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# Sir William Davenant (or D’Avenant; 1605-1668)

(Royalist poet, dramatist and dramatic producer; son of an Oxford tavern-keeper, godson and self-reputed illegitimate son of Shakespeare; st. All Saints grammar school, Oxford, and Lincoln College, page to Frances Duchess of Richmond, patronized by Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, court dramatist and poet, laureate at the Queen’s wish 1638, named governor of the King’s and Queen’s players at Drury Lane 1639; Cavalier activist, imprisoned by Parliamentarians, escape to France, lieutenant-general in the Earl of Newcastle’s army, knighted 1643 for service at the siege of Gloucester, emissary between the King and Queen, l. Paris, Louvre, projected colonist, imprisoned at Wight and the Tower of London, seemingly protected by Milton, later repaid favour, released, organiser of musical dramatic events, Theatre at Rutland House, Charterhouse Yard, 1656-, reviver of drama after Puritan interruption; licensed impresario after Restoration with the Duke’s Company, died insolvent, buried at Westminster Abbey)

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