you?

Sim. I sir, Ile tell him so. (may.

305 Doc. Dat be vell, my Rapier Iohn Rugby, follow
Exit Doctor.

Quic. VWell my friend, I cannot tarry, tell your
Maister Ile doo what I can for him,
And so farewell.

310 Sim. Mary will I, I am glad I am got hence.
Exit omnes.

Enter Mistresse Page, reading of
a Letter.

(reason,

315 Mis.Pa. Mistresse Page I loue you. Aske me no
Because theyr impossible to alledge. Your faire,
And I am fat. Yon loue sack, so do I:
As I am sure I haue no mind but to loue,
So I know you haue no hart but to grant (knowes
A souldier doth not vse many words, where a
320 A letter may serue for a sentence. I loue you,
And so I leaue you.

Yours Syr Iohn Falstaffe.

Now

I

] T I. iv. 29-31

I

A pleasant Comedie, of

- Now I Ieshu blesse me, am I methomorphised?
 I thinke I knowe not my selfe. Why what a Gods
 325 name doth this man see in me, that thus he shootes
 at my honestie? Well but that I knowe my owne
 heart, I should scarcely perswade my selfe I were
 hand. Why what an vnreasonable wooll sack is this.
 He was neuer twice in my companie, and if then I
 330 thought I gaue such assurance with my eies, Ide pul
 them out, they should neuer see more holie daies.
 Well, I shall trust fat men the worse while I liue for T II.i.49-51
 his sake. O God that I knew how to be reuenged of
him. But in good time, heeres mistresse Foord.
 335 Enter Mistresse Foord.
Mis.For. How now Mistris Page, are you reading
 Loue Letters? How do you woman?
Mis.Pa. O woman I am I know not what:
 In loue vp to the hard eares. I was neuer in such a
 340 case in my life.
Mis.Foord. In loue, now in the name of God with
 whom?
Mis.Pa. With one that sweares he loues me,
 And I must not choose but do the like againe:
 345 I prethie looke on that Letter.
Mis.For. Ile match your letter iust with the like,
Line for line, word for word. Only the name
Of misteris Page, and misteris Foord disagrees:
Do me the kindnes to looke vpon this.
 350 Mis.Pa. Why this is right my letter.
 O most notorious villaine!
 Why what a bladder of iniquitie is this?
Lets be reuenged what so ere we do.
 354 Mis.For. Reuenged, if we liue weel be reuenged.
 O Lord

the merry wiues of windsor.

355 O Lord if my husband should see this Letter,
Ifaith this would euen giue edge to his Iealousie.

Enter Ford, Page, Pistoll and Nym.

Mis.Pa. See where our husbands are,
Mine's as far from Iealousie,
360 As I am from wronging him.

Pis. Ford the words I speake are forst:
Beware, take heed, for Falstaffe loues thy wife:
When Pistoll lies do this.

Ford. Why sir my wife is not young,
365 Pis. He wooes both yong and old, both rich and
None comes amis. I say he loues thy wife: (poore
Faire warning did I giue, take heed,
For sommer comes, and Cuckoo birds appeare:
Page belieue him what he ses. Away sir Corporall

370 Exit Pistoll: (Nym.
Nym. Syr the humor of it is, he loues your wife,

I should ha borne the humor Letter to her:
I speake and I auouch tis true: My name is Nym.
Farwell, I loue not the humor of bread and cheese:
375 And theres the humor of it. Exit Nym.

Pa. The humor of it, quoth you:
Heres a fellow frites humor out of his wits.

Mis.Pa. How now sweet hart, how dost thou?
Enter Mistresse Quickly.

380 Pa. How now man? How do you mistris Ford?
Mis.For. Well I thanke you good M. Page.
How now husband, how chaunce thou art so me-
lancholy?

Ford. Melancholy, I am not melancholy.
385 Goe get you in, goe.

Mis.For. God saue me, see who yonder is:

C

Weele

<

I <

<

I <

T II.i. 119-120

<

<

<

M <

A pleasant Comedie, of

Weele set her a worke in this businesse.

Mis.Pa. O sheele serue excellent.

M

Now you come to see my daughter An I am sure.

390 Quic. I forsooth that is my comming.

Mis.Pa. Come go in with me. Come Mis. Ford.

Mis.For. I follow you Mistresse Page.

Exit Mistresse Ford, Mis. Page, and Quickly.

For. M. Page did you heare what these fellows

395 Pa. Yes M. Ford, what of that sir? (said?

For. Do you thinke it is true that they told vs?

Pa. No by my troth do I not,

I rather take them to be paltry lying knaues,

Such as rather speakes of enuie,

400 Then of any certaine they haue

Of any thing. And for the knight, perhaps

He hath spoke merrily, as the fashion of fat men

Are: But should he loue my wife,

Ifaith Ide turne her loose to him:

405 And what he got more of her,

Then ill lookes, and shrowd words,

Why let me beare the penaltie of it.

For. Nay I do not mistrust my wife,

Yet Ide be loth to turne them together,

410 A man may be too confident.

Enter Host and Shallow.

Pa. Here comes my ramping host of the garter,

Ther's either licker in his hed, or mony in his purse,

That he lookes so merily. Now mine Host?

415 Host. God blesse you my bully rookes, God blesse

Cauelera Iustice I say. (you.

Shal. At hand mine host, at hand. M. Ford god den

God den an twentie good M. Page. (to you.

I tell

the merry wiues of windsor.

- I tell you sir we haue sport in hand.
- 420 Host. Tell him cauelira Iustice: tell him bully
 Ford. Mine Host a the garter: (rooke.
 Host. What ses my bully rooke?
 Ford. A word with you sir.] T II.i.182-183
- Ford and the Host talkes.
- 425 Shal. Harke you sir, Ile tell you what the sport
 Doctor Cayus and sir Hu are to fight, (shall be,] T II.i.187-188
 My merrie Host hath had the measuring
 Of their weapons, and hath (eare:
 Appointed them contrary places. Harke in your
 430 Host: Hast thou no shute against my knight,
 My guest, my cauellira:
 For. None I protest: But tell him my name
 Is Rrooke, onlie for a Iest.
 Host: My hand bully: Thou shalt
 435 Haue egres and regres, and thy
 Name shall be Brooke: Sed I well bully Hector?
 Shal. I tell you what M. Page, I beleue
 The Doctor is no Iester, heele laie it on:
 For tho we be Iustices and Doctors,
 440 And Church men, yet we are
 The sonnes of women M. Page:
 Pa: True maister Shallow:
 Shal: It will be found so maister Page:
 Pa. Maister Shallow you your selfe
 445 Haue bene a great fighter,
 Tho now a man of peace:
 Shal: M. Page I haue seene the day that yong
 Tall fellowes with their stroke & their passado,
 I haue made them trudge Maister Page,
 450 A tis the hart, the hart doth all: I

A pleasant Comedie, of

Haue seene the day, with my two hand sword

I would a made you foure tall Fencers

Scipped like Rattes.

Host. Here boyes, shall we wag, shall we wag?

455 Shal. Ha with you mine host.

T II.i.197

Exit Host and Shallow.

Fa. Come M. Ford, shall we to dinner?

I know these fellowes sticks in your minde.

For. No in good sadnesse not in mine:

460 Yet for all this Ile try it further,

I will not leaue it so:

Come M. Page, shall we to dinner?

R

Fa. With all my hart sir, Ile follow you.

Exit omnes.

465 Enter Syr Iohn, and Pistoll.

Fal. Ile not lend thee a peny.

Pis. I will retort the sum in equipage.

Fal. Not a pennie: I haue beene content you

shuld lay my countenance to pawne: I haue grated

470 vpon my good friends for 3. repriues, for you and

your Coach-fellow Nym, else you might a looked

thorow a grate like a geminy of babones. I am dam-

ned in hell for swearing to Gentlemen your good

souldiers and tall fellowes; And when mistrisse Bri-

475 get lost the handle of her Fan, I tooked on my ho-

thou hadst it not.

Pis. Didst thou not share? hadst thou not fif-

I

teene pence?

Fal. Reason you rogue, reason.

480 Doest thou thinke Ile indanger my soule gratis?

I

In briefe, hang no more about mee, I am no gybit

for you. A short knife and a throng to your manner

of

the merry wiues of windsor.

of pickt hatch, goe. Youle not beare a Letter for me
 you rogue you: you stand vpon your honor. Why
 485 thou vnconfinable basenesse thou, tis as much as I
 can do to keep the termes of my honor precise. I, I
 my selfe sometimes, leauing the feare of God on
 the left hand, am faine to shuffel, to filch & to lurch.
And yet you stand vpon your honor, you rogue.

<
 R <

490 You, you.

Pis. I do recant: what woulst thou more of man?
 Fal. Well, gotoo, away, no more.

<

Enter Mistresse Quickly.

Quic. Good you god den sir.

495 Fal. Good den faire wife.

Quic. Not so ant like your worship.

Fal. Faire mayd then.

Quic. That I am Ile be sworne, as my mother

The first houre I was borne. (was

<

500 Sir I would speake with you in priuate.

Fal. Say on I prethy, heeres none but my owne
 houshold.

Quic. Are they so? Now God blesse them, and
 make them his seruants.

505 Syr I come from Mistresse Foord.

Fal. So from Mistresse Foord. Goe on.

Quic. I sir, she hath sent me to you to let you
 Vnderstand she hath receiued your Letter, (dit
 And let me tell you, she is one stands vpon her cre-

T II.ii.77

510 Fal. Well, come Misteris Ford, Misteris Ford.

I

Quic. I sir, and as they say, she is not the first
 Hath bene led in a fooles paradise.

<

Fal. Nay prethy be briefe my good she Mercury.

Quic. Mary sir, sheed haue you meet her between
 eight and nine.

515

C 3

Fal.

100-72-RAO-CANADA

A pleasant Comedie, of

- Fal. So betweene eight and nine: (birding,
Quic. I forsooth, for then her husband goes a
Fal. Well commend me to thy mistris, tel her
 I will not faile her: Boy giue her my purse.
 520 Quic. Nay sir I haue another arant to do to you
 From misteris Page:
Fal. From misteris Page? I prethy what of her?
Quic. By my troth I think you work by Inchant-
 Els they could neuer loue you as they doo: (ments,
 525 Fal. Not I, I assure thee: setting the attraction of my
 Good parts aside, I use no other enchantments:
Quic. Well sir, she loues you extreemly:
 And let me tell you, shees one that feares God,
 And her husband giues her leaue to do all:
 530 For he is not halfe so iealousie as M. Ford is. (Ford,
Fal. But harke thee, hath misteris Page & mistris
 Acquainted each other how dearly they loue me?
Quic. O God no sir: there were a iest indeed.
Fal. Well farwel, commend me to misteris Ford,
 535 I will not faile her say.
Quic. God be with your worship.
Exit Mistresse Quickly.
Enter Bardolfe.
Bar. Sir heer's a Gentleman,
 540 One M. Brooke, would speak with you,
 He hath sent you a cup of sacke.
Fal. M. Brooke, hees welcome: Bid him come vp,
 Such Brookes are alwaies welcome to me:
 A lack, will thy old bodie yet hold out?
 545 Wilt thou after the expence of so much mony
 be now a gainer? Good bodie I thanke thee,
 And Ile make more of thee then I ha done:

Ha

T II.ii.130-133

I

the merry wiues of windsor.

- Ha, ha, misteris Ford, and misteris Page, haue
I caught you a the hip? go too.
- 550 Enter Foord disguised like Brooke.
For. God saue you sir.
Fal. And you too, would you speak with me?
Fal. Mary would I sir, I am somewhat bolde to
My name is Brooke. (trouble you,
555 Fal. Good M. Brooke your verie welcome.
For. Ifaith sir I am a gentleman and a traueeller,
That haue seen somewhat. And I haue often heard
That if mony goes before, all waies lie open.
Fal. Mony is a good souldier sir, and will on.
560 For. Ifaith sir, and I haue a bag here,
Would you wood helpe me to beare it.
Fal. O Lord, would I could tell how to deserue
To be your porter.
For. That may you easily sir Iohn: I haue an ear-
565 Sute to you. But good sir Iohn when I haue (nest
Told you my griefe, cast one eie of your owne
Estate, since your selfe knew what tis to be
Such an offender.
Fal. Verie well sir, proceed.
570 For. Sir I am deeply in loue with one Fords wife
Of this Towne. Now sir Iohn you are a gentleman
Of good discoursing, well beloued among Ladies,
A man of such parts that might win 20. such as she.
Fal. O good sir. (loue
575 For. Nay beleue it sir Iohn, for tis time. Now my
Is so grounded vpon her, that without her loue
I shall hardly liue.
Fal. Haue you importuned her by any means?
Ford. No neuer Sir.

Fal. Of

T II.ii.151
T II.ii.152

T II.ii.208-211

T II.ii.214-215

A pleasant Comedie, of

- 580 ■ Fal. Of what qualitie is your loue then?
■ Ford. Ifaith sir, like a faire house set vpon
Another mans foundation. (me? <
- Fal. And to what end haue you vnfolded this to
■ For. O sir, when I haue told you that, I told you <
585 For she sir stands so pure in the firme state (all:
Of her honestie, that she is too bright to be looked <
Against: Now could I come against her <
With some detectiō, I should sooner perswade her <
From her marriage vow, and a hundred such nice <
590 Tearmes that sheele stand vpon.
- Fal. Why would it apply well to the veruensie
■ of your affection, (ioy? <
That another should possesse what you would en- T II.ii. 221-223
■ Meethinks you prescribe verie proposterously I
595 ■ To your selfe.
- For. No sir, for by that meanes should I be cer-
taine of that which I now misdoubt.
- Fal. Well M. Brooke, Ile first make bold with your
Next, giue me your hand. Lastly, you shall (mony, <
- 600 ■ And you will, enioy Fords wife.
- For. O good sir.
- Fal. M. Brooke, I say you shall.
- Ford. Want no mony Syr Iohn, you shall want
- Fal. Want no Misteris Ford M. Brooke, (none.
- 605 You shall want none. Euen as you came to me, <
Her spokes mate, her go between parted from me:
I may tell you M. Brooke, I am to meet her T II.ii. 241
Between 8. and 9. for at that time the Iealous
Cuckally knaue her husband will be from home,
- 610 ■ Come to me soone at night, you shall know how
■ I speed M. Brooke.

Ford. <

the merry wiues of windsor.

- Ford. Sir do you know Ford? (him not, I
■ Fal. Hang him poore cuckally knaue, I know
■ And yet I wrong him to call him poore. For they
615 ■ Say the cuckally knaue hath legions of angels,
■ For the which his wife seemes to me well fauored,
■ And Ile vse her as the key of the cuckally knaues
Coffer, and there's my randeuowes.
■ Ford. Meethinkes sir it were very good that you
620 Ford, that you might shun him. (knew <
■ Fal. Hang him cuckally knaue, Ile stare him
Out of his wits, Ile keepe him in awe
■ With this my cudgell: It shall hang like a meator
Ore the wittolly knaues head, M. Brooke thou shalt
625 ■ See I will predominate ore the peasant,
■ And thou shalt lie with his wife. M. Brooke I <
■ Thou shalt know him for knaue and cuckold,
■ Come to me soone at night.
- Exit Falstaffe.
- 630 ■ Ford. What a dammed epicurian is this?
My wife hath sent for him, the plot is laid:
Page is an Asse, a foole. A secure Asse,
Ile sooner trust an Irishman with my
Aquauita bottle, Sir Hu our parson with my cheese,
635 ■ A theefe to walk my ambling gelding, thē my wife
■ With her selfe: then she plots, then she ruminates,
And what she thinkes in her hart she may effect,
Sheele breake her hart but she will effect it.
God be praised, God be praised for my iealousie:
640 Well Ile goe preuent him, the time drawes on,
Better an houre too soone, then a minit too late,
Gods my life cuckold, cuckold.

Exit Ford.

D

Enter

T II.ii.280

A pleasant Comedie, of

Enter the Doctor and his man.

- 645 Doc. Iohn Rugby goe looke met your eies ore de
And spie and you can see de parson. (stall,
Rug. Sir I cannot tell whether he be there or no,
But I see a great many comming.
Doc. Bully moy, mon rapier Iohn Rugabie, begar
650 Hearing be not so dead as I shall make him. de
Enter Shallow, Page, my Host, and Slender.
Pa. God saue you M. Doctor Cayus.
Shal. How do you M. Doctor? (thee,
Host. God blesse thee my bully doctor, God blesse
655 Doc. Vat be all you, Van to tree com for, a?
Host. Bully to see thee fight, to see thee foine, to
see thee trauerse, to see thee here, to see thee there,
to see thee passe the punto. The stock, the reuerse,
the distance: the montnce is a dead my francoyes?
660 Is a dead my Ethiopian? Ha what ses my gallon?
my escuolapis? Is a dead bullies taile, is a dead?
Doc. Begar de preest be a coward lack knaue,
He dare not shew his face.
Host. Thou art a castallian king vrinall.
665 Hector of Greece my boy.
Shal. He hath showne himselfe the wiser man
M. Doctor:
Sir Hugh is a Parson, and you a Phisition. You must
Goe with me M. Doctor.
670 Host. Pardon bully Iustice. A word monsire
Doc. Mockwater, vat me dat? (mockwater.
Host. That is in our English tongue, Vallor bully,
vallor.

Doc.

the merry wiues of windsor.

- 675 Doc. Begar den I haue as mockuater as de Inglish
Iack dog, knaue.
- Host. He will claperclaw thee titely bully.
- Doc. Claperclawe, vat be dat?
- Host. That is, he will make thee amends.
- Doc. Begar I do looke he shal claperclaw me dē,
- 680 And Ile prouoke him to do it, or let him wag:
And moreouer bully, but M. Page and M. Shallow,
And eke cauellira Slender, go you all ouer the fields
to Frogmore?
- Pa. Sir Hugh is there, is hee?
- 685 Host. He is there: goe see what humor hee is in,
Ile bring the Doctor about by the fields:
Will it do well?
- Shal. We will do it my host. Farwel M. Doctor.
- Exit all but the Host and Doctor.
- 690 Doc. Begar I will kill de cowardly Iack preest,
He is make a foole of moy.
- Host. Let him die, but first sheth your impatience,
Throw cold water on your collor, com go with me
Through the fields to Frogmore, and Ile bring thee
- 695 Where mistris An Page is a feasting at a farm house,
And thou shalt wear hir cried game: sed I wel bully
- Doc. Begar excellent vel: and if you speak pour
moy, I shall procure you de gesse of all de Gentelmē
mon patinces. I begar I sall.
- 700 Host. For the which Ile be thy aduersary
To misteris An Page: Sed I well?
- Doc. I begar excellent.
- Host. Let vs wag then.
- Doc. Alon, alon, alon.

705

Exit omnes.

D 2

Enter

A pleasant Comedie, of

Enter Syr Hugh and Simple.

(espie

Sir Hu. I pray you do so much as see if you can
 Doctor Cayus comming, and giue me intelligence,
 710 Or bring me vrde if you please now.

Sim. I will Sir.

Sir Hu. Ieshu ples mee, how my hart trobes, and
 And then she made him bedes of Roses, (trobes,
 And a thousand fragrant poses,
 715 To shallow riueres. Now so kad vdge me, my hart
 Swelles more and more, Mee thinkes I can cry
 Verie well. There dwelt a man in Babylon,
 To shallow riuers and to falles,
 Melodious birds sing Madrigalles.

Sim. Sir here is M. Page, and M. Shallow,
 720 Comming hither as fast as they can. (sword,

Sir Hu. Then it is verie necessary I put vp my sword,
 Pray giue me my cowne too, marke you.

Enter Page, Shallow, and Slender.

725 Pa. God saue you Sir Hugh.

Shal. God saue you M. parson. (now.

Sir Hu. God plesse you all from his mercies sake

Pa. What the word and the sword, doth that a-
 gree well?

730 Sir Hu. There is reasons and causes in all things,
 I warrant you now.

Pa. Well Sir Hugh, we are come to craue
 Your helpe and furtherance in a matter.

Sir Hu. What is I pray you?

735 Pa. Ifaith tis this sir Hugh. There is an auncient
 friend of ours, a man of verie good sort, so at oddes
 with

T III.i.22 <

T III.i.39

I
 M I

the merry wiues of windsor.

- with one patience, that I am sure you would hartily
griue to see him. Now Sir Hugh, you are a scholler
well red, and verie perswasieue, we would intreate
740 you to see if you could intreat him to patience. <
 Sir Hu. I pray you who is it? Let vs know that.
 Pa. I am shure you know him, tis Doctor Cayus. <
 Sir Hu. I had as leeuue you should tel me of a messe <
He is an arant lowsie beggerly knaue: (of poredge,
745 And he is a coward beside. <
 Pa. Why Ile laie my life tis the man
That he should fight withall.
 Enter Doctor and the Host, they
 offer to fight. <
750 Shal. Keep them asunder, take away their wea- <
 Host. Disarme, let them question. (pons. <
 Shal. Let them keep their limbs hole, and hack M
 our English.
 Doc. Hark van vrd in your eare. You be vn daga
755 And de Iack, coward preest. <
 Sir Hu. Harke you, let vs not be laughing stockes <
to other mens humors. By Ieshu I will knock your
 vrinalls about your knaues cockcomes, for missing
your meetings and appointments.
760 Doc. O Ieshu mine host of de garter, Iohn Rogoby, I <
Haue I not met him at de place he make apoint,
Haue I not? <
 Sir Hu. So kad vdge me, this is the pointment
 Witnes by my Host of the garter. (place,
765 Host. Peace I say gawle and gawlia, French and I
 Soule curer, and bodie curer. (Wealch,
 Doc. This is verie braue, excellent.
 Host. Peace I say, heare mine host of the garter,

A pleasant Comedie, of

- Am I wise? am I polliticke? am I Matchauil? I
- 770 Shall I lose my doctor? No, he giues me the motiōs I
- And the potions. Shall I lose my parson, my sir Hu?
- No, he giues me the prouerbes, and the nouerbes:
- Giue me thy hand terestiall,
- So giue me thy hand celestiall:
- 775 So boyes of art I haue deceiued you both,
- I haue directed you to wrong places,
- Your hearts are mightie, you skins are whole,
- Bardolfe laie their swords to pawne. Follow me lads
- Of peace, follow me. Ha, ra, la. Follow. Exit Host.
- 780 Shal. Afore God a mad host, come let vs goe.
- Doc. I begar haue you mocka may thus?
- I will be euen met you my Iack Host.
- Sir Hu. Giue me your hand Doctor Cayus,
- We be all friends:
- 785 But for mine hosts foolish knauery, let me alone.
- Doc. I dat be vell begar I be friends. (Exit omnes)
- Enter M. Foord.
- For. The time drawes on he shuld come to my
- Well wife, you had best worke closely, (house,
- 790 Or I am like to goe beyond your cunning:
- I now wil seek my guesse that comes to dinner,
- And in good time see where they all are come.
- Enter Shallow, Page, host, Slender, Doctor,
- and sir Hugh.
- 795 By my faith a knot well met: your welcome all.
- Pa. I thanke you good M. Ford.
- For. Welcome good M. Page,
- I would your daughter were here.
- Pa. I thank you sir, she is very well at home.
- 800 Slen. Father Page I hope I haue your consent I
- For Misteris Anne? Pa.

the merry wiues of windsor.

- Pa. You haue sonne Slender, but my wife here,
 Is altogether for maister Doctor.
 Doc. Begar I tanck her hartily:
 805 Host. But what say you to yong Maister Fenton?
 He capers, he daunces, he writes verses, he smelles
 All April and May: he wil cary it, he wil carit,
 Tis in his betmes he wil carite.
 Pa. My host not with my cōsent: the gentleman is
 810 Wilde, he knowes too much: If he take her,
 Let him take her simply: for my goods goes
 With my liking, and my liking goes not that way.
 For. Well I pray go home with me to dinner:
 Besides your cheare Ile shew you wonders: Ile
 815 Shew you a monster. You shall go with me
 M. Page, and so shall you sir Hugh, and you Maister
 Doctor. (two:
 S. Hu If there be one in the company, I shal make
 Doc. And dere be ven to, I sall make de tird:
 820 Sir Hu, In your teeth for shame, (fairer
 Shal: wel, wel, God be with you, we shall haue the
 Wooing at Maister Pages:
 Exit Shallow and Slender,
 Host Ile to my honest knight sir Iohn Falstaffe,
 825 And drinke Canary with him. Exit host.
 Ford. I may chance to make him drinke in pipe
 First come gentlemen. Exit omnes. (wine,
 Enter Mistresse Ford, with two of her men, and
 a great bucke busket.
 830 Mis. For. Sirrha, if your M. aske you whither
 You carry this basket, say to the Launderers,
 I hope you know how to bestow it?
 Ser. I warrant you misteris. Exit seruant.
 Mis. Ford.

] T III. iii. 223-224

A pleasant Comedie, of

835 Mis.For. Go get you in. Well sir Iohn,
I beleue I shall serue you such a trick,
You shall haue little mind to come againe.

Enter Sir Iohn.

840 Fal. Haue I caught my heauenlie Iewel?
Why now let me die. I haue liued long inough,
This is the happie houre I haue desired to see,
Now shall I sin in my wish,
I would thy husband were dead.

Mis.For. Why how then sir Iohn?

Fal. By the Lord, Ide make thee my Ladie.

845 Mis.For. Alas sir Iohn, I should be a verie simple
Ladie.

Fal. Goe too, I see how thy eie doth emulate
the Diamond.

850 And how the arched bent of thy brow
Would become the ship tire, the tire vellet,
Or anie Venetian attire, I see it. (better.

Mis.For. A plaine kercher sir Iohn, would fit me

Fal. By the Lord thou art a traitor to saie so:

855 What made me loue thee? Let that perswade thee
Ther's somewhat extraordinarie in thee: Goe too
I loue thee:

Mistris Ford, I cannot cog, I cannot prate, like one
Of these fellows that smels like Bucklers-berie,
In simple time, but I loue thee,

860 And none but thee.

Mis.For. Sir Iohn, I am afraid you loue misteris

Fal. I thou mightest as well saie (Page.

I loue to walke by the Counter gate,

VWhich is as hatefull to me

865 As the reake of a lime kill.

Enter

T III.iii.44

the merry wiues of windsor.

Enter Mistresse Page.

Mis.Pa. Mistresse Ford, Mis. Ford, where are you?

Mis.For. O Lord step aside good sir Iohn.

Falstaffe stands behind the aras.

870 How now Misteris Page whats the matter?

Mis.Pa. Why your husband woman is cōming,

With halfe Windsor at his heeles,

To looke for a gentleman that he ses

Is hid in his house: his wifes sweet hart.

875 Mis.For. Speak louder. But I hope tis not true

Misteris Page.

Mis.Pa. Tis too true woman. Therefore if you

Haue any here, away with him, or your vndone for

ouer.

880 Mis.For. Alas mistresse Page, what shall I do?

Here is a gentleman my friend, how shall I do?

Mis.Pa. Gode body woman, do not stand what
shal I do, and what shall I do. Better any shift, rather

885 then you shamed. Looke heere, here's a buck-bag-
ket, if hee be a man of any reasonable sise, heele in
here.

Mis.For. Alas I feare he is too big.

Fal. Let me see, let me see, Ile in, Ile in,

Follow your friends counsell. (Aside.)

890 Mis.Pa. Fie sir Iohn is this your loue? Go too.

Fal. I loue thee, and none but thee:

Helpe me to conuey me hence,

Ile neuer come here more.

E

Sir

A pleasant Comedie, of

- 895 Sir Iohn goes into the basket, they put cloathes ouer him,
the two men carries it away: Foord meetes it, and all
the rest, Page, Doctor, Priest, Slender, Shallow. <
Ford. Come pray along, you shall see all.
 How now who goes heare? whither goes this?
Whither goes it? set it downe. <
- 900 Mis.For. Now let it go, you had best meddle with
buck-washing. <
Ford. Buck, good buck, pray come along,
 Maister Page take my keyes: helpe to search. Good
 Sir Hugh pray come along, helpe a little, a little,
 Ile shew you all. <
- 905 Sir Hu. By Ieshu these are iealosies & distemperes.
Exit omnes. <
Mis.Pa. He is in a pittifull taking. <
Mis. I wonder what he thought M
 910 Whē my husband bad them set downe the basket.
Mis.Pa. Hang him dishonest slaue, we cannot vse
Him bad inough. This is excellent for your
 Husbands iealousie.] T IV.ii.95-96
- 915 Mi.For. Alas poore soule it grieues me at the hart,
 But this will be a meanes to make him cease
 His iealous fits, if Falstaffes loue increase. <
Mis.Pa. Nay we will send to Falstaffe once again,
 Tis great pittie we should leaue him:
 What wiues may be merry, and yet honest too.] T IV.ii.98-100
- 920 Mi.For. Shall we be cōdemnd because we laugh?
 Tis old, but true: still sowes eate all the draffe.
Enter all.
Mis.Pa. Here comes your husband, stand aside.
For. I can find no body within, it may be he lied.
 925 Mis.Pa. Did you heare that? Mis. For. I

the merry wiues of windsor.

Mis. For. I, I, peace.

For. Well Ile not let it go so, yet Ile trie further.

S. Hu. By Ieshu if there be anybody in the kitchin
Or the cuberts, or the presse, or the buttery,

930 I am an arrant Iew: Now God plesse me:

You serue me well, do you not?

Pa. Fie M. Ford you are too blame:

Mis. Pa. Ifaith tis not well M. Ford to suspect
Her thus without cause.

935 Doc. No by my trot it be no vell:

For. Wel I pray bear with me, M. Page pardō me.

I suffer for it, I suffer for it: (now:

Sir Hu. You suffer for a bad conscience looke you

940 Ford. Well I pray no more, another time Ile tell
you all:

The mean time go dine with me, pardō me wife,

I am sorie. M. Page pray goe in to dinner,

Another time Ile tell you all.

945 Pa: Wel let it be so, and to morrow I inuite you all

To my house to dinner: and in the morning weelee

A birding, I haue an excellent Hauke for the bush.

Ford: Let it be so: Come M. Page, come wife:

I pray you come in all, your welcome, pray come

950 Sir Hu: By so kad vdgme, M. Fordes is (in.
Not in his right wittes:

Exit omnes:

Enter Sir Iohn Falstaffe.

Fal: Bardolfe brew me a pottle sack presently:

Bar: With Egges sir?

955 Fal: Simply of it selfe, Ile none of these pullets
In my drinke: goe make haste. (sperme

Haue I liued to be carried in a basket

E 2

And

M T III.iii.192

T III.v.28-31

A pleasant Comedie, of

- 960 and throwme into the Thames like a barow of But-
chers offoll. Well, and I be serued such another
tricke, Ile giue them leaue to take out my braines
and butter them, and giue them to a dog for a new-
yeares gift. Sblood, the rogues slided me in with as
little remorse as if they had gone to drowne a blind
bitches puppies in the litter: and they might know
965 by my sise I haue a kind of alacritie in sinking: and
the bottom had bin as deep as hell I should downe.
I had bene drowned, but that the shore was sheluie
and somewhat shallowe: a death that I abhorre.
For you know the water swelles a man: and what a
970 thing should I haue bene whē I had bene swelled?
By the Lord a mountaine of money. Now is the
Sacke brewed?
Bar. I sir, there's a woman below would speake
with you.
975 Fal. Bid her come vp. Let me put some Sacke
among this cold water, for my belly is as cold as if I
had swallowed snow-balles for pilles.
Enter Mistresse Quickly.
Now whats the newes with you?
980 Quic. I come from misteris Ford forsooth.
Fal. Misteris Ford, I haue had Ford inough,
I haue bene throwne into the Ford, my belly is full
Of Ford: she hath tickled mee.
Quic. O Lord sir, she is the sorrowfullest woman
985 that her seruants mistooke, that euer liued. And sir,
she would desire you of all loues you will meet her
once againe, to morrow sir, betweene ten and ele-
uen, and she hopes to make amends for all.
Fal. Ten, and eleuen, saiest thou?

Quic. I

T III.v. 50

the merry wiues of windsor.

- 990 Quic. I forsooth.
Fal. Well, tell her Ile meet her. Let her but think
 Of mans frailtie: Let her iudge what man is,
 And then thinke of me. And so farwell.] I
Quic. Youle not faile sir?
- 995 Exit mistresse Quickly.
Fal. I will not faile. Commend me to her.
 I wonder I heare not of M. Brooke, I like his
 Mony well. By the masse here he is. <<
Enter Brooke.
- 1000 For. God saue you sir.
Fal. Welcome good M. Brooke. You come to
 know how matters goes. I
Ford. Thats my comming indeed sir Iohn.
Fal. M. Brooke I will not lie to you sir,
 1005 I was there at my appointed time.
For. And how sped you sir?
Fal. Verie ilfauouredly sir.
For. Why sir, did she change her determination?
Fal. No M. Brooke, but you shall heare. After we
 1010 had kissed and imbraced, and as it were euen amid
 the prologue of our incounter, who should come,
 but the iealous knaue her husband, and a rabble of
 his companions at his heeles, thither prouoked and
 instigated by his distemper. And what to do thinke
 1015 you? to search for his wiues loue. Euen so, plainly
 so.] I
For. While ye were there?
Fal. Whilst I was there.
For. And did he search and could not find you?
 1020 Fal. You shall heare sir, as God would haue it,
 A little before comes me one Pages wife,

A pleasant Comedie, of

Giues her intelligence of her husbands

Approach: and by her inuention, and Fords wiues

Distraction, conueyd me into a buck-basket.

1025 Ford. A buck basket!

Fal. By the Lord a buck-basket, rammed me in
With foule shirts, stokins, greasie napkins,
That M. Brooke, there was a compound of the most
Villanous smel, that euer offended nostrill.

1030 Ile tell you M. Brooke, by the Lord for your sake
I suffered three egregious deaths: First to be

Crammed like a good bilbo, in the circomference

Of a pack, Hilt to point, heele to head: and then to

Be stewed in my owne grease like a Dutch dish:

1035 A man of my kidney; by the Lord it was maruell I
Escaped suffication; and in the heat of all this,

To be throwne into Thames like a horshoo hot:

Maister Brooke, thinke of that hissing heate, Maister
Brooke.

1040 Ford. Well sir then my shute is void?

Youle vndertake it no more?

Fal. M. Brooke, Ile be throwne into Etna

As I haue bene in the Thames,

Ere I thus leaue her: I haue receiued

1045 Another appointment of meeting,

Between ten and eleuen is the houre.

Ford: Why sir, tis almost ten alreadie:

Fal: Is it? why then will I addresse my selfe

For my appointment: M. Brooke come to me soone

1050 At night, and you shall know how I speed,

And the end shall be, you shall enioy her loue:

You shall cuckold Foord: Come to mee soone at

at night.

Exit Falstaffe.

Ford

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< T III.v. 109

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the merry wiues of windsor.

- 1055 For. Is this a dreame? Is it a vision?
Maister Ford, maister Ford, awake maister Ford,
 There is a hole made in your best coat M. Ford,
And a man shall not only endure this wrong,
But shall stand vnder the taunt of names,
 1060 Lucifer is a good name, Barbason good: good
Diuels names: But cuckold, wittold, godeso
 The diuel himselfe hath not such a name:
 And they may hang hats here, and napkins here
 Vpon my hornes: Well Ile home, I ferit him,
 And vnlesse the diuel himselfe should aide him,
 1065 Ile search vnpossible places: Ile about it,
 Least I repent too late:

Exit omnes.

Enter M. Fenton, Page, and mistresse

Quickly.

(resolute,

- 1070 Fen: Tell me sweet Nan, how doest thou yet
 Shall foolish Slender haue thee to his wife?
 Or one as wise as he, the learned Doctor?
 Shall such as they enioy thy maiden hart?
 Thou knowst that I haue alwaies loued thee deare,
 1075 And thou hast oft times swore the like to me.
An: Good M. Fenton, you may assure your selfe
 My hart is settled vpon none but you,
 Tis as my father and mother please:
 Get their consent, you quickly shall haue mine.
 1080 Fen: Thy father thinks I loue thee for his wealth,
 Tho I must needs confesse at first that drew me,
 But since thy vertues wiped that trash away,
 I loue thee Nan, and so deare is it set,
 That whilst I liue, I nere shall thee forget.

Quic: Godes

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T II.ii. 271-277<

A pleasant Comedie, of

- 1085 Godes pitie here comes her father.
Enter M. Page his wife, M. Shallow, and Slender.
Pa. M. Fenton I pray what make you here?
 You know my answere sir, shees not for you:
Knowing my vow, to blame to vse me thus.
- 1090 Fen. But heare me speake sir.
Pa. Pray sir get you gon: Come hither daughter,
 Sonne Slender let me speak with you. (they whisper.
Quic. Speake to Misteris Page.
Fen. Pray misteris Page let me haue your cōsent.
 1095 Mis.Pa. Ifaith M. Fento tis as my husband please.
 For my part Ile neither hinder you, nor further
Quic. How say you this was my doings? (you.
 I bid you speake to misteris Page.
Fen. Here nurse, theres a brace of angels to drink,
 1100 Worke what thou canst for me, farwell. (Exit Fen.
Quic. By my troth so I will, good hart. (Slēder
Pa. Come wife, you an I will in, weeles leaue M.
 And my daughter to talke together. M. Shallow,
 You may stay sir if you please.
- 1105 Exit Page and his wife.
Shal. Mary I thanke you for that:
 To her cousin, to her.
Slen. Ifaith I know not what to say.
An. Now M. Slender, whats your will? (An,
 1110 Slen. Godeso theres a Iest indeed: why misteris
 I neuer made wil yet: I thāk God I am wise inough
Shal. Fie cusse fie, thou art not right, (for that.
 O thou hadst a father.
Slen. I had a father misteris Anne, good vncle
 1115 Tell the Iest how my father stole the goose out of
 The henloft. All this is nought, harke you mistresse
Anne. Shal.

T III.iv.75

T III.iv.51

T III.iv.36

T III.iv.53-59

T III.iv.36-41

the merry wiues of windsor.

- 1120 Shal. He will make you ioynter of three hundred pound a yeare, he shall make you a Gentlewoman.
- 1125 Slend. I be God that I vill, come cut and long taile, as good as any is in Glostershire, vnder the degree of a Squire.
- 1125 An. O God how many grosse faults are hid, And couered in three hundred pound a yeare? Well M. Slender, within a day or two Ile tell you more.
- 1130 Slend. I thanke you good misteris Anne, vncke I shall haue her.
- 1135 Quic. M. Shallow, M. Page would pray you to come you, and you M. Slender, and you mistris An.
- 1140 Slend. Well Nurse, if youle speake for me, Ile giue you more then Ile talke of.
- 1145 Quic. Indeed I will, Ile speake what I can for you, But specially for M. Fenton: But specially of all for my Maister.
- 1150 And indeed I will do what I can for them all three.
- 1155 Exit omnes but Quickly.
- 1160 Quic. Indeed I will, Ile speake what I can for you, But specially for M. Fenton: But specially of all for my Maister.
- 1165 And indeed I will do what I can for them all three.
- 1170 Exit.
- 1175 Enter misteris Ford and her two men.
- 1180 Mis.For. Do you heare? when your M. comes take vp this basket as you did before, and if your M. bid you set it downe, obey him.
- 1185 Ser. I will forsooth.
- 1190 Enter Syr Iohn.
- 1195 Mis.For. Syr Iohn welcome.
- 1200 Fal. What are you sure of your husband now?
- 1205 Mis.For. He is gone a birding sir Iohn, and I hope will not come home yet.
- T III. iv. 48-49
- T III. iv. 45-47
&
43-44
- T III. iv. 32-33
- T III. ii. 50-51
- T III. iv. 106
- T IV. ii. 101-103
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- F
- Enter

A pleasant Comedie, of

- 1150 Enter mistresse Page. <
- Gods body here is misteris Page,
Step behind the arras good sir Iohn. <
- He steps behind the arras. <
- 1155 Mis.Pa. Misteris Ford, why woman your husband
 is in his old vaine againe, hees comming to search
 for your sweet heart, but I am glad he is not here. <
- Mis.For. O God misteris Page the knight is here, <
- What shall I do? T IV.ii.50
- Mis.Pa. Why then you'r vndone woman, vnles
 1160 you make some meanes to shift him away. <
- Mis.For. Alas I know no meanes, vnlesse <
- we put him in the basket againe. <
- Fal. No Ile come no more in the basket, <
- Ile creep vp into the chimney. (ling peeces. <
- 1165 Mis.For. There they vse to discharge their Fow- <
- Fal. Why then Ile goe out of doores. <
- Mi.Pa. Then your vndone, your but a dead man. T IV.ii.40
- Fal. For Gods sake devise any extremitie,] T IV.ii.67-68
- Rather then a mischief.
- 1170 Mis.Pa. Alas I know not what meanes to make,
 If there were any womans apparell would fit him, <
- He might put on a gowne and a mufler,
- And so escape.
- Mi.For. Thats wel remembred, my maids Aunt
- 1175 Gillian of Brainford, hath a gowne aboue. <
- Mis.Pa. And she is altogether as fat as he.
- Mis.For. I that will serue him of my word. M T IV.ii.71
- Mis.Pa. Come goe with me sir Iohn, Ile helpe to
dresse you. <
- 1180 Fal. Come for God sake, any thing.
- Exit Mis.Page, & Sir Iohn. <
- Enter

the merry wiues of windsor.

Enter M. Ford, Page, Priest, Shallow, the two men
carries the basket, and Ford meets it.

1185 For. Come along I pray, you shal know the cause,
How now whither goe you? Ha whither go you?
Set downe the basket you ssaue,
You panderly rogue set it downe. (thus?

T III.iii.145-146

Mis.For. What is the reason that you vse me
For. Come hither set downe the basket,

1190 Misteris Ford the modest woman,
Misteris Ford the vertuous woman,
She that hath the iealous foole to her husband,
I mistrust you without cause do I not?

Mis.For. I Gods my record do you. And if
1195 you mistrust me in any ill sort.

For. Well sed brazen face, hold it out,
You youth in a basket, come out here,
Pull out the cloathes, search. (cloathes?

Hu. Ieshu plesse me, will you pull vp your wiues
1200 Pa. Fie M. Ford you are not to go abroad if you
be in these fits.

Sir Hu. By so kad vdge me, tis verie necessarie
He were put in pethlem.

For. M. Page, as I am an honest man M. Page,
1205 There was one conueyd out of my house here ye-
sterday out of this basket, why may he not be here
now?

Mi.For. Come mistris Page, bring the old womā
For. Old woman, what old woman? (downe.

1210 Mi.For. Why my maidens Ant, Gilliā of Brainford.
A witch, haue I not forewarned her my house,
Alas we are simple we, we know not what

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Is

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IT IV.ii.112 <
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M <<
I

A pleasant Comedie, of

- Is brought to passe vnder the colour of fortune-
Telling. Come downe you witch, come downe.
- 1215 Enter Falstaffe disguised like an old woman, and mi-
steris Page with him, Ford beates him, and hee
runnes away.
Away you witch get you gone. (indeed,
Sir Hu. By Ieshu I verily thinke she is a witch
1220 I espied vnder her mufler a great beard.
Ford. Pray come helpe me to search, pray now.
Pa. Come weele go for his minds sake.
Exit omnes.
Mi.For. By my troth he beat him most extreemly.
1225 Mi.Pa. I am glad of it, what shall we proceed any
further?
Mi.For. No faith, now if you will let vs tell our
husbands of it. For mine I am sure hath almost fret-
ted himselfe to death.
1230 Mi.Pa. Content, come weele goe tell them all,
And as they agree, so will we proceed. Exit both.
Enter Host and Bardolfe.
Bar. Syr heere be three Gentlemen come from
the Duke the Stanger sir, would haue your horse.
1235 Host. The Duke, what Duke? let me speake with
the Gentlemen, do they speake English?
Bar. Ile call them to you sir.
Host. No Bardolfe, let them alone, Ile sauce them:
They haue had my house a weeke at command,
1240 I haue turned away my other guesse,
They shall haue my horses Bardolfe,
They must come off, Ile sawce them. Exit omnes.
Enter Ford, Page, their wiues, Shallow, and Slen-
der. Syr Hu.
Ford.

the merry wiues of windsor.

- 1245 Ford. Well wife, heere take my hand, vpon my
soule I loue thee dearer then I do my life, and ioy I
hmuue so true and constant wife, my iealousie shall
neuer more offend thee.
- 1250 Mi.For. Sir I am glad, & that which I haue done,
Was nothing else but mirth and modestie.
- Pa. I misteris Ford, Falstaffe hath all the grieffe,
And in this knauerie my wife was the chiefe.
- Mi.Pa. No knauery husband, it was honest mirth.
- Hi. Indeed it was good pastimes & merriments.
- 1255 Mis.For. But sweete heart shall wee leaue olde
Falstaffe so?
- Mis.Pa. O by no meanes, send to him againe.
- Pa. I do not thinke heelee come being so much
deceiued.
- 1260 For. Let me alone, Ile to him once againe like
Brooke, and know his mind whether heelee come
or not. (come.
- Pa. There must be some plot laide, or heele not
- Mis.Pa. Let vs alone for that. Heare my deuice.
- 1265 Oft haue you heard since Horne the hunter dyed,
That women to affright their litle children,
Ses that he walkes in shape of a great stagge.
Now for that Falstaffe hath bene so deceiued,
As that he dares not venture to the house,
- 1270 Weele send him word to meet vs in the field,
Disguised like Horne, with huge horns on his head,
The houre shalbe iust betweene twelue and one,
And at that time we will meet him both:
Then would I haue you present there at hand,
- 1275 With litle boyes disguised and dressed like Fayries,
For to affright fat Falstaffe in the woods.

] T IV. iv. 18-19

] T IV. iv. 76-77

A pleasant Comedie, of

- And then to make a period to the Iest,
Tell Falstaffe all, I thinke this will do best.
- 1280 Pa. Tis excellent, and my daughter Anne,
Shall like a litle Fayrie be disguised.
- Mis.Pa. And in that Maske Ile make the Doctor
steale my daughter An, & ere my husband knowes
it, to carrie her to Church, and marrie her. (boyes?)
- 1285 Mis.For. But who will buy the silkes to tyre the
Pa. That will I do, and in a robe of white
Ile cloath my daughter, and aduertise Slender
To know her by that signe, and steale her thence,
And vnknowne to my wife, shall marrie her.
- 1290 Hu. So kad vdge me the deuises is excellent.
I will also be there, and be like a Iackanapes,
And pinch him most cruelly for his lecheries.
- Mis.Pa. Why then we are reuenged sufficiently.
First he was carried and throwne in the Thames,
Next beaten well, I am sure youle witnes that.
- 1295 Mi.For. Ile lay my life this makes him nothing fat.
Pa. Well lets about this stratagem, I long
To see deceit deceiued, and wrong haue wrong.
- For. Well send to Falstaffe, and if he come thither,
Twill make vs smile and laugh one moneth togi-
ther.
- 1300 Exit omnes.
Enter Host and Simple. (skin?)
- Host. What would thou haue boore, what thick-
Speake, breath, discus, short, quick, briefe, snap.
- Sim. Sir, I am sent frō my M. to sir Iohn Falstaffe.
- 1305 Host. Sir Iohn, theres his Castle, his standing bed,
his trundle bed, his chamber is painted about with
the story of the prodigall, fresh and new, go knock,
heelee speak like an Antripophiginian to thee:
Knocke

T IV. iv. 72

I T IV. iv. 68

M] T IV. iv. 21

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I

the merry wiues of windsor.

- Knock I say.
- 1310 Sim. Sir I should speak with an old woman that I <
went vp into his chamber.
- Host. An old woman, the knight may be robbed,
Ile call bully knight, bully sir Iohn. Speake from thy <
lungs military: it is thine host, thy Ephesian calls.
- 1315 Fal. Now mine Host.
Host: Here is a Bohemian tarter bully, tarries the
comming downe of the fat woman: Let her descēd
bully, let her descend, my chambers are honorable,
pah priuasie, fie.
- 1320 Fal. Indeed mine host there was afat woman with I
But she is gone. (me,
Enter Sir Iohn.
- Sim. Pray sir was it not the wise woman of Brain-
ford?
- 1325 Fal. Marry was it Musselshell, what would you? <
Sim. Marry sir my maister Slender sent me to her, <
To know whether one Nim that hath his chaine,
Cousoned him of it, or no. T IV. iv. 34
- Fal. I talked with the woman about it.
1330 Sim. And I pray sir what ses she? I
Fal. Marry she ses the very same man that
Beguiled maister Slender of his chaine,
Cousoned him of it. <
- Sim. May I be bolde to tell my maister so sir?
1335 Fal. I tike, who more bolde.
Sim. I thanke you sir, I shall make my maister a
glad man at these tydings, God be with you sir.
- Host. Thou art clarkly sir Iohn, thou art clarkly, I
Was there a wise woman with thee?
- 1340 Fal. Marry was there mine host, one that taught I
Me

A pleasant Comedie, of

Me more wit then I learned this 7. yeare,

And I paid nothing for it,

But was paid for my learning.

Enter Bardolfe.

1345 Bar. O Lord sir cousonage, plaine cousonage.

Host. Why man, where be my horses? where be the Germanes?

Bar. Rid away with your horses:

After I came beyond Maidenhead,

1350 They flung me in a slow of myre, & away they ran.

Enter Doctor.

Doc. Where be my Host de gartyre?

Host. O here sir in perplexitie.

Doc. I cannot tell vad be dad,

1355 But begar I will tell you van ting,

Dear be a Garmaine Duke come to de Court,

Has cosened all de host of Branford,

And Redding: begar I tell you for good will,

Ha, ha, mine Host, am I euen met you? Exit.

1360 Enter Sir Hugh.

Sir Hu. Where is mine Host of the gartyr?

Now my Host, I would desire you looke you now,

To haue a care of your entertainments,

For there is three sorts of cosen garmombles,

1365 Is cosen all the Host of Maidenhead & Readings,

Now you are an honest man, and a scuruy beggerly lowsie knaue beside:

And can point wrong places,

I tell you for good will, grate why mine Host. Exit.

1370 Host. I am cosened Hugh, and coy Bardolfe,

Sweet knight assist me, I am cosened. Exit.

Fal. Would all the worell were cosened for me,
For

<
<

< <

<

T IV.v.76-82

<

T IV.v.73

<

I

<

T IV.v.72-73

I

the merry wiues of windsor.

For I am cousoned and beaten too.

- Well, I neuer prospered since I forswore
 1375 My selfe at Primero: and my winde
 Were but long inough to say my prayers,
 Ide repent, now from whence come you?

Enter Mistresse Quickly.

- Quic. From the two parties forsooth.
 1380 Fal. The diuell take the one partie,
 And his dam the other,
 And theyle be both bestowed.
 I haue endured more for their sakes,
Then man is able to endure.

- 1385 Quic. O Lord sir, they are the sorowfulst creatures
 That euer liued: specially mistresse Ford,
 Her husband hath beaten her that she is all
Blacke and blew poore soule.

- Fal. What tellest me of blacke and blew,
 1390 I haue bene beaten all the colours in the Rainbow,
And in my escape like to a bene apprehended
For a witch of Brainford, and set in the stockes.

- Quic. Well sir, she is a sorrowfull woman,
 And I hope when you heare my errant,
 1395 Youle be perswaded to the contrarie.

Fal. Come goe with me into my chamber, Ile
 heare thee. Exit omnes.

Enter Host and Fenton.

- Host. Speake not to me sir, my mind is heauie,
 1400 I haue had a great losse.

Fen. Yet heare me, and as I am a gentleman,
 Ile giue you a hundred pound toward your losse.

Host. Well sir Ile heare you, and at least keep your
counsell.

- 1405 Fen. Thē thus my host. Tis not vnknown to you,
 G The

A pleasant Comedie, of

- The feruent loue I beare to young Anne Page,
 And mutally her loue againe to mee:
 But her father still against her choise,
 Doth seeke to marrie herto foolish Slender,
 1410 And in a robe of white this night disguised,
 Wherein fat Falstaffe had a mightie scare,
 Must Slender take her and carrie her to Catlen,
 And there vnknowne to any, marrie her.
 Now her mother still against that match,
 1415 And firme for Doctor Cayus, in a robe of red
 By her deuice, the Doctor must steale her thence,
 And she hath giuen consent to goe with him.
 Host. Now which means she to deceiue, father or
 mother?
 1420 Fen. Both my good Host, to go along with me.
 Now here it rests, that you would procure a priest,
 And tarrie readie at the appointment place,
 To giue our harts vnited matrimonie. (among thē?
 Host. But how will you come to steale her from
 1425 Fen. That hath sweet Nan and I agreed vpon,
 And by a robe of white, the which she weares,
 With ribones pendant flaring bout her head,
 I shalbe sure to know her, and conuey her thence,
 And bring her where the priest abides our cōing,
 1430 And by thy furtherance there be married.
 Host. Well, husband your deuice, Ile to the Vicar,
 Bring you the maide, you shall not lacke a Priest.
 Fen. So shall I euermore be bound vnto thee.
 Besides Ile alwaies be thy faithfull friend.
 1435 Exit omnes.
Enter sir Iohn with a Bucks head vpon him.
 Fal. This is the third time, well Ile venter,
 They say there is good luck in old numbers,
Ioue transformed himselfe into a bull, And

T IV.vi. 16-17

<

<

T IV.vi.42

] T V.i.1-4
 < <

the merry wiues of windsor.

- 1440 And I am here a Stag, and I thinke the fattest
 In all Windsor forrest: well I stand here
 For Horne the hunter, waiting my Does comming.
Enter mistris Page, and mistris Ford.
Mis.Pa. Sir Iohn, where are you?
 1445 Fal. Art thou come my doe? what and thou too?
 Welcome Ladies.
Mi.For. I I sir Iohn, I see you will not faile,
 Therefore you deserue far better then our loues,
 But it grieues me for your late crosses.
 1450 Fal. This makes amends for all.
 Come diuide me betweene you, each a hanch,
 For my horns Ile bequeath thē to your husbands,
 Do I speake like Horne the hunter, ha?
Mis.Pa. God forgiue me, what noise is this?
 1455 There is a noise of hornes, the two women run away.
Enter sir Hugh like a Satyre, and boyes drest like Fayries,
mistresse Quickly, like the Queene of Fayries: they
sing a song about him, and afterward speake.
 (groues,
 1460 Quic: You Fayries that do haunt these shady
 Looke round about the wood if you can espie
 A mortall that doth haunt our sacred round:
 If such a one you can espie, giue him his due,
 And leaue not till you pinch him blacke and blew:
 1465 Giue them their charge Puck ere they part away.
Sir Hu. Come hither Peane, go to the countrie
 houses,
 And when you finde a slut that lies a sleepe,
 And all her dishes foule, and roome vnswept,
 1470 With your long nailes pinch her till she crie,

A pleasant Comedie, of

And sweare to mend her sluttish huswiferie.

Fai. I warrant you I will performe your will.

Hu. Where is Pead? go you & see where Brokers
And Foxe-eyed Seriants with their mase, (sleep,

1475 Goe laie the Proctors in the street,
And pinch the lowsie Seriants face:
Spare none of these when they are a bed,
But such whose nose lookes plew and red.

Quic. Away begon, his mind fulfill,
1480 And looke that none of you stand still.
Some do that thing, some do this,
All do something, none amis.

Hir Hu. I smell a man of middle earth.

Fal. God blesse me from that wealch Fairie.

1485 Quic. Looke euery one about this round,
And if that any here be found,
For his presumption in this place,
Spare neither legge, arme, head, nor face.

Sir Hu. See I haue spied one by good luck,
1490 His bodie man, his head a buck.

Fal. God send me good fortune now, and I care

Quic. Go strait, and do as I commaund, (not.
And take a Taper in your hand,
And set it to his fingers endes,
1495 And if you see it him offends,
And that he starteth at the flame,
Then ~~is~~ he mortall, know his name:

If with an F. it doth begin,
Why then be shure he is full of sin.
1500 About it then, and know the truth,
Of this same metamorphised youth.

Sir Hu. Giue me the Tapers, I will try
And if that he loue venery.

They

the merry wiues of windsor.

1505 They put the Tapers to his fingers, and he starts.
Sir Hu. It is right indeed, he is full of lecheries
 and iniquitie.

Quic. A little distant from him stand,
 And euery one take hand in hand,
 And compasse him within a ring,
 1510 First pinch him well, and after sing.

Here they pinch him, and sing about him, & the Doc-
tor comes one way & steales away a boy in red. And
Slender another way he takes a boy in greene: And
Fenton steales misteris Anne, being in white. And
 1515 a noyse of hunting is made within: and all the Fai-
ries runne away. Falstaffe pulles of his buckshead,
and rises vp. And enters M. Page, M. Ford, and
their wiues, M. Shallow, Sir Hugh.

Fal. Horne the hunter quoth you: am I a ghost?
 1520 Sblood the Fairies hath made a ghost of me:
 What hunting at this time at night?
 Ile lay my life the mad Prince of Wales
 Is stealing his fathers Deare. How now who haue
 we here, what is all Windsor stirring? Are you there?

1525 Shal. God saue you sir Iohn Falstaffe.
Sir Hu. God plesse you sir Iohn, God plesse you.
Pa. Why how now sir Iohn, what a pair of horns
 in your hand?

Ford. Those hornes he ment to place vpon my
 1530 And M. Brooke and he should be the men: (head,
 Why how now sir Iohn, why are you thus amazed?
 We know the Fairies man that pinched you so,
 Your throwing in the Thames, your beating well,

A pleasant Comedie, of

- And whats to come sir Iohn, that can we tell.
- 1535 Mi.Pa. Sir Iohn tis thus, your dishonest meanes
To call our credits into question,
Did make vs vndertake to our best,
To turne your leaud lust to a merry Iest.
- 1540 Fal. Iest, tis well, haue I liued to these yeares
To be gulled now, now to be ridden?
Why then these were not Fairies?
Mis.Pa. No sir Iohn but boyes.
Fal. By the Lord I was twice or thrise in the
They were not, and yet the grosnesse (mind
1545 Of the fopperie perswaded me they were.
Well, and the fine wits of the Court heare this,
Thayle so whip me with their keene Iests,
That thayle melt me out like tallow,
Drop by drop out of my grease. Boyes!
- 1550 Sir Hu. I trust me boyes Sir Iohn: and I was
Also a Fairie that did helpe to pinch you.
Fal. I, tis well I am your May-pole,
You haue the start of mee,
Am I ridden too with a wealch goate?
1555 With a peece of toasted cheese?
Sir Hu. Butter is better then cheese sir Iohn,
You are all butter, butter.
For. There is a further matter yet sir Iohn,
There's 20. pound you borrowed of M. Brooke Sir
1560 And it must be paid to M. Ford Sir Iohn. (Iohn,
Mi.For. Nay husband let that go to make amēds,
Forgiue that sum, and so weelee all be friends.
For. Well here is my hand, all's forgiuen at last.
Fal. It hath cost me well,
1565 I haue bene well pinched and washed.

Enter

the merry wiues of windsor.

Enter the Doctor.

Mi. Pa. Now M. Doctor, sonne I hope you are.

Doct. Sonne begar you be de ville voman,
Begar I tinck to marry metres An, and begar
Tis a whorson garson Iack boy.

1570

Mis. Pa. How a boy?

Doct. I begar a boy.

Pa. Nay be not angry wife, Ile tell thee true,
It was my plot to deceiue thee so:

1575

And by this time your daughter's married
To M. Slender, and see where he comes.

Enter Slender.

Now sonne Slender,
Where's your bride?

1580

Slen. Bride, by Gods lyd I thinke theres neuer a
man in the worell hath that crosse fortune that I
haue: begod I could cry for verie anger.

Pa. Why whats the matter sonne Slender?

Slen. Sonne, nay by God I am none of your son.

1585

Pa. No, why so? (married.)

Slen. Why so God saue me, tis a boy that I haue

Pa. How a boy? why did you mistake the word?

Slen. No neither, for I came to her in red as you
bad me, and I cried mum, and hee cried budget, so
well as euer you heard, and I haue married him.

1590

Sir Hu. Ieshu M. Slender, cannot you see but marrie

Pa. O I am vext at hart, what shal I do? (boyes?)

Enter Fenton and Anne.

Mis. Pa. Here comes the man that hath deceiued
How now daughter, where haue you bin? (vs all:

1595

An. At Curch forsooth.

Pa. At Church, what haue you done there?

Fen.

] T V.v. 190-192

A pleasaunt Comedie, of

- Fen. Married to me, nay sir neuer storme,
Tis done sir now, and cannot be vndone.
- 1600 Ford: Ifaith M. Page neuer chafe your selfe,
She hath made her choise wheras her hart was fixt,
Then tis in vaine for you to storme or fret.
- Fal. I am glad yet that your arrow hath glanced
- 1605 Mi.For. Come mistris Page, Ile be bold with you,
Tis pitie to part loue that is so true.
- Mis.Pa. Altho that I haue missed in my intent,
Yet I am glad my husbands match was crossed,
Here M. Fenton, take her, and God giue thee ioy.
- 1610 Sir Hu: Come M. Page, you must needs agree.
- Fo. I yfaith sir come, you see your wife is wel plea-
Pa. I can not tel, and yet my hart's well eased, (sed:
And yet it doth me good the Doctor missed.
Come hither Fenton, and come hither daughter,
Go too you might haue stai'd for my good will,
- 1615 But since your choise is made of one you loue,
Here take her Fenton, & both happie proue. (dings.
- Sir Hu. I wil also dance & eat plums at your wed-
- Ford. All parties pleased, now let vs in to feast,
Andlaugh at Slender, and the Doctors ieast.
- 1620 He hath got the maiden, each of you a boy
To waite vpon you, so God giue you ioy,
And sir Iohn Falstaffe now shal you keep your word,
For Brooke this night shall lye with mistris Ford.

Exit omnes.

FINIS.

N O T E S

The main purpose of these Notes is to draw the reader's attention to cases in which the Q reporters, instead of reproducing the corresponding F passage, have drawn on other F passages, earlier or later than the one in question. That is to say, in the Notes I am assuming that the Q text is a memorial reconstruction of that contained in F, and I am principally concerned with the types of memorial corruption usually called anticipations, recollections, and conflations.

I have in general confined myself to cases which I have myself noticed in the course of my examination of Q and F, and which have not, so far as I know, been referred to by any previous critic. I have generally omitted cases which have been so referred to previously. I have occasionally permitted myself an exception to this rule — notably in a few cases of reportorial borrowings from passages in other plays which have been noted by previous workers in the field.

Q lines

- 3 Nere talke to me, Anticipation of F IV. vi. 1 ---
Master Fenton, talke not to mee,
... At that point Q has --- Speake
not to me sir,...
- 5 The Councell shall know it. Anticipation of I. i. 110 --- F
The Councell shall know this.
Q Well, the Councell shall know
it.
- 6 good maister Shallow be A conflation of elements from
perswaded by mee. F III. iv. 50 --- Good Maister
Shallow... and F I. i. 1 ---
Sir Hugh, perswade me not:...
- 8-9 Wil you not heare reasons The reporters may have had in
M. Slenders? / You should mind any or all of the follow-
heare reasons. ing passages: I. i. 196 ---
F I Sir, you shall finde me
reasonable; if it be so, / I
shall doe that that is reason.
I. i. 219 --- F I hope sir, I
will do as it shall become one
that / would doe reason. I. i.
225 --- F I will doe a greater
thing then that, vpon your /
request (Cosen) in any reason.
III. i. 45 --- F There is rea-
sons, and causes for it. Q
There is reasons and causes in
all things, / I warrant you now.
- 10-11 Tho he be a knight, he The reporters may have had a vague
shall not thinke to / memory of II. i. 155 --- F I doe
carrie it so away. not thinke the Knight / would of-
fer it:... They intermingled with
this a memory of III. ii. 62 ---
F he will carry 't, / he will carry
't, 'tis in his buttons, he will
carry 't. Q he will cary it, he
will carit, / Tis in his betnes he
will carite.
- 12 M. Page I will not be The reporters may have had in
wronged. mind any or all of the following
passages: I. i. 95 --- F He hath
wrong'd me (Master Page.) I. i.
98 --- F he hath wrong'd me, indeed

- he hath, at a / word he hath:
beleene me, Robert Shallow Es-
quire, saith / he is wronged.
I. i. 292 --- F I will not /
doe you that wrong. II. i. 117
--- hee hath wronged mee in some
humors:...
- 15-16 and if my daughter /
like him so well as I,
wee'l quickly haue it
a match:
- For the idea contained in this
(though there is no phraseo-
logical resemblance) the re-
porters were presumably indebted
to III. iv. 91 --- F My daughter
will I question how she loues you,
/ And as I finde her, so am I af-
fected:... For the word "match"
they may have been indebted to any
or all of the following passages:
II. ii. 267 --- F the / howre is
fixt, the match is made:... Q ...
the plot is laid:... III. ii.
52 --- F We haue linger'd about a
match betweene An / Page, and my
cozen Slender,... III. iv. 74
--- F She is no match for you. Q
shees not for you:... IV. vi.
27 --- F Her Mother, (euen strong
against that match / And firme for
Doctor Caius)... Q Now her mother
still against that match, / And
firme for Doctor Caius,...
- 17 In the meane time
let me intrest you
to sojourne
- It is possible that the reporters
had in mind King John, I. i. 101-
103, where the phrase "in the meane
time", and the words "treat", "time",
and "sojourn'd", all occur within
three lines.
- 30-31 you haue hurt my
keeper, / Kild my
dogs, stalne my
deere.
- F has --- you haue beaten my men,
kill'd my deere, and brake open my
Ledge. The reporters derived "keep-
er" from I. i. 106 -- F But not
kiss'd your Keepers daughter? Q But
not kissed your keepers daughter.
As for the association of dogs with
deer, they were probably indebted to
an anticipation of V. v. 229 --- F
When night-dogges run, all sorts of
Deere are chac'd.
- 36 the Councell shall
know it.
- A recollection of F I. i. 31 ---
The Councell shall heare it,... At
this point Q reads --- The Councell
shall know it.

- 44 cegging companions
Anticipation of III. i.
113 --- F this same scall
scur-/uy-cegging-companion
the Host of the Garter.
- 52 What say you to this
Pistoll?
The reporters repeat this
from Q line 47.
- 53 I combat craue
The reporters have recalled
1 Henry VI, IV. i. 84 ---
What makes you thus exclaim?
And wherefore crave you com-
bat?
- 54-55 I do retort the lie /
Even in thy gorge,
See Alfred Hart, Stelne and
Surreptitious Copies, p. 394.
The reporters have recalled
Henry V, II. i. 54, 75 ---
I do retort the solus in thy
bowels.....'Couple a gorge!'
That is the word.
- 70-71 is nothing but in the
Mistresse.
Anticipation of IV. v. 42 ---
F Why sir, they were nothing
but about Mistris Anne Page,...
- 71 my husbands name is
Foord
Anticipation of II. ii. 179
--- her / husbands name is
Ford.
- 72 I shall desire your more
acquaintance.
Anticipation of II. ii. 152
--- F Good Master Bryene, I
desire more acquaintance of
you.
- 74 With all my hart
Perhaps the reporters are re-
calling III. i. 115 --- F By
gar, with all my heart:...
and/or III. iii. 228 --- F Dat
is good by gar, withall my
heart.
- 77 With all my hart,
The reporters repeat from Q
line 74.
- 87 You say well
Anticipation of II. ii. 89 ---
F Why, you say well:...
- 112 Come, come Maister
Slender, dinner staies
for you.
The reporters have conflated
I. i. 252 --- F The dinner
attends you, Sir. and I. i.
282 --- F Come, gentle M.
Slender, come; we stay for you.

- 157-158 He make a good /
shift to Iiue.
- The reporters have recalled the word "shift" in I. iii. 34 --- F I must conicatch, I must shift. Q I must cheat, I must cony-catch.
- 174 Tis so indeed Nym,
thou hast hit it right.
- The reporters may have had in mind Henry V, II. i. 129 --- Nym, thou hast spoke the right.
- 175 I must cheat,
- Anticipation of I. iii. 68 --- F I will be Cheaters to / them both. Q and He be cheaters to / them both.
- 182 gibes
- The reporters may have recalled this word from either or both of the following passages: III. iii. 229 --- F A lowsie knaue, to haue his gibes, and his mockeries. IV. v. 73 --- F you are wise, and full / of gibes, and vlouting-stocks:...
- 185 intend....wife,
- These two words occur within a single clause in the F version of II. i. 163 --- if hee should intend this voyage toward my wife,... At that point Q has --- But should he loue my wife,...
- 196-197 Heree's a Letter
to her. Heeres
another to misteris
Page.
- The reporters conflate elements from I. iii. 66 and I. iii. 71. At I. iii. 66 we have --- F here's another letter to her:... Q Here is another Letter to her,... At I. iii. 71 we have --- F Gee, beare thou this Letter to Mistris Page;... Q Heere beare thou this Letter to mistresse Page....
- 216 Hence slaues, avant.
- The reporters are doubtless indebted to II. i. 155 --- F Hang 'em slaues:... The "slaues" there and in Q line 216 are the same people.

- 221-222 Teaster Ile haue in
pouch / When thou shalt
want,
- 223 I haue operations in my
head,
- 229 Ile peases him with
Iallowes,
- 234 And eke his bed defile.
- 235 Let vs about it then.
- 236 sir Corporall Nym troope
on.
- 239 M. Slender is your Masters
name say you?
- 245 you say well.
- 250-251 to speak to misteris Anne
concerning him: / I pro-
mise you my M. hath a great
affectioned mind / to mis-
tresse Anne himselfe.
- The reporters may have had
in mind II. ii. 239 --- F
Want no money (Sir Iohn) you
shall want none. Q Want no
mony Syr Iohn, you shall
want none.
- The reporters are doubtless
indebted to either or both
of the following passages:
I. i. 116 --- F I haue mat-
ter in my head against you,
Q I haue matter in my head
against you... II. i. 139
--- F thou hast some
crochets in thy head,...
- Anticipation of I. iii. 98
--- F I will possesse him
with yellow-/nesse,...
- From II. ii. 269-270 ---
F my / bed shall be
abus'd,...
- From IV. iv. 80 --- F
Let vs about it,...
- Probably an inexact anti-
cipation of II. i. 114 ---
F Away sir Corporall Nim:
Q Away sir Corporall Nym.
- The reporters are almost
certainly indebted to a
memory of I. iv. 13-14 ---
F Peter Simple, you say
your / name is?
- Perhaps the reporters re-
membered II. ii. 89 --- F
Why, you say well:...
- The reporters would appear
to have conflated elements
from the following passages:
I. i. 206-207 --- F the
question is / concerning your
marriage. I. i. 213 --- F
But can you affection the
'o-man,... I. iv. 101-102
--- F my Master himselfe
is in loue with Mistris Anne
/ Page: but notwithstanding
that I know Anne mind,... III.
ii. 64 --- F Not by my consent

- I promise you. Q My host not with my cosent:...
- 262 Are you aised of that? From I. iv. 98 --- F Are you a-uis'd o' that?
- 264 he is such a honest man, The reporters were presumably indebted to I. iv. 71-73 --- F The yong man is an honest man. / What shall de honest man do in my Closset: dere / is no honest man dat shall come in my Closset.
- 264-266 and he should chance / To come home and finde a man here, we should / Have no who with him. The reporters have recalled I. iv. 3-5 --- F if he doe (I'faith) / and finde any body in the house; here will be an old / abusing of Gods patience, ...
- 270 step into the Counting-house, The reporters have anticipated IV. ii. 10-11 --- F Step into th' chamber, / Sir Iohn. Q Step behind the arras good sir Iohn.
- 281 Goe run vp Anticipation of IV. ii. 73-74 --- F run vp Sir Iohn. / Go, go, sweet Sir Iohn:... Q Come goe with me sir Iohn,...
- 291 Seruingman: The reporters presumably derived the word from III. i. 1-2 --- F good Master Slenders / seruing-man, and friend Simple by your name;...
- 306-307 tell your / Maister Ile doo what I can for him, The reporters were indebted to I. iv. 30-31 --- F Tell Master Parson Quene, I will doo what I can for your / Master:...
- 325-327 that thus he shootes / at my honestie? Well but that I knowe my owne heart, The reporters have extracted elements from II. i. 77-78 --- F it makes me almost / readie to wrangle with mine owne honesty:...
- 328 woolsack The reporters doubtless derived this from 1 Henry IV, II. iv. 148 --- How now, wool-sack! what mutter you?
- 329 He was neuer twice in my companie, The reporters have recalled II. i. 22 --- F why, hee hath not beene thrice In my Company:...
- 333-334 that I knew how to be reuenged of him. The reporters have recalled II. i. 25-26 --- F how shall / I be re- usng'd on him? for reueng'd I will be?

- 336-337 How now...., are you reading Loue Letters?
- 346-348 Ile match your letter iust with the like, / Line for line, word for word. Only the name / Of misteris Page, and misteris Foord disagrees:
- 350 Why this is right my letter.
- 352 Why what a bladder of iniquitie is this?
- 362 for Falstaffe loues thy wife:
- 363 When Pistoll lies do this.
- 398 paltry lying knaues,
- 408 Nay I do not mistrust my wife,
- The reporters doubtless had in mind II. i. 1 --- F What, haue [I] scap'd Loue-letters...
- The reporters have clearly been influenced by II. i. 61-63 --- F Did you euer heare the like? / Letter / for letter; but that the name of Page and Ford differs:
- The reporters have remembered the idea contained in II. i. 74-75 --- F Why this / is the very same: the very hand: the very words:...
- As Greg notices (Shakespeare's Merry Wives, p. 65), Falstaff compares himself to a bladder in 1 Henry IV, II. iv. 366 --- A plague of sighing and grief! it blows a man up like a bladder. The reporters may have remembered this and derived "bladder" therefrom. They probably derived "iniquitie" from the same scene in 1 Henry IV --- II. iv. 500 --- where we have Falstaff referred to as "that grey iniquity".
- From II. i. 122 --- F and Falstaffe loues / your wife:
- As Greg notices (Shakespeare's Merry Wives, p. 65), this remark does not occur in the F text of this play, but it is found in 2 Henry IV, V. iii. 124. The reporters doubtless drew on this latter passage.
- The reporters may conceivably have recalled II. i. 143, 151. In 143 F has "paltrie", and in 151 F has "this knaue".
- Anticipation of V. v. 129 --- F I will neuer mistrust my wife againe,...

421-422 Ford. Mine Host a the
garter: / Host. What
ses my bully rooke?

The corresponding F lines run:
Ford. Good mine Host o'th'Gar-
ter: a word with you. / Host.
What saist thou, my Bully-Rooke?
But the reporters have recalled
the wording, not of this, but of
I. iii. 1-3 --- F Fal. Mine
Host of the / Garter? / Ho. What
saies my Bully Rooke? Q Fal.
Mine Host of the Garter. / Host.
What ses my bully Rooke?

436 Sed I well bully Hector?

A recollection from I. iii. 12
--- F said I well (bully Hec-
tor?) Q Said I well, bully
Hector?

437-438 I baleene / The Dector
is no Iester,

The reporters are clearly in-
debted to II. i. 186-187 --- F
for / (baleene mee) I heare the
Parson is no Iester:...

488 filch

The word "filching" occurs, in
both F and Q, in I. iii. 26,
whence the reporters may have
derived it here.

489 you stand vpon your
honor,

Derived from II. ii. 18-19,
where both F and Q have these
same words.

501-502 heeres none but my owne
houehold.

The corresponding passage in
F reads --- I warrant thee,
no-bodie heeres: mine owne
people, mine owne people. The
reporters have understood
"heeres" in a wrong sense, as
meaning "here is" (aural error).
In addition, it should be noted
that the reporters have con-
fused this F passage with a much
later one, viz. IV. ii. 14 ---
F Why none but mine owne people.
It is from the later passage
that they derived the words
"none but".

507-508 she hath sent me to you
to let you / Vnderstand
she hath receiued your
Letter,

The corresponding passage in F
reads --- Marry, she hath re-
ceiu'd your Letter:... The re-
porters have conflated this with
II. ii. 155 --- F for I must
let you vnderstand,...

511-512 and as they say, she is
not the first / Hath bene
led in a fool's paradise.

The reporters have borrowed
from Romeo and Juliet, II. iv.
174-176 --- But first let me
tell ye, if ye should lead her
into a fool's paradise, as
they say. See James D. Fitz-
gerald, Proceedings of the
Royal Philosophical Society
of Glasgow, XLVII, 146, and
Harry R. Hoppe, RES, XI, 157.

515-516 eight and nine [twice]

F has --- ten/Ten, and eleven
[twice] . The Q error is due
to confusion with III. v. 44
and 51, where F has --- eight/
Eight and nine. In F, in II.
ii. and III. v., two definite
appointments between Falstaff
and Mistress Ford are arranged
by Mistress Quickly. That in
II. ii. is for between ten and
eleven; that in III. v. is for
between eight and nine. The Q
reporters confuse the two ap-
pointments, here and elsewhere.
It is manifestly a matter of
memorial confusion, and we need
not mention the other cases of
this confusion.

517 then her husband goes a
birding,

From III. v. 42-43 --- F
her husband goes this /
morning a birding;...

520-521 Nay sir I have another
arant to do to you /
From misteris Page:

From III. iv. 108-109 --- F
Well, I must of another / er-
rand to Sir Iohn Falstaffe
from my two Mistresses:...

528 And let me tell you, shees
one that feares God,

The reporters are indebted to
a memory of II. ii. 92-93 ---
F and one (I tell / you) that
will not misse you morning nor
euening prayer,...

530 he is not halfe so
iealousie

Perhaps an inaccurate reminis-
cence of II. ii. 85 --- F
hee's a very iealousie-man;...

578 Have you importuned her
by any means?

The corresponding line in F
(II. ii. 199) runs --- Have
you importun'd her to such a
purpose? The reporters have
confused this with Romeo and

- Juliet, I. i. 151 --- Have you importuned him by any means?
See Harry R. Hoppe, RES, XI, 157.
- 585-586 For she sir stands so pure in the firme state / Of her honestie,
- 590 Tearmes that sheele stand vpon.
- 607 I may tell you M. Brooke, I am to meet her
- 609 Cuckally knaue
- her husband will be from home,
- 610 Come to me soone at night,
- 615 hath legions of angels,
- 618 and there's my randeuoes.
- The reporters are indebted to II. i. 208-209 --- F and stands so / firmly on his wines frailty; ...
- For "Tearmes" the reporters may have been indebted to a memory of II. ii. 19-20 --- F it is as much / as I can doe to keepe the termes of my honor precise: Q tis as much as I / can do to keep the termes of my honor precise...
- The reporters have recalled II. ii. 241 --- F I shall be with her (I may tell you)...
- The reporters may have derived this from II. ii. 249 --- F Hang him (poore Cuckoldly knaue) ... Q Hang him poore cuckally knaue,... But "cuckoldly knave" occurs quite frequently throughout the play.
- The reporters remembered II. ii. 83-84 --- F Master Ford her / husband will be from home:... Cf. also II. ii. 105 --- F her husband is sel-/dome from home,...
- The reporters have remembered II. ii. 261-262 --- F Come to / me soone at night: and/or II. ii. 264 --- F Come to me soone at night. Q Come to me soone at night.
- From I. iii. 52 --- F he hath a legend of Angels. Q She hath legians of angels.
- The reporters probably recalled one or both of the following passages in Henry V: II. i. 16 --- That is my rest, that is the rendezvous of it. V. i. 82 --- And there my rendezvous is quite cut off.

- 624 wittolly knaues
The reporters derive this from II. ii. 251 --- F wittolly-knaue Q cuckally knaue.
- 632 Page is an Asse, a
foele. A secure
Asse,
The reporters are indebted to II. i. 208 --- F Though Page be a secure foele,...
- 640-641 the time drawes en,
/ Better an houre too
soone,
The reporters anticipate V. iii. 22 --- F The houre drawes-on:...
- 649 mon rapier Iohn
Rugbye,
A recollection of I. iv. 67-68 --- F Rugby, my / Rapier. Q My Rapier Iohn Rugby. Cf. also I. iv. 122 --- F follow my heeles, Rugby. Q my Rapier Iohn Rugby, follow may.
- 666 He hath showne him-
selfe the wiser man
The corresponding F line (II. iii. 34) reads --- He is the wiser man (M. Docto) rhe... (sic). The reporters have confused this with II. iii. 49-50 --- F Sir Hugh hath showne himselfe a wise and / patient Churchman:...
- 682-683 go you all over the
fields / to Fresmore?
At the corresponding point F has --- goe / you through the Towne to Fresmore. (II. iii. 68-69). The reporters have substituted "the fields" for "the Towne" owing to anticipation of II. iii. 78-79, where F has --- gee about the fields with / mee through Fresmore,... At that later point Q (lines 693-694) has --- com go with me / Through the fields to Fresmore,... Here the Q construction is influenced by that of F II. iii. 68-69, quoted above. Thus we have a complex case of memorial confusion.
- 690 Begar I will kill de
cowardly Iack preest,
The reporters have extracted elements from II. iii. 28-29 --- F By gar, he is de Coward-Iack-Priest of de / verld: Q Begar de preest be a coward Iack knaue,...
- 708-709 I pray you do so much
as see if you can es-
pie / Doctor Gayus
(continued over)
At I. iv. 2-3 F has --- I pray thee goe to the Casement, and see if you can see my / Master, Master Doctor (continued over)

comming, and giue me
intelligence,

Caius comming:... The re-
porters, drawing on this, have
at the same time associated it
with III. v. 79-80 --- F comes
in one Mist. Page, giues in-
telligence of Ferds / approach:
... Q A little before comes me
one Pages wife, / Giues her
intelligence of her husbands /
Approach:...

728-729 doth that a-/gree well?

Perhaps a recollection of I. i.
17 --- F it agrees well pas-
sant:...

730 There is reasons and
causes in all things,

The reporters have probably
recalled Henry V, V. i. 3-4
--- There is occasions and
causes why and / wherefore
in all things:... Indeed this
seems almost certain.

738 Now Sir Hugh, you are a
scholler

From II. ii. 168 --- F Sir,
I heare you are a Scholler:...

744 He is an arant lowsie
beggerly knaue:

Again the reporters are in-
debted to Henry V, in which
the following passages should
be noted: IV. viii. 35-37 ---
Your Maiestie heare now, sau-
ing your Maiesties / Manhood,
what an arrant rascally, beg-
gerly Knaue / it is. V. i.
5-6 --- The rascally, scauld,
beggerly, lowsie / pragg
Knaue Pistell. V. i. 17-18
--- Amuchient Pistoll: you /
scuruie lowsie Knaue. See
Alfred Hart, Stolne and Sur-
reptitious Copies, p. 394.

755 And de Iack, coward
preest.

The reporters are indebted to
II. iii. 28-29 --- F By gar,
he is de Coward-Iack-Priest of
de world:... Q Begar de preest
be a coward Iack knaue,...

788 The time drawes on

Cf. note, above, on Q lines
640-641.

795 By my faith a knot well
met:

The reporters are clearly in-
debted to III. ii. 45-46 ---
F Well met Mr Ferd. / Trust
me, a good knotte;...

800	I hope I have your consent	Conceivably the reporters recalled III. ii. 64 --- F Not by my consent I promise you. Q My host not with my consent:...
802	You have some <u>Slender</u> , but my	The reporters are doubtless anticipating V. ii. 2 --- F Remember son <u>Slender</u> , my
814	Ile shew you wonders:	Inexact anticipation of V. i. 11 --- F and you shall see wonders.
830-831	Sirra, if your M. aske you whither / You carry this basket, say to the Launderers,	The reporters are indebted to the following two passages: III. iii. 140-141 --- F Carry them to the / Landresse in Datchet mead: III. iii. 145-147 --- F Whether beare / you this? / To the Landresse forsooth?
832	I hope you know how to bestow it?	The reporters have vaguely recalled IV. ii. 42-43 --- F How should / I bestow him?
835	I beleene I shall serue you such a trick,	The reporters are indebted to III. v. 6-7 --- F Wel, if I be seru'd such / another tricke,... Q Well, and I be serued such another / tricke,...
840	This is the happie houre I have desired to see,	The reporters have vaguely recollected I. iii. 19 --- F It as a life that I have desir'd: I will thrive.
857	Mistris <u>Ford</u> , I cannot cog, I cannot prate,	From III. iii. 44 --- F Mistris Ferd, I cannot cog, I cannot prate...
882-883	what / shal I do, and what shall I do.	From III. iii. 115 --- F What shall I do? Q Alas mistresse <u>Page</u> , what shall I do?
885	of any reasonable size,	The reporters may have derived "size" from III. v. 11 --- F and you may know by my size,... Q and they might know / by my size...

- 891 I loue thee, and none
but thee: From III. iii. 70 --- F
but I loue thee, none but
thee; Q but I loue thee,
/ And none but thee.
- 892 conuey me hence, From III. iii. 112 --- F
conuey, conuey him out...
- 897 Come pray along, you
shall see all. The corresponding F passage
reads --- pray you come nere:
if I suspect without cause,
/ Why then make sport at
me,... The reporters have
confused this with III.
iii. 160-161 --- F You
shall see / sport anon:...
The word "sport" constitu-
tes a link between the ear-
lier and later passages,
though it does not appear
in Q 897.
- 899 set it downe. From III. iii. 5 --- F
Heere, set it downe.
- 903 helpe to search. The reporters have anti-
cipated IV. ii. 154 --- F
Helpe to search my house
this one time:...
- 906 these are iealousies &
distempere. Conceivably the reporters
derived the word "distemp-
eres", by anticipation,
from III. iii. 205-206 ---
F I / wold not ha your
distemper in this kind,...
- 910 Whē my husband bad them
set downe the basket. The corresponding F pas-
sage reads (III. iii. 170-
171) --- when your / husband
askt who was in the basket?
The reporters have confused
this with two other passages
--- IV. ii. 102-103 and IV.
ii. 111. The former runs ---
F if hee bid you set / it
downe, obey him: Q and if
your M. / bid you set it
downe, obey him. The lat-
ter runs --- F Set downe the
basket... Q Set downe the
basket...

- 911-912 Hang him dishonest slaue,
we cannot vse / Him bad
inough.
- 931 You serue me well, do
you not?
- 933-934 to suspect / Her thus
without cause.
- 939-940 He tell / you all:
- 947-948 Come M. Page, come wife:
/ I pray you come in all,
- 986 she would desire you of
all loues
- 989 and Ten, and eleuen, saiest
994-996 thou?.....Yeule not faile
sir?...I will not faile.
Commend me to her.
- 1001-1002 to / know how matters goes.
- The reporters have conflated
two similar, though widely
separated, passages: II. i.
155 --- F Hang 'em slaues:
and IV. ii. 95-96 --- F Hang
him dishonest Varlet, We can-
not / misuse [him] enough:...
- From III. iii. 192 --- F You
vse me well, M. Ford? Do
you?
- The reporters were doubtless
indebted to either or both of
the following passages: III.
iii. 143-144 --- F if I sus-
pect without cause, / Why then
make sport at me,... IV. ii.
126-127 --- F I suspect with-
out cause / (Mistris) do I?
Q I mistrust you without cause
do I not?
- An anticipation of V. i. 22 ---
F He tell you all (Master
Broome):...
- The reporters are indebted to
III. iii. 215-217 --- F Come
wife, / come Mi. Page, I pray
you parden me. / Pray hartly
pardon me.
- The reporters have been in-
fluenced by a recollection of
II. ii. 105-107 --- F But /
Mistris Page would desire you
to send her your little / Page
of al loues:...
- Here the reporters have drawn
on a recollection of an ear-
lier passage, II. ii. 87-88,
where the two texts read as
follows: F Ten, and eleuen./
Woman, commend me to her, I will
not faile her. Q Well commend
me to thy mistris, tel her / I
will not faile her:...
- Anticipation of IV. v. 113 ---
F you shall heare how things
goe,...

- 1021 comes me The reporters were doubtless indebted for this construction to III. v. 68 --- F comes me in the instant of our encounter,...
- 1030-1031 He tell you M. Breake, by the Lord for your sake / I suffered three egregious deaths: The corresponding passage in F (III. v. 98-99) reads --- But marke the sequell / (Master Breome) I suffered the pangs of three seuerall deaths: ... The reporters have conflated this with III. v. 113-114 --- F I am sorry, that for my sake / you haue sufferd all this...
- 1032 Crammed like a good bilbo, in the The reporters doubtless derived "Crammed" from III. v. 89-90 --- F Being / thus cram'd in the Basket,...
- 1033-1034 and then to / Be stewed in my owne grease like a Dutch dish: The corresponding F passage (III. v. 103-105) reads --- And then to be steeped in like a strong distillation / with stinking Cleathes, that fretted in their owne / grease:... The reporters have conflated this with III. v. 108-109 --- F (when I was / more then halfe stew'd in grease (like a Dutch-dish)...
- 1036 Escaped suffocation; and in the heat of all this, Conceivably the reporters have conflated elements from III. v. 106 --- F that am as subiect to heate as butter;... and III. v. 114 --- F you haue sufferd all this.
- 1045 Another appointment of meeting, The reporters probably derived "appointment" from III. v. 122-123 --- F I will then addresse mee to my appointment: Q why then will I addresse my selfe / For my appointment:...
- 1049-1050 come to me soone / At night, and you shall know how I speed, The reporters are indebted to an earlier scene. At II. ii. 245-246 F has --- come / you to me at night, you shall

- know how I speed. The corresponding passage in Q (lines 610-611) run --- Come to me soone at night, you shall know how / I speed M. Brooke. Here, as also in Q lines 1049-1050, the reporters have imported the word "soone" from either or both of the following passages: II. ii. 261-262 --- F Come to / me soone at night:... II. ii. 264 --- F Come to me soone at night. Q Come to me soone at night.
- 1051 you shall enioy her loue: The reporters are doubtless indebted to II. ii. 235-236 --- F you shall, if / you will, enioy Fordis wife. Q you shall / And you will, enioy Fordis wife.
- 1058 But shall stand vnder the taunt of names, The reporters have anticipated elements in V. v. 138-139 --- F Haue I liu'd to stand at / the taunt of one that makes Fritters of English?
- 1070 sweet Nan, This phrase occurs in F at III. iv. 2, III. iv. 100, and IV. vi. 20. The reporters may have derived it from any or all of these places.
- 1074 Thou knowst that I haue alwaies leued thee deare, The reporters have anticipated elements in V. v. 113-114 --- F I will neuer take you for my Leue againe, / but I will alwayes count you my Deere.
- 1087 what make you here? Possibly an anticipation of IV. ii. 48-49 --- F But what / make you heere?
- 1090 But heare me speake sir. Possibly an anticipation of IV. vi. 3 --- F Yet heare me speake: Q Yet heare me,...
- 1108 Ifaith I know not what to say. The corresponding F passage (III. iv. 54-55) runs --- Now good Mistris / Anne. Instead of this, the reporters appear to have drawn on a memory of Romeo and Juliet, IV. v. 140 --- Faith, I know not what to say. See Harry R. Hoppe, RES, XI, 157.
- 1118-1122 He will make you icynter of three hun-/dred pound (continued over) The reporters have combined in their own way phrases extracted from the following F passages: III. iv. 33 --- (continued over)

a yeare, he shall make
you a Gentle-/woman. /
I be God that I vill,
come out and long /
taile, as good as any
is in Glostershire,

Lookes handsome in three
hundred pounds a yeare?
III. iv. 43-44 --- I that
I do, as well as I loue any
woman in / Gloucestershire.
III. iv. 45 --- He will
maintaine you like a
Gentlewoman.

1148 is gone a birding

From III. v. 118 --- F is
this morning gone a Birding:...

1152 Step behind the arras

The reporters have recalled
III. iii. 85-86 --- F I will
ensconce mee behinde / the
Arras.

1158 What shall I do?

Anticipation of IV. ii. 50
--- F What shall I do?

1159 Why then you'r vndone

The reporters have extracted
and re-combined two phrases
from IV. ii. 38-39 --- F
I am vndone, the Knight is
heere. / Why then you are
vtterly sham'd,...

1188 What is the reason that
you vse me thus?

The reporters have recalled
Hamlet, V. i. 312 --- What
is the reason that you use
me thus? See P. A. Daniel,
on p. xix of his intro-
duction to the Griggs fac-
simile of Q Merry Wives.

1221 Pray come helpe me to
search,

A recollection of IV. ii.
154 --- F Helpe to search
my house this one time:...

1253 Ne knauery husband, it
was honest mirth.

In using the words "knauery"
and "honest" in the same line
the reporters may have been
indebted to a memory of IV. iv.
81 --- F ferry honest knau-
eries.

1260-1262 Let me alone, Ile to him
once againe like / Broeke,
and knew his mind whether
heelee come / or not.

The reporters have conflated
elements derived from the fol-
lowing passages: IV. iv. 13-
15 --- Let our wines / Yet
once againe (to make vs pub-
like sport) / Appoint a meet-
ing with this old fat-fellow,
... IV. iv. 76-77 --- Nay,

- He to him againe in name of Brocme,
/ Hee'll tell me all his purposes: sure
hee'll come. IV. iv. 83 --- Send
quickly to Sir Iohn, to know his
mindet... (These three quotations
are all from F.)
- 1293-1294 First he was
carried and
throwne in the
Thames, / Next
beaten wall,
- The reporters have conflated elements
from the following passages: III. v.
4-6 --- F Hauē I liu'd to be / car-
ried in a Basket like a barrow of
butchers Offall? and / to be throwne
in the Thames? Q Hauē I liued to be
carried in a basket / and throwne into
the Thames like a barrow of But-/chers
offoll... IV. iv. 20-21 --- F You
say he has bin throwne in the Riuer:
and / has bin greuously peaten, as an
old o'mant...
- 1312 An old woman,
- At the corresponding point (IV. v.
13) F has --- Ha? A fat woman? For
this the reporters have substituted
a phrase derived from IV. v. 10 ---
F There's an alde woman, a fat woman...
Q Sir I should speak with an old
woman...
- 1328 Cousoned him of
it,
- Clearly an anticipation of IV. v. 34,
where both F and Q have the phrase.
- 1366-1367 and a scurvy
beg-/gerly lowsie
knaue beside:
- The reporters have recalled III. i.
63-64 --- F and hee is a knaue be-
sides: a / cowardly knaue,... But
they have also recalled the confla-
tion they made there (Q lines 744-
745) with passages in Henry V. See
the note, above, on Q line 744, and
see James D. Fitzgerald, Proceedings
of the Royal Philosophical Society
of Glasgow, XLVII, 154.
- 1368 And can point
wrong places,
- The reporters appear to have conflated
elements from the following passages:
III. i. 87-88 --- F haue I not at de /
place I did appoint? Q Hauē I not met
him at de place he make apoint,...
III. i. 102 --- F I haue directed you
to wrong places: Q I haue directed you
to wrong places,...

1385-1386 O Lord sir, they are
the sorowfulst creat-
ures / That euer
liued:

Here the reporters have
drawn on their own word-
ing at Q 984-985 --- O
Lord sir, she is the sor-
rowfullest woman / that
her seruants mistooke, that
euer liued.

1405 Tis not vnknown to
you,

Perhaps a reminiscence of
The Merchant of Venice, I.
i. 122 --- Tis not vn-
knowne to you Anthonio.
See Alfred Hart, Stelae
and Surreptitious Copies,
p. 393.

1408-1409 But her father still
against her choise, /
Doth seeke

The reporters probably had
in mind a mixture of the
following passages: III.
iv. 18-19 --- F Gentle M.
Fenton, / Yet seeke my
Fathers loue, still seeke
it sir,... III. iv. 31 ---
F I come to him. This is my
Fathers choise:... IV. vi.
26-28 --- F Now Sir, / Her
Mother, (euen streng against
that match / And firme for
Dector Caius)... Q Now her
mother still against that
match, / And firme for Dec-
tor Cayus,...

1410 in a robe of white

Probably derived from IV. iv.
72, where F has the identical
phrase. Cf. also the phrase
"all in white" in an F passage,
IV. vi. 35-37, which has a gen-
eral resemblance to Q 1408-
1413 --- F Her Father meanes
she shall be all in white; /
And in that habit, when Glend der
sees his time / To take her by
the hand, and bid her goe,...

1421 Now here it rests, that
you would procure a
priest,

The corresponding F passage
(IV. vi. 48) reads --- And
heere it rests, that you'll
procure the Vicar. The re-
porters derived their "Now"
from IV. vi. 34 --- F Now,
thus it rests,... And they
derived their "a priest" from
IV. vi. 52-53 --- F Ile to

- the Vicar, / Bring you the Maid,
you shall not lacke a Priest. Q
Ile to the Vicar, / Bring you the
maide, you shall not lacke a Priest.
- 1426-1427 And by a robe
of white, the
which she weares,
/ With ribones
pendant flar-
ing bout her
head,
Using the word "robe" in 1426, one
of the reporters has subconsciously
recalled "en-roab'd" in a somewhat
earlier F line --- IV. vi. 41; and,
as a result, Q 1426 is followed by
a verbally exact rendering of F IV.
vi. 42 --- F With Ribonds-pendant,
flaring 'bout her head;...
- 1428 comey her
thence,
At line 1416 Q has --- steale her
thence. The association of the two
words "steale" and "comey" may well
be a result of a recollection of I.
iii. 29-30 --- F Comay: the wise it
call: Steale? foh: a fico / for the
phrase.
- 1429 where the
priest abides
our cuming,
From IV. vi. 31 --- F where a Priest
attends...
- 1439 transformed
himselke into
a
Perhaps the reporters recalled "trans-
formed" from IV. v. 86-87 --- F if it
should come / to the eare of the Court,
how I haue beene transformed;... And
perhaps then their minds jumped for-
ward to V. v. 82, where F has the con-
struction "transforme me to a".
- 1441 In all Wind-
sor forrest:
The phrase "in Windsor Forrest" occurs
in F at IV. iv. 29.
- 1447-1448 I see you will
not faile, /
Therefore you
deserue far bet-
ter then our
loues,
The reporters have conflated elements
from the following two passages: II.
ii. 87-88 --- F Woman, commend me to /
her, I will not faile her. Q Well com-
mend me to thy mistris, tel her / I will
not faile her:... IV. ii. 2 --- F I
see you are obsequious in your loue,...
- 1449 crosses.
The reporters may have remembered the
word "crosse" in V. v. 36 --- F He
would neuer else crosse me thus.
- 1454 God forgiue me,
what noise is
this?
The reporters have separated out and re-
combined in their own way elements con-
tained in the corresponding F passage ---
V. v. 30-32 --- Alas, what noise? / Hea-
uen forgiue our sinnes. / What should
this be?

- 1461 round about The line as a whole has no parallel in F, but the phrase "round about" occurs in the F scene (V. v.) at lines 75 and 79.
- 1462 A mortall that doth
 haunt our sacred
 round: It looks as if the reporters remembered the word "sacred" in V. v. 57 --- F Strew good lucke (Ouphes) on euery sacred roome,... And it looks as if they had memorially associated this with a passage in IV. iv. where F has --- With rounds of waxen Tapers on their heads, (IV. iv. 51), and --- In their so sacred pathes, he dares to tread / In shape prophane. (IV. iv. 60-61). They would appear to have drawn on elements in these last two passages.
- 1463 If such a one you
 can espie, Perhaps recollected from III. iii. 109-110 --- F to serch for such / a one,...
- 1464 And leaue not till
 you pinch him blacke
 and blew: The reporters doubtless had a vague memory of a line in the corresponding scene in F, viz. V. v. 45 --- There pinch the Maids as blew as Bill-berry,... From this they extracted the words "pinch" and "blew". But they also recalled IV. v. 102-105, where the phrase "blacke(,) and blew" occurs twice in F (and in Q as well). Thus in Q 1464 we have a memorial conflation.
- 1465 Giue them their
 charge Puck ere they
 part away. The reporters have recalled something of III. iii. 6-7 --- F Giue your men the charge, we must be / briefe, ...
- 1491 God send me good
 fortune now, and I
 care not. The reporters have conflated elements recollected from two earlier passages in the play: III. iv. 27-28 --- F I care not for / that, but that I am affeard. III. iv. 101-102 --- F Now heauen send thee good fortune, a kinde / heart he hath:...

1492-1503

In his Shakespeare's Merry Wives, p. 90, Greg comments: "This is another passage, which it is impossible to ascribe to the reporter, but which differs entirely from the folio,...". I cannot agree that it is impossible to ascribe the Q passage to the reporter(s), for it is built around key words found in F:-

		Q	F	
1493	Tapers		Tapers	IV. iv. 51 IV. iv. 64
1494	hand set	hand in hand set)	V. v. 77
	fingers endes	finger end		V. v. 84
1496	starteth flame	start flame		V. v. 86 V. v. 85
1499	sin	sinnefull		V. v. 93
1508	And euery one take hand in hand,	From V. v. 77 --- F Pray you lock hand in hand: your selues in order set:...		
1509-1510	And compasse him within a ring, / First pinch him well, and after sing.	The reporters are indebted to V. v. 65-66 --- F And Nightly-meadow- Fairies, looke you sing / Like to the <u>Garters</u> -Compassse, in a ring,...		
1522	the mad Prince of <u>Wales</u>	The reporters may have recalled III. ii. 65-66 --- F the wilde / Prince,...		
1527	a pair of horns	Probably from V. i. 6, where the phrase occurs in F.		
1539-1540	haue I liued to these yeares / To be gulled now, now to be ridden?	The reporters have recalled elements in V. v. 131-133 --- F Haue I laid my braine in the Sun, and dri'de it, / that it wants matter to preuent so gresse ore-reaching as / this? Am I ridden with a Welch Goate too? At the same time, the occurrence here of the phrase "Haue I" followed by a word beginning with the latter "I" has directed the re- porters' minds to two other passages: V. v. 138-139 --- F Haue I liu'd to stand at the / taunt of one that makes Fritters of English? and III. v. 4-5 --- F Haue I liu'd to be / carried in a Basket... Q Haue I liued to be carried in a basket... Thus in Q lines 1539- 1540 we have conflation.		

1546-1549 Well, and the fine
wits of the Court heare
this, / Thayle so whip
me with their keene
Iests, / That thayle
melt me out like tal-
low, / Drop by drop
out of my grease.

This passage is mainly a
transposition of IV. v.
86-92 --- F if it should
come / to the eare of the
Court, how I haue beene
transformed; / and how my
transformation hath beene
washt, and / cudgeld, they
would melt mee out of my
fat drop by / drop, and
Liquor Fishermans-boots
with me: I warrent / they
would whip me with their
fine wits, till I were as
/ crest-falne as a dride-
peare:... But the report-
ers have confused this with
certain other passages.
Thus their phrase "melt....
out of my grease" recalls
II. i. 60 --- melted him in
his owne greace: (F). (Note
also that "fretted in their
owne grease" occurs in F at
III. v. 104, and "stew'd in
grease" occurs in F at III.
v. 109.) Again, for their
word "tallow" in Q 1548 the
reporters may be indebted to
V. v. 14, where that word oc-
curs in F. Thus again we
have the reporters giving us
conflation.

We have said that Q 1546-1549
is mainly a transposition of
IV. v. 86-92. We may suggest
a reason why that transposi-
tion was made. It was due to
memorial confusion. The lines
in F (V. v. 121-122) correspond-
ing to Q 1545 are followed by
the phrase --- See now how wit
may be made a lacke-a-/Lent,...
This is absent from Q, but the
word "wit" probably subconscious-
ly reminded the reporters of F
IV. v. 86-92, which contains
the phrase "fine wits".

1552-1553 I, tis well I am your
May-pole, / You haue
the start of mee,

The reporters are here in-
debted to V. v. 156-157 --- F
Well, I am your Theame: you haue
the start of / me, I am deiec-
ted:...

- 1578 Now sonne Slender. The phrase "son(ne) Slender" occurs in F at III. iv. 77 and V. ii. 2. The reporters may have recalled it from either or both of these points.
- 1596 At Curch forsooth. The reporters may be re-collecting IV. vi. 49 --- F To stay for me at Church,...
- 1600-1601 neuer chafe your selfe,
/ She hath made her
choise The reporters may be recalling "chafe" from V. iii. 7-8 --- F as he will chafe / at the Doctors marrying my daughter:...
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