

Well the enigma code machine was not needed for this talk..... **When Will met Harry!**

Stewart Trotter entertained us with his fascinating talk, on the life and relationship of Shakespeare (Will) and Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton (Harry). Unravelling an intriguing code within Shakespeare's writings and archival material, making us think out of the box.

Stewart an interesting man of many talents but mainly a writer and director of Opera's plays & Musicals on the London stages and playhouses throughout the country.

He first became interested in Shakespeare when at Cambridge University and it was here he became convinced that the key to Shakespeare's psyche lay in the words of his plays and sonnets.

Life went on and it was on a visit to Titchfield Abbey with his daughter that his interest in Shakespeare was re-ignited. He joined up with Kevin Fraser (Titchfield Festival Theatre) and together they set up performances of Shakespeare within the Abbey grounds. (*many people still comment on how brilliant these were*).

Back to the plot..... Not a lot is written about Shakespeare himself, so a lot of what has been decoded is conjecture, but once you hear it, you are convinced that it has to be the case, it seems to have been staring you in the face, 'hidden in sight' as they say. But if you are not convinced it certainly creates a good discussion.

It has always been a question as to why Shakespeare ended up in London. Researching archives, and perhaps reading between the lines it is thought that he had to flee Stratford Upon Avon leaving his wife and children, due to various indiscretions against Sir Thomas Lucy, which he would have certainly ended up being incarcerated for or even worse.

Whilst in London, his father, who at the time was a man of means, paid for an apprenticeship for him, but he fell behind with the payments, leaving Will to lead a life of drinking, and gambling whilst paying his way by writing a few ballads.

Under the guidance of 'Crowley' he began writing plays, but what is not known by many is that only 2 of his plays are from his own original thoughts, most of them being re-writes from other sources, albeit brilliantly composed.

It is certainly known that the 3rd Earl became a Patron of Shakespeare and the code seems to reveal that the relationship was a lot more than that. It seems to indicate as many have thought that they became lovers and Shakespeare certainly dedicated sonnets to the Earl, whilst other writings *once decoded* seem to show his love and passion for the Earl, and the loss of this when the Earl eventually marries Elizabeth Vernon.

We at Titchfield like to claim that it was here that Shakespeare taught at the Grammar School (*Place House Cottages*), and it is certainly possible that this was the case as John Aubrey, wrote that '*Shakespeare taught at a country school*', and it was thought to have been instigated by Mary, Henry's mother, who asked Shakespeare to become her son's tutor, which was the beginning of their relationship.

For more information on the unravelling of Shakespeare's writings visit Stewart Blog:

'The Shakespeare Code' <https://theshakespearecode.blog/>

Part One: A Riposte to the BBC

<https://theshakespearecode.blog/2024/01/01/when-will-met-harry-a-riposte-to-the-bbc/>

Part Two: When Will Met Harry

<https://theshakespearecode.blog/2024/01/05/when-will-met-harry-part-two/>