

WORDS THAT SHAKESPEARE ONLY USED ONCE HAPAXES IN SHAKESPEARE AND TEN LETTERS OF HENRY NEVILLE

A hapax legomenon is a word which an author only uses once. Hapax legomenon is a transliteration of Greek ἅπαξ λεγόμενον, meaning “something said only once”¹. The plural is hapax legomena or hapaxes. In 1896 W. P. Workman counted such words in Shakespeare.

I offer this paper as further evidence that Sir Henry Neville was the hidden poet using William Shakespeare as a pseudonym/front man to protect his identity. I have previously written about four of Neville’s letters in relation to seven Shakespeare plays (Casson 2010a). It was during research for that paper I found the first hapaxes. I now focus on ten letters, written between 1599-1613, which contain at least 90 Shakespearean hapaxes, between 5 – 13 in each letter. I have also found hapaxes in other Neville documents. I have looked at five letters sent by other writers during these years as controls. I am able therefore to demonstrate that not only does Neville use rare Shakespearean words, but does so consistently in letters that are contemporary with the plays in which those words appear, and that Neville often anticipates Shakespeare’s vocabulary.

1) In Neville’s letter written on 1st August 1599, he used the word **inconvenienc**. This was only used once by Shakespeare, in *Henry V*. In the same letter Neville also used the French word **petit** which also occurs only in *Henry V*. This letter was written just after *Henry V*, which has been dated to the first half of 1599. From a reference to the Earl of Essex being in Ireland, it was probably completed in April. Neville left for France in April and arrived in Paris May 18th 1599. For a fuller analysis of this letter and its many connections with *Henry V* see my paper on Neville’s letters (Casson 2010a; see also James & Rubinstein, 2005, 121). The letter is in Winwood’s *Memorials* (1725, Vol 1, 82). This letter also includes the following hapaxes:

Prejudicial is unique to *Henry VI* part 3.

Hollanders is unique to *Henry VI* part 3.

Canaries is unique to *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

Imported is unique to *Timon of Athens* (also in letter 6, see below).

Disadvantage is unique to *Coriolanus*.

Prohibition is unique to *Cymbeline*.

Three of these predate the letter but three are later: Neville anticipating Shakespeare.

The letter contains 1117 words and 8 hapaxes: 0.71% of the total.

2) In Neville’s letter written on 29th July 1600, he used the word **implacable**, which was only used once by Shakespeare, in *Twelfth Night*. This letter was written during or before the writing of *Twelfth Night* (the earliest performances of which were during the Christmas season 1600-1). I have shown the many links between this letter and the play (Casson 2010a; see also James & Rubinstein, 2005, 132-5). The letter is in Winwood (1725, Vol 1, 232). This letter also includes the following hapaxes:

¹ From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hapax_legomenon accessed 11/7/11.

Commissioners is unique to *Henry V*.
Dependance is unique to *Troilus and Cressida*.
Distasted is unique to *Troilus and Cressida*.
Confidently is unique to *All's Well That Ends Well*.
Remonstrance is unique to *Measure for Measure*.
Solicitation is unique to *Othello*.
Adventured is unique to *Cymbeline*. This word also occurs in letter 5 (see below), which is dated 1603-4. Indeed the use of the word is the same in *Cymbeline* as in the two letters: “**I have adventured to**”.
President is unique to *Antony and Cleopatra*.
Borders is unique to *Antony and Cleopatra*.
Adjourn is unique to *Henry VIII*.

For all but the first of this list, Neville used the word before it appeared in a Shakespeare play. This is not the only letter containing a hapax from *Twelfth Night* written in 1600. In his letter dated 27/4/1600 Neville used the word **attested** which only occurs in that play (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 177): again Neville anticipating Shakespeare.

The July 29th 1600 letter contains 1278 words and 11 hapaxes: 0.86%.

3) Neville's letter of 19th February 1601² is in the British Library (Cotton Manuscripts, Caligula EX folio 21: see Casson, 2010b, 266). It was written shortly after the first performances of *Twelfth Night*. I first noticed the word **notoriously** which Shakespeare used twice only in *Twelfth Night* (and is therefore a dis legomenon). The letter was singed in a fire in 1731 when Ashburnham House went up in flames. The fire damage resulted in the loss of about 30% of the text. However I found Neville's draft copy at the National Archives at Kew (PRO 30/50/2 folio104). I have therefore been able to reconstruct the whole letter. There were ten true hapaxes, seven of which had been used earlier by the bard, whilst another three were used by Neville before they appeared in a Shakespeare play:

Prejudicial is unique to *Henry VI* part 3.
Inconvenience is unique to *Henry VI* part 1.
Congratulate is unique to *Love's Labour's Lost*.
Rochester is unique to *Henry IV* part 1.
Prohibit is unique to *Much Ado About Nothing*.
Presenting is unique to *The Merchant of Venice*.
Acknowledgment is unique to *Henry V*.

Recommend is unique to *Coriolanus*.
Viciousness is unique to *Antony and Cleopatra*.
Clothiers is unique to *Henry VIII*. (The singular **clothier** is unique to *Henry VI* part 2. The singular possessive, **clothier's**, is unique to *King Lear*.)

² Neville used old style dating so this letter was dated 1600. During this period the New Year was in April not January, so a letter dated February 1600 was actually written in 1601. I have modernised all the dates of letters in this paper.

This letter contains 775 words and 10 true hapaxes: 1.29%, the highest percentage of all the letters in this paper.

The following are not true hapaxes:

Blois is unique to *Henry VI* part 1. It is also to be found in *Edward III* which has recently been accepted into the canon so it cannot be regarded as a true hapax.

Secretary is unique to *Henry VIII* but as it occurs five times in that play it is not a true hapax.

Notoriously was used twice only in *Twelfth Night* and is thus a dis legomenon.

Inquisitive was used twice only in *The Comedy of Errors* and so is a dis legomenon.

(See below for other examples of dis legomena in Neville letters.)

4) Neville's letter of 31st July 1602 is in the collection of manuscripts of the Marquis of Salisbury at Hatfield House (Salisbury MSS, 1910, 268). In it he uses the phrase "to persist in" which is unique to *Troilus and Cressida*. The play was written about this time. In the letter Neville also used the following hapaxes:

Soiled is unique to *King Lear*; 'soil'd' is to be found in just 3 plays *Richard II*, *Hamlet* and *Troilus and Cressida*.

Extraordinarily is unique to *Henry IV* part 2.

Residue is unique to *As You Like It*.

Harken is unique to *Venus and Adonis*.

The letter contains 536 words and 5 hapaxes: 0.93%.

5) Neville's letter of 1603-4 is an undated draft to be found in a collection of Neville papers catalogued as D/EN F6/2/3, stored at the Berkshire Record Office, Reading. I have been able to date it from the content. Neville was released from the Tower on April 9th 1603 so the letter, which refers to him meeting the addressee at Greenwich, must be some time after that. Indeed, since the letter mentions a controversy concerning **Sir** Edwin Sandys, it must be later than May 1603, when he was knighted. In the letter Neville uses the word **Immoderate**, a hapax in *Measure for Measure* which was written 1603-4, about the time of this letter. This draft also contains the following hapaxes:

Imbecility is unique to *Troilus and Cressida* (1602). It was also used by Neville in his defence statement in 1601 which means Neville used the word both before and after it was written into the play (see below). In this draft 1603-4 letter Neville spells this **imbecillyty**.

Fee-farm is unique to *Troilus and Cressida*.

Tenures is unique to *Hamlet*.

Bashfulness is unique to *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Purposing is unique to *Henry VI* part 1.

Disability is unique to *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Neville had used the word in a letter dated 13/7/1599 (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 63).

Increased is unique to *The Comedy of Errors*.

Opened is unique to *Twelfth Night*.

Specially only occurs in *The Taming of the Shrew* but as it is used twice in that play it is a dis legomenon.

Seven unique words/phrases occurring in Shakespeare after this letter:

Favourably is unique to *Othello*.

Males is unique to *Macbeth* (1603-6). The possessive **males'** is unique to *The Comedy of Errors*.

“I have adventured to” is unique to *Cymbeline* (1609-10) and was used by no other writer 1600-1624.

Privity is unique to *Henry VIII* (1612-13) and was used by no other writer 1600-1624.

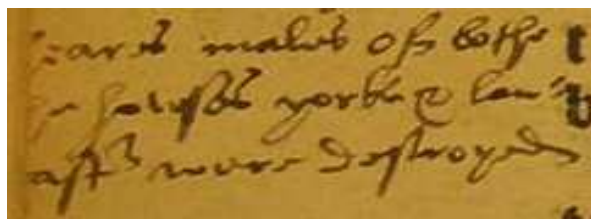
Greenwich is unique to *Henry VIII*.

“my occasions” is unique to *Timon of Athens* (1605-8) and, according to LION, was used by no other writer between 1601-1606. As Shakespeare used **occasions** 16 times this is not a true hapax.

“retired from” is unique to *The Winter's Tale* (1610-11) and was used by no other writer 1601-1604. As Shakespeare used **retired** 12 times this is not a true hapax.

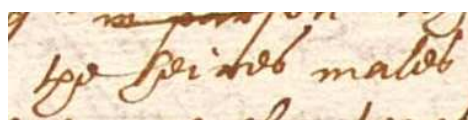
The letter contains 1333 words and 13 true hapaxes: 0.97%. The letter contains more rare vocabulary from *Troilus and Cressida* and *Measure for Measure* as I will explain in my next paper (Casson 2011b).

Note on Males: In his letter Neville writes “the heires males”. The annotator of Halle’s Chronicle uses these very words when he notes “the heares males of both the howses york & lan - aster were destroyed”. These annotations may be by Shakespeare (see Keen & Lubbock, 1954; Casson, 2010b, 78).



Halle’s Chronicle, Henry IV, f.x^a

We can compare this with Neville’s handwriting in his 1603-4 draft letter:



Neville’s draft letter, D/EN F6/2/3, Berkshire Record Office

Both writers use the rising tailed ‘s’. I have dated the Halle annotations to 1594-8, and so they may be up to a decade earlier. According to LION no other writer used these two words together between 1594-1603.

6) In Neville’s letter of 8th December 1604, he used the word **exempted**, which was only used once by Shakespeare, in *All’s Well That Ends Well*. This play is dated 1604-5. The letter is to be found in Winwood (1725, Vol 2, 37). Neville also used the following hapaxes, of which Shakespeare used eight before and four after the letter:

Border is unique to *Henry VI* part 3.

Nearness is unique to *Richard II*.

Bourdeaux is unique to *Richard II*.

Foreigners is unique to *King John*. Neville also used this word in 1606 (see below).
Considerations is unique to *Henry IV* part 1.
Capacities is unique to *Henry IV* part 2.
Governors is unique to *Henry IV* part 2.
Beaumont is unique to *Henry V* but as it occurs twice in the play, is a dis legomenon.

Contestation is unique to *Antony and Cleopatra*.
Imported is unique to *Timon of Athens*.
Bankrupts is unique to *Timon of Athens*.
Ardent is unique to *Timon of Athens*.

Timon of Athens has been dated to 1605-8 so Neville is here using three rare words to be found in this play, before it was written. Note also the hapax “**my occasions**” in the previous letter which is to be found in *Timon of Athens*. Like Timon, Neville was financially ruined: in his draft letter of 1603-4 he begged Cecil for financial relief. This letter includes over 30 words to be found in the play (including the following: Points, shortly, Hostile, Laws, Customs, likewise, Justice, hereafter, Trade, sufficient, Companies, common, purchase, Purposes, particular, Carriage, Reputation, Credit, Quantity, furnish, abandon, your Busyness, proceeded, Affection, remain, Assured).

The letter contains 1016 words and 12 hapaxes: 1.18%.

7) In Neville’s letter of 11th March 1606 he used the word **irreparable** which is unique to *The Tempest*. Neville therefore used this word up to five years before Shakespeare used it in the play. Between 1605-1613, apart from Neville and Shakespeare, no other writer used this word. The letter is to be found in Winwood (1725, Vol 2, 197). Neville also used the following hapaxes:

Disappointed is unique to *Hamlet*. This was the first recorded use (OED).
Occurrences is unique to *Henry V*.
Reduced is unique to *Henry V*.
Subsidies is unique to *Henry VI* part 3.
Abruptly is unique to *As You Like It*.
Adventured is unique to *Cymbeline*.
Casting only occurs in *The Winter’s Tale* but as it occurs three times in that play it is not a true hapax.

The letter contains 889 words and 7 true hapaxes: 0.78%.

This letter also contains an arresting image. Neville wrote, “it will wear as fast as a Tear will dry.” The only time Shakespeare used the word **tear** near **dry** is in *The Rape of Lucrece* when he wrote:

Many a **dry** drop seem’d a weeping **tear**. (Stanza 197)

In *Othello*, written two years before this letter, we find “Drop tears as fast...” (5.2.348)

8) In Neville’s letter of 4th June 1606 he used the word **affectionate** which is unique to *King Lear* (Winwood, 1725, Vol 2, 216). Neville had previously used the word **affectionated** in a letter of 16/2/1604 and again used **affectionate** in his letter of

21/6/1608. *King Lear* has been dated to 1605-6 and the first quarto was printed in 1608. The first recorded performance of *King Lear* was on December 26th 1606. Neville ends the 4th June 1606 letter with “my affectionate commendations and best wishes unto yourself and Mrs. Winwood”. The word occurs at the end of a letter in *King Lear* as the writer signs off: “Your - wife, so I would say – **Affectionate** servant, Goneril”. In both cases the word occurs at the end of a letter and in relation to a wife. Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton, dedicated a document about Richard III to “Sr Henry Nevill” in 1603 (James & Rubinstein, 2005, 320). He signed it, “Your Honoures most **affectionat** Servante” (see Casson, 2011a).

I have found twelve other hapaxes in this letter, ten of which were used by Shakespeare before the date of this letter:

Negotiations is unique to *Troilus and Cressida*.

Voluntaries is unique to *King John*.

Foreigners is unique to *King John*.

Devising is unique to *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Insisted is unique to *Julius Casesar*.

Contumely is unique to *Hamlet*.

Sureties is unique to *Richard II*.

Perverted is unique to *All's Well That Ends Well*.

Clause is unique to *Twelfth Night*.

Insomuch is unique to *As You Like It*.

Two others were used by Neville before they occur in Shakespeare.

Correspondence is unique to Sonnet 148. We cannot be sure of the date of this sonnet but it was published in 1609.

Romish is unique to *Cymbeline* (1609-10).

The letter contains 1076 words and 13 hapaxes: 1.2%.

9) In Neville's letter of 21st June 1608 (Winwood, 1725, Vol 2, 411) he used **Pretext**, a word unique to *Coriolanus*, which has been dated to 1608-9. Neville had also used this word in a letter dated 18/7/1600 (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 230). The following hapaxes also occur in this letter:

Acknowledgement is unique to *Henry V*.

Advantageable is unique to *Henry V*.

Affectionate is unique to *King Lear*.

Subsist is unique to Sonnet 122. The Sonnets were published in 1609.

Whereunto is unique to *Cymbeline* which is dated 1609-10, but occurs twice in that play so is not a true hapax.

The phrase “**to deal plainly**” is unique to *King Lear*. Whilst Shakespeare used the words ‘deal’ and ‘plainly’ separately many times this was the only time he used this phrase. The first Quarto of *King Lear* was published in 1608, the very year of this letter.

The letter contains words 547 and 5 hapaxes: 0.91%.

10) Nullity is unique to *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, a play written by Shakespeare and Fletcher in 1613. In Neville's letter of 18th June 1613, he used the word **nullity** in reference to the pending divorce of Frances (née Howard) and Robert Devereux, the 3rd the Earl of Essex. I have previously shown how this word illuminates the political background to the play, explaining what is behind this final romance (Casson, 2010a). **Nullity** also occurs in another Neville document, dated 15/7/1613, just a month after the letter. It is a handwritten copy of the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Abbott's report to James I on the Essex divorce, and his Majesty's response, and is to be found in Worsley MSS 47 at the Lincoln archives. Neville was at the heart of political events, including the arrest of Thomas Overbury, that underlie this play about friends languishing in prison and in conflict over a woman.

This letter also includes four other hapaxes:

Essex is unique to *Henry VI* part 3.

Filleth is unique to *Venus and Adonis*.

Irresolute is unique to *Henry VIII* (in a scene believed by scholars to have been written by Shakespeare: 1.2.209) Neville also used this word in a letter written on 2nd November 1600 (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 270).

Presumptions³ is unique to *Double Falshood* (in a speech believed by Oliphant to be by Shakespeare: 3.2.11, see Hammond, 2010, 95).

Double Falshood, Henry VIII and The Two Noble Kinsmen, date from 1612-13.

The letter contains 449 words and 5 hapaxes: 1.11%.

I now summarise Neville's use of Shakespearean hapaxes:

Total number of words in ten Neville letters: 9016.

Total number of hapaxes: 89; of these 36 (40%) were used by Neville before Shakespeare used them.

Percentage of hapaxes in all ten letters: 0.98%.

In other words Neville used a Shakespearean hapax about every 100 words.

These letters however do not exhaust the Shakespearean hapaxes in Neville's letters.

In a letter dated 24/4/1600 Neville used the word **inhibition** which Shakespeare only used once, in *Hamlet*. In the same letter Neville reported the recruitment of **Suissers** as mercenaries. Claudius calls for his Switzers in *Hamlet* (4.5.96) and this is the only time Shakespeare used this word. Two weeks later, on 9/5/1600, Neville again referred to 'Suissers' (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 181). Neville was writing from Paris and in this letter mentioned Denmark. In *Hamlet* Polonius refers to **Danskers** (this is a hapax = Danish) in Paris. *Hamlet* was the only play in which Shakespeare named Denmark. Five days after this last letter, on 14/5/1600, Neville used another word that occurs uniquely in *Hamlet*, **questionable**. Taking these words used by Neville in his April-May 1600 letters and by Shakespeare in *Hamlet*, I find that between 1599 - 1601, according to LION:

³ The singular 'presumption' occurs in four plays: *Henry VI*, 1,2,3 and *All's Well That Ends Well*.

Inhibition (24/4/1600) was used by no other writer between 1590-1606.

Switzers/Suissers (24/4/1600) was used by Edward Fairfax in *Godfrey of Bulloigne*, 1600.

Questionable (14/5/1600) was used by Andrew Willet in *A Christian Letter*, 1599 and by Antony Munday in poems from *England's Helicon*, 1600.

In other words, only Shakespeare and Neville used all these words at this time (Casson 2011a). These letters and his personal circumstances suggest that Neville was writing and re-writing *Hamlet* between 1600-1601, just as scholars have argued from the available evidence. Furthermore in this letter of 24/4/1600 there is **advertising** which is unique to *Measure for Measure*. According to McQuain & Malless (1998, 5) this is a word coined by Shakespeare, but Neville here uses it up to 4 years before the play was written. Neville also used **heretofore** which only occurs in *King Lear*. In his letter of 9/5/1600 Neville used **persisted**, a hapax from *Antony and Cleopatra*: again Neville anticipating Shakespeare.

Furthermore in Neville's trial statement of 1601 there are 10 hapaxes. This document is undated but it must be after Essex's death (25/2/1601), because he is referred to as the late Earl. It is placed before a letter from Cecil dated 7/3/1601 (Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 302). It contains the following hapaxes in order of their occurrence in Shakespeare:

Complements is unique to *Love's Labours' Lost*.

Uncharitably is unique to *Richard II*.

Objected is unique to *Henry IV* part 1.

Inwardness is unique to *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598-99).

Imbecility is unique to *Troilus and Cressida* (1602). Neville spells this **imbecilitie** and this was the spelling used in the 1609 quarto of *Troilus and Cressida*.

Proposition is only in *Troilus and Cressida*.

Solicitation is unique to *Othello*.

Treasurer is unique to *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Discourtesy is unique to *Cymbeline*.

Undoubtedly is unique to *Henry VIII*.

Of these, four were used by Shakespeare before Neville made this statement, six occur in later plays: again Neville anticipating Shakespeare.

The statement has 1379 words and 10 hapaxes: 0.72%.

Entangled is unique to *Antony and Cleopatra* which was written 1606 – 7. Neville used this word in a letter dated 21st June 1605 (Winwood, 1725, Vol 2, 77). The words in the letter are: “**entangled in some other business. But I am out of my proper orb when I enter into state matters...**” All these words occur separately in *Antony and Cleopatra*. The two words “State matters” occur together only in *Othello* which was written by 1604 (Casson, 2010a). In this letter there are three more hapaxes:

Considerations is unique to *Henry IV* part 2.

Concur is unique to *Troilus and Cressida*.

Mauvais is unique to *Henry V*.

In this letter Neville refers to the Latin poet Horace, saying that he prefers to leave state matters in the hands of others and “think of my husbandry in the Country, which puts me in mind of that Beatitude which Horace so much commends”. James elucidated this reference by pointing out that this beatitude was “staying in the country and writing” (James & Rubinstein, 2005, 164). There are just two references to Horace in Shakespeare, in *Love’s Labours’ Lost* and *Titus Andronicus*.

The Control Letters

I have used five letters as controls. These are written by Robert Cecil (7th December 1599); Edward De Vere, Earl of Oxford (July 1600); John Chamberlain (18th December 1604 and 10th June 1613); and Sir Dudley Carleton (January 1605). These letters do contain Shakespearean hapaxes. They do so in a scattergun effect, the words being from all periods: only one letter, from Chamberlain (1604) containing a hapax from a contemporary play. I note that not one of the three hapaxes in Oxford’s 1600 letter is from a play written 1599-1601. In contrast Cecil’s letter contains two words from *Henry V*. Since Cecil’s letter was to Henry Neville this shared vocabulary actually points to Neville’s authorship (see Casson, 2010a). The words are as follows:

1) Robert Cecil (7th December 1599: Winwood, 1725, Vol 1, 137-9):
voluntarily (*Troilus and Cressida*); **confidently** (*All’s Well That Ends Well*);
indisposition (*Timon of Athens*); **intendeth** (*King John*); **commissioners** (*Henry V*);
growth (*Taming of The Shrew*); **dissensions** (*Henry V*); **concurrere** (*Troilus and Cressida*); **reconciliation** (*Othello*); **affectionate** (*King Lear*).

Cecil’s use of **affectionate** pre-dates Neville and Shakespeare’s use of this word. Cecil signs his letter:

Your affectionate Kinsman &c.

RO. CECYLL

This is precisely how Neville and Shakespeare both use the word: at the end of letters. This opens up a new avenue for research: namely the connections between Cecil’s letters and Shakespeare (i.e. Neville). Cecil certainly saved Neville’s life in the aftermath of the Essex Rebellion. Shakespeare may be further indebted to him. I first suggested this in my paper on Neville’s letters where I had spotted that in Cecil’s letter to Neville dated 2/3/1599, in other words just as Shakespeare would have been writing *Henry V*, Cecil wrote jokingly that he “be content to **carry Coales** at any Frenchman’s Hand.” Cecil was referring to Neville’s coming ambassadorship in France. The words “carry coals⁴” are used by a boy in *Henry V*, who refers to Nym and Bardolph in France, stealing: “in Calais they stole a fire-shovel: I knew by that piece of service the men would **carry coals**.” (See Casson, 2010a for more on this letter.) We can now appreciate the hidden joke.

Cecil’s letter contains 1479 words and 10 hapaxes: 0.67%.

2) Edward De Vere, Earl of Oxford (July 1600: Hatfield MSS, CP 251/28, Fowler, 1986, 540): **correspondence** (Sonnet 148) **chargeth** (*Comedy of Errors*); **extraordinarily** (*Henry IV* part 2). This letter is in Fowler (1986, 540).

⁴ This is not a hapax as the words are also used in *Romeo and Juliet*.

The letter contains 364 words and 3 hapaxes: 0.82%.

3) John Chamberlain (18th December 1604, Winwood, 1725, Vol 2, 41): **procuring** (*Cymbeline*); **Hungary** (*Measure for Measure*); **Jurisdiction** (*Henry VIII*); **February** (*Much Ado About Nothing*); **Embroydery** (*Merry Wives of Windsor*); **improper** (*King Lear*); **Life-time** (*Henry VI* part 3). The letter is also to be found in McClure, (1939).

The letter contains 578 words and 7 hapaxes: 1.2%.

4) John Chamberlain (10th June 1613, Winwood, 1725, Vol 3, 460): **ingeniously** (*Timon of Athens*).

The letter contains 830 words and 1 hapax: 0.12%.

Taking the average between these two John Chamberlain letters the percentage of hapaxes is 0.56%.

5) Dudley Carleton (January 1605, Winwood, 1725, Vol 2, 43-5): **unmarried** (*Winter's Tale*); **matin** (*Hamlet*); **sorceries** (*Tempest*); **assaulted** (*King Lear*); **Greenwich, Whitehall** (*Henry VIII*); **Privileges** (*Measure for Measure*); **slenderly** (*King Lear*).

The letter contains 2179 words and 8 hapaxes: 0.36%

In Neville's letters we have 9016 words and a total number of 89 Shakespearean hapaxes: 0.98%. If we add in Neville's trial statement which is 1379 words containing 10 hapaxes we get a grand total of 10,395 words with 99 hapaxes, an average percentage of 0.95 %.

The 5 control letters contain 5430 words and a total number of 29 Shakespearean hapaxes: 0.53%. If we multiply this by two to get the equivalent of ten letters this would amount to 10,860 and 58 hapaxes: 0.53%. Thus we can see that Neville has an average of almost double the numbers of hapaxes in the control letters.

Ten hapaxes found in Neville letters and other contemporaries' works

I will now compare the contemporary usage of ten of these rare words when Neville's use is exactly contemporary with Shakespeare's, for the period 1599-1613: I put the date of Neville's use in brackets with the title of the contemporary Shakespeare play. I stipulate the span of contemporary uses I have searched in LION (the Literature on Line database) at the end of each listing.

Inconveniencs (1599: *Henry V*) was used by John Rainolds in *The Overthrow of Stage Plays* in 1599 and John Davies in *Microcosmos*. (LION 1599-1603)

Inhibition (1600: *Hamlet*) was used by no other writer at this time. (LION 1599 – 1601)

Implacable (1600: *Twelfth Night*) was used by Thomas Nash in *Lenten Stuffe* 1599; by the anonymous writer of *The Weaker Go To The Wall* in 1600 and Thomas Dekker in *Satiro-mastix* 1602. (LION 1599-1603)

Imbecility (1601 and 1603-4: *Troilus and Cressida*) Neville spelt this **imbecilitie** in 1601; **imbecillyty** in 1603-4; and **imbecilitie** was the spelling used in the 1609 quarto of *Troilus and Cressida*. **Imbecilitie** occurs in Edward Gilpin's *The Satyrs whipper his pennance* 1601 and Anthony Munday's *Palmerin* 1602. (LION 1601-4)

Immoderate (1603-4: *Measure for Measure*) was used by John Davies in his *Microcosmos* 1603; Thomas Dekker in *The Wonderful Year* 1603. (LION 1602-5)

Exempted (1604: *All's Well That Ends Well*) was used by Edward Wilkinson in *Isahacs Inheritance* 1603; Thomas Lodge in *A Treatise of the Plague* 1603. (LION 1603-06)

Muttering (1604: *Othello*) was used by no other writer between 1603-7. This hapax is in Neville's letter of 1st November 1604, written from "my bed at the Star-Chamber" in London where he was in "much paine of the gout" (Winwood, 1725, Vol 2, 35). The first recorded performance of *Othello* was on the very same day, 1st November 1604 in the Banqueting House in Whitehall (according to the Revels Office account⁵). The Star Chamber was nearby in the Palace of Westminster. The word **muttering** occurs in the first Quarto⁶, (1622, 43) in Desdemona's speech which begins, "Why then tomorrow night" (3.3.60). The word **mutter** also occurs in *Othello*, when Iago tells of Cassio talking in his sleep (3.3.419). Neville's letter of 1/11/1604 also includes **descents** which is unique to *All's Well That Ends Well* which is also dated to 1604. Neville writes "three or four descents" in his letter. Shakespeare writes "four or five descents" in the play. **Star Chamber** is unique to *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. (LION 1603-7)

Affectionate (1605, 1606 and 1608: *King Lear*) was used by George Chapman's *All Fooles* 1605; Arthur Warren in *To his kindest favourer Maister Robert Quarne* 1605; John Ford's *MONARCHS MEETING* 1606; Emanuel Ford in *Ornatus and Artesia* 1607; Gervase Markham in *The English Arcadia* 1607. (LION 1603-7)

Pretext (1608: *Coriolanus*) was used by John Ford in *MONARCHS MEETING* 1606; George Chapman in *Sir Giles Goosecappe* 1606; Emanuel Ford in *Ornatus and Artesia* 1607; Ben Jonson in *The Case is Altered* 1609; Francis Bacon in *The Wisdom of the Ancients* 1609. (LION 1606-9)

Irresolute (1600 and 1613: *Henry VIII*) was used by no other writer between 1600-1620. (LION 1600-20)

In other words whilst John Davies, John Ford and Emanuel Ford each used two of these words, only Shakespeare and Neville used all ten words in exactly contemporary writings.

⁵ See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Othello#Date_and_text accessed 20/7/11.

⁶ In the First Folio (1623) this word is replaced by 'mamm'ring' whilst in the Second Quarto (1630, 43) it becomes 'mam'ring'.

Workman (1896, 419) found a distribution of between 3-10 hapaxes per page of the Oxford one volume edition of Shakespeare's plays. This average accords with the frequency of hapaxes in Neville's letters which vary from 5-13. This frequency, coupled with the matched dates of the Shakespeare plays in which these rare words occur and their incidence in Neville's letters over 14 years, is strong evidence for the latter's identity as the poet Shakespeare.

Dis Legomena

In this paper I have focussed on the hapax legomenon, the single occurrence of words, but there are also instances of where a poet only uses a word twice: this is termed a dis legomenon. In Neville's 1601 trial statement there are the following such examples, the first two being particularly telling:

Wheresoever occurs just twice in Shakespeare: in *Hamlet* (1600-1) and *Measure for Measure* (1603-4).

Difficulties is only in *Troilus and Cressida* (1602) and *Measure for Measure*.

Absolutely is only in *Henry IV* part 2 and *Measure for Measure*.

Participation is only in both parts of *Henry IV*.

Pertinent only occurs in *Coriolanus* and *The Winter's Tale*.

Abhorring is only in *Coriolanus* and *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Communication is only in *Henry V* and *Henry VIII*.

Protestations is only in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *All's Well That Ends Well*.

Appareth is only in *Richard II* and *The Merchant of Venice*.

In Neville's draft letter 1603 I have found the following dis legomena:

Difficulties is only found in *Troilus and Cressida* and *Measure for Measure*.

Testimonies is only found in *Measure for Measure* and *Cymbeline*.

In Neville's letter of 1/11/1604 I have found dis legomena that are contemporary or anticipate Shakespeare's plays:

Priority is only in *Troilus and Cressida* and *Coriolanus*.

Information is only in *Measure for Measure* and *Coriolanus*.

Assemblies is only in *Measure for Measure* and *The Comedy of Errors*.

Salutations is only in *King Lear* and *The Tempest*.

Further research is revealing more evidence of Neville's Shakespearean vocabulary, including tris and tetrakis legomena.

Finally, this exploration does not exhaust what can be discovered from examining these hapaxes in the context of Neville's letters and the reader may wish to look at my other papers to follow this up. For example in my paper in which I examined four letters (Casson, 2010a) I showed that the hapax **petit** in Neville's letter of 1/8/1599 occurs in the phrase, "such **pettit** respects of **Profit**". In the prologue to Act 3 of *Henry V* there is, "Some **petty** and un**profitable** dukedoms". Later a French soldier who asks, "Petit monsieur, que dit-il?" (4.4.50) At this time Neville was the English Ambassador in France.

Acknowledgments

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For this paper I have used the on-line Shakespeare concordance:

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Note on the full texts of the letters.

I hold the full texts on these letters, some of which I have previously published and others of which I intend to publish in future papers. Should any reader wish to access these, most are in Winwood or contact me at: drjohncasson@gmail.com

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