

Lyric Poetry from Chaucer to Shakespeare

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 Although “It is likely that Oxford was the innovator of the new poems of courtly love” at the Elizabethan court¹ creating a sudden “self-consciously poetic” shift in the early 1570s,² and although he ultimately represented a profound qualitative leap in the importance of English literature, putting England on the map in terms of joining the artistic Renaissance at last, the Earl did not spring fully armed with lyrical talent from the head of Zeus, crying out iambic pentameters.³ We can, instead, detect in early suspected and attributed poems an evolution of Oxford towards “Shake-speare,” and we can see Oxford as a kind of culminating phenomenon in the context of native English lyric poetry: beginning with Chaucer; extending through Oxford’s uncle Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey; and blossoming into not just de Vere’s juvenilia in the Elizabethan anthologies but also in the lyricism of his more famous dramatic works in the Shakespeare canon.

The importance of Chaucer to Shakespeare is difficult to overestimate: “The sheer quantity of the material involved implies that Shakespeare did not merely use Chaucer for a plot or two (as he did some authors) but knew him so well that he recalled his work (often unconsciously, one would imagine) in virtually every play.”⁴ This kind of saturation has tended to prove too involved for the few scholars with sufficient expertise to do justice to both Shakespeare and Chaucer and who therefore generally stick to source studies and comparative work with the obvious cases: Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde* / Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida* and Chaucer’s *The Knight’s Tale* / Shakespeare’s *Two Noble Kinsmen*.⁵ But subtle Chaucerian allusions are woven throughout the canon, and, Ovid notwithstanding, Chaucer may be the single most important influence on the “poetry” in Shakespeare’s works.

E. Talbot Donaldson, the grand old master of early English literature (and my own “academic grandfather,” being my mentor’s mentor), says of Shakespeare, “Until Marlowe and Spenser almost in his own time, there were no poets in English besides Chaucer who had anything to teach him.”⁶ Especially influential to English lyric poets in the centuries following Chaucer despite the popularity of *The Canterbury Tales* are his dream-visions – the so-called Minor Poems: *The Book of the Duchess*, *The*

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House of Fame, *The Parliament of Fowls* – and the epic romance *Troilus and Criseyde* in addition to the Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women*. During Shakespeare's century, Chaucer's works had been reprinted by Thynne in 1532 (revised in 1542 and 1550) and again by Stowe in 1561, "the edition in which he probably became acquainted with Chaucer."⁷ Chaucer's works were also reprinted by Speght in 1598 and 1602.⁸ But despite Chaucer's eventual reputation as the so-called "father of English poetry" (ever since John Dryden declared it) and also the "father of English literature," Shakespeare's absorption of Chaucer was not entirely *de rigueur* for his era, as might be expected. Samuel Daniel in his *Defence of Rime* (1602) touts English medievals such as the Venerable Bede, Roger Bacon, and Occam, but not poets of the later Middle Ages; and "Of Chaucer's 'ancient' English rhyme, Daniel has nothing to say."⁹ Of course, to offer the obligatory glance at Shakespearean orthodoxy, the same old wall obstructs once again:

A large amount of research has been done on Tudor education in general, but, unfortunately, vernacular literature was not read at school, and there is no sure way of ascertaining when, how, and in what variety a middle-class schoolboy might have come across English books; for the most part we are thrown back upon the internal evidence of the plays themselves...¹⁰

... circularly. So how did Shakespeare access Chaucer? We know a nineteen-year-old Edward de Vere purchased an edition of Chaucer's works at the same time as his Geneva Bible and his Plutarch in French. Perhaps coincidentally, the most glorious and expensive manuscript edition of Chaucer's works, the Ellesmere manuscript (circa 1410) in which the famous illuminations of the pilgrims appear, seems to have been owned initially, and may have been commissioned, by John de Vere (1408-1461/62), 12th Earl of Oxford, who, following his father's death in 1417, became ward of the Duke of Exeter and then in 1426 of the Duke of Bedford: both dukes were kinsmen of Chaucer's son Thomas.¹¹

Though he somewhat restricts his otherwise admirable explorations to the obvious Shakespearean indebtednesses to Chaucer, we can also agree with Donaldson "that Shakespeare read Chaucer's poetry with understanding and great care, more carefully, perhaps, than some of his critics."¹² The evidence extends far beyond the two obvious revamps mentioned above. Hamlet's utterance of the weird and memorable line, "I am but mad north-north-west. When the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a hand-saw" (2.2.378-379)¹³ has been provided with a partial Oxfordian explanation: "when he was bedevilled by lack of money, it no doubt tormented Oxford to think of all he had invested and lost in the expeditions to find a 'northwest' passage to China."¹⁴ But no one as yet seems to have recognized that the playwright initially borrowed the odd directional reference from an equally peculiar moment in Chaucer's *The Parliament of Fowls* where the poem's narrator refers to "Citheria" (embodied in the planet Venus) being "north-north-west" (113, 117).¹⁴ This has remained a Chaucerian puzzle, since Venus is never seen that far north from

the vantage point of England. Hamlet's enigmatic utterance originated in Chaucer's enigmatic utterance.

In the tormenting of Malvolio in the dark house, Feste in *Twelfth Night* extraneously adopts the persona and costume of "Sir Topas," which both he and Maria afterwards acknowledge was unnecessary for the purpose. *The Tale of Sir Thopas* is Chaucer's own persona's pitiful rhyme in *The Canterbury Tales*. In other words, since Feste, the "allow'd fool" (1.5.94), serves as a representation of the playwright, then just as Sir Thopas is Chaucer's persona's creation, so "Sir Topas" is Shakespeare's persona's creation.

Also, consider the apothecary scene in *Romeo and Juliet* – with its "caitiff wretch," "Whose sale is present death" in the form of poison to Romeo (5.1.51-52) and who is called a "beggar" even though he owns a shop in Mantua (5.1.56) – along with Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale* in which a creepy old unnamed wandering figure symbolically points out the way to some young men in search of "Death," a concept they foolishly misunderstand and personify. Chaucer's "churl" (750),¹⁵ a "resteles kaityf" (728; the latter word Shakespeare uses also), sends the youths towards a cache of gold, while Shakespeare's Romeo rails inappropriately (since it is not a theme in the play nor a relevant moral concern), "There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls, / Doing more murther in this loathsome world, / Than these poor compounds" (5.1.80-82). Later in Chaucer's poem, one of the young men visits "a pothecarie" in the town to purchase "Some poyson" with which to kill his companions (852, 855).

Even Chaucer's most obscure of the Minor Poems, the seldom read and seemingly incomplete *The House of Fame*, yields an assortment of details recycled by the Bard. For example, Aaron in *Titus Andronicus* claims, "The Emperor's court is like the house of Fame, / A palace full of tongues, of eyes, and ears" (2.1.126-127), a direct reference to Chaucer's enigmatic and surreal poem. In Chaucer's poem we read of a white and red garland (135), the colors Shakespeare uses repeatedly as in *Lucrece* and elsewhere to signify the Tudor rose and Queen Elizabeth. We read of the Greek spy Sinon (152) and of King Priam of Troy slain (159), heated Shakespearean concerns in *Lucrece* and in *Hamlet*. We read of a "tempeste" (209). We read that "Hit is not al gold that glareth" (272), a message Shakespeare will paraphrase and insert in a gold casket in *The Merchant of Venice*. Chaucer writes, "But that is doon, nis not to done" (361), pre-echoing a phrasal obsession in *Macbeth*: e.g., "What's done cannot be undone" (5.2.68). And again, all this comes from one of the least known works of Chaucer. How much more inspiration would the theatrically inclined Oxford have found in Chaucer's exploration of character, voice, and dramatic narrative in his masterpiece, *The Canterbury Tales*?

Following his death, Chaucer's accomplishments as poet dwarfed the efforts of the few very minor wannabes in a 15th century whose instability – depicted in Shakespeare's History plays – disallowed much progress in English arts. The influence of Chaucer's mastery held sway for 150 years before any truly new commitment to homegrown English poetry reappeared in the generation before the Earl of Oxford's own poetic revolution.

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Not the weakest link between Chaucer and Shakespeare (or, more immediately, Chaucer and Elizabethan-era poetry) is Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1517-1547) – uncle to the 17th Earl of Oxford and the last person executed by Henry VIII about nine days before the death of the King (and the day Howard’s father was scheduled to die too). In the play *Sir Thomas More*, even though the historical Surrey was too young to have had a role in the events of the play or to have met or known Erasmus, who visited England before he was born and died when Surrey was a boy,¹⁶ Surrey the character nevertheless comes off especially well: a final irony since he, like More, will be executed by Henry VIII. For Edward de Vere, Surrey was a “literary hero and inspiration,”¹⁷ and he could easily have known of an affinity between their personalities:

Norfolk’s son Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, is, like his father, an unattractive character to modern eyes. Surrey was arrogant, vain, impetuous, resentful of the merest slight discerned by him and, most of all, contemptuous of any who lived in, or came from, a lower station in life. He was an extraordinary paradox: a distinguished, sensitive, very talented poet, but also a rowdy hooligan and a proud coxcomb whose conceited behaviour and beliefs easily nettled those around him. . . . This hothead was inevitably often in trouble, even after his arranged marriage in 1532 to Frances de Vere, daughter of the [15th] Earl of Oxford.¹⁸

Perhaps more admirably, Oxford would have noted a political affinity with his uncle: although Surrey had grown up with Henry VIII’s beloved illegitimate son Henry Fitzroy, the Norfolks generally objected to the gradual dismantling of the old nobility by the 16th-century Tudor government, an endeavor furthered by the Cecils during Oxford’s time.

And, by far most importantly, Oxford had an artistic affinity with this uncle: due to his translations from the *Aeneid* – Books 2 and 4, the ones Shakespeare most often cites¹⁹ – Surrey is essentially responsible for blank verse in English, the unrhymed iambic pentameter lines that Shakespeare established as the quintessential English poetic mode, to be inherited by Milton, Wordsworth, and so on. Surrey moreover is responsible for the so-called “Shakespearean” sonnet format, since he along with Thomas Wyatt are the chief representatives of English poetry during the early and mid-1500s.²⁰ So Arthur Golding, credited as translator of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* into English, was not necessarily in all respects the more influential of Oxford’s mentor uncles. Surrey “observed the nobleman’s code by publishing none of his verse except a brief tribute to Wyatt” during his life²⁰; most of his poetry was published in, or as, *Songs and Sonettes written by the ryght honorable Lorde Henry Haward, late Earle of Surrey and other, apud Richardum Tottel, 1557* – later known simply as *Tottel’s Miscellany*, though in Shakespeare’s own *Merry Wives of Windsor* we have a reference to it by name as the “Book of Songs and Sonnets” (1.1.199). Oxfordian founder J. Thomas Looney himself remarked that “For nearly twenty years (1557-1576) this work was the only one of its kind in the hands of readers and

students of poetry.”²² Poems in *Tottel's*, especially Surrey's, are often in poulter's measure (an early style of Oxford's in a few of his poems and in *Romeus and Juliet*, for example) and sport Middle Englishisms – such as “eke” for also, “fere” for mate, “wight” for person, “soote” for sweet, “wot” for know, and so on. “Chaucer the glory of his wit” (28)²³ is overtly touted in one poem in *Tottel's* (#31), and in many others Chaucer serves as the inspiration. Numerous close paraphrasings appear – e.g., the first line of Poem #171, “The lyf so long” (124) from the first line of Chaucer's *The Parliament of Fowls*: “The lyf so short, the craft so longe to lerne.” Clearly Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchess* and *The Parliament of Fowls* are the favorites, which is logical, because of their dream-vision quasi-love-lyric nature unlike anything in *The Canterbury Tales*. By “Uncertain Authors” (and so perhaps by Surrey) is Poem #186, “Of his loue named white” (145). Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchess* is a poetic tribute to John of Gaunt's love for his late first wife, Blanche. Whether the *Tottel's* poet also loved a woman named Blanche or let Chaucerianism dominate his work, “white,” not a likely first name, is a substitution for or translation of “Blanche.” The unscrubbed “Of the louers vnquiet state” (#187) begins with the lines, “What thing is that which I bothe haue and lacke, / With good will graunted yet it is denied” (145), a borrowing of Chaucer's entirely enigmatic lines in *The Parliament of Fowls* after his narrator has read Scipio: “For bothe I hadde thyng which that I nolde, / And ek I ne hadde that thyng that I wolde” (90-91).

The most noted case of Surrey's influence on Shakespeare occurs in *Hamlet*; in fact, they are Hamlet's first words at a key dramatic moment: when the play within the play has done its work on the conscience of the king and the call goes out for lights. Hamlet recites:

Why let the strucken Deer go weep,
The Hart ungalled play:
For some must watch, while some must sleep;
So runs the world away.
(3.2.271-274)

Surrey's poem, “The faithfull louer declareth his paines and his vncertain ioies, and with only hope recomforteth somewhat his wofull heart” (#265) includes these stanzas:

Then as the striken dere withdrawes him selfe alone,
So doe I seke some secrete place where I may make my mone.
There do my flowing eyes shew forth my melting hart,
So yet the stremes of those two welles right wel declare my smart.
(209)²⁴

Other possible Surrey influences on Shakespeare have gone unnoticed. Looking forward to Shakespeare, Surrey's poem “Of the ladie wentworthes death”

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(#213) contains a concept familiar to fans of *Much Ado About Nothing*: “To liue to dye, and dye to liue againe” (166). *Much Ado*’s Hero is told by a friar, “Come, lady, die to live” (4.1.252),²⁵ essentially what another friar tells Juliet, and the idea behind other false deaths and resurrections of Shakespeare characters. Surrey’s Poem #20 includes the following:

In faith, me thinke, some better waies
On your behalfe might well be sought,
Then to compare (as ye haue done)
To matche the candle with the sonne.
(20)

A mini-dissertation on the implications of this luminary phenomenon occurs when Portia of *The Merchant of Venice* returns home at the end of the play (esp. 5.1.90-93). Shakespeare’s recurring falcony metaphors find prompting in *Tottel’s* (#25; 24), as do considerations of Ovid (#242; 188); the characters in the play-within-the-play at the end of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Pyramus and Thisbe (#30; 27); and the “house defilde” of “Collatiue” (#245; 191), as in Shakespeare’s *The Rape of Lucrece*.

More significant than these incidental connections, here is an example of a full evolutionary trajectory of poetic subject from Chaucer to Shakespeare, with the intervening steps. Shakespeare is obviously indebted to Chaucer’s long narrative poem for the play *Troilus and Cressida*; but before Shakespeare, Surrey was much taken with the tale and its characters “Chreseide,” Troilus, and Priam too (#18; 18), and he wrote a poem serving as, and titled, “A comparison of his loue wyth the faithfull and painful loue of Troylus to Creside” (#237; 183f).²⁶ In the next generation after Surrey, the collection of Elizabethan lyric poetry from the 1570s, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* – part of that decade’s “body of courtier verse . . . that revived the emphasis upon love poetry as it had been introduced to the Tudor court by Wyatt and Surrey”²⁷ – is saturated with references to the story of Criseyde and “Priams sonne of Troy” (179), Troilus, with names of additional minor characters such as Diomedes and Priam included as well (147, 169, 179, 183, 187, 191, 271). “Cressides” name [var. “Cressyde”] is taken as synonymous with “inconstancie” (176).²⁸ Either most Elizabethan courtiers, contributing to *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* under whatever anonymity their poesies supplied, were obsessed with the story, or *one* particular courtier adopting assorted identities was.

A very famous moment in Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde* comes when at the height of the love affair the narrator self-consciously excuses and excludes himself.

O blisful nyght, of hem so longe isought,
How blithe unto hem bothe two thou weere!
Why nad I swich oon with my soule ybought,
Ye, or the leeste joie that was there?
(3.1317-1320)

In a poem included in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, Chaucer's persona as an outsider to love is nearly plagiarized:

I can not write what was his sweetest soure,
For I my selfe was never paramoure. (264)
But at least the *HSF* poet eventually cites his source:
And God he knoweth not I, who pluckt hir first sprong rose,
Since Lollius and Chauser both, make doubt uppon that glose.
(266)

Lollius is an invention of Chaucer's, invoked when he feels he needs to credit an old authoritative author. Someone instrumental in the creation of *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* and serving as the dominant anonymous voice [five of sixteen *Meritum petere*, *grave* poems mention Cressid and inconstancy (300)] was obviously a close reader and student of Chaucer.

In addition to the *Troilus and Criseyde* saturation of *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, this collection of lyric poetry from the 1570s, full of Chaucer echoes and Shakespeare prefigurings, determinedly shows the Elizabethans self-consciously invoking Chaucer for a kick-start to an English literary renaissance. Among the introductory materials is a supposed letter from "G.T." to "H.W." After acknowledging the production of "pleasaunt ditties or compendious Sonets, devised by green youthful capacities" but also bemoaning the absence of more stately philosophy expressed in poetry "as have bene by Poets of antiquitie, left unto the posteritie," the introductory letter laments:

And the more pitie, that amongst so many toward wittes no one hath bene hitherto encouraged to followe the trace of that worthy and famous and famous Knight *Sir Geffrey Chaucer*, and after many pretie devises spent in youth, for the obtayning a worthles victorie, might consume and consummate his age in discribing the right pathway to perfect felicitie, with the due preservation of the same.

(119)

It sounds as if at least one anonymous courtier in the 1570s felt that Chaucer should be taken indeed as the "father of English poetry" and as a signpost for the development of serious, distinctively English, literature.

Influences, echoes, and borrowings from Chaucer occur throughout *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*. In Chaucer's first dream vision, *The Book of the Duchess*, a dull-witted, initially insomniac narrator dreams of wandering into a wood where he overhears and then speaks with a lover who, he fails to realize, is in mourning. The Chaucer love-lament supplies a chess conceit (659) to the *HSF* poet: "When deadly hate, / Did play check mate, / With me poor pawne..." (282). One of Chaucer's innovations in *The Book of the Duchess* is that of capturing a natural, spontaneous, inner-line reconsideration on the part of the lover in turmoil:

I wolde ever, withoute drede,
Have loved hir, for I moste nede.
Nede? Nay, trewly, I gabbe now;
Nought “nede,” and I wol tellen how.... (1073-76)
The effect is matched in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*:
They be the pangs, which strive to stop my breath,
They be the pangs, which part my love from thee.
What said I? Love? Nay lyfe: but not my love,
My life departes, my love continues still....
(287)

HSF references to “Dame nature” (131, 162) most likely come from the appearance of the personification as the authority figure in Chaucer’s *The Parliament of Foules*. In *HSF* we also find an alliterative description of a sea battle:

The Barkes are battered sore, the gallies gald with shot,
The hulks are hit and every man must stand unto his lot.
The powder sendes his smoke into the cruddy skies,
The smoulder stops our nose with stench, the sunne offends our eies,
The pots of lime unsleakt, from highest top are cast,
The parched peas are not forgot to make them slip as fast.
(236)

Both content and style match Chaucer’s *The Legend of Good Women* – in a passage concerning the first of the “good” women too: Cleopatra. The last bit of military slapstick with the dried peas is also Chaucer’s (*LGW* 648).

Of course Chaucer’s most famous work, *The Canterbury Tales*, proves to be a significant influence on the poet(s) of *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*. One poem with a bob-and-wheel stanzaic form (124) is derived from Chaucer’s *Tale of Sir Thopas*, the tale supplied by the poet’s own created persona in *The Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer slyly attracts readers to *The Miller’s Tale* with a faux disapproval of its salaciousness and almost recommends that we skip it: “And therefore, whoso list it nat yheere, / Turne over the leef and chese another tale” (*The Miller’s Prologue* 3167f). In *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, in the F.I. introduction, “H.W. to the Reader,” the dismissive author parenthetically notes that “the wiser sort wold turne over the leafe as a thing altogether fruitless” (117); and a sonnet occurring later in the F.I. section is introduced similarly: “Let it passe, amongst the rest, and he that liketh it not turn over the leaf to another” (135).

The Dan Bartholmew [sic] section of *HSF* is clearly inspired by Chaucer’s Wife of Bath in *The Canterbury Tales*, who takes an immediately combative stance in her *Prologue*: “Experience, though noon auctoritee / Were in this world, is right ynogh for me” (1-2). Dan Bartholmew himself is “of Bathe,” and the first line of the poem addresses this same issue of “authority”:

To tell a tale without authoritye,
Or fayne a Fable by invention,
That one procedes of quicke capacitye,
That other proves but small discretion,
Yet have both one and other oft bene done.
And if I were a Poet as some be,
You might perhappes heare some such tale of me.

...

I neede not seeke so farre in coastes abroad,
As some men do, which wryte strange historyes,
For whyles at home I made my childe abode
And sawe our lovers playe their Tragedyes.

...

That at the last he quite forgat his bookes,
And fastned fansie with the fairest lookes.

(260-261)

“Farewel my bok and my devocioun!” announces Chaucer’s persona narrator similarly in the *Prologue* to the *Legend of Good Women* (F39), when the season of love begins.

Pointing the way towards Shakespeare’s lyrical poetry, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* includes a poem in which the narrator asks: “What will you more? so oft, my gazing eyes did seeke / To see the Rose and Lilly strive uppon that lively cheeke...” (126). The red and white flowers are juxtaposed elsewhere in the collection, where “The Rose and Lillie seeme to strive for equall change of hew” (195; cf. 260), and “Uppon hir cheeks the lillie and the rose / Did entremeete, with equall change of hew” (262). Compare Shakespeare’s *The Rape of Lucrece*:

This heraldry in Lucrece’ face was seen,
Argued by beauty’s red and virtue’s white;
Of either’s color was the other queen,

...

The sovereignty of either being so great
That oft they interchange each other’s seat.

(64-70; cf. 386)

Lucrece is of interest to the poet(s) of *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (cf. 151), as are Antonius and Cleopatra (150, 190) in fact and numerous other Shakespearean characters.

Another *HSF* poem breaks off mid-sentence, after which the commentator apologizes:

Tell him that reason ought to be his rule,
And he allowed no reason but his owne,

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Tell him that best were quickly to recule,
Before all force by feare were overthrowen,
And that his part

I have not hitherto recovered a full end of this discourses. . . . (293)

This faux editorial misfortune is indeed another Chaucerian wink. Chaucer ends *The House of Fame*, after thousands of lines of enigmatic buildup, with the announcement that “A man of gret auctorite...” (2158). The end. Some scholars actually want us to believe that Chaucer was called away, as if to his medieval lunch, and never got back to the poem. Likewise, after nine meandering biographies of love-woe in *The Legend of Good Women*, Chaucer ends his tale of Hypermnestra with the pronouncement: “This tale is seyde for this conclusioun” (2723). And similarly, wife Philippa chose that moment to interrupt him demanding that he empty the household chamber-pots? In *The Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer’s *The Squire’s Tale* ends nowhere, and his own persona’s *Tale of Sir Thopas* ends mid-sentence: “Til on a day – ” (918). The poet in *HSF*, a close reader of Chaucer and appreciator of exquisite humor, has felt compelled to include an example of this proto-Monty-Pythonesque strategy for ending a short work.

Next, there seem to be connections to the Earl of Oxford in concerns and phrasings of *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*. The poetry captures moments of Italian zeal as Oxford anticipates his coming tour of the continent, with a reference to “Gondalaes” and an insertion of some Italian: “Siate di buona voglia, My lordes be well apayde” (239). More directly, the *HSF* poet adopts at one point a humility pose regarding his own narrative ability: “Yong Rouland Yorke may tell it bette than I” (259). Roland Yorke, of course, accompanied Oxford in his Italian travels as a friend and only later, it seems, did Oxford recognize his true vile character, probably depicting him as the treacherous Iago in the tragedy of *Othello*.

Also tragically prophetic of Oxford’s propensity to value high-minded ideals over real estate:

For lands may come again, but libertie once lost,
Can never find such recompence, as countervails the cost.
(232)

The word “contentation” appears in *HSF* (121) and in Edward de Vere’s dowager countess mother’s letter to William Cecil of 7 May 1565. But “childish delight in such freaks of verbiage as ‘agnominated’ and ‘contentation’”²⁹ appear also in the “W.S.” play *Locrine*, and the *HSF* concern with Albyion and its founder, the post-Trojan-War exile, Brutus (239), are also at the essence of this apocryphal Shakespeare (Oxford?) play.

Other tantalizing Oxfordian connections include a “pyketothe” (toothpick) mention – apparently one of the Earl’s affectations – and the ambivalence towards

“forayne” influences in fashion (227): with the self-questioning “And why I go outlandishlike, yet being English borne” (231). Oxford’s having grown up in the home of William Cecil, eventually marrying Cecil’s daughter, has long among Oxfordians explained Hamlet’s superficially nonsensical accusation of Polonius as “a fishmonger” (2.2.174), with the playwright referring to Cecil’s persistent sponsoring of a law attempting to make Wednesday a meatless day in addition to the traditional Friday – a move designed not so much to legislate piety as to support the fishing industry. “To Cecil’s wards, children, family, servants, and even guests, who eyed fish day after day, Cecil must truly have seemed the nation’s number one fish-monger.”³⁰ Consider then these lines from *HSF*:

I give the Vicar here, to please his gredie will,
A deyntie dishe of suger soppes but saust with sorow still:
And twice a weeke at least, let dight them for his dishe,
On frydayes and on wednesdayes, to save expence of fishe. (286)

Even more compelling for the Oxford connection come these lines in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*:

Amongst old written tales, this one I beare in mind,
A simple soule much like my selfe, did once a serpent find.
Which (almost dead for colde) lay moiling in the myre
When he for pittie toke it up and brought it to the fyre.
No soner was the Snake, cured of hir grief,
But streight she sought to hurt the man, that lent hir such relief.
(187)

Interestingly, as Miller points out,³¹ this parable was applied by Sir Walter Raleigh to himself with the Earl of Oxford representing the serpent, when Raleigh wrote to Lord Burghley in 1583 regarding his simultaneous hope and fear that he himself could help restore Oxford into the good graces of the Queen: “And the more to witness how desirous I am of your Lordship’s favour and good opinion, I am content, for your sake, to lay the serpent before the fire as much as in me lieth; that, having recovered strength, myself may be most in danger of his poison and sting.” Oxford plays upon the etymological connections of his own name: Ver = worm [“Don Worm” in *Much Ado* (5.2.84), “joy of the worm” in *Antony and Cleopatra* (5.2.260, 279), et al.], the Anglo-Saxon term for any reptile from a simple snake to Beowulf’s dragon.

Finally, and I think not independently, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* also contains phrasings that seem like suggestive anticipations for “Shakespeare” works, such as the revering of “Nasoes [Ovid’s] name” (190), and the utterance, “I found but labour lost” (127). The mention of “Dan Cupide” (196) – presumably indicating the title “Don,” which as we know from *Much Ado About Nothing* is interchangeable with Count (= Earl) – appears also in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, and the poet is at least

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interested in the story of “Holyferne” and Judith, and uses the phrase “much ado” (290), and name-drops “Don John of Austrye” (237). Also appearing in *HSF* is not just the particular spelling of “mistresse Elinor” from *King John* but also the troubled concern with “commodite,” as expressed in the Bastard’s speech in that play. The phrasing “give me eare awhile” (231) anticipates Antony’s effective speech before the crowd in *Julius Caesar* (3.2.73). From *The Merchant of Venice* (2.7.65) we recognize the *HSF* phrase “glistring gold” (252) / “glistering golde” (232). “My mother of the Montacutes, a house of worthy fame” (231) obviously connects with *Romeo and Juliet*. Matters of Cyprus (233) and the Turke (235), including mention of “turkish tirannie” (236) vs. the “venetian fleete,” will appear in *Othello*. The Shakespearean canon’s saturation with falconry is represented here too:

I see the faucon gent [gentle falcon] sometimes will take delight,
To seeke the sollace of her wing, and dally with a kite. (127)
Certainly most suggestive of all, the *HSF* poet calls on Athena as his muse:
For Pallas first whose filed flowing skill,
Should guyde my pen some pleasant words to write:
With angry mood hath fram’d a froward will.
To dashe devise as oft as I endite.
For why? if once my Ladies gifts were knowen,
Pallas should loose the praises of hir own.

Meritum petere, grave
(173)

Athena is the patron goddess of Athens (birthplace of theater in Western culture) whose name “Pallas” in Greek means “the Spear-shaker.” *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* was in print just a couple years before Gabriel Harvey’s famous Latin lines to Edward de Vere, translated into English as “Thy countenance shakes a spear,” or “Thy will shakes speares.”

The *HSF* poem titled “An absent lover doth thus encourage his Lady to continew constant,” begins, “Content thyself with patience perforce” (182) and later includes the lines, “Beleve me now it is a pinching payne, / To thinke of love when lovers are away” (183). Ruth Loyd Miller points out the echo in an “E.O.” poem³²: “Patience perforce is such a pinching pain, / As die I will, or suffer wrong again” as well as the phrase recurring again in *Romeo and Juliet*: “Patience perforce” (1.5.92). The same *HSF* poem, signed *Meritum petere, grave*, after referring to the ideal couple Ulysses and Penelope, complains,

The longing lust which Priames sonne of Troy,
Had for to see his Cressyde come againe:
Could not exceede the depth of mine anoye,
Nor seeme to passe the patterne of my payne.
I fryse in hope, I thaw in hot desire,

Farre from the flame, and yet I burne like fire. (183)
The Dan Bartholmew poem later restates this last couplet:
I freeze in hope, yet burne in hast of heate,
I wish for death, and yet in life remaine.
(277)

In the renaissance English madrigal, “Thule, the Period of Cosmography,” which some believe to have been written by the Earl of Oxford, recurs the chorus:

These things seem wondrous, yet more wondrous I,
Whose heart with fear doth freeze, with love doth fry.

These phrases also echo a bit in the play *The Taming of the Shrew*: Tranio says to rival Gremio, “thy love doth freeze”; “but thine doth fry,” retorts the old man (2.1.338).

Here follows a poem from *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* in its entirety, with inserted commentary on its connections backwards to Chaucer and forwards to Shakespeare:

This tenth of March when Aries receyv'd,
[Chaucer's most famous lines, those beginning the *General Prologue* of *The Canterbury Tales*, contain this kind of astrological personification. Chaucer is also the originator of arbitrary but seemingly significant dates that give the impression of verisimilitude or occasional poetry: May 3rd in the *Nun's Priest's Tale* and *Troilus and Criseyde*, and December 10th in *The House of Fame* (63, 111).]

Dame Phoebus rayes, into his horned head:
[The symbol of cuckoldry, a Shakespearean obsession.]
And I my selfe, by learned lore perceyv'd,
That Ver approacht, and frostie wynter fled.
[One season is capitalized like a proper name; not the other. See also *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (1.1.7).]

I crost the Thames, to take the cherefull ayre,
In open feeldes, the weather was so fayre.
[The Chaucerian *reverd* wanderlust impulse, exemplified in the *Prologue* to *The Legend of Good Women*, transposed to or perhaps just specified as London geography.]

And as I rowed, fast by the further shore,
I heard a voyce, which seemed to lament:
[In *The Book of the Duchess*, the narrator overhears a lone voice lamenting. Compare the Oxford's “Echo Poem” and “Desire,” and the Shakespeare poem *A Lover's Complaint*, each examined below.]

Wherat I stay'd, and by a stately dore,
I left my Boate, and up on land I went.
Till at the last by lasting payne I found,
The wofull wight, which made this dolefull sound.

[“Wofull wight” is a formulaic medievalism occurring perhaps significantly in “Richard Edwards”’ *Damon and Pithias*³³ – a suspected early Oxford play – “Brooke’s” *Romeus and Juliet*³⁴ – a suspected early Oxford poem – and “Care and Disappointment”³⁵ attributed to the young Oxford.]

In pleasaunt garden (placed all alone)
I sawe a Dame, who sat in weary wise,
With scalding sighes, she uttred all hir mone,
The ruefull teares, downe rayned from hir eyes:
Hir lowring head, full lowe on hand she layed,
On knee hir arme: and thus this Lady sayed.

Alas (quod she) behold eche pleasaunt greene,
Will now renew, his sommers livery,
The fragrant flowers, which have not long bene seene,
Will flourish now, (ere long) in bravery:
The tender buddes, whom colde hath long kept in,
Will spring and sproute, as they do now begin.

[The poet combines the *reverdie* tradition – setting a love poem during the “re-greening” of Spring – with the *aubade* genre in which a lyricist laments the otherwise cheerful morning when the lovers must part. For *aubades*, see Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde* (3.1450ff) and *Romeo and Juliet* (3.5.1ff).]

But I (alas) within whose mourning mynde,
The graffes of grief, are onely given to growe,
Cannot enjoy the spring which others finde,
But still my will, must wyther all in woe:
The cold of care, so nippes my joyes at roote,
No sunne doth shine, that well can do them boote.

The lustie Ver which whillome might exchange

[That Ver would serve as a pun for Oxford’s proper name is supported by contemporary instances: Sir Edward Dyer³⁶; Penny Rich, by Philip Sidney³⁷ and others³⁸; a “punning revelation of authorship” by Lord Strange³⁹; and Myra being a possible anagram for Mary (Sidney).⁴⁰]

My grieffe to joy, and then my joyes encrease,
Springs now elsewhere, and showes to me but strange,
My winters woe, therefore can never cease:

In other coasts, his sunne full clere doth shyne,
And comfort lends to ev'ry mould but myne.

What plant can spring that feeles no force of Ver?
What flower can florish, where no sunne doth shyne?
These Bales (quod she) within my breast I beare,
To breake my barke, and make my pyth to pyne:
Needs must I fall, I fade both roote and rynde,
My branches bowe, at blast of ev'ry wynde.

This sayed: she cast a glance and spied my face,
By sight wherof, Lord how she chaunged hew?
So that for shame, I turned backe a pace

[One is reminded of the story of Actaeon, who accidentally in the woods glimpsed the goddess Diana, the story that Charles Beauclerk shows to be at the heart of Shakespeare/Oxford's mythopoesis.⁴¹]

And to my home, my selfe in hast I drew:
And as I could hir woofull wordes rehearse,
I set them downe in this waymenting verse.

[A Chaucerian duty, as at the end of *The Book of the Duchess*: "To put this sweven in ryme" (1332). Here too, the ending seems arbitrary and dispassionate, the narrator offering no final perspective.]

Now Ladies you, that know by whom I sing,

[Chaucer includes a stanza addressed to the ladies in his court audience near the end of *Troilus and Criseyde* (5.1772ff), and one can assume this poet similarly means ladies-in-waiting, in this case to Queen Elizabeth, "by whom" he sings.]

And feele the wynter, of such frozen wylls:
Of curtesie, yet cause this noble spring,
To send his sunne, above the highest hilles:
And so to shyne, uppon hir fading sprayes,
Which now in woe, do wyther thus alwayes.

Spreta tamen vivunt

["Despised things still live."]

(163-165)

The moment is set in the old *reverdie* tradition, and what follows plays out the resulting expectations too, confirming that intention; but instead of giving us a vague "somer" (as in countless lyrics) or even "May" (as in the French poem most influential to Chaucer's era, *Le Roman de la Rose*), this poem begins with a characteristically Chaucerian arbitrary date. In Chaucer's works we find a sprinkling of May 3rds no

one has determined the significance of, and in *The House of Fame* occurs a seemingly random reference to December 10th (111). The specificity of citing a calendar date, even if it's not really arbitrary but whose meaning is lost to later readers, retains an interesting effect of its own – almost a scientific detachment of a narrator trying to shove forth what he can in the hopes that specific data will help him comprehend his related experience.

But for the absence of the dream-vision setup, this poem proceeds very much like the Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women* or, in finding a solo love-complainer, Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchess*, in which the medieval poet memorialized Blanche, John of Gaunt's late first wife, by creating a Black Knight character and giving him Gaunt's voice of mourning. That's the kind of ventriloquism Oxford extends, in general, or in this case with brazen cheekiness, since the Dame is lamenting the departure of "Ver"! The abrupt enigmatic withdrawal at the end of the slight narrative is also standard Chaucer in the style of the *The Book of the Duchess* and elsewhere. Thus the poem exemplifies the talent of the young Earl of Oxford, inspired by Chaucer, bringing his own élan to the fore, and anticipating the lifelong concerns that will find expression in the Shakespeare canon.

Another 1570s collection of poetry, *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, saw seven editions to 1600 (1576, 1577, 1585, etc.) with various deletions and additions. The collection contained ninety-nine poems in its first edition, and twenty-six poems were added to later editions, all written as lyrics.⁴² It is where we find the poems by "E.O." with the ABABCC rhyme scheme, which Looney first matched with Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*. Speculation arises that de Vere may have edited *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* since Richard Edwards had been dead since 1566.⁴³ Here and among the more widely dispersed E.O. poems usually attributed to the 17th Earl of Oxford, we find more key links between the Chaucerian lyric poetry tradition and Shakespeare. Looney recognized the importance of red and white, the Tudor colors so emphasized in Shakespeare's *Lucrece*, in the E.O. poem "What Cunning Can Express."⁴⁴ The E.O. sonnet "Who Taught Thee First to Sigh?" adopts Surrey's form that eventually became known as the "Shakespearean" sonnet.⁴⁵ And another instance of "Ver" punning, more brazen than the *HSF* example above, serves as the gimmick in the poem commonly known as "Echo Verses."⁴⁶

Sitting alone upon my thought in melancholy mood,
In sight of sea, and at my back an ancient hoary wood,
I saw a fair young lady come, her secret fears to wail,
Clad all in colour of a nun, and covered with a veil;
Yet (for the day was calm and clear) I might discern her face,
As one might see a damask rose hid under crystal glass.

Three times, with her soft hand, full hard on her left side she knocks,
And sigh'd so sore as might have mov'd some pity in the rocks;
From sighs and shedding amber tears into sweet song she brake,
When thus the echo answered her to every word she spake:

Oh heavens! who was the first that bred in me this fever? Vere.
Who was the first that gave the wound whose fear I wear for ever? Vere.
What tyrant, Cupid, to my harm usurps thy golden quiver? Vere.
What sight first caught this heart and can from bondage it deliver? Vere.

Yet who doth most adore this wight, oh hollow caves tell true? You.
What nymph deserves his liking best, yet doth in sorrow rue? You.
What makes him not reward good will with some reward or ruth? Youth.
What makes him show besides his birth, such pride and such untruth? Youth.

May I his favour match with love, if he my love will try? Ay.
May I requite his birth with faith? Then faithful will I die? Ay.

And I, that knew this lady well,
Said, Lord how great a miracle,
To her how Echo told the truth,
As true as Phoebus' oracle.

We have, then, yet another poem involves the Chaucerian premise of a narrator overhearing someone's lamentation. In this case much of the enjoyment springs from the cheekiness of the faux narcissism of a poet ventriloquizing his own profound effect on a lady and having her give voice to his cheesy excuses for rotten behavior.

"Oxford flaunts a copious rhetoric"⁴⁷ and receives some general praise for poems known to be his. But in terms of content, although "Secrecy and the dissimulation of one's love are constant themes, reflected in such alliterative phrases as Oxford's 'silent sute' and 'secret sighs'"⁴⁸ and although "Oxford compared his mistress to Venus, Juno, and Pallas, then identifies her as she 'alone, who yet on yearth doeth reign,'"⁴⁹ yet the insistence remains that a romantic relationship with Queen Elizabeth was impossible for any courtier⁵⁰ and that such lyrical outpourings were "written as poetic exercises rather than to commemorate or influence actual events."⁵¹ In any case, with the E.O. poem "Desire"⁵² the influence of Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchess* is recognized and acknowledged.⁵³

The lively lark stretched forth her wing
The messenger of Morning bright;
And with her cheerful voice did sing
The Day's approach, discharging Night;
When that Aurora blushing red,
Descried the guilt of Thetis' bed.

I went abroad to take the air,
And in the meads I met a knight,
Clad in carnation colour fair;

I did salute this gentle wight:
Of him I did his name inquire,
He sighed and said it was Desire....

The subsequent interview with this personified abstraction is brief. The bottom line(s): it pains “desire” to see someone else obtain what one desires, “Nor greater joy can be than this: / Than to enjoy that others miss.” That “The courteous knight said me no nay” is a Chaucerian locution, awkward and long obsolete by the late 16th century.

A couple years after *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* and *The Paradyse of Daynty Devises*, in 1578 appeared in print *A Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions*, whose original title, according to the Stationers’ Register records, was to have been *A Handefull of Hidden Secrets*, and then *Delicate Dainties to Sweeten Lovers’ Lips Withall*.⁵⁴ The “T.P.” indicated on the title page as the collector of the poems seems to refer to Thomas Proctor, with whom Anthony Munday (secretary to the Earl of Oxford) was fellow-apprentice and sometime poetic collaborator.⁵⁵ Mostly anonymous contributors to *Gorgeous Gallery* are assumed to include Thomas Churchyard (longtime servant of Lord Oxford), Clement Robinson, “E.S.,” and the unknown “Master Bewe.”⁵⁶ As with *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, this collection frequently name-drops Troilus and Cressida, Pyramus and Thisbe, Helen and Paris, Penelope, and others. “Sir Romeus['] annoy / But trifle seemes to mine,” complains one poet (41).

In “A louing Epistle, written by Ruphilus a yonge Gentilman, to his best beloued Lady Elriza, as followeth” (9-13), we find this couplet:

Sith beggars haue no choyce: nor need had euer law
The subiecte Oxe doth like his yoke: when hee is driuen to draw.
(30-31)

The poem refers to Cupid, the Minotaur, Argus, Agamemnon, “The wofull ende [of] Cressed,” and others. Can we not detect Oxford, Elizabeth, and Shakespearean fascinations here? Similarly, “The Louer forsaken” (16-20) includes the phrase “the losse of your good name” (like the Shakespeare obsession and the E.O. poem “Loss of My Good Name”⁵⁷), refers to a tiger’s heart (the famous phrase from *Henry VI, Part 3* 1.4,137), and insists, “Thou art the Queene of women kinde, and all they ought obay.”

Poems in this collection hearken again back to Chaucer. “The Louer in distresse exclaymeth agaynst Fortune” asks, “why art thou so vnkinde, / To mee that fayne would bee thy sonne, and euer in thy minde?” (21) – misunderstanding the nature of Fortune in the same way as does Chaucer’s Troilus and Shakespeare’s Timon of Athens. The “wo or weale” phrase (e.g., 46) also recurs. Another poem, “In the prayse of rare beauty,” begins with a tribute to the English poetic influences:

If Chawcer yet did lyue, whose English tongue did passe,
Who sucked dry Pernassus spring, and raste the Iuice there was:
If Surrey had not scalde, the height of Ioue his Throne. . . .

(63)

The poem name-drops Tarquin and Lucrece among others.

Also looking ahead to Shakespeare, we see one poem in the collection beginning: “Why asketh thou the cause / Wherfore I am so sad” (44), much like Antonio’s opening lines in *The Merchant of Venice*. We get a “Willow willow willow” song (83-86) as in *Othello*. And, Timon-like, the voice of one poem (86) laments:

My lucklesse losse from wealth to woe, by fickle fortune throwne.
I once had freends good store, for loue, (no drosse I tryde)
For hauing lost my goods on Sea, my freends would not abide,
Yet hauing neede I went to one, of all I trusted moste:
To get releefe, hee answerd thus, go packe thou peuish poste.
. . .
Would God I had not knowne, their sweet and sugered speach,
Then had my greefe the lesser bin, experience mee doth teach.

The following complete poem, “Of a happy wished time,” resembles a passage in *The Comedy of Errors* (1.2.47-50).

Eche thing must haue a time, and tyme doth try mens troth,
And troth deserues a special trust, on trust great frenship groth:
And freendship is full fast, where faythfulnesse is found
And faythfull thinges be ful of fructe, and fruitful things be sound
The sound is good in prooffe, and prooffe is Prince of prayse,
And woorthy prayse is such a pearle, as lightly not decays.
All this doth time bring forth, which time I must abide,
How should I boldly credit craue? till time my truth haue tried.
And as a time I found, to fall in Fancies frame,
So doo I wish an happy time, at large to shew the same.
If Fortune aunswer hope, and hope may haue her hire,
Then shall my hart possesse in peace, the time that I desire.

(47-48)

Looney noted that the *Comedy of Errors* sequence resembles a similar pattern of concatenation in the de Vere verse, “The Grief of Mind”⁵⁸:

What plague is greater than the grief of mind?
The grief of mind that eats in every vein;
In every vein that leaves such clots behind;

Such clots behind as breed such bitter pain;
So bitter pain that none shall ever find,
What plague is greater than the grief of mind.

A batch of depressingly grim, moralistic poems signed “T.P.” precedes the penultimate long narrative poem of the collection: “The History of Pyramus and Thisbie truly translated.” The lengthy lead-in, mercifully axed from the Act V production in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, includes some unintentionally goofy lines: for example,

Curst is their face, so cry they ofte, and happy death they call,
Come death come wished death at once, and rid vs life and all.

It’s “Minus [Minos’] Tombe” here (111), not Ninus’ (or “Ninny’s”). Oddly, the piece is finally emotionally effective.

Another Elizabethan anthology, *A Handefull of Pleasant Delites*, was published in 1584. The small book is one of lyrics written to already existing ballads (usually mentioned along with the long titles), and the unknown “Clement Robinson and divers others” are given credit on the title page of the one surviving British Museum volume. However, the Stationers’ Register shows a license issued to Clement Robinson in 1566 for “a boke of very pleasaunte Sonettes and storyes in myter.”⁵⁹ The 1584 volume is therefore usually considered a later edition of the book of 1566.

The first lyric in the collection is a poetic “nosegaie” listing flowers and herbs – rosemary, violets, cowslips, etc. – and their associations, and this one is indeed considered a source for Ophelia’s botanical ravings in *Hamlet*. There are other Shakespeare connections and quoted title phrases from among these lyrics. But especially intriguing is this poem, titled “A warning for Wooers, that they be not ouer hastie, nor deceiued with womens beautie, To, Salisburie Plaine.”

Ye louing wormes [Vers?] come learne of me
The plagues to leaue that linked be:
The grudge, the grief, the gret anoy,
The fickle faith, the fading ioy:
 in time, take heed,
In fruitlesse soile sow not thy seed:
 buie not, with cost,
 the thing that yeelds but labour lost.

[Note the Shakespearean phrase.]

If Cupids dart do chance to light,
So that affection dimmes thy sight,
Then raise vp reason by and by,
With skill thy heart to fortifie
 Where is a breach,

Oft times too late doth come the Leach:
 Sparks are put out,
 when fornace flames do rage about.

Thine owne delay must win the field,
When lust doth leade thy heart to yeeld:
When steed is stolne, who makes al fast,
May go on foot for al his haste:
 In time shut gate,
For had I wist, doth come too late,
 Fast bind, fast find,
 Repentance alwaies commeth behind.

The Syrens times [tunes] oft time beguiles,
So doth the teares of Crocodiles:
[A favorite Shakespeare image; he alludes to crocodile tears in *Henry VI, Part 2* (3.1.226), *Othello* (4.1.245-246), and *Antony and Cleopatra* (2.7.49).]

But who so learns Vlysses lore,
May passe the seas, and win the shore.
 Stop eares, stand fast,
Through Cupids trips, thou shalt him cast:
 Flie baits, shun hookes,
 Be thou not snarde with louely lookes.

Where Venus hath the maisterie,
There loue hath lost her libertie:
where loue doth win the victorie,
The fort is sackt with crueltie.
 First look, then leap,
In suretie so your shinnes you keepe:
 The snake doth sting,
 That lurking lieth with hissing.

Where Cupids fort hath made a waie,
There graue aduise doth beare no swaie,
Where Loue doth raigne and rule the roste,
There reason is exilde the coast:
 Like all, loue none,
except ye vse discretion,
 First try, then trust,
 be not deceiued with sinful lust.

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Make Priams sonne, his fond deuse
When Venus did obtaine the price:
For Pallas skil and Iunoes strength,
He chose that bred his bane at length.
Choose wit, leaue wil,

[Consider this couplet from *Romeus and Juliet*: "If thou wilt master quite
the troubles that thee spill, / Endeavour first by reason's help to master witless will"
(1399-1400).]

let Helen be with Paris stil:
Amis goeth al,
wher fancie forceth folles to fall.

Where was there found a happier wight,
Than Troylus was til loue did light?
What was the end of Romeus.
Did he not die like Pirus

[The parallels between these characters – Romeo from the play and Bottom's
play-within-the-play character in the last act of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – have
been long noted.]

who baths in blis?
let him be mindful of Iphis
who seeks to please,
may ridden be like Hercules.

I lothe to tel the peeuish brawles,
And fond delights of Cupids thrawles,
Like momish mates of Midas mood,
They gape to get that doth no good:
Now down, now vp,
As tapsters vse to tosse ye Cup
One breedeth ioy,
another breeds as great anoy

Some loue for wealth, and some for hue,
And none of both these loues are true.
For when the Mil hath lost hir sailes,
Then must the Miller lose his vailes:
Of grasse commeth hay,
And flowers faire wil soon decay:
Of ripe commeth rotten,
In age al beautie is forgotten.

Some loueth too hie, and some too lowe,

And of them both great griefs do grow,
[Compare the similar item in the “course of true love” passage in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1.1..136).]

And some do loue the common sort:
And common folke vse common sport.
 Looke not too hie,
Least that a chip fall in thine eie:
 But hie or lowe,
 Ye may be sure she is a shrow.

But sirs, I vse to tell no tales,
Ech fish that swims doth not beare scales,
In euerie hedge I finde not thornes:
Nor euerie beast doth carrie hornes:
 I saie not so,
That euerie woman causeth wo:
 That were too broad,
 Who loueth not venom must shun the tode.

Who vseth still the truth to tel,
May blamed be though he saie wel:
Say Crowe is white, and snowe is blacke,
Lay not the fault on womans backe,
[The story of the crow becoming black comes from Ovid’s tale in *Metamorphoses* of Apollo’s cuckoldry, adapted by Chaucer as *The Manciple’s Tale*.]
 Thousands were good,

But few scapte drowning in Noes flood:
 Most are wel bent,
 I must say so, least I be shent.
[A tactless but cheeky acknowledgement of public pressure derived from Chaucer’s apparent punishment for misogyny: the royal court’s commission of *The Legend of Good Women*.]

Finis.

The poem seems a sometimes sulky teenage assessment of love, similar to some suspected poems in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* and identical to the juvenile kind of disapproval throughout *Romeus and Juliet*. The classical and Ovidian name-dropping is familiar from *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* – and especially intriguing is the one stanza with the cluster of names relevant to Shakespeare studies: Troylus, Romeus, Piramus.

A late Elizabethan collection, *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599) contains poems already considered to be by Shakespeare (I, II, III, V), but we might also consider the

Venus and Adonis poems (IV, VI, IX). Venus is called Cytheria here, as in Chaucer's *The Parliament of Fowls*, mentioned above. Regarding "Sonnet IV: Sweet Cytheria, sitting by a brook," one Oxfordian has remarked, "From the point of view favoring an historical affair between Oxford and Elizabeth I, this is as blatant a Mrs. Robinson-like failed seduction as could be packed into the Shakespearean sonnet format."⁶⁰ And Sonnet VIII, praising "Phoebus' lute, the queen of music," evokes *Twelfth Night*, beginning, like the play, "If music..." and in the second line referring to "the sister and the brother."

England's Helicon, from 1600, is a collection entirely of pastoral poetry, and so its aura is nostalgic.⁶¹ Indeed, some of the contributing poets had been dead for many years. The dedicatory "To the Reader" page includes this acknowledgment of attribution murkiness with a *Titus Andronicus* touch:

The trauaile that hath beene taken in gathering them from so many handes, hath wearied some howres, which seuered, might in part haue perished, digested into this meane volume, may in the opinion of some not be altogether vnworthy the labour. If any man hath beene defrauded of any thing by him composed, by another mans title put to the same, hee hath this benefit by this collection, freely to challenge his owne in publike, where els he might be robd of his proper due.

Poems are attributed to the long dead Sir Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser, to Michael Drayton, Robert Greene, Thomas Watson, W. Shakespeare (57), the Earle of Oxenford (82-83), Christopher Marlowe, and to the more enigmatic "Shepherd Tonie," "Ignoto," W.H., W.S., E.B., S.E.D., and others. This is the collection containing the famous "Come liue with me and be my loue" (186-187) by "Chr. Marlow." The "Nimph's Reply" follows (187-188), and despite every anthology through the decades, it is not credited originally to Sir Walter Raleigh but to "Ignoto." The next poem in the collection is also Ignoto's and in the same vein: "Come liue with mee, and be my deere," with the lines, "Then in mine armes will I enclose / Lillies faire mixture with the Rose" (189): the red and white theme yet again. Ignoto is interested in Thisbe (211) in a poem that begins,

The frozen snake, opprest with heaped snow
By struggling hard gets out her tender head,
And spies farre off from where she lies below
The winter Sunne that from the North is fled.
But all in vaine she lookes vpon the light,
Where heate is wanting to restore her might.

(210)

Here we find a sturdier Sir Walter Raleigh connection, but one focused on Oxford, as we saw earlier with an excerpt from a poem in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* including the reanimated snake image that Raleigh also used in trepidation of helping

Oxford back into Elizabeth's good graces. Shakespeare was subsequently fascinated with this same image or phenomenon, as for example in *Julius Caesar* (2.1.32ff) and *Antony and Cleopatra* (1.2.193f).⁶²

A direct link between the Chaucerian lyrical poetry tradition and Shakespeare is the much-neglected poem published originally with *Shake-speares Sonnets* in 1609: *A Lover's Complaint*. To many, it does not sound like Shakespeare, but attempts to remove the work from the canon have usually been ignored, since the poem is not viewed as consequential: "If it is by Shakespeare, it neither detracts from his achievement nor adds anything to it."⁶³ Charlton Ogburn considers the poem indistinguishable in quality from the early de Vere poetry,⁶⁴ and as an early lyrical work the poem fits integrally into the trajectory of Oxford's poetic development into "Shake-speare."

Like Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchess* and the many other poems in this tradition examined above, *A Lover's Complaint* sets a narrator to overhearing a distraught lover, this time a woman, telling an old man of her woe: she was seduced and betrayed by a womanizing, handsome, popular, and privileged youth. Archaic, Chaucerian terms such as *eyne* (eyes), *real* (regal), *sounding* (swooning), etc.⁶⁵ are complemented by newly invented words by the poet. And *A Lover's Complaint* is written in rime royal stanzas (ABABBCC): Chaucer's frequent verse form and the form used by Shakespeare for his *Lucrece*. Chiljan speculates that the poem is "perhaps expanding upon the 'echo' poem" of Oxford's,⁶⁶ especially considering the first stanza:

From off a hill whose concave womb reworded
A plaintful story from a sist'ring vale,
My spirits t' attend this double voice accorded,
And down I laid to list the sad-tun'd tale,
Ere long espied a fickle maid full pale
Tearing of papers, breaking rings a-twain,
Storming her world with sorrow's wind and rain.
(1-7)

The stanza links Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchess* with Oxford's "Echo Poem" and, in the last phrase, with *Twelfth Night*: Feste's final song "The Wind and the Rain." Oxford's sensitivity to both legal language and English poetry prompts him to note and re-use another Chaucerian phrase:

My woeful self that did in freedom stand,
And was my own fee-simple (not in part),
What with his art in youth and youth in art....
(143-145)

The legal term "fee-simple" refers to complete control of land in freehold. Of Chaucer's Man of Law in the *General Prologue of The Canterbury Tales* we hear, "Al

was fee symple to hym in effect” (319): perhaps also meaning that all was simply fee (money) to this shady character, a subtle Chaucerian ambiguity of phrase that Oxford would have appreciated, growing up in the household of William Cecil.

The frequent red and white imagery that we find in Oxford’s and Shakespeare’s works occurs here too: “pallid pearls and rubies red” (198) are compared with “blushes” (200) and “modesty” (202), as in *Lucrece*. The poem ends with no final commentary by the narrator. This is typical of the similar Chaucer poems, but the effect here makes Chiljan suspect that we are to understand that he was the woman’s seducer, and that the lover described all along represents Oxford before his marriage.⁶⁷ After all, like Oxford/Shakespeare,

He had the dialect and different skill,
Catching all passions in his craft of will.
(125-126)

The lover, overall, sounds like Lady Olivia’s description of Orsino in *Twelfth Night*:

I suppose him virtuous, know him noble,
Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth,
In voices well divulged [spoken of], free, learned and valiant,
And in dimension and the shape of nature
A gracious person.
(1.5.203-207)

In addition to embodying a courtly ideal, these autobiographical representations have superlative verbal gifts. In modern parlance, they’re all “Shakespeares.”

“In voices well divulged” means, on the surface, “well spoken of”; but it can also mean “revealed in an assortment of voices.” It might serve as a Shakespeare Authorship motto. Ultimately, the evolution of English lyric poetry from Chaucer to Shakespeare is a movement towards assorted voices – characters – activated dramatically. One Chaucer critic claims that “Chaucer’s discoveries as a poet, and his originality, lie not in narrative – plots, myth making, invention – but in voices, and in the controlling of language so that voices other than his own are made to speak.”⁶⁸ In other words, Chaucer establishes himself as a lyric poet but during his career grows more interested in dramatic poetry and the interplay of the voices of various characters. From works such as *The Book of the Duchess* and other dream-visions involving a dull narrator who overhears other matter yet offers no real perspective, Chaucer eventually built *The Canterbury Tales* on a rich assortment of characters, each speaking in his or her own voice, and sometimes interacting with other pilgrims. Chaucer as poet in Richard II’s court is depicted in a manuscript illumination reading *Troilus and Criseyde*; so his entertainment for the royals and nobles was tantamount to a kind of theatrical experience already. Although we will never know to what extent he may have “gotten into character” when reading his own works, his court entertainments seem to have evolved from recitals of lyric poetry and tended more

and more towards a kind of reader's theater.

The macroscopic picture of the development of English lyric poetry was in fact nascent in Chaucer's development as poet. Most of the poems we have focused on above involve the same kind of ventriloquism: the poet not just serving as narrator in his own voice but adopting and even giving over most of the poem to other voices – in other words, creating characters almost in terms of dramatic monologue or dialogue. Perhaps this trend explains the surprising poetic occurrence in *Tottel's Miscellany* of the male poet occasionally adopting the voice of a female speaker or persona: typically the moaning of a wife whose husband is at sea – itself a situation undoubtedly inspired by an early portion of Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess* in which the narrator reads the story of King Ceyx and his wife Alcion. Chaucer, unlike Ovid in the original source, focuses on Alcion's panic while her husband risks (and indeed loses) his life in a sea-storm. Surrey's two different poems titled "Complaint of the absence of her louer being vpon the sea" (#17 and #19), for one example, seem to anatomize this state of mind in the voice of the fretting female. These poems have no narrative frames: they just plunge into the character's voice, something we can consider is a step on the way to becoming dramatic writing: a step midway between *Romeus and Juliet* and *Romeo and Juliet*. These Chaucer-influenced examples strain the boundaries of the genre of poetry and move towards drama, putting the poetry into other characters' mouths. And this internal ventriloquism is only a step away from ascribing poems and sets of poems to an assortment of other courtiers through the poesies used throughout the Elizabethan anthologies.

So too in the evolution of English literature, the final step in the trajectory from lyric poetry to dramatic literature involves creating or arranging an assortment of characters and doing the speaking for all of them, an organic progress we can understand in the literary life of the Earl of Oxford (but of course something that makes no sense in the picture of William of Stratford): "More than once we find Lord Oxford writing, with considerable insight, from another's point of view."⁶⁹ Oxford ended up successfully melding two forms. Very early dramatic works such as *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* and other "apocryphal" or anonymous history plays are blood-and-thunder boisterous over-the-top romps. Oxford's early attempts to infuse this dramatic form with his lyrical gifts yielded early "Shakespeare" plays such as *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, which while clearly disappointing to critics as theatrical events, nevertheless draw praise for their lyrical qualities. Apologizing for the unevenness and "patchy" aspects of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* as a play,⁷⁰ critics typically assert that at least it has "a delicate, lyrical charm."⁷¹

Many critics are willing to carve out stages in Shakespeare's development, much like Chaucer's, with this early stage being "often called Shakespeare's lyric period based on the poetry in plays such as *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Richard II*."⁷² The admitted "lyrical grace" of such plays⁷³ would "suggest that it was the work of a man still more at home with narrative or lyrical verse than with drama."⁷⁴ Stanley Wells praises this "appealing verse, passages of which would be entirely at home in the poetical anthologies of the period"⁷⁵ – perhaps, for

example, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, or *A Handefull of Pleasant Delites*, or perhaps even among the poems of E.O. Gradually, Oxford would learn how to marry his established poetic talents with the electricity of the drama.

Although J. Thomas Looney had enough of a task at hand in setting forth the true identity of "Shake-speare," he did recognize at least the general scheme of this advancement in English literature, calling the Earl of Oxford "the personal embodiment of the great literary transition by which the lyric poetry of the earlier days of Queen Elizabeth's reign merged into the drama of her later years."⁷⁶ Artistically, it is how Oxford became Shakespeare.

Endnotes

- ¹ Daphne Pearson, *Edward de Vere (1550-1604): The Crisis and Consequences of Wardship* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub. Co., 2005), 135.
- ² Steven W. May, *The Elizabethan Courtier Poets: The Poems and Their Contexts* (Asheville, NC: Pegasus Press, 1999), 52.
- ³ Such a depiction is more similar to that of the Stratford grain-merchant / money-lender bursting onto the London literary scene.
- ⁴ Ann Thompson, *Shakespeare's Chaucer: A Study in Literary Origins* (NY: Barnes & Noble Books, 1978), 59.
- ⁵ Chaucer/Shakespeare scholar Ann Thompson is justifiably skeptical "about the value of source-studies [as] a remote and pedantic backwater" (vii). She adds Bullough's diagnosis: "This attitude is largely due to the shortcomings of the source-hunters themselves who have failed to realize that pin-pointing sources is not an end in itself: 'their pursuit should be the first stage in an investigation of Shakespeare's methods of composition...'" (qtd. in Thompson, 15).
- ⁶ E. Talbot Donaldson and Judith J. Kollmann, eds, *Chaucerian Shakespeare: Adaptation and Transformation*, Medieval and Renaissance Monograph Series II (Detroit: Michigan Consortium for Medieval and Early Modern Studies, 1983), 5. When Puttenham listed the Earl of Oxford as first among the "new Crew of courtly makers," he was using the Chaucerian, medieval term for poets or artists.
- ⁷ Donaldson and Kollmann, 5.
- ⁸ The poetry of Gower, the other significant poet in the court of Richard II, was printed in editions from 1533 and 1554 but not again until 1857. See Alice Miskimin, *The Renaissance Chaucer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 27. The figure of Gower serves as a kind of Chorus in the Shakespeare play *Pericles*. Chaucer is mentioned by name only in the Prologue to *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, but that portion is certainly by the "collaborator" rather than by Shakespeare himself.
- ⁹ Miskimin, 21.
- ¹⁰ Thompson, 2.
- ¹¹ Ralph Hanna III and A.S.G Edwards, "Rotheley, the De Vere Circle, and the Ellesmere Chaucer," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 58.1 (1996), 11-35.
- ¹² E. Talbot Donaldson, *The Swan at the Well: Shakespeare Reading Chaucer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 4.
- ¹³ All Shakespeare references are, unless otherwise noted, to *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997) and given parenthetically in the text.
- ¹⁴ Dorothy Ogburn and Charlton Ogburn, *This Star of England* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, Pub., 1952), 688-689.
- ¹⁵ All Chaucer line references are to *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd. ed. by Larry D. Benson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1987), and are given parenthetically in the text.
- ¹⁶ Joseph Sobran, "Oxford's Uncle Henry: *Sir Thomas More* Considered in Oxfordian Light," *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* 38.1 (Winter 2002), 6.
- ¹⁷ Sobran, "Oxford's Uncle," 6.
- ¹⁸ Robert Hutchinson, *The Last Days of Henry VIII: Conspiracies, Treason and Heresy at the Court*

of the *Dying Tyrant* (NY: HarperCollins, 2005), 181-182.

- ¹⁹ Joseph Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare: Solving the Greatest Literary Mystery of All Time* (NY: The Free Press, 1997), 177. "Troy is Shakespeare's favorite emblem of suffering, loss, and unbearable grief" (177). Oxford refers to the Trojan debacle in a 1572 letter to Burghley following and concerning the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre, citing "a number of French *Aeneases*." Sobran points out that one of Oxford's poems mentions "Paris, Priam's son" (177).
- ²⁰ And although credit for the English sonnet always goes to "Wyatt and Surrey," Surrey should receive top billing. He is the many times more prolific contributor to *Tottel's Miscellany*.
- ²¹ Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare*, 176.
- ²² J. Thomas Looney, *"Shakespeare" Identified, Vol. I*, 3rd ed. by Ruth Loyd Miller (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1975), 543.
- ²³ All references to Henry Howard poems are from *Tottel's Miscellany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), given parenthetically by number (#) and/or by page.
- ²⁴ Ross W. Duffin, in *Shakespeare's Songbook* (NY: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 2004), 463, points out the connection, calling Surrey's poem "If Care Do Cause Men Cry" and, I hope accidentally, misidentifying Surrey as Thomas Howard (369n, 520), rather than Henry Howard (1517-1547). Is he blurring Thomas Wyatt with Surrey?
- ²⁵ Similarly, "She died, my lord, but whiles her slander liv'd" (*Much Ado* 5.4.66).
- ²⁶ One might fill in the time-line with Robert Henryson's interest in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*. The fifteenth-century northern poet wrote a bleak sequel, *The Testament of Cresseid*, which was often printed along with Chaucer's poem. Criseyde becomes unrecognizably disfigured by leprosy.
- ²⁷ May, 52.
- ²⁸ One wonders how the notion of naming a car, the Toyota Cressida, after the paragon of unreliability passed however many board meetings. Similarly, the Ford Phaeton; read Ovid's account of the worst traffic accident of the gods in Book 2 of *Metamorphoses*.
- ²⁹ C.F. Tucker Brooke, ed, *The Shakespeare Apocrypha* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), xvii.
- ³⁰ Ruth Loyd Miller, qtd. in Eva Turner Clark, *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays*, 1931. 3rd ed. by Ruth Loyd Miller (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1974), 676.
- ³¹ Ruth Loyd Miller, ed., *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press Corporation, 1975), 301. All quotations from poems in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* come from this edition with page numbers given parenthetically in the text.
- ³² Miller, ed., 183.
- ³³ *Richard Edwards' Damon and Pithias: a critical old-spelling edition*. Ed. Jerry White (NY: Garland Pub., 1980).
- ³⁴ Brooke's 'Romeus and Juliet' Being the Original of Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet' Newly Edited by J.J. Munro (1908, rpt. NY: AMS Press, Inc., 1970).
- ³⁵ See Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare*, 235; or May, 271. The poem begins, "Even as the waxe doeth melt."
- ³⁶ May, 292.
- ³⁷ May, 84-87.
- ³⁸ May, 96.
- ³⁹ May, 66.
- ⁴⁰ May, 77.
- ⁴¹ Charles Beauclerk, *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom: The True History of Shakespeare and Elizabeth* (NY: Grove Press, 2010).

- ⁴² Richard M. Waugaman, M.D. "A Shakespearean 'Snail Poem,' Newly Attributed to Edward de Vere." *Shakespeare Matters* 7.2 (Winter 2008): 1.
- ⁴³ Waugaman, 6.
- ⁴⁴ Looney, 563; for the poem, see Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare*, 255-256.
- ⁴⁵ Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare*, 116, 202.
- ⁴⁶ To be found in May, 282-283; also, with verbal connections to Shakespearean works, see Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare*, 260-262. Looney himself first recognized the importance of this poem (560-561).
- ⁴⁷ May, 53.
- ⁴⁸ May, 54.
- ⁴⁹ May, 55.
- ⁵⁰ May, 57.
- ⁵¹ May, 58.
- ⁵² Looney comments on the poem (565), and Sobran includes it in *Alias Shakespeare*, 245.
- ⁵³ May, 275-276.
- ⁵⁴ Hyder E. Rollins, ed., *A Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926), xiv. Subsequent page numbers for poems quoted are from this edition.
- ⁵⁵ Rollins, xix.
- ⁵⁶ Rollins, xxi.
- ⁵⁷ See the poem in May, 272-273; also Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare*, 239.
- ⁵⁸ Looney's analysis appears in Clark, 20-21; cf. Ogburn and Ogburn, 52; also Charlton Ogburn, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality*, 2nd ed. (McLean, VA: EPM Pub., 1992), 583.
- ⁵⁹ *A Handfull of Pleasant Delites*, ed. Clement Robinson (London, 1878). Subsequent poems belonging to this collection are from this edition.
- ⁶⁰ W.J. Ray, "Proofs of Oxfordian Authorship in the Shakespearean Apocrypha," *The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* 45.2 (September 2009), 23.
- ⁶¹ *England's Helicon* (London: Frederick Etchells and Hugh Macdonald, 1925). Subsequent poems quoted are from this edition.
- ⁶² And here's a stanza from a "Greene" poem:
I stoode amaz'd, and wondring at the sight,
while that a dame,
That shone like to the heauens rich sparkling light,
Discourst the same,
And said, My friend, this worme within the fire:
Which lyes content,
Is Venus worme, and represents desire.
(99)
- Ignoto also has some connection with Weelkes' 1597 madrigals (231); and one of the Thomas Watson (another musician) pieces focuses on the Actaeon myth (60): "I dare not name the Nimph that works my smart, / Though Loue hath grau'n her name within my hart."
- ⁶³ Hallett Smith, Introduction, *A Lover's Complaint*, in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), 1875.
- ⁶⁴ Ogburn, 393.
- ⁶⁵ Katherine Chiljan, "Complaints About *A Lover's Complaint*," *The Shakespeare-Oxford Newsletter* 44.1 (Winter 2008), 6.

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- ⁶⁶ Chiljan, 8. Chiljan also scrutinizes *A Lover's Complaint* in *Shakespeare Suppressed: The Uncensored Truth about Shakespeare and his Works* (San Francisco: Faire Editions, 2011), 76-83.
- ⁶⁷ Chiljan, "Complaints," 7-8.
- ⁶⁸ Miskimin, 31.
- ⁶⁹ Miller, ed., 301. This is why it is so unlikely that Anne Vavasour wrote the "Echo Poem," especially given a very self-glorifying *Ver* poem in the *Hundreth Sundrie Flowers* which is a delightfully cheeky stance (to put words into the mouth of a regretful lady pining for oneself). At least one poem ascribed to Queen Elizabeth seems to have been penned by Oxford (Looney, 600-601). And what is the authorial truth behind Arthur Golding, Arthur Brooke, Thomas Watson, Thomas Weelkes, William Shaksper? At the other end of the ventriloquism spectrum, we have the poem in the voice of Anne Cecil, expressing grief at the loss of her newborn son: a gift from her husband? The practice could seem insensitive or pushy, presuming to speak through other people – but perhaps it's no more peculiar than letting Hallmark express one's emotions.
- ⁷⁰ Anne Barton, Introduction, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1997), 179.
- ⁷¹ Barton, 177.
- ⁷² Terry A. Gray. "1599 The Great Globe." <<http://shakespeare.palomar.edu/timeline/greatglobe.htm>>.
- ⁷³ Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare: A Life in Drama* (NY: W.W. Norton and Co., 1997), 41.
- ⁷⁴ Barton, 178.
- ⁷⁵ Wells, 41.
- ⁷⁶ Looney, 292.