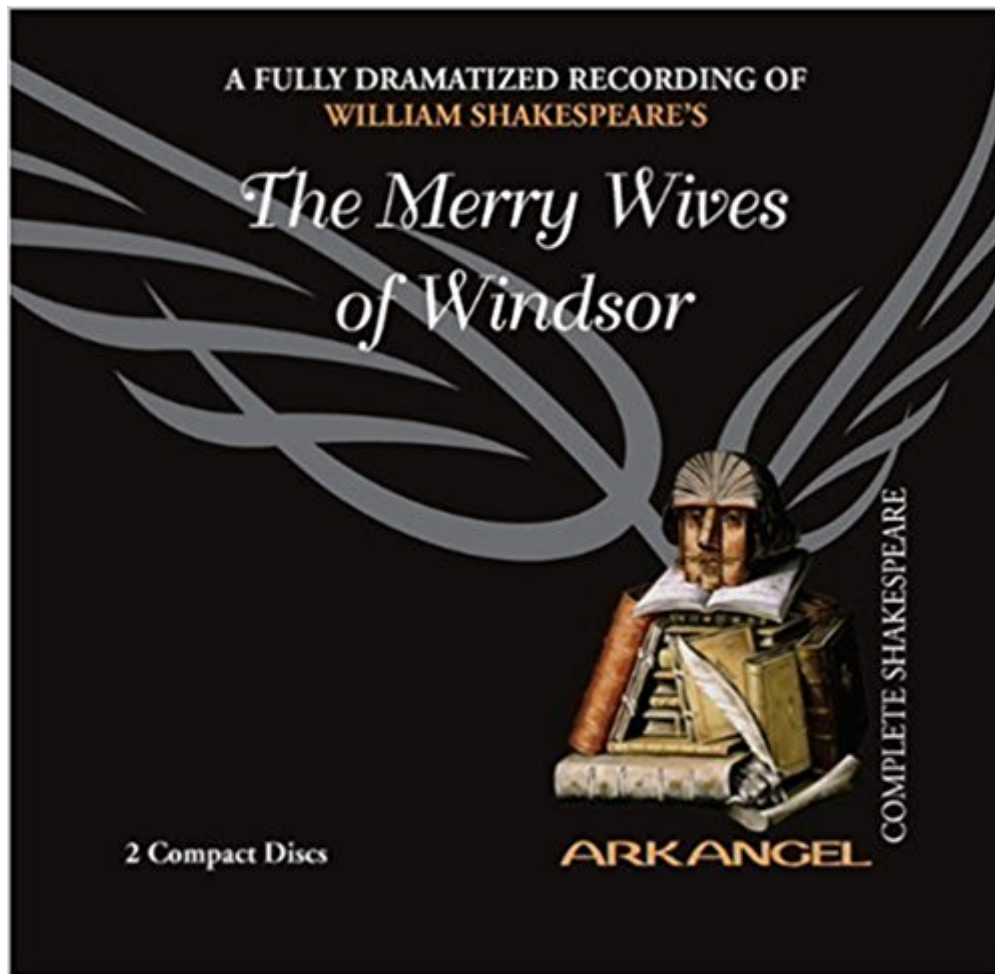




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# The Merry Wives Of Windsor (Arkangel Shakespeare)



## Synopsis

[Full-Cast Audio Theater Dramatization. Dinsdale Landen is Falstaff. Sylvestra Le Touzel plays Mistress Ford and Penny Downie is Mistress Page. Nicholas Woodeson is Ford, Phillip Jackson is Page, and Clive Swift plays Justice Shallow.] It is said that Queen Elizabeth gave Shakespeare two weeks to write this play that showcases her favorite comedic character, Sir John Falstaff. The dissolute Falstaff plans to seduce Mistress Ford and Mistress Page, two "Merry Wives of Windsor," thereby gaining access to their husbands' wealth. The two women have the old rogue's measure, however, and Falstaff's plots lead only to his own humiliation. But the merry wives themselves fall prey to plotting as their plans to prevent Mistress Page's daughter Anne from marrying the young man she loves are frustrated in their turn.

## Book Information

Audio CD: 1 pages

Publisher: BBC Audiobooks America; Unabridged edition (September 15, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1932219234

ISBN-13: 978-1932219234

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1 x 6.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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## Customer Reviews

Word has it that Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603) was so amused by Sir John Falstaff in Henry IV Part 1 she asked William Shakespeare to write a play with Falstaff in love. The Bard obliged, but on his own terms. Thought to be written in two weeks, "The Merry Wives of Windsor" is Shakespeare's only play to use England's emerging middle-class as a backdrop. The subject is courting, and the state of protestant marriage in Elizabethan England. Falstaff is a knight, but hardly young or dashing. In Henry IV Part 1, Sir John describes himself as "A goodly portly man, i'faith, and a corpulent; of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye, and a most noble carriage . . ." Prince Hal describes him as "a stuffed cloak-bag of guts" and "an old white-bearded Satan." Needless to say, he's hardly a catch. His idea of love is to find a woman who will fund his considerable appetite for food, fun and drink. Falstaff has

his attention focused on two such women, both of whom are married to wealthy town merchants. Both women have flirted with him--or so he has deluded himself into thinking. Equally important, in their respective households both control the family's purse. They are Mistress Ford and Mistress Page, a.k.a. the Merry Wives of Windsor. Sir John writes them identical love letters, and says, in effect, we both like to drink, neither of us are young; when your husband's away, let's get together and have some fun. The merry wives are on to Falstaff, however, and invite him to their homes for the purpose of making a fool of him. Their husbands learn of the planned rendezvous and one of them--Master Ford--believes his wife is about to cheat on him and becomes crazy with jealousy. Master Page, on the other hand, trusts his wife. That's half the plot.

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