

Notes for *The Century of Deception*

Chapter Ten: 'When This Solemn Mockery is O'er', pp. 233-260.

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- 'When This Solemn Mockery is O'er' title: *Vortigern; An Historical Play*, p. 51: 'And when this solemn mockery is o'er'.
- 'Give me another sword! I have so clogg'd, / And badged this with blood and slipp'ry gore, / That it doth mock my gripe. A sword, I say!': *Vortigern; An Historical Play; With An Original Preface by W.H. Ireland. Presented at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, on Saturday April 2, 1796. As a Supposed Newly-Discovered Drama of Shakspeare*. London: Joseph Thomas, 1832, Act 5, Scene IV, p. 53.
- 2 August 1775: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [hereafter known as *ODNB*], Ireland, William Henry (1775–1835).

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- Samuel Junior: *Reforging Shakespeare: The Story of a Theatrical Scandal*, Jeffrey Kahan, Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 1998, p. 119. Samuel was born 15 June 1773, according to the family bible (which also dated the birth of William-Henry).
- Probably Mrs Freeman: *The Farington Diary by Joseph Farington*, Edited by James Greig, Vol. I, July 13, 1793 to August 24, 1802, 3rd Edition, London: Hutchinson & Co, p. 145.
- Maternal instincts: *Ibid*, p. 133. Passing off her children 'as her nieces'.
- Samuel not his father: *The Boy Who Would Be Shakespeare, A Tale of Forgery and Folly*, Doug Stewart, Da Capo Press, 2010, chapter 1, loc. 217: 'Several times, for no good reason, she took William-Henry aside and told him that Samuel didn't think he was the boy's father.' *Records of My Life; by the late John Taylor, Esquire*. In Two Volumes, Vol. I, London: Edward Bull, 1832, p. 245: 'His mother, according to an entry in the Diary, was Mrs. Freeman, who lived with Ireland's father.'
- Belonged to Mrs Freeman: *The Farington Diary*, p. 133: 'A fortune of £12000'.
- Anna Maria de Burgh Coppinger: *The Boy Who Would Be Shakespeare*, chapter 1, loc. 248.
- Happiest period of his life: *The Confessions of William-Henry Ireland. Containing The Particulars of his Fabrication of the Shakespeare Manuscripts; Together with Anecdotes and Opinions of Many Distinguished persons in the Literary, Political, and Theatrical World*, London, 1805, [known hereafter as *The Confessions*], p. 4. He spoke fluent French and when he returned his English conversation was sprinkled with Gallicisms.
- Articled clerk with Mr Bingley: *The Confessions*, p. 5. Of Bingley's two other employees, one died and one was discharged, leaving William-Henry on his own.

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- Good living: Prior to that he had been a failed Spitalfields weaver. See *The Farington Diary*, p. 145.
- Writing travel books: His first publication, *A Picturesque Tour Through Holland, Brabant, and Part of France*, appeared in 1790. He continued the successful series with *Picturesque Views on the River Thames* and *Picturesque Views, on the River Medway*.
- Norfolk Street: *The Boy Who Would Be Shakespeare*, chapter 1, loc. 248.
- Famous people: These included a blue ribbon worn by James the Second at his Coronation, Joseph Addison's pocket fruit knife, and a buff leather jacket belonging to Oliver Cromwell. Auctioneers inserted the phrase 'supposed to have been' in respect of the latter at the auction of Samuel's property at his death in 1801. See *A Catalogue of the Books, Paintings, Miniatures, Drawings &c. The Property of the late Samuel Ireland, Esq. Which will be Sold by Auction, By Leigh, Sotheby and Son*, On Thursday, May 7, 1801, pp. 2 & 3.
- William Shakespeare: *Reforging Shakespeare*, p. 25. Thanks partly to David Garrick, the production of Shakespeare plays increased enormously. For instance in the period 1776 to 1800 the three tragedies most often staged in London were all by the Bard, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*.
- Original papers: People thought there must be papers languishing somewhere. James Boaden, who would be one of the first to embrace William-Henry's forgeries, wrote that it was of 'infinite surprise' that all 'the effusions' that must have poured from his pen were somehow lost to posterity. *Memoirs of The Life of John Philip Kemble*, James Boaden, Philadelphia: Robert H. Small, 1825, p. 349. Samuel Ireland had his own interest piqued by a supposed discovery of some papers at an attorney's office near Measham: *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, John Nichols, Volume V, London, 1828, p. 463. The reasons why people wouldn't have kept Shakespeare's papers are given in *The Boy Who Would be Shakespeare*, chapter 3, locs. 706-725.
- Accompanied by his son: This trip, according to William-Henry, would be the catalyst for his subsequent fraudulent activities. *The Confessions*, p. 18.
- *Picturesque Views on the Upper, or Warwickshire Avon: Picturesque Views on the Upper, or Warwickshire Avon*, Samuel Ireland, London: R. Faulder, 1795.
- John Jordan: *The Confessions*, p. 19. William-Henry called him a 'very honest fellow'.
- Profession of Faith: *Reforging Shakespeare*, p. 38.
- Shakespearian credentials: One of these was Edmond Malone who included the poem in his 1790 Edition of Shakespeare, see *Ibid*, p. 38. Malone subsequently did have doubts about it, p. 228, note 90.
- Samuel's purchases: *The Confessions*, p. 20. An enterprising shop-keeper did a good trade from carving tobacco stoppers, water seals and busts from a Mulberry Tree which Shakespeare had supposedly planted. William-Henry

referred to them as 'bagatelles' and commented that he didn't think that a 'dozen full-grown mulberry tree's would have been sufficient to produce the 'innumerable mementoes' on offer. Samuel Ireland did buy a goblet which William-Henry thought might possibly have been carved from the original tree.

- Anne on his knee: *Ibid*, p. 33.
- Manuscripts burnt: *Ibid*, pp. 27 and 31-2. Several baskets of letters and papers had been moved from New Place to Clopton House following a fire. Mr Williams was the owner of Clopton House and claimed to have burnt them. To make it worse, Mr Williams' wife confirmed the story and that she had told her husband not to proceed with the bonfire as the documents 'might be of consequence'. Mr Williams enjoyed tormenting his credible visitor, as evidenced by a MS note in the BL copy of William-Henry Ireland's *An Authentic Account of Shakesperian Manuscripts*, cited in Note 73, p. 579 of *Shakespeare's Lives*, New Edition, S. Schoenbaum, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991. Schoenbaum's contention that 'Grebanier's suggestion that Jordan had a share in the deception is unsupported' is questionable, given the letter John Jordan wrote to Samuel Ireland on 15 November 1793 [BL MS Folio 39347, 23]. In this letter he reassures Samuel that should Mr Williams 'make any discovery relative to Shakespeare you shall certainly have it'. He also informs Samuel that he would personally go round to the house and have a further look himself – and that Samuel would be the first to know if anything was discovered.
- Read his plays aloud: *The Confessions*, p. 6
- Preoccupied with the playwright: He was also obsessed by Thomas Chatterton, *The Confessions*, p. 11. Thomas Chatterton in his teenage years had created the works of a fifteenth century monk called Thomas Rowley. It was original antique verse but written with aged ink on old vellum. Feted in his short life for these and other works, the accepted story was that Chatterton had committed suicide at the age of seventeen in 1770. It is more likely that he died from an accidental overdose of arsenic and opium.
- 'a similar fondness and veneration for every thing that bore a resemblance to the mighty father of the English stage': *The Confessions*, p. 7.

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- Shakespeare's plays: *The Farington Diary*, p. 145.
- Around about this period: According to *The Confessions*, p. 37, the first forgery happened in the summer of 1794. Pierce in *The Great Shakespeare Fraud: The Strange, True Story of William-Henry Ireland*, Patricia Pierce Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2004 dates it to the Autumn of 1794, p. 235. However Kahan in *Reforging Shakespeare*, p. 51, thinks it took place before Samuel and William-Henry did their trip to Stratford in the summer of 1793. It's possible Kahan arrives at this conclusion due to *An Authentic Account of the Shaksperian Manuscripts, &c.*, W. H. Ireland, London, 1796, pp. 3-5. Here William-Henry seems to chronologically write about the forgeries before his Stratford visit.
- 'the book to Mr. Ireland, who had no doubt as to its authenticity': *The Confessions*, pp. 37-40.
- Actual signature: *The Confessions*, p. 43. William-Henry said that the resemblance was purely by chance. Kahan in *Reforging Shakespeare*, p. 50 argues this is nonsense, and that he must have seen and practised copying out the original signature.
- Abraham Simon, *The Confessions*, pp. 42-3.

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- 1773 *The Plays of William Shakespeare: The Plays of William Shakespeare. In Ten Volumes. With The Corrections and Illustrations of Various Commentators*; To which are added Notes by Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, London, 1773.
- 'in order the better to conceal it as being from the same pen': *The Confessions*, pp. 47-8.
- coal ashes: *Ibid*, pp. 48-9.
- In his diary: British Library MS Folio 30346, 6-9.
- Mr Mitchell: In the diary he is just referred to as Mr M. His identity is revealed in *Shakespeare's Lives*, p. 138. In *The Confessions*, p. 62, Ireland states that the meeting took place in a 'coffeehouse'.
- Mr H: *Ibid*, p. 128.
- 1610 lease. Apparently William-Henry handed it to Mr H who gave it back saying that he was very welcome to it – and to anything else of the kind. An alleged reason why Mr H was so generous at giving the papers to William-Henry was that the latter had found among the papers a deed which brought about an end to a long legal dispute that the owner was entangled in. In gratitude, he allowed William-Henry whatever papers he wanted. William-Henry furthermore hinted that maybe the philanthropist's father had illegally obtained the papers and therefore wouldn't want to go public on his ownership of them. See *An Authentic Account*, pp. 12-13.
- Edmond Malone: *An Inquiry into the Authenticity of certain Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments published Dec. 24, 1795. And Attributed to Shakspeare, Queen Elizabeth and Henry, Earl of Southampton*, Edmond Malone, London, 1796, pp. 265-276. It is noteworthy that the earliest critique of Samuel's published Shakesperian papers, *A Letter to George Steevens, Esq. Containing A Examination of the Papers of Shakespeare; published by Mr. Samuel Ireland to which are added Extracts From Vortigern*, James Boaden, 1796, doesn't even attempt a critical analysis.
- Five known signatures: Three signatures are on Shakespeare's Last Will and Testament. Two of them, discovered in 1768, are on the house sale of a property in Blackfriars, London. It is signed in two places by Shakespeare, one on the conveyance, the other on the mortgage. A sixth was discovered by Charles William Wallace in 1909 and relates to a lawsuit where Shakespeare was called as a witness
- Half his library: *The Confessions*, p. 45: 'he would frequently assert, that such was his veneration for the bard that he would willingly give half his library to become possessed even of his signature alone.'

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- 'It is impossible for me to express the pleasure you have given me': *The Confessions*, p. 51. Samuel insisted on giving William-Henry a valuable book from his library in exchange.
- He consulted Sir Frederick Eden, an authority on heralds: According to *Shakespeare's Lives*, p. 139, Samuel consulted the Herald's Office first who authenticated the seals but couldn't identify the seals. It was then that he sent for Eden. In *The Confessions*, p. 52, it was the very next day that Samuel sent for Eden.
- Looked at the impression: *Ibid*, p. 53.
- Promissory note: It had many faults. It was in a contemporary format, 'Stratford' was mis-spelt as 'Statford' and the Globe Theatre was built 10 years later in 1599. Samuel Ireland would later unconvincingly address the latter point in *An Investigation of Mr. Malone's Claim to the Character of Scholar, or Critic, Being an Examination of his Inquiry into the Authenticity of the Shakspeare Manuscripts, &c.*, Samuel Ireland, London, 1797, p. 38.

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- Numerous 'e's': *The Confessions*, p. 60.
- 'Chickenne': *Ibid*.
- Repeated twice a day: Cited in *Shakespeare's Lives*, p. 143.
- 'distanced': *The Confessions*, p. 68. William-Henry attributes the words to Dr Parr; but in *An Authentic Account*, p. 16, he just writes 'one of them'.
- Shakespeare received and paid; *A Descriptive Catalogue of a Collection of Shakspeariana; Consisting of Manuscripts, Books and Relics, Illustrative of the Life and Writings of Shakespeare, In the Library of William Harrison, Esq.*, London, 1866, pp. 4-14, pp. 22-36 and pp. 38-41.
- Richard Cowley; *Ibid*, pp. 14-20 and 36-37.
- William Holmes; *Ibid*, pp. 42-4.

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- Letter from Queen Elizabeth: *Ibid*, pp. 44-6.
- Margin notes: *The Confessions*, p. 194. One of the margin notes demonstrates the Bard's compassion as he refuses to attend the execution of Guy Fawkes as he did not like to behold sights of that kind, p. 197.
- 'a giddy thoughtless young man, incapable of producing the papers': *An Authentic Account*, p. 23.
- Output: One paper said there was a danger of 'finding too much!', *Herald*, 17 February 1795, Folio 30349, 7.
- Further materials discovered: BL MS Folio 30346, 23.
- Properly evaluate: For instance the handwriting of Southampton was nothing like the genuine article and there is no circumstance in which Queen Elizabeth would have sent a personal letter to a lowly actor like Shakespeare.
- Tearing off part of the paper: *The Confessions*, pp. 101-2 suggests that William-Henry had acted alone in this regard. However in an unpublished version, William-Henry claimed that his father was party to this deception.
- 'whymyscalle conceyte': The letter, to Richard Cowley, is in *Miscellaneous Papers, and Legal Instruments Under the Hand and Seal of William Shakspeare: Including the Tragedy of King Lear, and a Small Fragment of Hamlet, from the Original Mss. In the Possession of Samuel Ireland of Norfolk Street*, London, 1796. See also *The Confessions*, pp. 72-3.

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- 'I could never perceive any thing like a resemblance to the name in question': *The Confessions*, p. 111.
- Mr Warburton: *The Confessions*, pp 181-2.

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- Two John Heminges: *The Confessions*, pp 86-93.
- Dissenting voices: Newspapers also supported Samuel Ireland in the early days. *Telegraph*, 17 February, 1795, Folio 30349, 7: 'The internal evidence of those papers is sufficient to convince the most incredulous.'
- James Boswell: *Mr Ireland's Vindication of his Conduct, Respecting The Publication of the supposed Shakespeare MSS, Being a Preface or Introduction to A Reply to the Critical Labors of Mr Malone, In His "Enquiry Into The Authenticity Of Certain Papers. &c. &c."*, London, 1796, p. 21. Not everybody was so enamoured. Richard Porson, classical scholar and frequent contributor to *The Morning Chronicle*, when asked to put his name to the declaration, refused on the grounds that he detested subscriptions of all kinds, especially those to Articles of Faith. See *A Biographical Essay*, M. L. Clarke, Cambridge, 1937, p. 72. Joseph Ritson, a scholar of Shakespeare who had taken issue with George Steevens' 1773 *The Plays of William Shakespeare*, wrote a private letter in May 1795 saying he had carefully examined the Shakespearian papers and found them to be 'a parcel of forgeries, studiously and ably calculated to deceive the public'. But this never appeared in the public domain. See Letter dated 19 May 1795 to Mr Paton, *The Letters of Joseph Ritson, Esq. In Two Volumes, Vol. II*, London: William Pickering, 1833, p. 75.
- 'authentic and important documents respecting the private and public life of this wondrous man' and 'instantly have his subscription returned': *Shakspeare Prospectus*, dated 4 March 1795, issued by Samuel Ireland in BL MS Folio 30347, 32-35, pp. 1 & 3.
- House of Lords: *The Confessions*, pp. 97-8.
- 'the most remarkable circumstance' and 'that the parchment and seals of the deeds are indisputably ancient and authentic': Letter dated 21 July 1795 to Mr Paton in *The Letters of Joseph Ritson*, p. 93.

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- chosen not to inspect: *Records of My Life*, p. 245: 'Mr Malone had given him an advantage in refusing to look at these alleged remains of our great Bard, and Mr. Isaac Reed also declined to inspect them.'
- Never publicly expressed: Postulated in Jonathan Bate, 'Faking it: Shakespeare and the 1790s', *Literature and Censorship*, Edited by Nigel Smith, Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1993, p. 74, that Ritson didn't expose Samuel as he saw him as another outsider, not an establishment figure.

- ‘anachronisms and inconsistencies’ and ‘ignorance and gullibility of the Shakspearian connoisseurs’: Letter dated 21 July 1795 to Mr Paton in *The Letters of Joseph Ritson*, p. 93.
- Accepted the terms: *The Confessions*, pp. 183-5.
- 24 December 1795: *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, May 1826, p. 421.
- ‘making interpolations where I conceived they would answer my purpose’; *The Confessions*, p. 116.
- ‘ribaldry’: *Ibid*, p. 118’
- Playhouse copies: *Ibid*, pp. 118-9.
- *Hamblette*: Script was published in *Miscellaneous Papers, and Legal Instruments Under the Hand and Seal of William Shakspeare*.
- ‘weary of this plodding business’: *The Confessions*, pp. 119.
- First negative response: It is hard to know the initial critical response to Samuel Ireland’s *Miscellaneous Papers* as most reviews of it were written alongside the published attacks on it. 4 January 1796, *Oracle*, 30349, 27. ‘Our Readers will perceive the necessity of refraining, at present, to comment upon the papers of Mr Ireland’, until the pamphlets of Mr Boaden and Malone are out.

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- *A Letter to George Steevens: A Letter to George Steevens, Esq. Containing A Examination of the Papers of Shakespeare; published by Mr. Samuel Ireland to which are added Extracts From Vortigern*, James Boaden, 1796. ‘This day is published’, *The Morning Chronicle*, 16 January 1796. Its publication was heralded in *The Morning Chronicle*, 6 January 1796.
- *A Comparative Review of the Opinions of Mr James Boaden: A Comparative Review of the Opinions of Mr. James Boaden, (Editor of The Oracle), in February, March, and April 1795; And of James Boaden, Esq. (Author of Fountainville Forest, and of a Letter to George Steevens, Esq.) In February 1796, Relative To The Shakspeare MSS, By A Friend to Consistency*, London, [n.d]. Published 3 February 1796, *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, May 1826, p. 422.
- *Shakspeare’s Manuscripts, in the Possession of Mr. Ireland: Shakspeare’s Manuscripts, in the Possession of Mr. Ireland, Examined, Respecting The Internal and External Evidences of Their Authenticity*, By Philaethes [Francis Webb], London, 1796. Published 28 January 1796, *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, May 1826, p. 421.
- ‘The official defender of the Pseudo Shakspeare is a Mr. Webb. – It is feared he is inextricably entangled’: *The Oracle, Public Advertiser*, 5 February 1796. *The Oracle, Public Advertiser* was the full title of the paper.
- Make use of them: *Shakspeare’s Manuscripts, in the Possession of Mr. Ireland*, pp. 9-10.
- Legal instruments: *Ibid*, p. 11.
- The rightful heir: Mr H had himself priced the papers at £20,000, BL MS Folio 30346, 24.
- River Thames: Another paper William-Henry produced was a deed of trust from Shakespeare to John Heminges requesting him to carry out certain obligations, including the distribution of papers to named persons. It appeared that Heminges had not carried out these duties. Conveniently it was hinted at that Mr H might be a descendant of Heminges and felt obliged to correct the wrong of his predecessor by giving the papers to their rightful owner, none other than William-Henry Ireland. See *The Confessions*, pp. 235-7.
- Gift to William-Henry: *Ibid*, pp. 228-235.
- Unlikely tale: *The St. James’s Chronicle; Or, British Evening-Post*, 12-14 April 1796. ‘Many people, and even Mr Malone himself, in some degree, seem surprised that any man should have forged such a vast quantity of papers, and in a manner so clumsy as to lead to immediate detection. Nay, some have even gone so far as to plead this very circumstance in favour of the authenticity of the MSS.— A very strange argument, and which leads to very strange conclusions!’
- ‘Imposture, in general, keeps within bounds of probability: *Shakspeare’s Manuscripts, in the Possession of Mr. Ireland*, p. 16.
- Writing consistent: *Ibid*, p. 24.
- Ultimately credulous: *The Monthly Review*, July 1796, p. 345.

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- ‘intended for theatrical representation’: *Shakspeare Prospectus*, dated 4 March 1795, issued by Samuel Ireland in BL MS Folio 30347, 32-35, p. 3.
- 26 December 1794: BL MS Folio 30346, 23
- *King Lear*: BL MS Folio 30346, 28, dated 3 January 1795.
- ‘the literary world will have enough to talk of for seven years to come’: *The London Packet; Or, New Lloyd’s Evening Post*, 6-9 February 1795.
- ‘The idea of seeing an original Play of our great Poet brought upon the Stage in these times, fills the mind with a mixed emotion of wonder and delight’: *The St. James’s Chronicle; Or, British Evening-Post*, 10-12 February 1795.
- ‘their surprise and rapture at the discovery of such a literary treasure’, *Ibid*.
- Two months: *The Confessions*, p. 133.
- March 1795: Estimated date according to *Reforging Shakespeare*, p. 124
- It was overly long: Sheridan said ‘there were two plays and a half, instead of one’, *The Confessions*, p. 136.
- Suggest Amendments: *Records of My Life*, pp. 244-5.

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- Very young: *The Confessions*, p. 139. Sheridan also admitted to not being a huge fan of Shakespeare on p. 138.
- First sixty nights: *Ibid*, p. 139.

- Sheridan's wind-fall: This was badly needed. Sheridan's financial problems are mentioned by the actress Sarah Siddons, the sister of John Kemble, in *Life of Mrs Siddons*, Thomas Campbell, Vol. II, London: Effingham Wilson, 1834, pp. 198-9, letter dated May 1796.
- 'a few minutes conversation': *The Clubs of London; With Anecdotes of Their Members, Sketches of Character, And Conversations. In Two Volumes, Vol. II*, London: Henry Colburn, 1828, p. 107.
- Audience to determine provenance: *The Oracle, Public Advertiser*, 23 September 1795. 'It is for the Town to say, whether they will *adopt* it.'
- 'Thee cheesesse youe sentte mee werree tooe sweatttie, ande tooe rankee inn flavourre': *Telegraph*, 14 January 1796, BL MS Folio 30349 34.
- 'wee shalle *drinke Tea* withe thee bye Thames Tomorrowe, thou Monarche offe the *Globe*.' and 'not then built': *The Oracle, Public Advertiser*, 23 January 1796.
- 'Shakespear, it has been said, never blotted a word' and 'Where is the wonder, when he wrote with such apparent eeeee!': *The Oracle, Public Advertiser*, 29 March 1796.
- *Vortigern* at the Drury Lane: It was known that the Drury Lane theatre had an interest in the play much earlier from *Observer*, 4 October 1795, BL MS Folio 30349 21. 'The Manuscript Play of *Vortigern*, which is attributed to the divine pen of *Shakespear*, is committed to Mr Sheridan's care, for revision and alteration.'

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- 'The Manuscript of the Play of *Vortigern* being now placed by Mr. Ireland in the hands of the Manager, will be speedily brought forward, with appropriate Scenery and Decorations': *The Morning Post And Fashionable World*, 4 January 1796. By this stage a large part of a production's budget was spent on the scenery. 'In Garrick's time, most of Drury Lane's running costs went to paying the actors. Now two-thirds of that expense went into scenery'. *The Boy Who Would be Shakespeare*, chapter 9, loc. 2163.
- Kemble: *The Tomahawk! Or, Censor General*, 7 January 1796. 'Why does not Mr Kemble say, Shakespere's *Vortigern*, in his advertisement of that play?'. See also *Ibid*, 17 February 1796: 'Mr Kemble, with much prudence, will not affirm The *Vortigern*, so long in preparation, is Shakespeare's!'
- Sheridan: *The Oracle, Public Advertiser*, 5 February 1796. 'Why does not Sheridan advertise this play as Shakspeare's?'
- 'an offensive indifference': *The Star*, 31 March 1796. *The Oracle, Public Advertiser*, 29 March 1796 defended Kemble. 'Kemble has no blame whatever. His opinion was distinctly declared at the rehearsals to the possessor of the play.'
- Sarah Siddons: *The Oracle, Public Advertiser*, 23 March 1796. 'Mrs Siddons continues indisposed. The part of *Rowena* in the *Vortigern* tragedy falls therefore to the lot of Mrs. Powell.'
- Claiming ill-health: *Life of Mrs Siddons*. Thomas Campbell, Vol. II, London, 1834, pp. 196-7. Writing to a friend in March 1796, she said that she was 'studying for *Vortigern*', so it could be that her illness was genuine.
- Respond in print: Malone wrote that his perusal of the Shakespearian papers had convinced him that they were 'direct and palpable forgeries'. 'Letter from Malone to Charlemont, 29 December, 1795', *The Manuscripts and Correspondence of James, First Earl of Charlemont*. Vol. II - 1784-1799, London, 1894, p. 267. One newspaper regretted his over eagerness. *The True Briton*, 29 December 1795: 'Mr Malone's intended Publication respecting the Shakspeare MS. is announced so *rapidly* after the publication of these curious reliques, that we fear his friends will think that such *impetuosity of criticism* hardly promises the *elaborate and patient* research which the subject demands. It would be unfair to arraign Mr. Malone of want of candour, before we know what his work may contain; but we wish for his own sake, that he had not displayed so much *eagerness* to commence the *attack*.' On 2 January 1796 he announced his intended publication in the *Chronicle*, 2 January 1796, BL MS Folio 30349, 33: 'In the press and speedily will be published.'
- *An Inquiry into the Authenticity of certain Miscellaneous Paper: An Inquiry into the Authenticity of certain Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments published Dec. 24, 1795. And Attributed to Shakspeare, Queen Elizabeth and Henry, Earl of Southampton*, Edmond Malone, London, 1796
- Eventually came out: As time dragged on, reports were occasionally made about the slow progress of his book. *The St. James's Chronicle; Or, British Evening-Post*, 4-6 February 1796: 'Mr Malone's Detection of the Shakspeare Forgery is delayed only by the Plates, which are numerous. They are expected, however to be ready by the middle of this month. Alas, poor *Vortigern!*' One newspaper suggested that it was being deliberately delayed until the '*first of April*'. *True Briton*, BL MS Folio 30349, 55. Malone would not be hassled, writing that he shall not be induced 'to publish his Detection of this Forgery sooner than suits his own convenience'. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, February 1796, p. 92. He claims it would be published 'about the 8th or 10th March', which proved overly optimistic.
- 30 March 1796: *The Gentleman's Magazine*, May 1826, p. 422.
- Handwriting of the period: *The Oracle, Public Advertiser*, 1 April 1796.
- Authenticate the works: *An Inquiry into the Authenticity of certain Miscellaneous Paper*, p. 7.
- Already in existence: *Ibid*, p. 100.
- Consonants and vowels: *Ibid*, p. 34.
- Arabic numbers: *Ibid*, p. 126.
- Titles of noblemen: *Ibid*, p. 129.
- Young actors; *Ibid*, p. 132.
- Double Christian names: *Ibid*, p. 230.
- Malone's book: 'The complete damnation of the Play of *Vortigern* was certainly wholly independent of any faction that might have been raised against it; and yet, we cannot help observing, that Mr Malone's publication against the

authenticity of the Play only two days before it was to be represented, was a very unfair proceeding and extremely illiberal.' *The Times*, 4 April 1796.

- 2 April: *The Morning Post And Fashionable World*, 29 March 1796 announced its date of staging, the day before Malone's publication.

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- 'most illiberal and unfounded assertions in Mr Malone's Enquiry: BL MS Folio 30349, 140. Marked as the handbill that was distributed at the theatre on 2 April 1796. In *The Times*, 2 April 1796, this appeared in the paper beneath the notice for the play on its opening night. Two days later the theatre itself denounced the placement as it seemed to imply it was part of the theatrical advertisement: *The Morning Chronicle*, 4 April 1796.
- 'heard with that *Candour* that has ever distinguished a *British Audience*': BL MS Folio 30349, 140.
- Filled twice over: *The Times*, 4 April 1796.
- Centre of the house: *The Confessions*, p. 144.
- 'in the green-room: *Ibid*, p. 149.
- 'as apparently to deprive him of all recollection': *Lloyd's Evening-Post*, 1-4 April 1796.

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- 'very excellent play': Samuel's diary, 28 December 1795, BL MS 30346, 159: 'I found he had nearly finished reading it. I asked him what he thought of it, he replied that he thought it a very excellent play.'
- 'shall be worthy the name of Shakespeare': *Ibid*: 'I then renewed my request that he wd exert himself, in a prologue, to which he reply'd with much energy – that I will do directly by endeavour to produce one, that shall be worthy the name of Shakespeare.'
- 'I must lower my tone a little': *Ibid*: 'I have seen Mr Kemble since I read the play, and find that in Consequence of it, I must lower my tone a little with regard to your Prologue.'
- The first three acts went fine: *The Farington Diary*, p. 145. *The Morning Post And Fashionable World*, April 4 1796: 'Whether it was that we mistook the candour and patience of the Audience for approbation, or that the play fell off in the two last acts, we cannot exactly say. We believe both were the fact.'
- Nervous William-Henry: *The Confessions*, p. 149: 'On the important night which was to seal the fate of my long-expected Vortigern and Rowena, I spent the greater part of the time of its representation in the green-room of the theatre; where I conversed for the most part with Mrs. Jordan; who, at the commencement of the third act (at which period not a dissenting voice had been heard) congratulated me on the success of the piece, and gave it as her opinion that it would succeed.'
- 'bellow on': *Ibid*, p. 152.
- Legs exposed: *Ibid*, pp. 153-4.
- 'And when this solemn mockery is o'er': *The Confessions*, p. 157. *The Times*, 4 April 1796 and *Lloyd's Evening-Post*, 1-4 April 1796 had it slightly different: 'I would this solemn mockery were over'. *The Morning Post And Fashionable World*, April 4 1796 didn't actually quote this line but rather quoted the two lines before and after it. 'Thou clap at thy rattling fingers to thy sides; [And when this solemn mockery is o'er] With icy hand thou takest him by the feet', It wrote: 'The "rattling fingers" and "icy hand", produced such loud and long laughter...'
- 'most sepulchral tone of voice possible'; 'with even more solemn grimace than he had in the first instance': *The Confessions*, pp. 157-8.
- *A School for Scandal*: *Lloyd's Evening-Post*, 1-4 April 1796. 'Mr. Barrymore, at the close of the Play, exerted himself to procure a second representation, but in vain; and after many unsuccessful efforts he retired, and Mr Kemble came forward to announce the *School for Scandal* in its room.'

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- 'hardly qualified to be candle-snuffers'; 'most execrable acting' and 'both would be prevented from ever appearing again upon the stage': *The Star*, 4 April, 1796. Same review appeared in *The True Briton*, 4 April, 1796.
- 'Shakespeare in Masquerade' and 'they will never wish to see him again': *The General Evening Post*, 2-5 April 1796.
- 'in the exercise of his usual Faculties' and 'is remarkable, in seldom borrowing from himself': *The St. James's Chronicle; Or, British Evening-Post*, 2-5 April, 1796.
- 'but alas we found not even the shadow of one': *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 4 April 1796.
- 'We are persuaded...Vortigern has experienced.' *The True Briton*, 4 April 1796.
- Long evening: *The Farington Diary*, p. 145. 'Prologue spoken at 35 minutes past 6: Play over at 10.' And then the afterpiece, *My Grandmother*, would have followed that.
- 'retired to bed, more easy in my mind than I had been for a great length of time, as the load was removed which had oppressed me': *The Confessions*, pp. 159-160.
- 'acknowledge that he has been deceived' and 'he must take the consequences': *The St. James's Chronicle; Or, British Evening-Post*, 12-14 April 1796. Two months later he was duly castigated in *The Oracle, Public Advertiser*, 9 June 1796: 'the trash published by Mr. Ireland has been long plainly stigmatized, not only as forged by impudence, but containing also the deepest marks of ignorance.'
- Montague Talbot: *The Confessions*, p. 120.

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- Promised not to tell: *Ibid*, p. 123.
- He had met Mr H: *Ibid*, p. 128.
- Loyal and schtum: *Ibid*, p. 241.
- Albany Wallis: *Ibid*, p. 246.

- 'stating that it was his opinion, as a professional man, that the supposed gentleman was not exactly safe in committing his name to the public': *Ibid*, p. 247.
- 'manuscripts of Shakspeare' and 'unacquainted with the source'. *Ibid*, p. 256.
- Tell all in a letter: *Ibid*, p. 259.
- Could not have produced them: *Ibid*, p. 260.
- To go public. *Ibid*, p. 261.
- *An Authentic Account of the Shaksperian Manuscripts: An Authentic Account of the Shaksperian Manuscripts, &c.*, W. H. Ireland, London, 1796.
- 'the literary merits of the pamphlet now before us': *Herald*, 22 December 1796, BL MS 30349, 107.
- 'not a single spark of genius, talent' and 'the smallest portion of that *feeling*': *The True Briton*, 22 December 1796.

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- 'Young Vortigern certainly might have written the Shakspeare MSS, as they are now called – But who composed the play that he copied': *Gazetteer*, 27 December, 1796, 30349 – 110.
- 'if it be true'; 'goes to prove that the writer is a great liar'. *The Morning Chronicle*, 24 December 1796. Full quote is: 'A young Literary Adventurer has lately published a pamphlet respecting himself, which, if it be true, goes to prove that the writer is a great liar.' This is slightly misquoted in *The Confessions*, p. 269: 'W. H. Ireland has come forward and announced himself author of the papers attributed by him to Shakspeare; which, if *true*, proves him to be a *liar*'.
- *Mr Ireland's Vindication of his Conduct: Mr Ireland's Vindication of his Conduct, Respecting The Publication of the supposed Shakspeare MSS, Being a Preface or Introduction to A Reply to the Critical Labors of Mr Malone, In His "Enquiry Into The Authenticity Of Certain Papers. &c. &c."*, London, 1796
- Second: *An Investigation of Mr. Malone's Claim to the Character of Scholar, or Critic, Being an Examination of his Inquiry Into The Authenticity of the Shakspeare Manuscripts, &c*, Samuel Ireland, London, 1797.
- Leicester: *Ibid*, p. 24.
- Handwriting: *Ibid*, p. 11.
- Letter 'r': *Ibid*, p. 64.
- Hen and chicken: *Ibid*, p. 116.
- Blooming or blossoming: *Ibid*, p. 105: 'He insinuates that Shakspeare was too good a naturalist not to know, that a bud first blooms, and then blossoms. And so it may be in Ireland, but in England, we are accustomed to say, that a tree first blossoms, but continues in bloom.'
- The papers were fake. *Ibid*, pp. 28-9. Malone had stated that if it could be proved that just one word in the papers could not have existed in Elizabethan times, then everything else must be a forgery. Ireland argues that if a witness accuses someone of a crime, despite many others giving him alibis, then we shouldn't necessarily believe the truth of the single person.
- 'by far the best written book we have seen since the commencement of the dispute': *The Monthly Mirror*, 1797, p. 99.
- Left him his watch: *ODNB*, Ireland, William Henry (1775–1835).
- Prolific author: 'William Henry Ireland: Catalogue of Works', *Notes And Queries*, 14 May, 1932, pp. 347-350.
- Major confession: *The Confessions of William-Henry Ireland. Containing The Particulars of his Fabrication of the Shakspeare Manuscripts; Together with Anecdotes and Opinions of Many Distinguished persons in the Literary, Political, and Theatrical World*, London, 1805.
- 'the whole taken together will excite pity from some, indignation from others, and great astonishment from all': *The British Critic*, July 1805, p. 93.
- *Vortigern: Vortigern; An Historical Play; With An Original Preface by W.H. Ireland. Presented at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, on Saturday April 2, 1796. As a Supposed Newly-Discovered Drama of Shakspeare*. London: Joseph Thomas, 1832.

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- Letter to Anne Hathaway: 'William Henry Ireland's Authentic Forgeries', Jack Lynch, *The Princeton University Library Chronicle*, Vol. 66, No. 1, Autumn 2004, p. 89.
- Confession: Debate over this took place at the time as well. There was a public debate held in the Assembly Rooms in Brewer Street asking the question: 'Do the Shakespearean Manuscripts, the Play of Vortigern and Rowena, and the Apology of Mr. Ireland Jun. exhibit stronger Proofs of Authenticity, flagrant Imposition, or the Credulity of Persons of Genius?' Playbill dated 9 January 1797 in BL MS 30349 112.
- 'no person will admit you into their house': Cited in *Reforging Shakespeare*, p. 198, and note 77, p. 249, as letter from Samuel to William-Henry, as 16 June, 1796, BL MS 30346, 249v.
- Dubious provenance: *Ibid*, p. 121.
- 'Shakspeare humbug' and 'determined not to be outdone': *Gazetteer* 5 January, 1797, 30349 109.
- 'literary impostor': *The Morning Chronicle*, 6 January 1797.
- *The Oaken Chest or the Gold Mines of Ireland: The Oaken Chest or the Gold Mines of Ireland a Farce, Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires, Vol. VII, 1793-1800*, Mary Dorothy George, 1942, no. 8884, pp. 297-8.

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- *Notorious Characters. No. 1: Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires, Vol. VII*, no. 9064, p. 378. The engraving is referred to in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, November 1797, p. 931. Same article also states that *The Oaken Chest*, by Mr Nixon, 'made their appearance above a year ago'.

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- 'This declaration, therefore, totally exculpates the father Mr S Ireland, from all share or participation in the forgeries, if forgeries they can be called.' BL MS 30347 36.

- 'gross libel': BL MS 30347 37, Opinion of Mr Tidd, 6 December 1797.
- 'perfectly absurd and unadvisable': BL MS 30347 39, Opinion of Mr Erskine, 23 June 1798, going along with William Garrow's opinion.
- 'pretended quarrel': Letter from George Steevens, 26 December 1796 in *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, John Bowyer Nichols, Volume VII, London, 1848, p. 9.
- 'concerned in devising'; 'fabrication' and 'the story of his son': *Records of My Life*, p. 245.

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- 'thoroughly believed his son's honesty': *The Farington Diary*, p. 145. Henry Angelo was another man who absolved Samuel of culpability, although in his case retrospectively. *Reminiscences of Henry Angelo*, London: Henry Colburn, 1828, p. 126: 'The late Samuel Ireland, of Shakspearean renown, though certainly acquitted by posterity of any share in the memorable hoax connected with that abused name, was an able hand in detecting pretenders and quacks.'

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- Less than bright: Samuel always thought his son was stupid. *The Boy Who Would be Shakespeare*, chapter 2, loc. 330 states he had a reputation as a 'blockhead'. Great Ealing School was, just one of a number of educational establishments in England he attended: he was given a letter from the headmaster stating that he shouldn't bother returning after the holidays as trying to teach him was a waste of money, see *The Confessions*, p. 3. Taken on a trip up the Thames, Samuel pointed out Alexander Pope's residency to his son and informed him that he would never achieve such literary fame as the great poet: 'I fear you will never shine such a star in the hemisphere of literary fame'. Anecdote appears in MS Note (1834) in *Ireland's Shaksperian Fabrications* in Harvard College Library (TS 680.23.5F), cited in *Shakespeare's Lives*, p. 135 and p. 579, note 74.
- 'forbad you to trust him': *The London Review*, 27 October 1860, p. 395, written by Charles Mackay. But see *Notes and Queries*, p. 275, April 16, 1932 for a caveat about Mackay who only 'having met him in business, as he knew nothing at first-hand of his character or home life'.
- Kick out of lying: Jack Lynch believes him to be a serial liar. 'William Henry Ireland's Authentic Forgeries', pp. 79-96.
- Wealthy woman: BL MS Folio 30346 206.
- William the Conqueror: BL MS Folio 30346 225.
- Mental breakdown: *The Fourth Forger, William Ireland and the Shakespeare Papers*, John Mair, London: Cobden-Sanderson, 1938, cited in *Reforging Shakespeare*, p. 202. 'Mair's opinion is that William-Henry might have gone temporarily insane.'
- 'brain was affected': BL MS Folio 30346 225.

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- £60: *The Confessions*, p. 140.
- Obtaining money: *Ibid*, p. 140.
- Shakespearian papers are worth: BL MS Folio 30346 24 & 34.
- Paid 1,000 guineas: *The Confessions*, pp. 163-4.
- 'prove a source of benefit': *Ibid*, p. 183.
- 'occasion a little mirth': *An Authentic Account*, p. 3.
- 'men of superior genius' and 'I knew how far the credulity of mankind might be imposed upon.' *The Abbess, A Romance*, W. H. Ireland, The Avowed Author of the Shakspear Papers, &c. &c. In Four Volumes, Vol. 1, London, 1799, Preface x.
- 'own vanity': *An Authentic Account*, p. 9.

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- 'being scarcely seventeen years and a half old': *The Confessions*, p. 301.
- 'My boyhood should have in some measure screened me from the malice of my persecutors': *Ibid*, pp. 301-2.
- 'considerably under the age of eighteen when I wrote the play of Vortigern': *Ibid*, p. 135.
- 'thoughtless impulse of a head-strong youth, under seventeen years of age': *Vortigern; An Historical Play*, Preface, p. iii.
- Nineteen years old: *An Authentic Account*, p. 21. 'At the time of it's [sic - Vortigern] completion, I was about nineteen years of age.' It was finished around April 1795.
- True age: He was born on 2 August 1775.
- 'a boy of seventeen years of age' and 'boyish folly': *The Confessions*, p. 315.
- 'to afford pleasure to a parent': *Vortigern; An Historical Play*, Preface, p. iii.
- 'permanent gratification': *Ibid*, Preface, p. xiii.
- 'my father's enthusiasm' and 'the happiest of human beings': *Ibid*, Preface, p. ii.
- Walter Raleigh: BL MS Folio 30346 173, dated 12 April, 1796.

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- 'the enormous crime you committed against the divinity of Shakspeare'; 'nothing short of sacrilege' and 'sample of mingled pedantry and folly': *Vortigern; An Historical Play*, Preface, p. xiii.
- 'injured no one': *Ibid*, Preface, p. vii.