

## Question 52

Who else has been suggested as the possible author of the works attributed to Shakespeare?

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Woody Allen comically warned us in an essay some years ago that when one asks the average man or woman who wrote the plays of William Shakespeare you should not be surprised “if you get answers like Sir Francis Bacon, Ben Jonson, Queen Elizabeth and possibly even the Homestead Act.” You may laugh at Mr. Allen’s hyperbole, but is it any less improbable than some of the other candidates put forth? The case has been made for no fewer than 77 persons or groups of people to be the true dramatist or dramatists of those plays attributed to William Shakespeare. A list of those lesser-known individuals would read as such:

William Alexander,  
Lancelot Andrews,  
Richard Burbage,  
Edmund Campione (who died in 1581),  
Miguel de Cervantes,  
The Jesuit priests,  
Thomas Kyd (who died in 1594),  
Sir Thomas More (who was beheaded in 1535), Cardinal Wolsey and even King James I himself.

The list goes on, and suddenly the Homestead Act looks more plausible than ever.