Archives at Kew. It is probably one of the most important and detailed accounts of illicit trade in the late seventeenth century.

The survey includes three of the most important provincial ports, namely, Bristol, Exeter, and Plymouth. Culliford had risen within the Customs to become one of the most important Customs officers utilized by the commissioners to investigate corruption. However, as was necessary for anyone in a prominent state position during this era, he needed patronage. In the case of Culliford, this came from his relation to the Customs commissioner, Laurence Hyde (later Lord Rochester).

Prior to commencing his digest of Culliford's survey, Stephens provides an extremely useful breakdown of the Customs anatomy in the provincial ports. This includes the various positions in the service, the social background of those employed, their forms of remuneration, and the way goods were taxed and recorded. Such was the complexity concerning the latter that it contrived to make fraud within the ports much easier. Stephens also provides a detailed account of the main trade in the ports and the amount of Customs revenue collected at each of them.

The early 1680s was a particularly thwart period, with the Crown still nervous in the aftermath of the Exclusion crisis and the prohibition of French goods generating a great deal of extra smuggling, particularly around England's southern coast. One of the tasks set for Culliford by the commissioners was to judge the capability of port employees and their ability to carry out their various tasks. As such, he frequently advised them on the need to raise the salaries of port officials and expand the number of people working there. He was also not afraid to amass evidence against corrupt employees and recommend their removal. Culliford goes into great depth explaining the various scams involved in things like drawback fraud, the veracity of officers weighing imported and exported goods, the purported definition and quality of goods, and the more mundane illicit landing or exporting of untaxed or prohibited items. It should be underlined that Culliford's report is one of the best sources available to historians wishing to understand the actual practices, organization, and intimidation involved in illicit trade during this period.

Entrepreneurialism among the free traders and port officials was extraordinarily impressive and incredibly widespread. These people had as much of a claim to fueling a consumer society as did legal merchants. The extent and regularity of smuggling and pilfering makes repetitive reading; however, it is precisely this regularity and repetitiveness that makes Culliford's account such a valuable resource. I strongly recommend this book to anyone interested in understanding the huge alternative economy that characterized late seventeenth-century England.

William J. Ashworth, University of Liverpool

JULIA THOMAS. *Shakespeare's Shrine: The Bard's Birthplace and the Invention of Stratford-upon-Avon*. Haney Foundation series. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. Pp. 256. $34.95 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/jbr.2013.82

Shakespeare's Shrine studies the nineteenth-century development of Stratford as a site of cultural tourism revolving around his Birthplace. It describes how the Birthplace was transferred from private to public ownership in 1847, how it achieved iconic status, and how it contributed to the Shakespeare myth.

Only in her conclusion does Thomas reveal that the book is rooted in the camping holidays she spent with her family in Stratford, or better in the tension between the fascination the Birthplace exerted on her as a child and the voice of her father, who alerted her to the necessity of rationally sifting the information they were offered. The results of this self-conflicting inspiration are remarkable. This book is not only a delight to read, owing to the affectionate irony

that tinges its prose, but also deeply instructive. I would go so far as to describe it as a lesson in method.

Let us start from the beginning. As Thomas reminds us, in the eighteenth century the public was more interested in graves and monuments than in sites of nativity. We all remember the Shakespeare Jubilee that David Garrick organized in 1769, after both Shakespeare's mulberry tree and the New Place had been demolished by the dastardly Francis Gastrell. It was this loss of cultural memory that invited a public celebration of the Bard against the backdrop of his hometown.

Although the ultimate result of Garrick's celebration was that of "moving" Stratford to London, since the jubilee was reenacted on the London stage, this event can be regarded as marking the beginning of an embryonic form of cultural tourism pivoting on the Birthplace. This was the age of the notorious Mary Hornby, who became tenant of the house in 1793, filling it with questionable relics and even establishing a rival "show" after she was evicted in 1820. This commercial age, with its squabbles and its undignified exploitation of the Birthplace, ended in the 1840s, when the property was auctioned and was purchased for the nation thanks to a subscription.

Thomas devotes enlightening pages to the metamorphoses the edifice underwent in the 1850s and 1860s, when the Birthplace was reinvented in an attempt not only to restore it to the state it showed in a 1769 print but also to respond to the Victorian idea of Tudor England. To protect the Birthplace from fires, the house was cut from the rest of the terrace by demolishing the buildings on both sides. This upgrading of the Birthplace to a detached house had social implications, because Shakespeare's father was promoted to the ranks of the middle class. What was actually a set of three buildings—a tenement, a butcher's shop, and the Swan and Maidenhead pub—was turned into a single large house, by redesigning both the exterior and the interior.

Thomas expands not only on the tension between the nineteenth-century ideas of restoration (i.e., reconstruction) and preservation but also on the paradigm of *authenticity* that underlay the whole process. As Thomas explains, an effect of authenticity was paradoxically achieved by circulating engravings and photographs of the Birthplace that legitimized the restoration. Reading this section of the book makes one appreciate why Thomas chose to use the term *invention* in her title.

Thomas, moreover, does not stop at her excellent analysis of material history, but she connects restoration campaigns, the activities of committees, the numbers of visitors, the creation of railway lines, and the publication of guidebooks to another level of discourse. What she shows is that the invention of the Birthplace also reflected wide-ranging cultural trends, such as a turn to biography as an interpretive paradigm of texts. Youth and the domestic context acquired growing significance in the nineteenth century both socially and culturally. Consistent with this, an increasing emphasis was laid not only on Shakespeare's formative years but also on his plays as texts to be read at home. Suffice it to think of Thomas Bowdler's *The Family Shakespeare* (1818), in which the plays were notoriously expunged to make them suitable for family reading.

Nevertheless, the increasing emphasis on Shakespeare's "domesticity"—which is exemplified also by the tourists' fascination with the Birthplace fireplace as a site of storytelling—also engendered a reaction. The insistence on the local appeal of Shakespeare and on the private, physical dimension of his life came to contrast with his universal and textual nature. Thomas puts this attitude in a nutshell by quoting Elizabeth Braddon's novel *Asphodel* (1881), in which a character claims:

> "Who would not love to possess Shakespeare's spoon, or to eat out of Shakespeare's porringer?" That is the kind of rot which clever men write about Shakespeare; and I think it is because I have been overdosed with such stuff that I have learned to detest the bard in his private character. (29)

https://doi.org/10.1017/jbr.2013.82 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Thomas discusses various aspects of the Victorian discontent with the Birthplace as the emblem of this "referential" attitude. For instance, she describes the plight of Joseph Skipsey, a poet who was appointed custodian of the Birthplace in 1889 and soon resigned due to his qualms concerning the enterprise. His story was recounted by Henry James in "The Birthplace" (1903), and this parable enables Thomas to discuss the contrasting attitudes of American visitors to the Birthplace, ranging from enthusiastic homage to a radical criticism of British traditions.

Be they fervent or suspicious, transatlantic tourists played a major role within the annals of Stratford. What Thomas interestingly clarifies, moreover, is the snowball effect that tourism triggered. The presence in Stratford of relics concerning the sojourn of famous writers further contributed to the fascination of the place. Thus tourists came to Stratford also on the trail of Washington Irving, who was associated in particular with the parlor of the Red Horse Inn, having described it in *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819–20).

Briefly, the book is a trove of anecdotes, but far from being episodic, this analysis is impeccably interconnected. Without renouncing the pleasure of storytelling, Thomas is always alert to implications and ready to increase our consciousness of cultural phenomena. She simultaneously constructs and deconstructs the fascination of the Birthplace, luring us into sharing the believers' gaze only to show how this aura of mysticism was created. This is a book not to be missed by all those who are interested in the Victorian reception of the Bard.

Maurizio Ascari, University of Bologna

Robert Tittler. *Portraits, Painters, and Publics in Provincial England, 1540–1640*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. 272. $110.00 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/jbr.2013.83

Social mobility in the early modern period has attracted much attention both from contemporary commentators and from academics in the present day, and visual display of the characteristics associated with the elite was one of the acknowledged means of social advancement. Decoration and material objects within the home provided opportunities for such display, and the rapid growth in popularity of portraits during this period can be seen as a manifestation of this. Included in this phenomenon must be the work of provincial craftsmen/painters producing rather crude examples compared to their metropolitan, elite counterparts. As with other aspects of the visual environment, there is much more to this portraiture than mere emulation of social superiors, and we need to be alert to the messages they contain.

Robert Tittler tackles this much neglected subject, arguing that it is a crucial element in English history. He shows us how the way sitters chose to have themselves portrayed communicates their self-image, telling us what they felt important about their lives, their achievements, status, and beliefs. He has teased out a huge amount of information from the subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, messages contained in these portraits through color, dress, texts, and the objects depicted with the sitter.

Tittler's thoroughly researched and well-referenced book is both scholarly and readily accessible to anyone interested in the early modern period. It examines the growing demand for portrait painting in the latter part of the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century in relation to its social and cultural context. While we are familiar with the Tudor and Stuart portraits of the nobility conveying messages of status, achievements, and beliefs, here Tittler presents evidence of an astonishing number of provincial vernacular portraits. He reckons maybe as many as ten thousand might have been in existence by 1640. While these share some of the characteristics of elite portraits, inevitably the story is much more complex. It