This section includes:

(1) A stylometric analysis of Sheldon's own writings, comparing his writings with the known patterns of word usage and original spellings of the Shakespeare works.

(2) Description of three Sheldon mysteries: Philip Henslowe's reference in his diaries dated 29 August 1594 to "Mr. Shealden, player"; the construction and dedication of the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford in the 1660s; a report in 1789 that the actor Shakspere's skull had been stolen from his grave in 1794 and found in Sheldon's crypt in Beoley, Worcestershire.

Finally, a modern transcription of the deposition of Sheldon from the case *Russell v. Sheldon* (STAC 5/R41/32; November 1584 – November 1585), with a copy of the original document, is attached to the end of the section.

I. STYLOMETRIC COMPARISON OF SHELDON'S AND SHAKESPEARE'S WRITINGS

Introduction

This compares the writing patterns in a deposition from Sheldon in a legal case *Russell v. Sheldon* (STAC 5/R41/32, November 1584/5) with known grammatical and spelling patterns of Shakespeare.

The transcription of this deposition is attached to the end of this section; it was taken from the original document (6500 words on 128 lines). The document was obtained from the UK National Archives. A copy of this original document is appended to the last page of the transcription.

The deposition was offered to in response to a complaint filed in Star Chamber by Sheldon's son-in-law John Russell who was alleging that Sheldon was trying to take his wife away because "for difference between them in causes of religion."

Sheldon defended his daughter Elizabeth and his wife Ann Throckmorton against Russell's attempts to indict them both as Catholic recusants. A portion of the case was reported by Leslie Hotson in his book, *I, William Shakespeare* (London, Jonathan Cape, 1937); while Hotson was not suggesting that Sheldon was Shakespeare, he did charectarize the incident as providing "ample material" for "clashes between the Montagues and Capulets" (Hotson, p. 34).

Comparison with Shakespeare Stylometrics

Although there has been no computer analysis of this document, broadly speaking this legal deposition appears a very good match for the Shakespeare plays in terms of both (A) word usage and (B) original spelling. Each is considered below.

A. Word Usage

In *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), Hugh Craig and Arthur F. Kinney introduce their proposed lexicon of Shakespeare words with: "A disputed passage in which some or all of *gentle*, *answer*, and *beseech* occur, and in which there are no instances of *yes*, *brave*, *sure*, and *hopes*, shows an affinity with known Shakespeare" (Craig/Kinney, p. 18). By this standard, the deposition shows an affinity with Shakespeare: while there is no instance of "beseech," there are 2 instances of "gently" ("gently and friendly entertained" at line 36; "gently entertained" at line 123), with 14 instances of "answer" (or answered), and there is no usage of *yes*, *brave*, *sure*, or *hopes*. Beyond this, there are other important marker words, some measured to be preferred by Shakespeare and others less frequently (or rarely) used by Shakespeare in his plays.

Table 1 below shows the usage of these marker words by Sheldon in his legal deposition. As can be seen, Sheldon's usage (or non-usage) is consistent with Shakespeare's word preferences.

Table 1. Sheldon Usage in Deposition of Common Shakespeare Markers

Preferred Shakespeare Word Usage	Non-Preferred Shakespeare Word Usage	Source
Gentle ("gently") (2 times); answer (14); beseech (0)	Yes (0); brave (0); sure (0); hopes (0)	Hugh Craig and Arthur F. Kinney, *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship* (Cambridge Univ Press, 2009), p. 18: basic test for affinity with Shakespeare word usage.
Hath (27) Doth (5)	Has (0) Does (0)	Craig/Kinney, pp. 34-5, 38-9.
That (used as conjunction)(100)		Craig/Kinney, p. 39.
Most (28)	Much (2)	Craig, "Common-word Frequencies, Shakespeare's Style, and the *Elegy* by W.S.," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 8.1 (May 2002): commenting on "most" as an important "serviceable" common-word marker of Shakespeare. Also Ward E.Y. Elliott and Robert J. Valenza, "And Then There Were None: Winnowing the Shakespeare Claimants," *Computers and the Humanities,* vol. 30, no. 3 (1996), pp. 191-235, at 201.
	Ye (0) Contractions (0)	Elliott/Valenza, pp. 196, 199. Also Craig/Kinney, p. 35.
You (13); I (4); he (36); your (1); she (4); it (17)	Thy (0); thou (0); thee (0); we (0); they (7)	Elliott/Valenza, p. 196.
Good (9); better (5)	Best (0)	Elliott/Valenza, p. 196.

Preferred Shakespeare Word Usage	Non-Preferred Shakespeare Word Usage	Source
Where-compound words such as whereof (23); there-compound words such as therein (41)		Elliott/Valenza, p. 200.
	Ours (0); hers (0); ought (0); tonight (0); couldst (0); darest (0); us (0); methought (0); theirs (0); mightst (0); its (0); beest (0); sire (0); ours (0); ourself (0); up (as preposition) (0); dared (0); selves (0); methought (0); mought (0); mine (as noun) (0); mowe (0); oughtst (0); wolle (0)	Craig, "Common-words," Table 3.

B. Original Spelling

The text spelling in the modern transcription has been almost completely modernized; however, the spelling in the original document is very different from the modern spelling.

As an example of the original spelling, the first five lines of the document are set forth in their original spelling, line by line:

(1) The said Defendt sayth that he veryly thincketh that the said bill of complaynt against him, exhybyted in this honorable courte, is in the most materyall pts thereof false, untrue, and insuffycyent in the lawe to be answeared unto, for dyvers manyfest and apparant causes therein contayned, and the

(2) matters thereof devysed and ymagyned of purpose only to put this defendt to moore vexacyon, trovble, and expences in the lawe without any suche iuste cause, as by the said bill ys pretended.

All advanntage to the insuffycyentcy of w^{ch} said byll to this defendt saved he, this defendt,

(3) for answeare to suche of the matters as do concerne the said defendt: sayeth fyrst tovching the pl's allegacions that this defendant hath been vowed & addicted to papishcall Religion, and that this defendt hath been a gever of counteyance unto Recusants & knowen adversaryes to religion established.

(4) This defendt thincketh that to these (& suche lyke generall (& uncertayne sclaunders tovching these or lyke matters he this Sefendt shall not be inforced to answeare [and herein doth refer himself to the consyderacyn of this honorable court whether he shalbe enforced to answeare] the same therein: for that this Defendt thincketh the matters tovching the same are suche as this honorable courte seldome or never heareth or

(5) determyneth, especyally whan the same ys so enterlaced with pryvate matters as in the same bill of complaynt the same are ymportynently inserted.

The original spellings in the Sheldon deposition can be compared to the recognized "old-fashioned" spellings in the early Shakespeare plays. Arguing for the similarity of the spellings in Hand D in the Sir Thomas More play to those of Shakespeare's early quartos, the editor J. Dover Wilson catalogued a large number of "old-fashioned" spellings in early Shakespeare quarto publications, spellings he said were "unusual forms for the writers of the period."

(See Craig/Kinney, p. 139, quoting Wilson; also see "Frequently Asked Questions" in this website, number 4, on Shakespeare as an older man, with full discussion of Wilson's findings.)

Wilson originally focused on the rare spelling "scilens" for "silence" ('sc' for 's'). While there is no spelling "scilens" in the deposition, there is a (somewhat) similar variable spelling: line 4, "sclaunder" for "slander" (although the "sc" in "sclaunder" may have sounded like a 'k'). There are, however, other noticeable

similarities between Wilson's list of old-fashioned spellings and the Sheldon deposition. For example, 'c' and 't' interchangeable before -ion: see line 2, "vexacyon", see line 4, "consyderacyn"; 'ck' for 'k' after 'n': see line 1 & 4, "thincketh"; 'a' for 'e': line 1, "apparent"; the use of 'w^{ch}' for 'which': see "w^{ch}" in line 2.

II. THREE SHELDON MYSTERIES

Three unexplained mysteries related to Sheldon follow. First, there is a 1594 notation "Mr Shealden, player" in the *Diary of Philip Henslowe* (Shakespeare Society, 1845, p. 112); according to the book, this is the only mention of "Sheldon as a player." Then, in the period since Sheldon's death in 1613, two other mysteries arose, one regarding the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford, first conceived in 1663, 50 years after the death of Ralph Sheldon; and the second, a 1879 report that the actor Shakspere's skull was stolen from his grave in 1794 and found in Ralph Sheldon's crypt at Beoley, Worcestershire.

Mystery #1: In his *History of the Elizabethan Stage* (vol. II, p.339), E.K. Chambers lists 'Shealden': "A 'player', witnessed a loan for Henslowe on 29 August 1594," referring to the aforementioned notation in Henslowe's Diary. There is no further notice of 'Shealden' (or Sheldon) in either the Diary or any other list of Elizabethan players. In June 1594, the Henslowe's troupe had just begun a series of joint operations with Shakespeare's Lord Chamberlain's Men. But at the same time, scandals surrounded the both Sheldon and the name of Shakespeare. The year before, in 1593, the writer had first used the name 'William Shakespeare,' publishing the wildly popular *Venus & Adonis*, which was also gaining a reputation as a lascivious poem (see *HM* on Labeo, 212-17). In its wake, another popular poem *Willobie His Avisa* (1594) which referred to "Lucrece rape" added to the scandal, referring to "W.S." – as an "old player" who unsuccessfully woed Avisa (perhaps the 'Dark Lady'). Further, during the same month Sheldon witnessed Henslowe's loan, he was in London for a Privy Council inquiry concerning a Catholic plot to kill the Queen (the charges against Sheldon were found baseless, *HM* 211). Subsequently, a hitherto unknown actor named William Shakespeare was recorded for the first time in the records of the era, headlining, with actors Kempe and Burbage, the court Christmas festivities 1594/5. Was this possibly a mask for the unexpectedly newly notorious writer 'William Shakespeare'?

Mystery #2: The history of the Sheldonian Theatre, dedicated in a great ceremony in July 1669 in Oxford, is odd. Gilbert Sheldon (1598-1677), son of a yeoman and a distant cousin of Ralph's, rose to prominence after the Restoration becoming the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1663. At that time, he proposed that a Theatre be built as the Oxford graduation hall, and he himself paid for its entire construction: even so, he notoriously refused to attend the dedication ceremony, or even see the building that was to be named the Sheldonian in his honor. Modeled after the open-air theatres of the 16th and 17th century, it was first time a theatre was built and used for such purpose. If there were to be a tribute to Sheldon as the playwright Shakespeare, the Sheldonian Theatre – with its U-shaped design, ceiling painted to mimic the sky, located facing the Bodleian Library – would be ideal. See Appendix I.

Mystery #3: Two magazine articles in 1879 and 1884 reported that art historian Horace Walpole (1717-97) offered 300 pounds to anyone who could obtain the skull of the actor Shakspere. Walpole's ancestory was Catholic, and he was a close friend of Lady Frances Browne, born Frances Sheldon. Frances Sheldon was the daughter of Edward Sheldon, the great-great grandson of Ralph Sheldon. Subsequently, in 1794,the Shakspere skull was stolen, and it was reported that the skull eventually ended up in the Sheldon family crypt at Beoley in Worcestershire, specifically in the funerary urn of Ralph Sheldon.

Modern investigation using radar imaging found, indeed, that the Shakspere's skull was missing from his grave in Stratford. In 2009, a photographer for a local newspaper investigated a rogue "undersized" skull that was found in the Sheldon crypt. But the skull itself (over 200 years later) has not been conclusively identified as the Shakspere skull. Nonetheless, most of the details of the original account have proved accurate. See New York Times, 3 March 2025.

Appendix I: The Sheldonian: Why a Theatre?

As noted, the Sheldonian Theatre has an odd history. It's unquestionable purpose from its inception in 1663 was to be an auditorium for the annual Oxford graduation ceremony (the "Act").[1] Yet the building has always had an uncanny

[1] Anthony Geraghty, *The Sheldonian Theatre* (Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2013), 1.

resemblance to the London playhouses built in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries; the contemporary Oxford antiquarian Anthony Woods noted at the time that the auditorium was "built theatre-ways" with gated entrances much like the London playhouses.[2] Moreover, in its theatre design it was unique: according to architectural historian Anthony Geraghty, it was the first example of a theatre design actually built and used for the purpose of the graduation ceremony.[3] How was this concept conceived, and whose idea was it?

The project was first mentioned in1603, early in the era of the English Restoration. In January 1603, the Earl of Clarendon, then Chancellor of Oxford wrote to Vice-Chancellor Walter Blandford:

> I remember it was in the designes or hopes of my Lord of Canterbury to gett in the Tenements betweene the Scholes and St Maries, & there to have erected a Theatre for the Act, which indeed the University stands in need of, and St Maries ought to be freed from it; if that designe could be persued it would well bring all ends to passe, and containe a noble structure for the Press as well as other purposes.[4]

So, where did this novel idea of a Theatre come from, and from whom? Geraghty argues strenuously that the idea for the Theatre came from Clarendon, acting upon the memory of William Laud (1573-1645), Chancellor of Oxford from 1630 and Archbishop of Canterbury from 1633. Laud had long sought to separate the secular function of the graduation "Act" from the church of St. Mary's, thereby protecting the religious sanctity of the chuch from the "profaneness" of the annual ceremony.[5]

---

[2] Geraghty, 18.
[3] Geraghty, 98 ; Geraghty notes that a similiar theatre concept had been considered for a university in Naples in 1615 but was never completed.
[4] Geraghty, 28.
[5] Geraghty, 26-27.

Traditionally, however, the idea has been thought to have come from Gilbert Sheldon, a man newly appointed as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1563. Sheldon, an ally of Clarendon's,[6] went on to personally finance the entire cost of the Theatre, with an additional fund for its upkeep.[7]

Despite the obviously key role of Clarendon, Geraghty also acknowledges that Clarendon's role was "quickly eclipsed" by the "munificence" of Sheldon, and he notes that Anthony Wood made no mention of his role with the Theatre in his biography of Clarendon.[8]

Moreover, Geraghty's research indicates a strong "shadowy" background influence from Sheldon. According to Geraghty:

> There is reason to believe that he [Clarendon] was encouraged in this respect [that is, to promote the building of the new Theatre] by Gilbert Sheldon, whose early involvement with the Theatre that was eventually to bear his name is somewhat shadowy. There are grounds for supposing that he was involved from as early as the spring of 1663. At this stage Clarendon was still hoping to fund the project by several 'good Benefactors', and on 30 April he informed the vice-chancellor that he already knew 'where 1000 [pounds] is to be had'. As this is exactly the sum that Gilbert Sullivan subsequently donated (in June 1664), we can be fairly confident that the "1000 pounds" mentioned by Clarendon had been promised by Sheldon. If so, then Sheldon's encouragement of the project from behind the scenes would tally with [Anthony] Wood's statement that the Theatre was 'animated . . . by the exhortation of divers eminent persons, especially those Bishops that had been formerly Members of the University'.[9]

[6] See Geraghty, 29, referring to Clarendon's "friend Sheldon."
[7] Charles Edward Mallet, *A History of the University of Oxford*, vol. II (Oxford, Methuen & Co., 1924), 426.
[8] Geraghty, 28.
[9] Geraghty, 31-2.

Sheldon had been elected Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, in 1622, and in 1635, became the Warden of the College.[10]

While there can be no doubt of Clarendon's commitment (and that of Laud) to removing all secular activity from St. Mary's,[11] the question still remains: why a theatre and why a theatre modeled after the open-air Lond theatres of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries?

The building was the first major stucture designed by architect Christopher Wren (1632-1723); while it is unknown exactly how the then-novice architect Wren was appointed to the task,[12] both Wren and his father were associated with Sheldon as former Fellows of All Souls College.

Although the Theatre has never been used to stage plays, Wren's preliminary design in early 1663, included a model of a theatre to be used in the "acting of plays." Henry Oldenburg, Secretary to the Royal Society, wrote to John Evelyn of 16 April 1603: "Dr. Wren has brought to town the modell of a Theatre, to be built for the Oxonian Acts, and for Playes also."[13] Thus, even though the Sheldonian Theatre has never been actually used to stage plays, in its original concept, it was not only to look like a Theatre but also to function as a playhouse.

As earlier noted, Sheldon went on to fund the entire project, apparently of his own funds. Sheldon was born in the village of Stanton in the county of Staffordshire in 1698, son of Roger Sheldon, the servant of Gilbert, the seventh Earl of Shrewsbury.[14] As mentioned, Gilbert Sheldon was elected Fellow of All

[10] Vernon Staley, *The Life and Times of Gilbert Sullivan* (London, Wells, Gardner, Darton & Co, 1913), 32.
[11] Geraghty, 31.
[12] Geraghty, 35.
[13] Geraghty, 52.
[14] Staley, 4-5.

Souls in 1622 and then Warden in 1635. In 1648, he was removed from his position as Warden of All Souls, and imprisoned for six months.[15] In 1660, with the Restoration of Charles II, Gilbert was appointed Bishop of London, and then, in 1663, Archbishop of Canterbury.

There is no indication of how Sheldon acquired the immense amount of money (14, 470 pounds, according to Mallet) necessary to fund the construction and operation of the Sheldonian Theater.[16] Although his biographer Staley speculated that as the Sheldons "were an old Staffordshire family," there was "no doubt Gilbert Sheldon inherited some of those ample funds which he later contributed so lavishly to public objects in both Church and State," he provides no evidence for this statement.[17]

The construction of the Theatre preceded relatively quickly, with the building completely constucted by 1669. The opening ceremony was held on 9 July 1669, with the consecration of the Theatre, and continuing with great celebrations through 12 July. According to Anthony Wood, it was a "great Act: a vast concourse of people. The players (duke of York's) came and acted at the Guildhall yard – carried away de claro 1500li. Scholars pawned books, bedding, blankets – laughing at London – but afterwards they grew wiser."[18]

In the meantime, Sheldon had been elected Chancellor of Oxford upon Clarendon's withdrawal in December 1667. However, according to Mallet, he "could never find time to visit Oxford." Moreover, in astounding fashion, he did

---

[15] Anthony Wood, *The History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford*, vol. I (Oxford, 1796), 554-605; Staley 53-4.
[16] Mallet, p. 426, footnote 2: Mallet states that the actual construction of the building cost Sheldon 12,239 pounds, according to Oxford accounts.
[17] Staley, 4.
[18] Wood, *Life and Times of Oxford*, vol. II (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1891-1900), 165.

not even attend the "chief event of his Chancellorship," which was the "opening of the Theatre that bears his name."[19]

At the ceremony, with Sheldon in absentia, the University Registrar read "the founder's [Sheldon's] grant and gift of it [the Theatre] to the University";[20] and also the Vice Chancellor declared that Sheldon intended to "endow his Benefaction," giving an additional sum of 2000 pounds for its upkeep.[21]

John Evelyn was present in Oxford for the Sheldonian opening ceremony, and on that day he wrote: "In the morning , was celebrated the Encaenia of the New Theatre, so magnificently built by the munificence of Dr. Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury, in which was spent 25,000 pounds, Sir Christopher Wren, the Architect (as I remember) told me; and yet it was never seen by the benefactor, my Lord Archbishop having told me that he never did nor ever would see it."[22] Sheldon resigned his Chancellorship the following month, in August 1669.

There has never been any explanation for Sheldon's seemingly inexplicable refusal to attend the opening of the Theatre for which he contributed such huge amounts of money and which bore his name.

As mentioned at the outset, if there were to be a most fitting tribute to the memory of Ralph Sheldon, it would be the Sheldonian Theatre. Although Gibert Sheldon was not directly related to Ralph's family from Worcestershire/Warwickshire, he did adopt the coat of arms of Ralph's family

[19] Mallet, 426.
[20] Staley, 152.
[21] Wood, *Life and Times of Oxford*, vol. II, 800.
[22] Staley, 151-52.

(historic arms for the family, signified by its three sheldrakes) in 1660, upon his ascension to Bishop of London. He was the first member of his Sheldon family to adopt such heraldry. In passing, it is also worth noting that Anthony Wood, the chief chronicler of Oxford of the time, was a long-time friend of Ralph Sheldon, the grandson of Ralph Sheldon of Beoley. And as it happens, Wood did not mention the absence of Sheldon in his otherwise elaborate description of the event.

III. MODERN TEXT TRANSCRIPTION OF SHELDON DEPOSITION

This is a modern transcription of the legal deposition of Ralph Sheldon in the case *Russell v. Sheldon*, STAC 5/R41/32 (November 1584 – November 1585). The transcription adjusts the original line-by-line transcription to include paragraph spacing, punctuation, and modern spelling (y=i; u=v; j added; modern spelling where does not change the meaning of the word).

The original document from the UK National Archives is appended to the last page. It should be noted that the document was one large page, with over 6500 words on 128 lines, and only two notable cross-outs. (Compare the commentary from the First Folio by the players John Heminge and Henrie Condell: “wee have scarse received from him [Shakespeare] a blot in his papers.”)

> **NOTE**: This text transcription indicates the number of each line of the text from the original document. Following the transcription is the original document received from the UK National Archives. This is the document from which the transcription was made by the author.

Sheldon Deposition (STAC 5/R41/32)

[line 1] The said defendant sayth that he verily thinketh that the said bill of complaint against him, exhibited in this honorable courte, is in the most material parts thereof false, untrue, and insufficient in the law to be answered unto, for diverse, manifest, and apparent causes therein contained; and the [line 2] matters thereof devised and imagined of purpose only to put this defendant to more vexacion, trouble, and expenses in the law without any such just cause, as by the said bill is pretended.

All advantage to the insufficiency of which said bill to this defendant saved he, this defendant, [line 3] for answer to such of the matters as do concern the said defendant: sayeth first touching the pl's allegations that this defendant hath been vowed & addicted to papishcall Religion, and that this defendant hath been a giver of countenance unto Recusants and known adversaries to religion established.

[line 4] This defendant thinketh that to these and such like general and uncertain slanders touching these or like matters he this defendant shall not be enforced to answer [and herein doth refer himself to the consideration of this honorable court whether he shall be enforced to answer] the same therein: for that this defendant thinketh the matters touching the same are such as this honorable courte seldom or never heareth or [line 5] determineth, especially when the same is

so interlaced with private matters as in the same bill of complaint the same are importently inserted.

Nevertheless for some declaration and satisfaction to this honorable court, and those which shall see or hear this defendant's answer touching this [line 6] defendant's duty and allegeances to the Queen's most excellent majesty, this defendant sayth that since the said defendant did make his submission unto the honorable Lords of her majesty's privy council, he the said defendant hath in all things (to his knowledge) dutyfully and most faithfully performed his dutys [line 7] and alleageance according to the said submission, and in his conscience thinketh the same to be well known to the said complainant, for that in the persons of the sayd complainant he the said defendant since hath dutyfully accomplished the same.

And whereas the said complainant in the said bill pretendeth that [line 8] this defendant sought to separate the said complainants wife from him, and that for the difference between them in causes of Religion: this defendant sayeth that the said complainant hath often showed himself, long before the time of separation in the bill specified, by speeches delivered by the said complainant to the said [line 9] defendant and to divers other persons, and by many other circumstances, to dislike and conceive displeasure against his said wife for other causes too tedious to be herein inserted, and as this defendant taketh it, unfit to trouble this honorable court

withal. And the said complainant hath, many times before the time of [line 10] separation in the bill specified, used vile and evil means to his said wife, as well by shutting and locking her up and restraining her of her liberty, and by taking and removing from her such necessary persons as were both comfortable and serviceable unto her, and in place of them appointed others, who [line 11] as it was thought, were very lewd and badly disposed persons; and hath most cruelly, unmanly, and barbarously beaten and stricken her (as it hath been constantly affirmed) thinking thereby to make her weary of her life and to compel her to be willing to depart without any allowance at all for [line 12] her maintenance, or at the least, with a very small portion.

And likewise long before the time of separation in the bill alleged, the complainant sent her home to the house of the said defendant in most vile and despiteful manner without the consent of the sayd defendant, and (as the said defendant thinketh) against the [line 13] will and liking of his said wife: whereupon complaint was made by the said defendant unto her majesty's council in the Marches of Wales, which thereupon after long and deliberate hearing thereof by consent of the said complainant, did set down an order for the good usage and intreaty of his sayd wife who [line 14] was by the same order to be sent for to the house of the now defendant, and from thence to be brought by the means of one Richard Lygon, Esquire deceased, to the house of the complainant.

The which was not performed by the means of the said complainant, by reason whereof. And by the unreverent usage of the said complainant [line 15] towards her majesty's said council, information was given by the said council unto some of the Lords of her highness's most honorable privy council, whereupon means was not only made on behalf of the said complainant to stay the said defendant from prosecuting the said complainant by way of suit: [line 16] where as otherwise this defendant thinketh the said complainant should have received condign punishment for his contemptuous and unreverent breach of the aforesaid order of her majesty's council in the Marches of Wales.

But also the said defendant, upon the said means used, was contented for his said [line 17] daughter's quietness to have a full end to be made between the said complainant and the said defendant, and that a convenient portion should be affirmed for the maintenance of the complainant's said wife which end and portion aforesaid appointed were made and set down by the Right Honorable Lord Chancellor of [line 18] England and Sir William Cordell knight deceased then Master of the Rules.

And therefore this defendant marveleth [line 19] that the said complainant can so impudently affirm that matter of Religion was the cause of the severerance of the complainant and his said wife when it as well known that the said complainant and his wife were married by a minister according to her majesty's

laws. And this defendant hath credibly heard that the said complainant's wife after the aforesaid marriage did many times accompany the said complainant at service and publicly prays according to her majesty's laws, said in his [line 20] house at Strensham.

And whereas the said complainant importantly surmiseth, that secret masses were continually used in the house of the said defendant, and also brought to the house of the said complainant in the time of his absence beyond the seas: this defendant thinketh that the complainant thereby showeth his malice [line 21] very apparently for that whereas he did about three years now past absence, which time hit hath been reported that there was apprehended by the sayd complainant an old priest, with whom after the said complainant had conference (the said complainant seeking, as it is thought to shadow his practice and malicious intent) [line 22] caused the sayd old priest to be brought before the now Right Honorable the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, then being Bishop of Worcester, and before whom it was sayed he had confessed he had said mass at Strensham by the procurement of Anne, the wife of the said defendant: whereupon advertisement was given [line 23] to the Right Honorable the Lords of her highness's privy council, and by their honors's direction to the sayd Lord Archbishop, the sayd Lord Archbishop was also required to examine the fate of that matter, which was effectually done.

And yet the said complainant's malice was not satisfied by these proceedings; [line 24] for after that time the said complainant (as the said defendant hath been credibly informed) to show further his wicked malice against the said defendant and the wife of this defendant and also against the said complainant's own wife by all the means he could, did assay and attempt at diverse Quarter Sessions and assises held [line 25] in the county of Worcester, to indict the wife of the said defendant and Elizabeth the wife of the said complainant: which by no means he could bring to pass (as this defendant thinketh) whether the County gave little credit unto his information, noting (as it may be thought) his extreme malice [line 26] or whether it were defect of good and sufficient matter.

And for further proof that the said complainant desired the said separation of the said complainant from his wife, about Easter last past, this defendant sayeth, that about the xxiii of March last, one Rowland Baugh, gent, did come to this defendant with Letters [line 27] from him the said complainant as sent by the said complainant, wherein the complainant in effect requested a separation betwixte him and his said wife, with an offer therein of a convenient portion for her mantenance, showing that he thought the same meetest for them both. And by the said Rowland Baugh made means [line 28] that the said yearly allowannce or portion might be reduced to some reasonable rate, for that this complainant sayed he meant to be good to his children, who should be no further charge or burthen to

his wife their mother than she should thinke good of: upon which said complainant's Letters and by the mediation of the said Rowland Baugh [line 29] there ensued an agreement for a separation and portion to be allowed for the complainant's said wife's maintenance.

And for a final end therein, one Robert Harper, this defendant's servant in the bill mentioned, and one Nicholas Follyate servant likewise unto this defendant, were sent unto the complainant's house at Strensham the said week before [line 30] Easter last past in the bill mentioned with the books for the said yearly allowance and portion engrossed, to the intent the complainant should seal and deliver the same in due form of law: upon which said Harper and Follyate then and thither coming with the said Rowland Baugh and showing of the said books to the sayd [line 31] complainant.

The said complainant after perusing thereof (as the said Harper informed the now defendant) thereupon misliked the same, for that therein was 30 pounds portion by the year more than he the said complainant would assent to give, and yet was all of hit less than the yearly sent of one hundred marks which the said [line 32] complainant in his said bill pretendeth that he hath allowed his said wife: whereuppon the sayd Harper and Follyate departed. And afterwards the sayd Harper and Follyate being by the complainant's procurement sent for back again,

upon the morrow being Wednesday came to Strensham aforesaid where the [line 33] said assurance was sealed by the said complainant.

Whereupon the said Harper & Follyatt being ready to depart from thence, having given no reason of offense to the said complainant (to this defendant's knowledge) the said complainant (as this defendant was told by the said Harper) used then unseemly words [line 34] to Harper aforesaid, against Harper and this defendant, and threatened to fight with him and this defendant. And being wished to be better advised than to quarrel with this defendant, the said complainant (as this defendant hath heard) in most furious manner replied to this effect that he would fight [line 35] with the said defendant, with Edward Sheldon the defendant his son and heir apparent, and Francis Clare esquire, this defendant's son-in-law by marriage, and that shortly after he the said complainant would send to challenge them all.

And further this defendant sayeth that on the said Tuesday in the Easter week, in the [line 36] said bill mentioned, the said Francis Clynton in the bill specified came to Beoley aforesaid about twelve of the clock the same day (the said defendant with others his friends then being at dinner) where the said defendant and others his friends and servants gently and friendly entertained him. And this defendant [line 37] did demand of him whether he would please to sit

down to dinner, when he answered, “No”; whereupon the said Clynton was requested to go into the buttery there to dine by himself, which the said Clynton likewise refused, whereupon some one of the defendant’s friends rose from the table [line 38] and accompanied him in most friendly manner into the sais defendant’s garden at Beoley aforesaid, praying him (as this defendant is informed) to go and eat some meat, to whom he answered that he would neither eat nor drink before he had delivered his message to Mr Sheldon, meaning this defendant.

[line 39] Immediately after dinner aforesaid, this defendant, calling to mind the unseemly speeches and words of challenge used by the said complainant to the foresaid Harper, and thinking the said Clynton’s coming was to make the said challenge with this defendant, thereupon the said defendant requested Robert Acton, Francis Clare, [line 40] and George Skynner esquire, there present at aforesaid, to accompany the said defendant, and to hear such words as the said Clynton should use to the said defendant. And upon the meeting of the said defendant and the said Clynton in the garden, the said Clynton demanded of the said defendant whether he might [line 41] speak with the said defendant alone or privately, to which the said defendant answered to this effect (as the nowe defendant remembreth), “No, for that you, Mr Clynton, are to me a stranger, and a man with whom I have had small acquaintenance. And I think you be come from

such a one [meaning the complainant] to offer unto me some quarrel [line 42] to the breach of the peace or villainy, which I intend not to receive here in my own house; but do require you, pray you, and charge you, even for you own safety, not to open your mouth to my offence. For [this defendant said] if you do, I will forget humanity and civility, and so use you as the basest person in this [line 43] house shall tread upon you."

And with all further said to this effect, that if the said Clynton had either wit, discretion or honesty he would not have taken such a matter in hand, to disquiet a gentleman so much his better in his own house. And further said to this effect, whatsoever the complainant will offer "to [line 44] me himself I will answer it." And further the said defendant said then to this effect, that the said defendant was "no hydden man" but such a one as the said complainant might find at all times, for that his occasions were to follow his business, namely on Monday following to Abberton in his way to Abbot's Wood and [line 45] Bucknell Wood, where there was some matters in question about words between this gentleman, signifying the said Frances Clare and him the said defendant, and that he would that night lie at Wadborough at the house of William Sheldon, Esquire, brother to the said defendant. And on the morrow proposed to be at the [line 46] Quarter Sessions, and so from thence to follow his business to London or other such or like words to the same effect were uttered by the said defendant.

And whereas the said complainant surmiseth that this defendant and divers others to the number of threescore persons were assembled in [line 47] warlike and riotous manner arrayed and weaponed at or near the complainant's wood called Harwell and the said defendant sayeth (to his remembrance) neither this defendant, nor any or his company, were in or upon the said wood called Harwell. But this defendant, and some others much fewer than threescore [line 48] were in and upon the said woods called Bucknell about the question above mentioned (?????????) defendant and the rest there being with him usually do go, the said complainant and others did come and assault this defendant and others. And this defendant then having a byrding [line 49] piece in his hands which he usually carryeth, and did use all the means he could to keep her majestie's peace, (?????) from hurt.

And where the said complainant did doth greviously enforce, that the said defendant having gathered his uttermost power and force out diverse counties came [line 50] to the City of Worcester the xxth day of April, in the bill specified with the number of three hundred persons at most (???????). The said defendant sayeth, that to his remembrance there were not in his company any others than such as were or be his kinsmen or alliesmen, or kin or allied [line 51] to his said kinsmen, neither (to his knowledge) were there any servant men but such as were his own serving men or servants unto such kinsmen or alliesmen as before are mentioned; and that many of them came to the Sessions, either bound in duty or in respect of

her majesty's service, about their [line 52] private affairs, or to attend and do their duties in and upon their said masters.

And that the most of them were not gathered or assembled together by this defendant, but some met or overtook him and his company by chance, some hearing of the complainant's threatenings against this defendant [line 53] did repair to this defendant: for this defendant was credibly advertised that the complainant, being desired (??????) to come in peaceable manner and without any extraordinary great number, did utter and declare that he would come with what force & number he could, to be [line 54] revenged of the said defendant. And also this defendant hath had intelligence that the complainant was accompanied with the number of __#____ or ____#___ footemen and horsemen or thereabouts and that the said complainant had declared unto the bailiff and officers of the said City that his coming was to be revenged upon this now defendant and he would be revenged upon the now defendant. [line 55] And that therefore the complainant prayed the said bailiff that he might either enter into the said City, or pass by the said City and to meet the said defendant in coming on the highway to the said City.

Whereof the now defendant hearing and so meaning to prevent his said malicious intent the said defendant [line 56] with his company rode out of the nearest and ordinariest highway, one mile and more to another gate entering onto

the said City, where he entered into the said City in peaceable manner, with the good contentacion of the said bailiff and officers (as this defendant thinketh).

And whereas the complainant pretended [line 57] that the defendant came with a malicious mind of revenge towards the complainant with an intention to breach (then at the said Sessions) the peace, and to commit outrageous acts upon the complainant, the said defendant sayeth, that he the said defendant (if he had so intended) might easily have executed his mind of [line 58] revenge at the meeting _____ at the said Bucknell Wood with ___ violence (??????). At such time as the said complainant most willfully assaulted the said defendant, being in the defendant's own possession called Bucknell Wood where the said defendant had the said [line 59] complainant & his company in effect at his mercy and devotion to which said Bucknell Wood the said defendant came upon his necessary business and affairs (as is aforesaid), the which violence this defendant did not only forebear to do, respecting the offense to God, his duty to the Queen's most excellent majestie [line 60] the avoidance of murder, or else at the least blood fall. But also then was the _protection and defense of the said complainant and his company, albeit the complainant then and there assaulted the said defendant with some peril and danger to him this defendant & his brother William Sheldon then there [line 61] accompanying this defendant.

All which the said defendant thinketh this complainant cannot (??????) deny especially when so many witnesses of good and sufficient credit will be ready to verify the said defendant his sayings herein, and the said defendant's meaning [line 62] the assault and outrage made then at the said Wood by the said complainant and his company upon the said defendant, and thinking that the said complainant wholly endeavored the spoil and destruction of the said defendant. And having understanding of certain threatening words which the complainant uttered [line 63] at Strensham to a servant or officer sent by the bailiff of the said City of Worcester requesting him either to forsweare his coming to the sessions the next day, or to come in peaceable manner, both which (as it were reported) he refused to do. And then sayed (as it was likewise [line 64] reported) that he had been abused by the said defendant, and that he would come to Worcester to be revenged of the said defendant, or the like furious words. All which duly considered, the said defendant had reason for his safety and defence to be accompanied with more number of persons that he usually had accustomed.

[line 65] Nevertheless the number with the defendant were nothing answerable to the false surmise of the said complainant, neither did said defendant gather his uttermost power and force, as the said complainant untruely hath alleged. And where the said complainant alleges that he peaceably came into the said City of [line 66] Worcester, and in like sort delivered his weapons, & caused

those his men and followers being about the number of ____ footmen and fourtie horsemen to do the like, this defendant hath been credibly informed and (as this defendant thinketh it is right well known) that before the said complainant & they [line 67] would yeeld up his & their weapons, or promise to observe the peace, there was an offer made by some of the company of the said complainant to have entered by force, and some blows and strokes were given betwixte the complainant's company and the magistrates, people there assembled for preservation of her majestie's peace.

[line 68] And where likewise the complainant alleges that at his coming into the Sessions he made or caused to be made a proclamation demanding the observation of the peace, the same is altogether unknown unto the said defendant: for as the said defendant did hear, more was not done by the said complainant in that behalf than [line 69] upon the request of some of the Justices, together with the bailiff and officers of the said City; the said complainant there giving his promise in the open Sessions that he would for himself and his people undertake the observation of the peace during the time of the Sessions or during the time of his abode in the [line70] City; the which upon the like motion to the said defendant, he the said defendant did also undertake promise & accomplish.

And whereas the complainant hath inserted many vain and frivolous words of his knowledge of the malice of the said defendant and of Elizabeth the complainant's wife towards him the complainant with intention [line 71] by this defendant and the complainant's wife to persuade the complainant's young daughter in Religion, and thereupon the complainant (as he alleges) did send for his daughter to the said defendant's house in manner as, and about the time, in the bill alleged. The said defendant sayeth that he thinketh in his conscience, the same to be most [line 72] false and untrue, for many causes the said defendant thereunto moving, partly for that the complainant's daughter, at the time of his said sending for was not above three years old (as this defendant thinketh).

And this defendant hath heard that the complainant about the xxiij of May last past at Strensham [line 73] aforesaid, in the hearing of the said Clynton, Rauff Horysall and others, delivered these or the like speeches ___, that he the said complainant would challenge and set down the said defendant at his own gates; and if he, the said complainant, could not procure the said defendant to come out and fight [line 74] he, the said complainant, would report to all the world most vilely of him, and if he could find any the said defendant's people or servants straggling abroad they should be well beaten.

Whereto the said Clynton (as this defendant likewise heard) then presently answered with these or the like [line 75] words that "it was dangerous to seek a man at his own house, and that the said complainant might be easily overtaken, if he had not the greater company." To which the said complainant replied to this effect, that for the danger of the law he had a good color or devise, for he would go for his daughter [line 76] whom he dearly loved, being then with his wife at Beoley aforesaid; the said complainant then and there saying further, to this effect, he had no cause to trust his said daughter in his enemies' hands, because they might poison her; further saying that he would go so strongly that the said defendant's [line 77] force should not be able to resist him.

Soon after which said speech, __ about the first of june last past, the said complainant sent a servant of his (whose name as yet the defendant knoweth not) to the said defendant's house at Beoley aforesaid, with a letter (as this defendant thinketh) to the said Francis Clare. Which letter [line 78] the said Francis wished the messenger not to deliver if there were therein any reproachful or unseemly forms of disworship or disgrace, so thereupon the said messenger returned from the said Francis Clare to one kinsman's house at Beoley aforesaid where his house was, without delivery [line 79] of the said letter: where (to one of this defendant's servants the said messenger used speech to said effect at his departure from thence) "Tell you me" (meaning the said defendant) that his said master (meaning the said

complainant) would within one fortnight come to Beoley aforesaid and fetch his daughter.

In or about [line 80] which time the said complainant (as this defendant likewise heard) gave out to diverse and sundry persons, whose names this defendant thinketh he shall be able to produce, that he, the said complainant, would be at Beoley with an hundred calivers. After this the complainant purposing to [words crossed out] [line 81] execute his great malice against this defendant, the said Edward Sheldon the defendant's son and others, the said complainant thereupon (as this defendant thinketh) caused one _____ Webbe, _____, Thom Harbert, and Walter _____ , (as this defendant thinketh) all or the most part [line 82] them being the said complainant's servants with diverse others as yet to the defendant unknown, to the number of forty evil disposed persons or thereabouts to be assembled and meet together at Strensham aforesaid in or about the third of June last past; and so assembled [line 83] caused them to be arrayed in most warlike manner with swords, bucklers, pistols, and privy coats (as this defendant verily thinketh).

And in such manner arrayed, diverse of the said persons came to or near the house of the said defendant at Beoley aforesaid about twelve of the clock of [line 84] the said day thinking (as the said defendant supposeth) to have found him the

said defendant at dinner and so the better to have executed their intended villainy. And they being this and there assembled did before the said defendant's house in two places intending (as this defendant verily [line 85] thinketh) the utter spoil and destruction of the said defendant, his wife and family. And this said defendant, understanding of this their unlawful and riotous assembly, came unto the said Webbe and others at gate of the said defendant's house aforesaid with the defendant's bows and arrows in the [line 86] said defendant's defence, commanding them to depart.

Whereto the said Webbe answered to this effect, that he would not depart but would "die first," the said Webbe having not only a long sword but also a short sword at his girdle ready to have performed his devilish intent in the [line 87] said house if he might have entered thereinto. And thereupon he the said Webbe and divers of the said evil disposed persons drew their swords at or very near the gate of the said defendant at Beoley aforesaid and then and there (as this defendant thinketh) would have assaulted the [line 88] said defendant and others in his house, but that the said defendant was then and there with sufficient persons by the defendant able to have resisted their violence and to withstand their intended practices: with the said lewd persons perceiving, they returned [line 89] from the said defendant's house, and in their way did with great oaths (as this defendant

after heard) utter that if they could meet either man or boy belonging to the said defendant or to the said Francis Clare that he should die for it, or be spoiled.

By all which [line 90] circumstances this defendant verily thinketh the complainant's allegations in his bill touching as well the sending for his daughter as the manner thereof are feigned and untrue, and only to color the complainant's [crossed out misdemeanors] outrageous misdemeanors and devilish malice [line 91] towards this defendant: and this defendant is rather so moved to thinke, for that the said complainant's daughter was offered to some of the said parties so pretending to come for her and by them, not accepted. And further (as it is reported) the woman sent by the complainant to fetch [line 92] the complainant's daughter then was (as this defendant hath been credibly advertised) of very lewd and evil disposition and conversation, for she never being married was suspected to be with child; and thereupon was before that time, either put away from the complainant's house or sent [line 93] unto her friends inhabiting in Upton parish in the said county of Worcester, as this defendant hath heard. And the day before the coming of the said complainant's men to Beoley in that riotous manner, the said woman (as this defendant hath heard) was sent for to go upon this colorable errand which [line 94] when she had performed, and was returned to Strensham, she there (as it was reported) manifested herself to be with child, showing that it was gotten in that house, and from thence she would not depart until some order were taken

with her; and so shall remaineth there (as this defendant is [line 95] informed) unless some provision be lately made elsewhere to bestowe her.

And where the said complainant most untruely alleges that the said defendant the Tuesday after Trinity Sunday last did send the said Edward Sheldon his son to the said Quarter Sessions in the bill mentioned [line 96] accompanied with three hundred persons unknown out of divers counties in riotous manner with intention to break her majesties peace, and attempt some violence against the complainant: the defendant sayeth that upon divers servants given out, that the complainant would lie in wait with [line 97] a great company as well to meet the aforesaid Francis Clare as he should pass from Beoley to the house of the said Francis at Lythermister as also to encounter the said Francis Clare as he should go to the said Quarter Sessions for the necessary service of [line 98] the Queens most excellent majestie, the said Francis Clare being a justice of peace of the said county.

Thereupon the said defendant sought, for the better safety of the said Francis Clare, did send the said Edward Sheldon with xv or xvi of his servants or there [line 99] abouts to accompany said Francis Clare to his own house and so to Worcester with Francis Clare (he, the said defendant hath cause to think, the said complainant doth most deadly hate). And for the better declaration that the intent

of the said Francis and Edward Sheldon [line 100] was to preserve the peace, and with all only to defend themselves, and not attempt any violence, the said defendant was told by the said Francis Clare and Edward Sheldon that divers of the complainant's servants being at the foresaid Quarter Sessions the said Tuesday, and many [line 101] times meeting the said Francis Clare and Edward Sheldon and their company the said complainant servants were suffered to pass quietly by them, the said Francis Clare and Edward Sheldon and their company, without offense either by contentious words or deeds [line 102] to any the said complainant's servants offered, albeit the said complainant's servants used themselves most disdainful and scornful manner towards the said Francis Clare, Edward Sheldon and their company, as the said Francis Clare told the said defendant. Whereby that [line 103] manifestly doth appear that there was no meaning at all by the said Francis Clare & Edward Sheldon to contend or quarrel with the said complainant's servants or any his followers.

And whereas the complainant in his bill most untruely maketh show that upon words [line 104] sent from the bailiff of the foresaid City of Worcester signifying some doubts and fears they had of disorders to be committed at the said Quarter Sessions, with request to the complainant to have care of the keeping of the peace, and thereupon the complainant being ready [line 105] to have come to said Sessions, in respect of their said words made stay at home and would not

come to the said Sessions. The said defendant thereto sayeth that it hath been credibly reported that notwithstanding [xxxxx] from the bailiff, if he, the [line 106] complainant, could have procured any great number of gents or others to have showed his greatness, the said complainant's meaning was (as this defendant hath been advertised) to hath been at the said Quarter Sessions, there to have [xxxxx] broken the Queens [line 107] majestie's peace, and assaulted the said defendant, Francis Clare, their friends and servants if the said complainant could there have found them or [xxxxx] of them.

For this defendant thinketh it will be proved that the said Clynton did [xxxxxx] gents as also others [line 108] to have gone and accompanied the said complainant to the said quarter Session. And not prevailing in the said solicitations (hit hath been also said) that the said Clynton did absent himself from the complainant's company which was taken also to be one cause of the said complainant's stay [line 109] from the said Quarter Sessions.

And where the said complainant pretendeth great duty and reverence towards the Right Honorable the Lord of her majesties privy council, their commandments, the same well appereth by the speedy reply he made after he had received their [line 110] honorable letters: the which being delivered unto him the Thursday the xxijth of June last (as it is reported) he made not his appearance

before the Lords until the Thursday following being the xxixth of the said june, the house of the said complainant where the said letters were [line 111] delivered not being four score miles distant from the court then at Greenwich where the said Lords were then assembled.

Without that, that the said Harper was sent unto the house of the complainant at Strensham to taketh away the said complainant's wife to _____ the said [line 112] bill mentioned; or that the said Harper by the commandment of this defendant, or to this defendant knowledge, used such insolent and proud language words of challenge and ostentation unto the said complainant in such manner and form as in the bill alleged. Or that the said [line 113] Harper by this defendant's commandment, or to this defendant knowledge, did say that the defendant should give meeting when and where the said complainant should call him in such manner and form as in the said bill, is untruely alleged.

And without that, that the said Clynton [line 114] to the defendant's knowledge, did come to Beoley to let the said defendant understand of the great abuses and unseemly usage of the said Harper in speech and otherwise, and to be persuaded whether the same was by the defendant's commandment or not, and to none other end or intent in [line 115] this world. Or that the said defendant so soon as the said defendant came in the presence of the foresaid Clynton at Beoley

aforesaid did breake forth into such raging and proud speech in such manner and form as in the bill of the complainant, is most untruely set forth and [line 116] declared.

And without that, that this defendant procured one Rowland Baugh to deliver out by public speech unto the said complainant that the said defendant would be at Harnell woods as in the said bill is untruely alleged. Or that the said defendant to his knowledge [line 117] came into the said Harnell woods, being the complainant's inheritance, unless it were for availing through the same to the defendant's woods at Bucknell aforesaid, which this defendant neither did, to his now remembrance, as in the said bill is untruely alleged.

And without [line 118] that, that the said defendant the xxth of April being the day of the Quarter Sessions at Worcester, or long before, had gathered a power and force together in a readiness, as well within the county of Worcester and others the counties in the bill specified to the [line 119] number of three hundred, as in the said bill is most untruely alleged.

Or that the said defendant in seven years before had never with his presence or otherwise showed or expressed any kind of duty in her majesty's service within her said county or to none of Worcester, [line 120] as in the said bill of complaint is most falsely set forth and declared.

And without yet that that the said defendant, upon coming of the complainant servants to his house at Beoley, had ready in arms and the number of one hundred persons, or to the defendant's remembrance [line 121] cryed out "kill these villains" or asked where Russell was, as in the said bill is untruely alleged and declared.

Or that the said defendant with his company did so and such manner assault, wound, beat, and pursuade the servants of the said complainant to flight [line 122] shoots out of his house, continuing his furious speeches, as in the said bill is untruely alleged. For this defendant saith that none of this defendant company did assault any of the complainant's servants, until that some of the complainant's did draw their weapons [line 123] and after assault. And this defendant did what he could to pacify them, and to keep the complainant's servants from hurt, and did at the last cause the broil to cease and gently entertained with beer and other relief divers of the said servants of the complainant.

[line 124] Or that the said defendant sent Edward Sheldon his son to the next Quarter Sessions at Worcester and being the Tuesday next after Trinity Sunday last, or that the said Edward Sheldon, to this defendant's knowledge, the said day and time went to Worcester [line 125] in such manner and form and to such end, intent and purpose as in the said bill is alleged. And without that, that the said

defendant procured and set forward Edward Sheldon, Francis Clare, Henry Clare and all servants friends and followers [line 126] of the said defendant to expect the coming to London of the said complainant, as in the said bill is most falsely set forth and declared.

And without that, that any other matter, cause, or thing in the said bill of complaint perfectly and sufficiently alleged [line 127] which the defendant thinketh to be material or effectual for this defendant to answer unto as true in such manner, sort and form as in the said bill of complaint is suggested.

All which matters this defendant is ready to aver and prove, as this [line 128] honorable court shall understand. And prayeth to be dismissed out of the same, with his reasonable costs and charges therein most wrongfully sustained.

I. The original deposition document from the UK National Archives is found on the next page. The transcription was made directly from this document by this author.

