

# shakespeare at war

Producer: Shane Martin. Writer: Peter Russell.  
Inspired by "Captain Shakespeare: A Portrait" by H.V. F. Winstone.

**WILLIAM SHAKESPEAR BORE A NAME THAT WAS ALL TOO EASILY REMEMBERED. AND LIVED A LIFE THAT HAS BEEN ALL TOO QUICKLY FORGOTTEN. PIONEERING PHOTOGRAPHER AND CARTOGRAPHER, DEDICATED LINGUIST AND BOTANIST, PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMAT AND SOLDIER, SHAKESPEAR GAVE HIS LIFE TO THE BIRTH OF MODERN ARABIA. BORN A SON OF AN EMPIRE IN RETREAT, HE DIED A BROTHER OF A PEOPLE IN THE MAKING.**



In 1907 Captain William Henry Irving Shakespear was appointed Political Agent in Kuwait at the age of twenty-five. He was the youngest Consular Official in the history of The British Empire and a protege of The Viceroy of India, Lord Kitchener.

The appointment of such an energetic, intelligent and independently minded Indian Army Officer to a sensitive post in the gulf ruffled feathers in The Foreign Office from the start. And The Foreign Secretary, Sir Henry McMahon made clear that British interests in the region were to continue to be confined to the Gulf and to trade. And that the territorial claims of the Turks and the Rashids and the Al Saud and the tribal warfare in the interior were a matter for the Turks.

And the Turks were not to be upset. The security of Kuwait and the construction of the Baghdad railway, not to mention Russia, Persia, Mesopotamia and ultimately, of course, India and the Empire, were, at the time at least, thought to depend on nothing less.

A neat view of the world from London, perhaps, but not one that Sheikh Mubarak of Kuwait, or his adopted son Abdul Aziz, were even aware of, far less shared. Or one that Shakespear soon found had much to do with the reality on the ground.

The Al Saud's long history of enmity with the Rashids and their Turkish backers, for example, was matched only by the young king's admiration for 'the great government' and his firm belief that it was only the British who could be relied upon to fulfill his destiny in uniting his people, reclaiming his lands and freeing his kingdom from colonial oppression.

And in Shakespear, fate or history, or a little bit of both perhaps, found him the one living Englishman who, whatever its logic or merit, was ever prepared to admit the same.

Physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually Abdul Aziz and Shakespear were as close to twins as makes no difference. And as they trekked through the Arabian interior together, one battling his country into political existence as the other mapped its physical geography, their kinship only deepened. Even as the storms around them and the world they hoped to shape were gathering.

Until a shot rang out in Sarajevo and their fates became entwined forever.

**SHAKESPEAR AT WAR IS A HISTORICAL DRAMA FEATURE FILM INSPIRED BY "CAPTAIN SHAKESPEAR: A PORTRAIT" BY THE HISTORIAN H.V. F. WINSTONE. A PREQUEL TO THE EPIC LAURENCE OF ARABIA, IT REVEALS THE EVENTS THAT LED TO THE CREATION OF MODERN ARABIA AND EXPLAINS THE ROOTS AND CAUSES OF THE FAILURE OF WESTERN POLICY IN THE ARAB WORLD FROM SHAKESPEAR'S DAY TO OUR OWN.**

This project is in development and is seeking partners and funding to complete development and package for production finance. Contact: Shane Martin on 971 503 438401 or [shane@boomtown-productions.com](mailto:shane@boomtown-productions.com)