



# The Life of William Shakespeare

Nicholas Rowe

Introduction by Charles Nicholl

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- The first ever biography of Shakespeare, published here for the first time in its original form
- Written using archival research and interviews with those who knew and worked with Shakespeare
- Includes 25 pages of illustrations from the first illustrated edition of Shakespeare's plays

This rare text is the first ever biography of Shakespeare, written by one of the liveliest dramatists and poets of the early 18th century.

This landmark in our understanding of the man and his work is introduced by one of the most original biographers of our own time and richly illustrated with contemporary images.

Nicholas Rowe's *Some Account of the Life of Mr. William Shakespear* was published in 1709 as the preface to his pioneering edition of the plays. Rowe, together with Thomas Betterton, the greatest actor of the period, carried out archival research and interviewed widely to collect as much information about Shakespeare as possible. This is as close as we will ever get to the people who knew and worked with Shakespeare.

Rowe's edition of the plays was also the first to be illustrated. This edition has 25 pages of these fascinating early images, mostly based on contemporary performance: a unique and charming picture of Shakespeare in performance.

**Nicholas Rowe** (1674-1718) was the author of a number of successful tragedies, a great translation of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, and the first modern edition of Shakespeare. He was appointed Poet Laureate in 1715.

**Charles Nicholl** is the author of several biographical studies of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, including *The Lodger*, about Shakespeare's life in Jacobean Cripplegate; *A Cup of News*, about the pamphleteer Thomas Nashe; and an acclaimed investigation into the death of Christopher Marlowe, *The Reckoning*. His many awards include the Hawthornden Prize and the James Tait Black Prize for Biography.

