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## Cardenio and the Eighteenth-century Shakespeare Canon

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### Abstract

In 1728, in the preface to the second printing of *Double Falsehood*, Lewis Theobald for the first time published a complete edition of Shakespeare. 'I ... think it not amiss here', he announced, 'to promise that ... if I live, the [unclear] from my hand [Shakespeare's] *whole Works* corrected, with my best Care and Ability' (DF, 170n.). When this edition appeared however, one of its more noticeable omissions was *Double Falsehood* itself. Other plays that Theobald believed written, at least in part, were also excluded. There was no space for *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, despite it being a 'Theobald's', and one that he repeatedly stated had been co-authored by Shakespeare. Neither did Theobald's edition include the 'apocryphal' plays that appeared in the 1664 second issue of the Third Folio, works that Theobald likewise excluded from his wider Shakespeare canon (Theobald 1733, I, vii and VI, 100n.). Indeed, despite Theobald's promise to set forth the *whole Works* of Shakespeare, and despite his belief that these extended well beyond the traditional 36-play canon, the 1733 *Works* were limited, in terms of *extent*, to the 1623 First Folio.

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Theobald's Double Falsehood, the oscillation annihilates the vent.

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