

was not able to use Fulman's materials.⁹ On Shakspere, Fulman before his death in 1688 had accumulated only a few lines of conventional information. But Davies at some time between 1688 and his own death in 1708 made a couple of interesting additions, one of which is to the effect that Shakspere was

much given to all unluckinesse in stealing venison & Rabbits particularly from Sr Lucy who had him oft whipt & sometimes Imprisoned & at last made Him fly his Native Country to his great Advancem^t. but His reveng was so great that he is Justice Clodpate and calls him a great man & y^t in allusion to his name bore three lowses rampant for his Arms.¹⁰

Shakspere has now run away with a vengeance. He and Lucy have had a long feud. Shakspere has conducted systematic raids on Lucy's venison and rabbits, while Lucy sometimes whipped and sometimes imprisoned him till he finally forced Shakspere to flee to his advancement in London. Through the "three lowses rampant" of Justice Clodpate, it is inferred that Lucy is being satirized by Shakspere in reward for this great benefit.

From this account and from that which Rowe builds upon the information Betterton is alleged to have picked up in Warwickshire it is quite clear what the Stratford story was around 1708. Shakspere is now forced to flee to his advancement in London by Sir Thomas Lucy, whose given name Davies did not know. Davies says Shakspere stole both venison and rabbits, and Lucy often had him whipped and sometimes imprisoned till he forced him to flee to advancement. Rowe says that certain young men who made a regular practice of stealing deer engaged Shakspere "more than once in robbing a Park that belong'd to Sir Thomas Lucy of Cherlecot, near Stratford." In both Davies and Rowe Shakspere's trespass is repeated, but in Rowe's version Shakspere is led into trouble by ill companions, and he steals only deer, no rabbits. These ill companions are quite evidently additions to the story, since they go entirely untroubled by Lucy; Shakspere alone still transgresses and alone is punished. And when Rowe examined *Merry Wives* he was scholar enough to know that only deer stealing was at issue. But to a casual reader Falstaff had stolen deer and his men had caught conies. This may be the reason both deer and rabbits were involved in the story of Davies. But Davies has the local story with direct application to the Lucy family, and they now had both deer and rabbits. Further, deer and rabbits usually figured together in these stories. For instance, Dr. Simon Forman says that in 1573 John Thornborough, later Dean of York and then in succession Bishop of Limerick, Bristol, Worcester, together with his croney Robert Pinkney at Oxford

never studied nor gave themselves to their bockes, but to goe to scolles of defence, to the daunceing scolles, to stealle dear and connyes, and to hunt the hare.¹¹

Davies is evidently telling the untrimmed Stratford version of Shakspere's transgression, which Rowe polishes up.

The punishment corresponds to the crime. Lucy in Rowe's version still prosecutes only Shakspere and thus forces him to go to London and become

⁹ Chambers, *Shakespeare*, Vol. II, pp. 255 ff.

¹⁰ Chambers, *Shakespeare*, Vol. II, p. 257.

¹¹ Halliwell, *Dr. Simon Forman*, p. 12.