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Line Cottagnies et Gisèle Venet

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Études Épistémè

Line Cottegnies et Gisèle Venet

## More Mysteries about the Saint-Omer Folio: Nevill and other Marks of Ownership

- 1 Since the discovery by Rémy Cordonnier of a copy of a Shakespeare First Folio in the Saint-Omer public library,<sup>1</sup> scholars' attention has focussed on the identity of the mysterious Nevill, whose name stares at any reader opening the book. His identification, it is assumed, must help date at least some of the annotations in the volume itself. All we can safely say, without identifying the marks of ownership present in the volume, is that the presence of the book is attested in the manuscript catalogue of the library drafted by its first librarian Jean-Charles-Joseph Aubin for which we only have a fair copy dated 1823.<sup>2</sup> This was a labour of love which took Aubin close to thirty years to complete, if we are to believe what he writes in the dedication of his work to the local authorities. The books seized after the French Revolution from all the religious institutions in the area had been stored, apparently in terrible conditions, while waiting for a suitable venue for a public library to be created. Sadly, the inventory of the books sequestered made in 1794 by two revolutionary commissioners is lost,<sup>3</sup> which means that we cannot be absolutely certain that the Folio was already there by 1794, and that it came directly from the English Jesuit College (which was closed first in 1762, then taken over by English (Catholic) secular clergy, and was seized in 1792), although it is probable. There would still have been a few English readers about after 1823 in the area, but the connection with the library was severed, which gives us a *terminus ad quem* for the manuscript annotations in English and for the marks of ownership, although 1762, which is when the English Jesuits precipitously left for Bruges, leaving many of their books behind in the hands of their successors, is a strong possibility. Yet this neat narrative is also complicated by the fact that the English clergy in charge after the Jesuits left continued adding books to the library, if we are to judge by the number of late eighteenth century English books still present in the Saint-Omer library.<sup>4</sup>
- 2 Nevill was an assumed name used by many Jesuits between the XVII<sup>th</sup> and the XVIII<sup>th</sup> centuries, including members of the Scarisbrick family. Eric Rasmussen and others have suggested that this Nevill might be Edward Scarisbrick (1639-1709), who left his full name in lead in another First Folio now in the Folger Library (Folger 55).<sup>5</sup> Scarisbrick was present in St Omers College in 1653-1659, 1664-1665, and then again in 1691, and returned to England to take up a position in Culcheth Hall, where he signed the other Folio (with his full name) which remained in its library until the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, when it was bought by the Folger Library.<sup>6</sup> He died in Culcheth in 1709. If this was the right 'Nevill', his interest in Shakespeare would thus be confirmed by his interest in another copy of the Folio. If this Scarisbrick was indeed our Nevill, it would be tempting, but perhaps unwise, to suppose that he abandoned his 'bad' copy of the Folio for the benefit of the College because he knew he would be able to find a better copy at home. For the Saint-Omer Folio misses forty-six leaves.<sup>7</sup> However the other names of possessors in Folger 55 (previously the Culcheth Hall copy) are not names of St Omers students.<sup>8</sup> In any case, it is probable that members of the English College left the Saint-Omer copy of the Folio behind when they had to leave in a rush in 1762 precisely because it was imperfect. But the Folio could have been signed by any other Scarisbrick.
- 3 In a recent article published in the *Times Literary Supplement*, Jan Graffius contends that a more likely candidate is Edmund Sale, also known as Nevill to the Jesuits, who, after being a student in the College, returned to St Omers in 1632 as Master of Poetry.<sup>9</sup> Her identification relies on the necessity for the Folio to have been in Saint-Omer for Father Francis Clark to have used it for his historical plays written between 1653 and 1657.<sup>10</sup> While the connection sounds tantalizing, the binding, which is undoubtedly English,<sup>11</sup> seems late seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century and the hand for the 'Nevill' annotation looks to us much later than 1630s—it is probably eighteenth century. There is no guarantee, therefore, that the Folio used

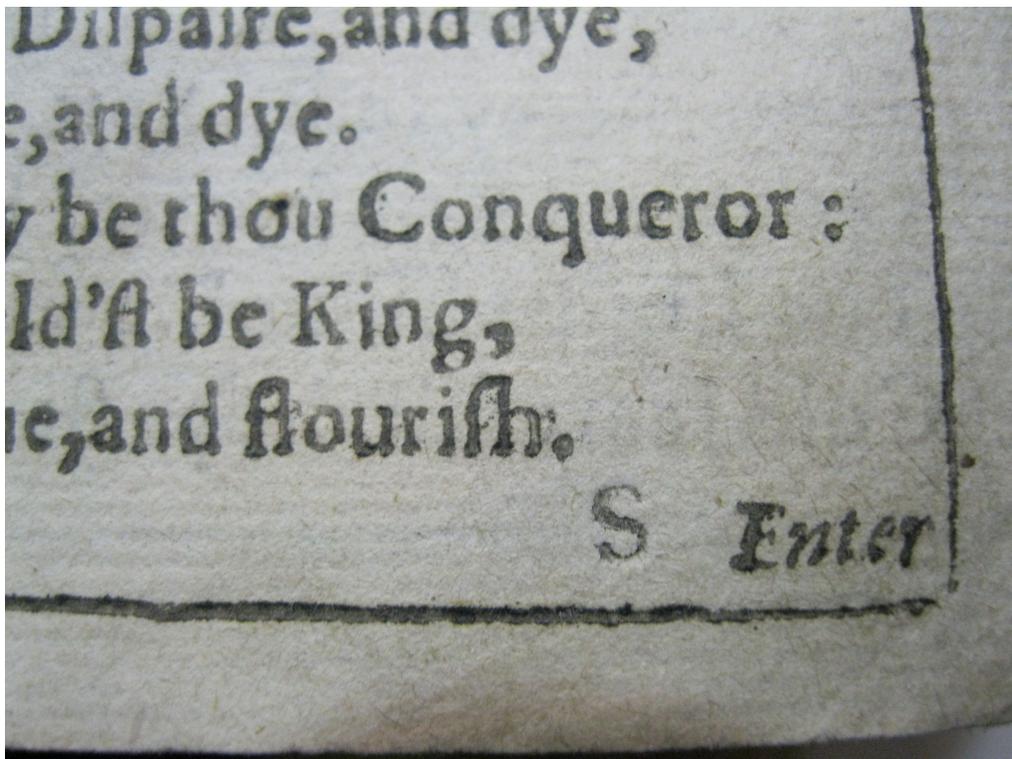
by Clark was this particular one. More work, however, needs to be done to date with more precision the manuscript annotations.

- 4 In fact, it is highly probable that ‘Nevill’ is the Thomas Nevill who donated a number of books to the College Library in 1736, which are still held in the Saint-Omer Library. It was brought to our attention by Rémy Cordonnier that we now possess another example of the Nevill signature that is exactly similar to the one of the Folio on the title-page of another book, a political tract entitled *The Proceedings of the House of Lords Concerning the Scottish Conspiracy* (London, 1704).<sup>12</sup> This book was donated to the library of the English College by ‘Thomas Nevill’ in 1736, as indicated by an inscription on the title page, above the manuscript signature Nevill: ‘*Bibl. Maj. Coll. Angl. Aud. Soc. Jesu ex Dono Clarissimi Viri Tho. Nevill. 1736.*’ Another book donated by Nevill, also in the Saint-Omer library, is a collection of pamphlets of the first half of the eighteenth century, which is of particular interest because it includes some manuscript annotations, although the handwriting does not match any of the annotations in the Folio. Again, a manuscript inscription on the title page specifies: ‘*ex dono clarissimi viri Domini Thome Nevilles.*’ The volume includes twelve pamphlets which were originally published between 1701 and 1732. The first one in the order of binding is *The Complete History of the Late Septennial Parliament* (London, 1722).<sup>13</sup>
- 5 After a fairly thorough investigation in the Saint-Omer library, we have been able to identify at least eight other volumes donated by Nevill to the College Library in the same year. They are mostly about politics, and include another eighteenth-century collections of pamphlets (and parliamentary reports) and books about the history of the crown of England. Three are about science.<sup>14</sup> Given that all these books entered the College library in 1736, it is almost certain that the Shakespeare Folio made it into the College Library at that date, and not before.
- 6 There are (at least) three men who could have called themselves Thomas Nevill(e), to the best of our knowledge (but there might be others that we are not aware of): 1. Thomas Scarisbrick (1642 or 1643-1673), a Jesuit; 2. Joseph or Thomas Joseph Scarisbrick (1673-1729), also a Jesuit; and finally Basil Thomas Scarisbrick, later Eccleston (1713?-1789), who was a student at St Omers sometime around 1727, and would later send his son, also named Thomas, to the College.<sup>15</sup> It would not have been unusual for an old student to send a parcel of books to his College as a gift, especially in light of the fact that the College library had burned down again in 1725.<sup>16</sup> The date at which the books were entered into the library, and the dates of the pamphlets bound in the collections mentioned above, definitely rule out the first two candidates. The third one, Basil Thomas Scarisbrick (Eccleston) is a likely candidate for sending the battered Folio along to his college. However, a recent edition of Basil Thomas Eccleston’s memoranda books includes samples of what is presented as his hand-writing, which do not correspond to the hand which is responsible for the annotations in *The Complete History of the Late Septennial Parliament*.<sup>17</sup> If Basil Thomas Scarisbrick (Eccleston) presented this parcel of books to the library in 1736, then he might not be the same person as the annotator of the pamphlets in question—but he might still be the previous owner of the Folio that was given to the Library.
- 7 The Saint-Omer Shakespeare Folio possesses other distinctive marks, however, possibly marks of ownership, which are perhaps less prominent at first sight. On nine occasions in the volume the letters P and S appear, hand-stamped in ink at the bottom of the page, either both on the same page, or on two consecutive pages (see fig. 1 and 2).



**Figure 1**

PS on p. 100, 2 *Henry IV*. Saint-Omer, BASO, inv. 2227 (all the illustrations are reproduced by kind permission of the Bibliothèque d'Agglomération de Saint-Omer).



**Figure 2**

S on p. 201, *Richard III*, BASO, inv. 2227.

- 8 As a matter of fact, the Folio's manuscript annotations must be seen as a palimpsest of at least five different hands, with interventions which bear witness to completely opposed uses of the text, one that points to a pedagogical usage, another that seems to indicate a recreational usage: the annotations in *1 Henry IV*, for instance, probably in an eighteenth century hand, seem to testify to a preparation of the text for a school staging, possibly in a Jesuit context. They

modernize the spelling; turn the role of the hostess into a male part (in accordance with the rules of the *Ratio Studiorum*, which forbade female parts), and abridge a selection of scenes. Whole passages are crossed out. The annotations in *Henry V* seem to indicate that long passages, rather than independent scenes as in *1 Henry IV*, were selected (with annotations 'begin' and 'end' marking the beginnings and the ends of the selections), most probably to be recited in class (see fig. 3).

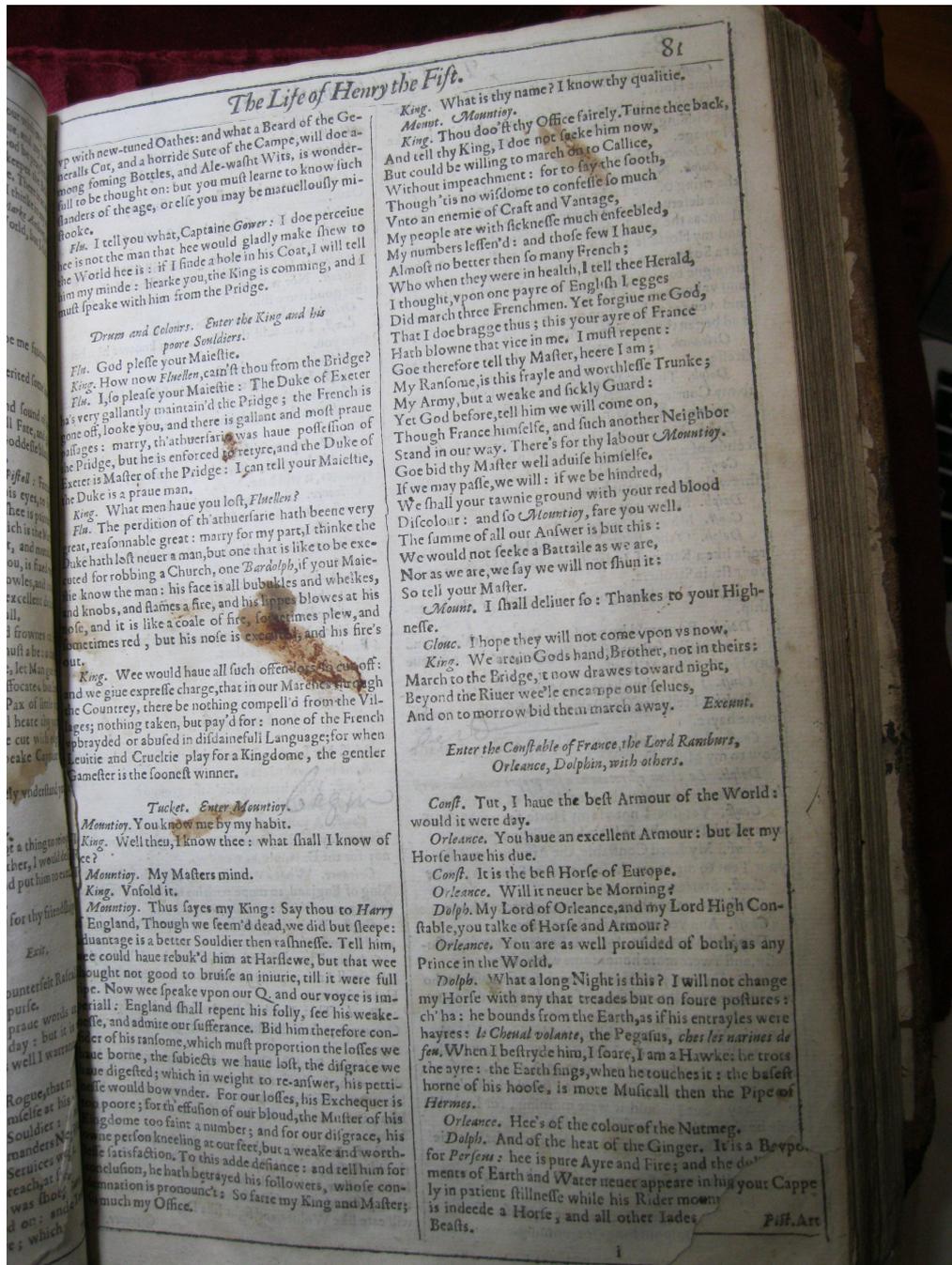


Figure 3

A page of *Henry V* (p. 81), with 'begin' and 'end' in lead, BASO, inv. 2227.

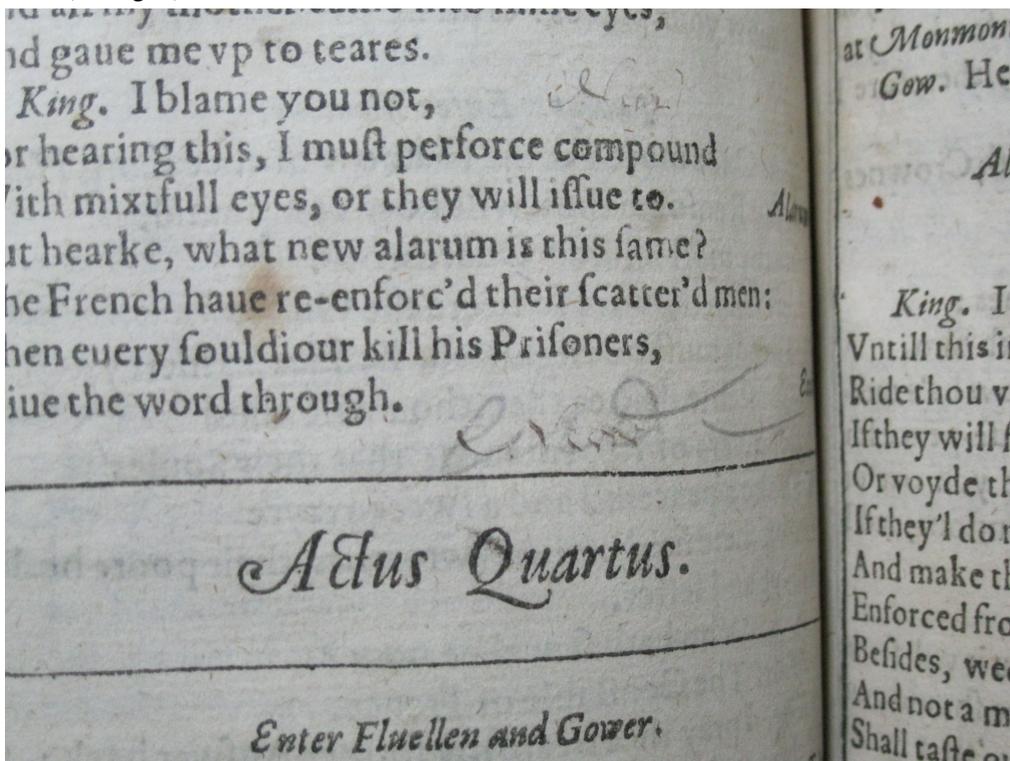
- 9 But there are also traces indicating elsewhere that the text was read by young readers, who inserted doodles in lead, and there are even a few instances where very young boys wrote their initials (or letters) in lead or pencil in the text, in a hand that could even be modern (see fig. 4).<sup>18</sup>



**Figure 4**

Initials m. o. (with other letters : m, n, p) in lead or pencil, *Hamlet*, p. 180, BASO, inv. 2227.

10 There are also older kinds of annotations, as far as we can tell, which concern editorial points, such as a couple of word corrections, and even an indication that a passage is new (in ink) in the Folio version of the text, which implies that the reader had the Quarto of the play at hand (see fig. 5).<sup>19</sup>



**Figure 5**

The word 'New' in ink repeated twice on p. 88, *Henry V* (the second 'New' written over with 'end' in lead. BASO, inv. 2227.

11 The complex, composite nature of all these annotations, compounded by the long and fraught history of the book, which led to its being deprived of its publisher's leaves, title-page, and

initial and final quires, makes it extremely difficult to understand what the PS might refer to. The hand-pressed letters might have nothing to do with the name Nevill in ink which is on the first page of *The Tempest*. They might have been made at a very different time over the two centuries between the time of publication and Aubin's catalogue entry. In both the technique used – a technique which implies types used for printing, or decorating binding – and where they were printed, the marks are particularly puzzling. They involve two individual letter-types, as is indicated by the varying space between the letters, and the fact that the letters are sometimes not quite aligned. To the best of our knowledge, using hand-stamped letters was an extremely unusual way of marking a book; marking it *nine* times might also appear odd and somewhat excessive. In Jesuit colleges, library marks usually featured in ink on the title page, or on the fly-leaf. Individuals, on the other hand, signed their books. It was common for successive owners to inscribe their private books, and in English colleges the masters and students had a few books of their own. It seems also to have been common practice in colleges for boys to inscribe the school-books they used. The Saint-Omer library still possesses a moving testimony of such a practice, with a book which was once part of the English College library, *Natalis Stephani Sanadonis e Societate Jesu Carminum Libri Quatuor* (Lutetiae Parisiorum, Barbou, 1715), a collection of Neolatin poems by the French Jesuit Father Sanadon. The book contains no fewer than fifteen names of readers listed in ink on the title-page. In this case the names feature all on the title page, but this was not necessarily always the case.

- 12 Hand-stamped initials are unusual. The positioning of the PS marks in the Folio is also odd, although a regular pattern seems to emerge.

Title of play	Signature	Page number	Position in the play
<i>Comedy of Errors</i>	I2 <sup>v</sup> (P S)	p. 100	end of the play
<i>As You Like It</i>	R3 <sup>v</sup> (P) and R4 (S)	p. 200-201	beginning of act 4
<i>Winter's Tale</i>	Cc2 (P S)	p. 303	end of the play
<i>2 Henry IV</i>	k4 <sup>v</sup> (P S)	p. 100	end of the play
<i>Richard III</i>	s6 <sup>v</sup> (P) and t (S)	p. 200-201	beginning of act 5
<i>Henry VIII</i>	x4 (PS)	p. 232	end of the play
<i>Timon of Athens</i>	hh5 <sup>v</sup> (PS)	p. 98	end of the play
<i>King Lear</i>	rr4 <sup>v</sup> (P) and rr5 (S)	p. 300-301	beginning of act 4
<i>Cymbeline</i>	aaa6 <sup>v</sup>	p. 388	end of the book (play incomplete)

- 13 As this chart reveals, six (out of nine) of these marks feature on the final page of a play. Seven fall on pages that are multiples of a hundred (or are close enough, as is the case with 98 and 303, in plays in which the end of the play was close enough to a multiple of a hundred). It seems that the compulsive marker aimed at marking the book on pages with numbers that were multiples of a hundred, but thought it more seemly (perhaps) to aim for the ending pages of the plays concerned, perhaps because of the attractive decorative tailpieces, which also left more room for the letters themselves than was the case on text-crammed pages. The regularity

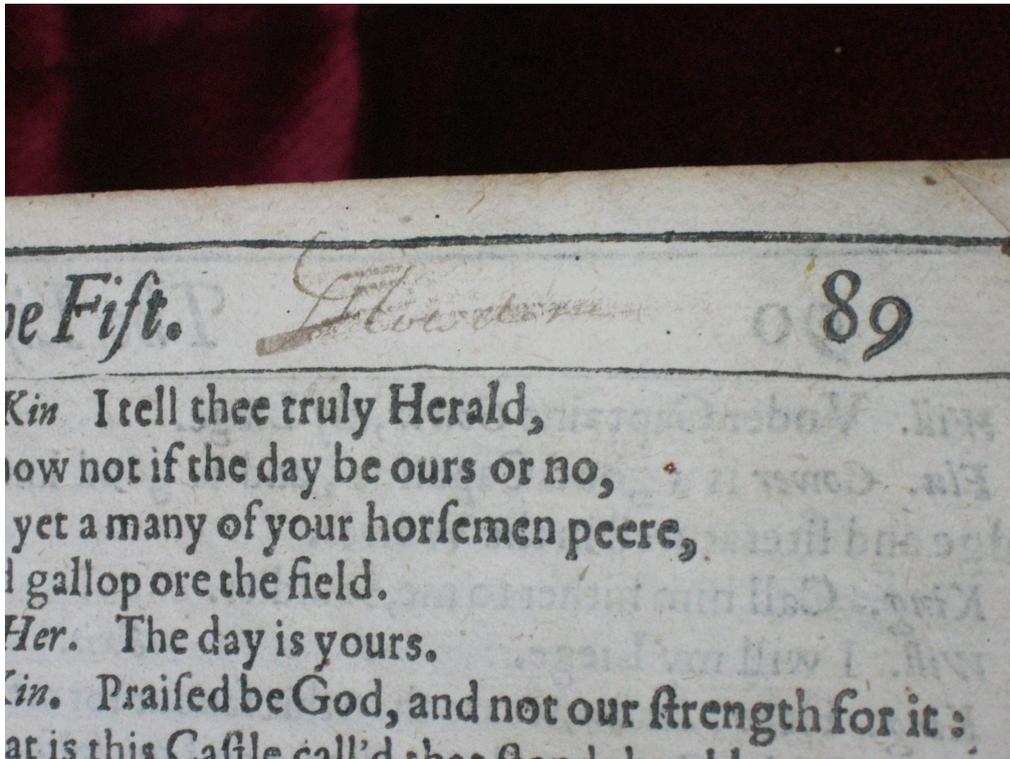
was also made difficult by the erratic numbering of the folio, which meant that there was, for instance, no p. 200 in the tragedies (200 in fact becomes 300 due to multiple errors in the pagination). The fact that the marker stamped the last page of the *Cymbeline* in this copy (p. 388), also allows us to conclude that he had in hand the book in the imperfect state that we see it in today, and that *Cymbeline* was already missing its last pages – which represent a full quire (eee1- eee6). The odd one out in this pattern, however, is the stamp on *Henry VIII*, which could appear as an exception to the pattern we have tried to describe, but it is followed by *Troilus and Cressida*, an obvious afterthought in the printing process, in the section of the histories, which was not numbered. It thus could have been considered as marking the end of a section.

14 The presence of the letters PS raises many questions. What could have driven anyone to want to mark a book at regular intervals? The regularity of the marking (but for the one exception) excludes the possibility that these marks might have something to do with censorship of specific passages. However, the marking could indicate an intervention on the part of a Jesuit authority. We examined the possibility that PS might stand for *Permissu Superiorum*, which was very often used as *imprimatur* on the title-page of Jesuit books, including those printed at St Omers in the first half of the seventeenth century. However, the numerical regularity of eight out of nine of the marks does not indicate text-specific interventions, in contradistinction with the censor's interventions in the Valladolid second Folio, for instance, which targeted specific passages.<sup>20</sup> And then why mark the book nine times? Whether it be a stamp of approval or of censorship, due to Jesuit or other religious authorities, the fact that no other instance of a similar marking has yet emerged either in the Bibliothèque of Saint-Omer, or in that of Stonyhurst College does not allow us to reach any conclusion – although this does not mean that other occurrences will not surface.<sup>21</sup>

15 There are other possibilities, and the number of hypotheses is almost limitless. If it is a library mark, it is highly unusual in this form, and again there would be other instances of this marking in books from a similar provenance – but they might one day emerge.<sup>22</sup> Is it possible that a Prefect of Studies, a function which implied the responsibility of the students' reading, decided to make this book available to a group of students, but repeatedly marked the Folio with a PS (for Prefect of Studies or Praefectus Studiorum) as a reminder to the boys of the status of the book? As a matter of fact, we have almost too many PS's for comfort: the first Edward Scarisbrick mentioned above returned to Saint-Omer in 1675 precisely to take up the position of Prefect of Studies in the English College, before returning to England in 1680. As it was customary for Jesuit priests to latinize their names, could the letters stand for Pater Scarisbric(k)us – as a matter of fact there were several Jesuits called Scarisbrick? However, if a Prefect of Studies, or a priest, whoever he was, had stamped one book for the benefit of his students in this manner, chances are high that there would be other books with the same marks to be identified somewhere. Yet, in spite of our efforts, no other example has as yet emerged. Research is made difficult by the fact that the St Omers College library was dispersed, and the Saint-Omer public library itself only lists a few books that can be identified as coming from the old English College library, as ownership and library marks were almost systematically erased and destroyed, at the expense of much cutting and mutilating when the books were integrated into the new library. When those marks survive, it is almost miraculous.

16 We are perhaps dealing, however, with an individual's ownership marks, initials or acronym, which might bear no direct relationship with the signature 'Nevill', and might have been made in a very different environment and at a different time. Collectors of prints sometimes stamped their engravings using hand-stamped letters (although using separate types for each letter was rare). A Peter Silvester, a French Huguenot who died in 1718, used a very similar mark to brand his collection of prints. Admitted in June 1693 as 'licentiate of the College of Physicians' in London, after serving in the army in Flanders, he became 'Commissioner of the sick and the hurt' at the court of William III. Although he was present in the Low Countries in the years 1680s (as we know from a letter of C. Huygens),<sup>23</sup> he is not an obvious candidate for our Folio, because he was a French speaker, and was also unlikely, as a Huguenot, to have connections with the English Jesuits – although of course books circulate in ways that are impenetrable.

- 17 If the P stood for Pater, then there might of course be some famous candidates in and around St Omers, such as Father Joseph Simons (1593-1671), the famous Jesuit playwright, who was active in St Omers between 1623 and 1631. But there are many other possibilities. On the already mentioned title-page of the poems of the Neolatin poet Sanadon, which belonged to the students' library (*Bibl. Schol.*), there is a name written in ink which stands out among the others, because it is, rather intriguingly, repeated three times: 'Paulus Simons' (twice), 'Paule Simons' (once). It is as if the boy insisted on making himself obtrusive, as his name brackets the names of two other Simons's: 'Edmundus Simons' and 'John Simons'. Simons (or Simmons) was the Jesuit assumed name of some members of the Plowden family, from Plowden Hall (Shropshire), who, like the Scarisbricks, were an old aristocratic family of recusants who had been sending their sons to St Omers for a century. Some also used 'Perot' on occasions. According to the biographical index of Geoffrey Holt, Edmund Plowden alias Simons was one of the seven sons of William Ignatius Plowden (1700-1754), who was himself schooled in Saint-Omer from around 1713. Edmund studied in Saint-Omer between 1739 and 1746; his brother John between 1741 and 1748.<sup>24</sup> Charles Plowden (1743-1821), the seventh brother of the family, reached fame by becoming Provincial and Rector of Stonyhurst in 1817.<sup>25</sup> None of the brothers was called Paul, however. We should also mention their four uncles, who all became Jesuits (and could of course be called 'Pater'): Father Francis S.J. (1662-1736), who also used the name 'Perot', Father Richard S.J. (1663-1729), who was Rector of St Omers between 1709 and 1712, and again between 1725 and 1728, Father Edmund S.J. (1664-1750), and Father Thomas Percy S.J. (1672-1746), also known as Percy, or Peter, or Joseph, or Thomas, who was Rector of St Omers from 1739 to 1742, after studying there in the early 1690s.<sup>26</sup> We are left to speculate again, of course, but it is not impossible that one member of that family called himself Paul (perhaps as a nickname). In any case, the Paul who inscribed the 1715 school-book certainly manifested his desire to leave his name behind. Is it too far-fetched to imagine that he might have left more traces of his presence in the St Omers library by adorning the Shakespeare Folio, of all books, with his initials? Perhaps it is, but the human factor might explain the apparent irrationality of the nine marks, where an institution like a library or a college would have been satisfied with a couple.
- 18 Or more speculative still: could the letters PS refer to the 'Plowden Simons' combination, as a proud sign of recognition for an initiated reader? For boys whose fathers and elder brothers had been to school at St Omers to spend six years of their lives there, whose younger brothers would, over the years, follow them, and whose future sons would in turn, presumably, be expected to follow in their footsteps, could there have been a temptation of inscribing a form of dynastic presence in the College books? After all, school-books were inscribed and so were prize books. The College library was expected to stand the test of time – and did in some respect for many years, in spite of the two fires of 1684 and 1725, until the final expulsion. If the Folio had been versed at some point into the College library, or rather, into *one* of the libraries of the College<sup>27</sup> – because this is one of the main questions we are confronted with –, then it might have represented a form of permanence for boys who were just passing through, but knew other members of their families were to follow. The Folio carries more than just the one manuscript signature of Nevill, proudly flaunted on the first page of the torn book – most probably that of a young boy, MO, as seen above. It is not too strained to see the PS's as belonging to the same category of branding. In fact, at the risk of being accused of seeing PS's everywhere, could we suggest that another manuscript annotation, almost illegible because of an ink smudge, could perhaps be deciphered as a signature 'SPlowden', in an eighteenth-century hand (see fig. 6)?



**Figure 6**

Signature (?), *Henry V*, p. 89, BASO, inv. 2227.

- 19 This page of *Henry V* is incidentally the page in which the victory of Agincourt is announced to Henry V, a nationalistic moment that many Catholics of the pro-Lancastrian Northern and Western counties would necessarily have found compelling.<sup>28</sup> There is certainly something appealing in the hypothesis that the hand-stamped PS might refer to members of the Plowden family, in response, perhaps, to a pseudonym like Nevill which evoked the presence of another family of the old Catholic gentry. More research, however, would be necessary to confirm or infirm this hypothesis. We need to find more books stamped with the PS marks, which would allow us to perhaps draw some conclusions about what the marks were meant for, and for whom, and if they are evidence of some form of censorship, ownership marks or readers' inscriptions.

### Notes

1 Saint-Omer, BASO, inv. 2227.

2 'Catalogue raisonné de la plus grande partie de ces livres précieux qui ont paru successivement dans la république des lettres, depuis l'invention de l'imprimerie jusqu'à nos jours, suivi d'un catalogue de plus de neuf cens manuscrits. le tout disposé par ordre de matières et de facultés, suivant le système bibliographique généralement adopté ; avec une table générale des auteurs, une notice des livres imprimés dans le 15<sup>e</sup> siècle, et une autre notice des ouvrages qui ont été imprimés sans indication de ville ou sans date d'année et sans le nom de l'imprimeur. par Jean Charles Joseph Aubin, ancien bénédictin de la congrégation de St maur et Bibliothécaire de la Ville de St omer. A paris chez ----- MDIII XXIII.' In spite of having been prepared for publication, the Catalogue never appeared in print.

3 A manuscript held at the Saint-Omer library reports the operations of the two men who were in charge of drafting a list of the sequestered books in 1794. It is entitled 'Journal des Opération des Citoyens Boubert et H. Spitalier, Commissaires pour le Triage et le Catalogue des Livres des Bibliothèques du District de St Omer, par Arrêté de l' Administration du dit District, en date du 11 Ventose, 2<sup>e</sup> année de la République Une et indivisible' and has been digitized: <http://bibliotheque-numerique.bibliotheque-agglo-stomer.fr/collection/19040-journal-des-operation-des-citoyens-boubers-et-h/>, last accessed 15 April 2015.

4 The most recent history of the English Jesuit College in Saint-Omer is Maurice Whitehead, *English Jesuit Education. Expulsion, Suppression, Survival and Restoration, 1762-1803*, London, Ashgate, 2013.

5 The suggestion was made by Eric Rasmussen in a *New York Times* article on 24 November 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/26/arts/shakespeare-folio-discovered-in-france-.html?smid=fb-share&\\_r=3](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/26/arts/shakespeare-folio-discovered-in-france-.html?smid=fb-share&_r=3), last accessed 24 February 2015.

6 Geoffrey Holt, *The English Jesuits 1650-1829*, n.p., Catholic Record Society, 1984, p. 220. According to usage, we shall use the form 'St Omers' to designate the English College, and 'Saint-Omer' for the French city.

7 Here is a list of the missing leaves: Preliminary leaves all missing, including portrait and title-page; <sup>a</sup>A2, B4-D1, D6, ¶¶3-¶¶4, cc1, dd1, dd6, mm6, oo, x1, bbb1-bbb6. NB: E6, which must have detached itself, was re-inserted erroneously between F1 and F2. The binder's leaves are also missing (presence of stubs of three post-original leaves, with traces of manuscript annotations).

8 This Folio contains three other names that can be deciphered ('James Guy[?]', Z1, 'Nicholas Hawlett', i5 and v2, 'James Cassall 1712', according to the Folger record), and they are not, however, names of pupils of St Omers College, which means that it was probably not on location. We would like to thank Georgianna Ziegler, from the Folger Library, for responding kindly to our enquiries about Folger 55. Scarisbrick also taught in Liège, Ghent, and at the College of St Aloysius and the College of St Ignatius, before taking up his position in Culcheth, according to G. Holt (*ibid.*, p. 220).

9 Jan Graffius, 'A Gift from Poetry. The newly discovered First Folio in Saint-Omer', *Times Literary Supplement*, 6 February 2015, p. 14-15.

10 See Martin Wiggins, 'Shakespeare Jesuited: The Plagiarisms of "Pater Clarcus"', *The Seventeenth Century*, 20.1, 2005, p. 1-21.

11 For the history of the English press at St Omers, see Charles Alfred Newdigate, 'Notes on the Seventeenth Century Printing Press of the English College at Saint Omers', *The Library*, 10, 1919, p. 179-190, Michael J. Walsh, 'The Publishing Policy of the English Jesuits at St Omer, 1608-1759', in Keith Robbins (ed.), *Religion and Humanism: Papers Read at the Eighteenth Summer Meeting and the Nineteenth Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society, Studies in Church History*, 17, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1981, p. 239-50, and 'An Eighteenth-Century Jesuit Bibliography', *Heythrop Journal*, 20, 1979, p. 44-56. Many thanks to Maurice Whitehead for pointing out Michael Walsh's work to us. Little is known, however, about the material condition of the printing press at St Omers. There is no way of knowing if they had an English binder near them, for instance, but from the bindings of the other books listed as coming from the Jesuit College in the Saint-Omer Bibliothèque d'Agglomération, which are all very different, it does not seem to have been the case. L. Cottegnies would like to thank Dr. Goran Proot, head of rare books at the Bibliothèque Mazarine, for his help in matters of binding and bibliography.

12 We would like to thank Rémy Cordonnier for sharing this information.

13 Line Cottegnies and Pierre Lurbe are currently working on a transcript and commentary of the annotations of *The Septennial Parliament* (forthcoming).

14 The other collection of pamphlets (all originally published between 1716 and 1732) is bound with [Anon.], *A Report from the Committee Appointed to Enquire into the State of the Gaols of this Kingdom: Relating to the Mashalsea Prison, and farther relating to the Fleet Prison* (London, 1729). The scientific books are: Robert Boyle, *New Experiments Physico-Mechanicall Touching the Spring of the Air and its Effects* (Oxford, 1660), Stephen Blancard, *A Physical Dictionary. In which, all the Terms Relating either to Anatomy, Chirurgery, Pharmacy, or Chymistry, are very accurately explain'd* (London, 1684), and perhaps, because it was entered into the College Library the same year: Samuel Jeake, *A Compleat Body of Arithmetick* (London, 1701).

15 See Geoffrey Holt, *St Omers and Bruges Colleges 1593-1773: A Biographical Dictionary*, Thetford, Catholic Record Society, 1979, p. 232-233. Holt mentions another Thomas Scarisbrick, about whom nothing is known apart from the fact that he was in St Omers around 1664-1667 (p. 232). Basil Thomas's son, Thomas Eccleston Scarisbrick (1752-1809), is too late to be a likely candidate.

16 According to Maurice Whitehead (in a private correspondence), the Constable family of Everyham in East Yorkshire sent for instance a large collection of books to the College in the mid-eighteenth century, for which there is a list extant in the University of Hull library (unpublished material). We would very much like to thank Maurice Whitehead for this information which sheds light on the circulation of books between England and France in the period.

17 *The Memoranda of Basil Thomas Eccleston 1757-1789*, ed. Andrew J. Gritt, John M. Virgoe, C.P. Brownrigg, Liverpool, The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 2004 (vol. CXXXIX).

18 The Canon Georges Coolen, who was chaplain of the adjacent Lycée Ribot between 1940 and 1971, had free access to the library (for which he seems to have acted in the capacity of librarian) and apparently used the Folio for teaching purposes. For a biography of G. Coolen, see the *Bulletin de la Société Académique des Antiquaires de la Morinie*, XX, 1967, p. 609-37. We would like to thank Rémy Cordonnier for the reference and for the anecdote which he holds from a former pupil of the Lycée.

19 The passage in the 1600 Quarto reads:

20 See Folger 2<sup>nd</sup> Folio 7. [http://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/detail/FOLGERCM1~6~6~804832~151900:Mr--VWilliam-Shakespeares-comedies,?sort=MPSORTORDER1%2CCall\\_Number%2CCD\\_Title%2CImprint&qvq=q:Call\\_Number%3D%22STC%2B22274%2BFo.2%2Bno.07%22;sort:MPSORTORDER1%2CCall\\_Number%2CCD\\_Title%2CImprint;lc:FOLGERCM1~6~6&mi=197&trs=898](http://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/detail/FOLGERCM1~6~6~804832~151900:Mr--VWilliam-Shakespeares-comedies,?sort=MPSORTORDER1%2CCall_Number%2CCD_Title%2CImprint&qvq=q:Call_Number%3D%22STC%2B22274%2BFo.2%2Bno.07%22;sort:MPSORTORDER1%2CCall_Number%2CCD_Title%2CImprint;lc:FOLGERCM1~6~6&mi=197&trs=898) (accessed 1 March 2015).

21 Gisèle Venet would like to thank Jan Graffius, Curator at Stonyhurst, for her kindness on the occasion of her visit.

22 In 1812 was created in Saint-Omer a short-lived 'Petit Séminaire' (which would be a convenient PS), a new institution imagined by Napoleon to train future priests, which depended on the generosity of its neighbours for its new library, but why would one of its books have found its way back to the public library by 1823? The Petit Séminaire was closed down as such in 1835 to become the Collège Saint-Bertin. See Alexandre Lehembre, *Le Petit Séminaire de Saint-Omer (1812-1835)*, Tourcoing, J. Duvivier, 1913.

23 Frits Lugt, *Les marques de collections de dessins & d'estampes. Marques estampillées et écrites de collections particulières et publiques. Marques de marchands, de monteur et d'imprimeurs. Cachets de vente d'artistes décédés. Marques de graveurs apposées après le tirage des planches. Timbres d'édiction. Etc.* 1921, San Francisco, Alan Wofsy Fine Arts, 1975, p. 391.

24 Geoffrey Holt, *St Omers and Bruges Colleges*, p. 207-209. The five brothers mentioned are, by order of birth, Edmund (b. 1727), John (b. 1732), Robert (b. 1740), Charles (b. 1743), Francis (Peter) (b. 1749). The Fr. Richard Plowden who became Rector of St Omers between 1709 and 1712, and died in 1729, belongs to a different branch of the family. See Bernard, Basset, *The English Jesuits: From Champion to Martindale*, London, Burns & Oates, 1967. Richard Plowden was again rector between 1725 and 1728. See Maurice Whitehead, *English Jesuit Education*, Appendix 1, p. 197-198.

25 Geoffrey Scott, 'Plowden, Charles (1743-1821)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22388>, accessed 24 February 2015.

26 We hold this information from R. G. P. Plowden, from Plowden Hall, to whom we are extremely grateful for his help in matters of genealogy.

27 We are extremely grateful to Maurice Whitehead for pointing out to us that the English College had a very rich library culture, with a main library, a students' library, a separate library belonging to the Jesuit community, and perhaps also a Sodality library. To this, of course, we must add the small collections of books possessed by individual Jesuits in their private chambers. See Whitehead, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

28 It is perhaps ironic that it was a Scarisbrick who was knighted by Henry V at Agincourt, and not a Plowden.

### ***Pour citer cet article***

#### Référence électronique

Line Cottagnies et Gisèle Venet, « More Mysteries about the Saint-Omer Folio: Nevill and other Marks of Ownership », *Études Épistémè* [En ligne], 27 | 2015, mis en ligne le 21 mai 2015, consulté le 26 mai 2015. URL : <http://episteme.revues.org/472>

### ***À propos de l'auteur***

#### **Gisèle Venet**

Gisèle Venet, Professeur émérite, a enseigné durant toute sa carrière à la Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3. Après une thèse sur *Temps et vision tragique. Shakespeare et ses contemporains* (publiée aux Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1985 ; réédition en 2002) qui dégagait les composantes baroques de ces auteurs, elle a enseigné et dirigé des travaux sur Shakespeare et ses contemporains, publiant, outre des articles sur la période maniériste et baroque, des éditions critiques - Webster, John Ford, Burton, et surtout Shakespeare chez Gallimard, en Folio Théâtre ou dans la Bibliothèque de la Pléiade dont elle coordonne avec Jean-Michel Déprats l'édition bilingue en huit volumes. Le séminaire de recherche pluridisciplinaire qu'elle a fondé en 1990 sous le nom *Épistémè* s'est prolongé par la suite par une revue électronique à comité de lecture, <http://episteme.revues.org>

### ***Droits d'auteur***

Études Épistémè

## **Résumés**

Depuis la découverte d'un exemplaire du premier in-folio de Shakespeare, en novembre dernier, dans la bibliothèque d'agglomération de Saint-Omer, l'attention des spécialistes s'est focalisée sur l'identité du mystérieux Nevill, dont le nom défie tout lecteur qui ouvre le volume. Son identification, pense-t-on, permettra de dater au moins certaines des annotations dans le volume. L'ouvrage, quoi qu'il en soit, possède d'autres marques distinctives, potentiellement des marques de possesseurs, qui sont peut-être moins visibles à première vue. À neuf reprises les lettres P et S sont poinçonnées à l'encre dans l'ouvrage, tantôt sur la même page, tantôt sur deux pages consécutives. De telles initiales ou lettres poinçonnées à la main sont inhabituelles. Le placement des marques est aussi étrange, bien qu'on puisse distinguer un schéma régulier, ainsi que nous sommes en mesure de le montrer. La présence des lettres PS pose de nombreuses questions. Pourquoi marquer un livre à intervalles aussi réguliers ? Ce court article propose une identification pour Nevill, et entend décrire le phénomène du marquage, ainsi que d'autres annotations dans l'in-folio. Il offre aussi plusieurs hypothèses pour tenter d'expliquer la présence des marques.

## **Nouveaux mystères autour du *Folio* de Shakespeare de Saint-Omer: Nevill et autres marques de possession**

Since the discovery of a copy of a Shakespeare First Folio last November in the Saint-Omer public library, the scholars' attention has focussed on the identity of the mysterious Nevill, whose name stares at any reader opening the book. His identification, it is assumed, must help date at least some of the annotations in the volume itself. The book, however, possesses other distinctive marks, possibly marks of ownership, which are perhaps less prominent at first sight. On nine occasions in the volume the letters P and S appear, hand-stamped in ink at the bottom of the page, either both on the same page, or on two consecutive pages. Hand-stamped initials or letters in books are highly unusual. The placement of the PS marks in the Folio is also odd, although a regular pattern seems to emerge, as we can show. The presence of the letters PS raises many questions. What could have driven anyone to want to mark a book at regular intervals? This short article offers a possible identification for Nevill and describes the marking, as well as other annotations in the Folio. It also offers some hypotheses to explain the presence of the marks.

## ***Entrées d'index***

**Mots-clés** : Shakespeare, Folio, marques de possesseurs, annotations, jésuites anglais, Collège de St Omers, bibliothèque de Saint-Omer

**Keywords** : Shakespeare, Folio, ownership marks, annotations, English Jesuits, St Omers College, Saint-Omer library

## ***Notes de l'auteur***

This article is an updated, significantly different version of a previous note originally posted on <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-01120682> (accessed 31 March 2015).