

THE “PRINCE TUDOR” DILEMMA: *Hip Thesis, Hypothesis, or Old Wives’ Tale?*

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There was an old woman who lived in a shoe,
She had so many children she didn't know what to do,
So she gave them some broth without any bread,
Whipped them all soundly and sent them to bed.

English Nursery Rhyme



WITHIN the study of the Shakespeare authorship question there has long been an argument known as the “Tudor Rose,” or more recently, the “Prince Tudor” theory (“PT” for short). The debate between the Stratfordians and the Oxfordians couldn’t be any more abrasive than that between those who advocate PT and those who see it as a deviation which does nothing to resolve the question of whether or not the seventeenth Earl of Oxford wrote the Shakespeare canon. The basic version of PT holds that Edward de Vere was the Queen’s paramour, or secret husband, and that Henry Wriothesley, third Earl of Southampton, was their illegitimate son, making de Vere the *sub rosa* King of England (no pun intended) and Wriothesley heir to the throne. This, they hold, “explains” the Sonnets, why de Vere hid his authorship of the Shakespeare canon, and other matters.

Sir Francis Bacon was the first candidate for the authorship of the Shakespeare canon. He was also the first to be “explained” by the PT theory, as formally presented in 1910 by Baconian Alfred Dodd.¹ In this original version, Bacon was the Queen’s son by Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, to whom she was secretly married. Since the secret could never be made public, the “Tudor Prince” was given to Sir Nicholas Bacon and his wife to raise as their own. Thirteen years after J.T. Looney introduced the Oxfordian thesis of authorship, the plot shifted to Oxford, in a version introduced by Percy Allen² in 1933, then expanded by Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn, Sr. in *This Star of England* in 1952. In this version Oxford replaces Leicester as the Queen’s secret husband, while Bacon’s role as Tudor Prince is taken by Henry Wriothesley, third Earl of Southampton.

Charlton Ogburn Jr. touched upon his parents’ scenario several decades later in *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* with the disclaimer: “I take no stand” (346). The story was embraced and further developed by Elisabeth (Betty) Sears in her 1991 *Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose* (soon to be republished in an expanded version by Meadow Geese Press). The most recent and notable version of PT, however, is the self-published *Oxford, Son of Queen*

Elizabeth I (2001) by Paul Streitz, who retains some of the original Baconian plot by making Oxford, not only the Queen's clandestine lover, but her illegitimate son (by Sir Thomas Seymour) as well.

Streitz avers that "no historian has presented all the facts from A to Z, which paint a picture not easily dismissed" (xiii); and "[t]he purpose of this book is to critically examine all the historical evidence to determine whether or not Elizabeth had a child in the summer of 1548 and whether or not this child was raised as Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, better known to the world as the author 'William Shakespeare'" (xv); and: "None have investigated the rumors concerning Queen Elizabeth with any historical diligence or accuracy" (89). While Streitz does portray an intriguing picture to readers new to the subject, his "examination" covers only the evidence that suits his purpose while he omits anything that might conflict. What Streitz is promoting is not a "theory," but an hypothesis, and one backed by more energy than fact.

This has become an important issue for the progress of the Oxfordian movement and, to the chagrin of a significant number of Oxfordians, one that is unlikely to go away anytime soon. Because the Ogburns's books have been among the most persuasive biographies of Oxford ever published, they have created a substantial audience that is eager to support some version of the PT story. For that reason, we feel called upon to examine more closely what Streitz has to say.

Were Elizabeth and Seymour lovers?

In discussing the illicit relationship that developed between the Princess Elizabeth and the Lord Admiral Thomas Seymour in 1548, one that supposedly resulted in Elizabeth's pregnancy and the birth of Edward de Vere, Streitz writes:

After the death of . . . Henry VIII, Thomas Seymour proposed marriage to the young Princess Elizabeth, who was twelve years old at the time . . . Elizabeth promptly rejected Seymour's proposal with a letter that indicates maturity beyond her years, but Katherine Parr may have edited it, as Elizabeth was a part of the Dowager Queen's household at Chelsea and Hatfield. (70)

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Streitz then quotes an excerpt from the letter, stating in a footnote that he obtained the material from *A Crown For Elizabeth* by Mary M. Luke, whose footnote in turn leads to Elswyth Thane’s *The Tudor Wench*, whose source is revealed to be none other than the unreliable Gregorio Leti. Leti, who invented many of his so-called sources, was forever unearthing “documentation” never seen before or since. In the case of the Seymour/Elizabeth affair, Leti concocted a phony correspondence around authentic documents that seemed to be supported by the known facts. Leti’s letters are regarded as spurious by modern historians and no scholar wishing to be taken seriously exploits them as genuine (BBH 60). Streitz should have confined himself to G.B. Harrison’s *The Letters of Queen Elizabeth* for the authentic letters, or better still, the newer *Elizabeth I, Collected Works*, edited by Leah Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose.

Streitz later quotes from an authentic letter to Thomas Seymour’s elder brother Edward, Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector, one of two in which, he asserts, Elizabeth broaches the subject of her pregnancy. While the “evil reports” and “such rumors” mentioned in this letter in all likelihood do refer to rumors of sexual relations between herself and Thomas Seymour, the phrase “to have such a one” has been misinterpreted by Streitz. We cite the relevant section from *Elizabeth I, Collected Works*, including two lead-in sentences which help to illuminate the matter, sentences Streitz chose not to include:

And as concerning that point that you write—that I seem to stand in mine own wit in being so well assured of mine own self—I did assure me of myself no more than I trust the truth shall try. And to say that which I knew of myself I did not think should have displeased the Council or your grace. And surely the cause why that *I was sorry that there should be any such about me* was because that I thought the people will say that I deserved through my lewd demeanor *to have such a one*, and not that I mislike anything that your lordship or the Council shall think good (for I know that you and the Council are charged with me), or that I take upon me to rule myself. (32, emphasis added)

According to Streitz:

Elizabeth protests that she “deserved through her lewd demeanor, *to have such a one*.” Here, the lady does protest too much and is giving away the circumstances of her relation with Thomas Seymour (that is, that she was a willing party to her involvement). Further, Elizabeth does not clearly say that she did not have *such a “one*.” She confronts the issue of whether her “lewd demeanor” was the cause of it, but there is no clear denial of having any such child. (87, emphasis added)

The phrase “to have such a one” does *not* refer to a child. Having been deprived of Kate

Ashley, her governess since childhood, Elizabeth is vehemently objecting to being put under the formal custodianship of the cold and unfriendly Lady Tyrwhitt. She claims the measure makes her appear guilty as well as incapable of supervising herself. It should be obvious that the phrase “to have such a one” refers directly back to the preceding phrase “any such about me.” That is, “to have such a one” means “to have such a guardian,” or “that there should be any such about me” as Lady Tyrwhitt.

Robert Tyrwhitt’s letters to Somerset inform us that Elizabeth insisted that Kate Ashley “was made her mistress by the king her father,” and that she “cannot now abide anybody who disapproves of her doings.” (CSPD 82) Tyrwhitt, in a later letter to Somerset (as recorded in the Haynes State Papers), clarifies Elizabeth’s words:

Pleaseth it your grace to be advertised, that after my wife’s repair hither, she declared to the lady Elizabeth’s grace, that she was called before your grace and the council and had a rebuke, that she had not taken upon her the office to see her well governed, in the lieu of Mrs. Ashley. Her answer was, that Mrs. Ashley was her mistress, and that she had not so demeaned herself that the council should now need to put any mo mistresses unto her. Whereunto my wife answered, seeing she did allow Mrs. Ashley to be her mistress, she need not to be ashamed to have any honest woman to be in that place. She took the matter so heavily, that she wept all that night and lowered all the next day, till she received your letter: and then she sent for me and asked me whether she was best to write to you again or not; I said, if she would make answer that she would follow the effect of your letter, I thought it well done that she should write; but in the end of the matter I perceived that she was very loth to have a governor; and to avoid the same, said the world would note her to be a great offender, having so hastily a governor appointed her. And all is no more, she fully hopes to recover her old mistress again. The love she yet beareth her is to be wondered at. I told her, if she would consider her honor and the sequel thereof, she would, considering her years, make suit to your grace to have one, rather than to make delay to be without one, one hour. She cannot digest such advice in no way; but if I should say my phantasy, it were more meet she should have two [mistresses] than one. (as qtd. by Aikin 55)

To Elizabeth’s tantrum, Somerset replied with the reproof to which she refers in the sentences omitted by Streit: “And as concerning that point that you write—that I seem to stand in mine own wit in being so well assured of mine own self. . . .” Which is, of course, the point. Elizabeth wanted to rule herself and not have “such a one” as Lady Tyrwhitt “about” her.

Streitz has misread his material and misinforms his own readers, something he is quick to criticize in others, as he does here with Mary Luke:

In her book, the passages in De Quadra's report that state reports of Amy Robsart's illness were false ("but she was not ill at all") are omitted. This would appear to be a case of Luke misleading the reader by knowingly withholding vital information and then making a conclusion that would be seen as plainly false if full information was available. (120)

Oxford's date of birth

Streitz regards the evidence that Edward de Vere was born on 12 April 1550 as manufactured. His date for the birth of Edward ("or perhaps twins") is sometime in July 1548:³

The second criterion is having a window of opportunity to give birth to such a child. This criterion is more than fulfilled by Elizabeth being semi-isolated from the world in the company and care of supporters loyal to the Protestants and personally loyal to Elizabeth. (91)

Streitz insufficiently explains what would have been conflicting loyalties between figures such as Anthony Denny and Edward Seymour. He also fails to acknowledge that Elizabeth's tutor, Roger Ascham, wrote to his friend and one-time pupil William Ireland from Cheshunt on 8 July 1548, right around the time Streitz claims Elizabeth delivered her child:

I would that you, my dearest Ireland, would wish to spend a day or two with me here at Cheshunt so that I could pour all my innermost thoughts into your most trustworthy bosom. . . . Katherine R., a most charming and honorable girl, has been with me. I was at court on the day when she came to Chelsea, but if I hadn't been, I would have taken her to my most illustrious Lady. (117-20)

Had the Princess Elizabeth been in, or approaching, childbed, at this time, a matter of the utmost and worrisome secrecy, it seems unlikely that one such as Ascham would have had access to her, or having it, would have written so lightly of inviting outside guests to visit her.

Earl John's second marriage

Streitz also writes of the vise in which Protector Somerset held John de Vere, the exact origin of which is still a mystery, but one that Sir James Dyer described in 1571 as "the great spoile and disherison of J. late earle of Oxforde, by the circumvention, coiacion [commination?], cohersion and other undue meanes of Edward, late duke of Somerset" (Dyer 126).

The bizarre control that Somerset wielded over John de Vere, whatever its source, was uncanny. One can only posit that the sixteenth Earl must have been in fear of imprisonment or even for his very life to have acquiesced to the Lord Protector's exorbitant demands. It's also possible that his daughter's life was at stake, since she was bodily in Somerset's possession throughout this ordeal, as we find from a letter addressed to "Mr. Vice Chamberlain" on the eve of Somerset's downfall in October 1551, demanding that he:

delyver unto the Lord Chamberlaine the Lady Catherin Vere, presently remaining at the Duke of Somersetes house at Syon, with her apparel and stuffes belonging unto her. (APC 3.401)

Streitz's version of Somerset's rule over de Vere, relying on the non-research of others, includes the following:

On February 26, 1548, Edward Seymour forced the 16th Earl of Oxford to post a bond that required a marriage contract for John de Vere's daughter . . . to Seymour's son, Henry. . . . Part of this arrangement was a penalty that took away any collateral heirs' rights to inherit the majority of the de Vere land holdings. (3.93)

Streitz is evidently unaware of the specific and intricately-detailed outline of terms contained in the indenture between the sixteenth Earl and Somerset as listed in the Calendar of Patent Rolls, which appears to have covered every nook and cranny of the Earl's estate (4.376-81). According to the contract forced on Earl John, Katherine was contracted to marry Somerset's son Henry by Michaelmas 1559 (or, should Henry die first, then another of his sons within one month following that date). While the sequence of inheritance differs from manor to manor, with some of them going first to Katherine and Henry, the vast majority of manors, including Earls Colne, Castle Hedingham, and the best part of the others, were to go first to John de Vere for life and then to his male heirs, and failing any male heirs, only then to Katherine and her Seymour husband. These clauses were worded in typical fashion:

. . . to the use of the said earl for life and after his decease to the use of the first and elder issue male of his body and the heirs male of the body of such issue with successive remainder in default to the use of the second and other issue male and heirs male of such issue, to the said Henry and Katharine and the heirs of the body of the said Henry by her. . . . (4.379)

When John de Vere's first wife Dorothy Neville died on 6 January 1548, the Protector wasted no time in making his move. The first indenture was imposed on the Earl three weeks later. It's obvious why, for if Earl John were to marry and have a son, all Somerset's schemes to appropriate the de Vere patrimony for his own progeny would be thwarted. John de Vere and his advisors would surely have realized that, if he were to maintain his earldom, he must

remarry and beget an heir as soon as possible.

Thus it would seem that the perplexing about-face performed by Earl John while on the verge of marrying Dorothy Fosse—marrying Margery Golding instead—may have more to do with keeping the de Vere inheritance together (did he suspect an ambush?), and less to do with Streit's claim that "the Lord Protector coerced de Vere into marrying [Margery]" because she was "firmly allied" with him (96). Under the circumstances, it seems highly unlikely that Somerset would encourage the Earl to marry anyone, however "firmly allied" with him.

After having emphasized Somerset's knowledge of Elizabeth's pregnancy, his role in having her transferred from Katherine Parr's household at Hatfield to Anthony Denny's at Cheshunt, and his subsequent domination of John de Vere, Streit appears to forget the Duke's intimate involvement in these sensitive matters, handing all responsibility for placing the Princess's changeling in the de Vere household over to Somerset's secretary, William Cecil (103), an about-face he fails either to acknowledge or explain.

Two Marys

Not content with portraying Oxford as a bastard who incests his own mother, Streit presents the reader with the scenario that Mary Vere, Edward de Vere's "supposed" full-blooded sister, was actually Mary Seymour, the child born to Katherine Parr and Thomas Seymour in late August 1548. To support this contention, Streit continues to utilize whatever previously debunked information he thinks will support the grand design, such as the Arthur Golding petition of 28 June 1563.⁴ According to Streit:

This letter is extraordinary in two respects. First, the letter states that Edward de Vere was fourteen years old, which would make his birthday 1549. . . . Even more extraordinary, the letter states that Edward de Vere has a sister! Arthur Golding states that both Edward de Vere and his sister are the same age, fourteen. (103)

The petition to which Streit refers contains the phrase: *minorem quatordecem annorum*. Streit's source is Louis Thorn Golding, who "translated freely" the relevant phrase:

. . . to touch the legitimacy of the blood and right of hereditary possessions of the said Earl and his sister and alleges the aforesaid Earl to have been and to be a minor of fourteen years. . . . (38-9)

Any Latin Dictionary will serve, but let us turn to the contemporary edition in use at the time, *The Bibliotheca Eliotae*, Thomas Cooper's 1548 augmentation of Sir Thomas Elyot's 1538 Latin dictionary, which defines *minor*, *minoris* as "lesse, smaller, yonger," *minor natu* as

“the yonger,” and *minor filius* as “the yonger sonne.” Thus, the phrase *minorem quatordecem annorum* should be translated as “less” or “younger than fourteen years.” If Edward de Vere was born on 12 April 1550 and his sister Mary sometime after that, they were indeed—as the official records indicate—“younger than fourteen years” on 28 June 1563.

These ages are consistent with the evidence found in the two extant wills of the sixteenth Earl of Oxford. The 21 December 1552 will includes several references to “my Sonne Edward” and “Edward my Sonne,” but contains no references to his daughter Mary, nor is she mentioned in a codicil of 28 January 1554 where Edward is once again named. We first find notice of Mary in the sixteenth Earl’s will of 1562. Streitz almost addresses this at one point:

. . . in John de Vere’s will of 1552, there was mention of Edward and his older sister, Katherine, but there was no mention of a younger sister. . . . The circumstantial evidence and logic of the situation indicate that William Cecil placed the missing Mary Seymour and the alleged child of Princess Elizabeth in the household of John de Vere. Edward was probably placed there first, and he was followed by his half-sister [meaning Mary, whose father, according to Streitz, was also Seymour] a year or so later when she disappeared from the historical record. (103)

Since Streitz does not mention the 1554 codicil, his “a year or so later” does not follow. Additionally, Streitz tells us “the disappearance of Mary Seymour was incontrovertibly linked to William Cecil” (77), a statement apparently based solely on the fact that the Duchess of Suffolk wrote to Cecil on 24 July and 27 August 1549, seeking relief from the financial burden placed on her by her assumption of temporary custody of the one-year-old girl and her train after the Duke and Duchess of Somerset had failed to follow through on their promises to defray the costs. He quotes from the Duchess of Suffolk’s letters to Cecil (75-76), then follows it up with a citation from Susan James’s *Kateryn Parr: The Making of a Queen*:

Restored in blood on 22 January 1550, Mary Seymour was made legally eligible to inherit any family property to which she might subsequently fall heir. . . . Mary Seymour disappears from the records shortly after this. (76)

Thus, it appears that if Cecil did intercede at all, his actions resulted in the “Act of Restitution of Mary Seymour” approximately five months later, in which she

and her heyres . . . from hensforthe maye and shalbe enhabled to demaunde aske have holde and enjoye all and everye such . . . manner of hereditament with their appertenance which were of the saide Thomas Lorde Seymor hyr father . . . as yf the saide Thomas Lorde Seymor father to your saide Subgecte, had never byn attaynted. . . . (SR 4.1.113-14)

So we see that at the beginning of 1550, all had been set right for Mary Seymour and the future looked quite bright, for her as well as "her heyres." Moreover, two months later, on 17 March 1550, we find in the Acts of the Privy Council a warrant for payment to the

Receyvour of the Wardes . . . for dyettes, wages and lyvereys of the howshold of Mistres Mary Seymour for a yere and a half ended at the Feast of th'annunciacion of Our Lady next cummyng. (2.411)

Since it seems clear that the Seymour child's interests and future were being properly protected, it's far from evident why anyone would benefit by having her transformed into Mary Vere. Streitz fails to deal with this question, or with how the switch was kept a secret when so many in both households must have known about it. It would have been, at the very least, a good four years after March 1550, before she entered John de Vere's household.

One can only conjecture why Streitz did not inform his readers of the sixteenth Earl's 1554 codicil. And a little original research of the paper trail on the heels of Mary Seymour's 22 January 1550 Act of Restitution would have revealed that "the circumstantial evidence and logic of the situation indicate" that the toddler died sometime after the 17 March 1550 Warrant for payment to the Receiver of the Wards quoted above, and before 17 July 1551. This was the date of "lettres to Sir Andrewe Dudley to deliver the plate that was in his custodie of the late Lord Admyrales unto thandes of Sir Anthony Aucher, Master of the Jewell Howse" (APC 3.317). Had Mary Seymour still been alive at that time, it is unlikely we would find the plate that was legally hers being remitted to the Jewel House of the Tower of London. The fact that her plate was at that stage in the possession of Sir Andrew Dudley (chief gentleman of the privy chamber), denotes some phase of transition, the implication being she had died at some earlier point in time. A pattern emerges that suggests Mary Seymour may have been deceased as early as 1 May 1550, a mere month and a half after the Warrant for payment to the Receiver of the Wards, when we find a sudden plethora of records granting leases of lands formerly belonging to the late Thomas Seymour (CPR 57.2.196-7; APC 3.26).

Additional research of the original documents would be in order to determine whether the specific manors, monasteries, granges, farms, orchards, pastures, meadows, parcels, liberties, and livestock named in these particular grants were being leased in Mary Seymour's interests, or were among those specified in her Act of Restitution that would remain in forfeit to King Edward. If neither is the case, then the child was deceased by that date. Certainly she had died by 17 September 1551, the date we would expect to see the renewal of the little girl's eighteen-month maintenance grant, but find instead a most conspicuous lacuna. All of the "hereditaments" evidently reverted to the crown after Mary Seymour's demise, as we find Queen Elizabeth, early in her reign, doling out

The manor of Easthroppe, in the county of Wilts, some time the estate of Sir

Thomas Seymor knight, Lord Seymor of Sudley, attainted of treason in the 2d and 3d years of Edw. 6, and granted by Queen Eliz. To Wm. Dunche esq., plaintiff's father. (CEC 1.253-4)

The list continues from there naming numerous other "manors," "messuages," and "divers lands" in various parishes and towns, "all which were forfeited to the crown upon his attainder." That Easthroppe and the other manors listed therein were not necessarily among those estates that were excepted as forfeit to King Edward in Mary Seymour's Act of Restitution may be inferred by the fact that one "Henry Seymor" is named as a defendant in this Proceeding, who was likely one of the "collateral auncestor[s]" as designated in the said Act of Restitution.

Oxford's claim to the throne

From the moment the premise that Oxford was Elizabeth's bastard child is introduced to the reader, Streitz repeatedly asserts that Oxford had a claim to the throne, a declaration that hardly stands to reason for anyone who understands the logistics of the rights of succession. Not until the 1571 Act of Treason passed by Parliament could Oxford, had he in fact been Elizabeth's illegitimate son, possibly have had any claim. Streitz finally seems to realize the difficulty this poses for his premise:

This act in its convoluted language and logic specifically reversed the previous Act of Succession. The key phrase "laufully begotten" was dropped. Instead, heirs to the throne could now be "the naturall yssue of her Ma'j body." . . . The complexity of the language hides the momentous change in succession and opens up the possibility for an heir to the throne from Elizabeth, even an illegitimate one. . . . The more important point is that the act in one stroke made Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, the heir to the throne, legitimate offspring of Elizabeth or not. Before this, even if Oxford was her son, he was still not the heir to the throne according to Henry's Act of Succession of 1544 because he was not "laufully begotten." . . . only William Cecil had both the motive and the power to influence Parliament to change the succession to the throne. . . . Within a year, Cecil had changed the order of succession to the throne to make Oxford heir, and completed the marriage of his daughter, Anne Cecil, to Oxford, placing her directly in line to be Queen of England. (138-9)

Admittedly, this Act is a curiosity and one we should continue to ponder. It did indeed give rise to rumors, but unfortunately for Streitz's thesis, none that point to Oxford. Streitz

doesn't offer his readers William Camden's commentary on this Act in his *The Historie Of The Most Renowned And Victorious Princesse Elizabeth, Late Queene Of England* in which he quotes verbatim the relevant section of the Act of Treason, following the citation with:

To some this seemed heauy, who were of opinion that the tranquility of the Realme was to be established by designing an Heire apparent. But incredible it is what ieaists [=jests] lewd catchers of words made amongst themselues by occasion of that Clause, Except the same be the Naturall issue of her body; forasmuch as the Lawyers terme those Children naturall, which are gotten out of Wed-locke, whom nature alone and not the honesty of Wed-locke hath begotten, and those they call Lawfull, according to the ordinary forme of the Common Law of England, which are lawfully procreated of the body. Insomuch as I my selfe being then a young man, haue heard them oftentimes say, that that word was inserted into the Act of purpose by Leicester, that he might one day obtrude vppon the English some bastard sonne of his, for the Queenes naturall issue. (28-9)

Camden, who looked to Cecil for patronage through most of his career, would always be inclined to point the finger at Leicester. But if Cecil were responsible, there should be some hint somewhere in the records, however minute, of a plan to promote either Oxford or Wriothesley as successor to Elizabeth. So far, we have seen none.

"The bitter passion of a perplexed mother"

Prince Tudor theorists dismiss as contrived, manipulated, or a cover-up all evidence that the third Earl of Southampton was in fact the son of his "supposed father," the second Earl. This begins with the letter of 6 October 1573 wherein the second Earl thought it was good to impart unto Sir William More "such comforte as God hath sente me after all my longe troubles, which is that this present morning at three of the clock, my wife was delivered of a goodly boy (God bless him)" (Stopes 1). This they regard as reference to a child that either died or was put away to be replaced by the illegitimate royal heir.

Streitz fails to deal with the report by one "Elizabeth Massyes" that on 7 September 1572 while a prisoner in the Tower, the second Earl of Southampton told a Mr. Hale, who occupied the chamber in the Tower beneath him, "that ther was a privie staires where the Quene and my Lord of Leicestre did mete, and if they had not used sorcery there should have bene yong traitors ere now begotten" (CSPS 4.396), information entirely congruous with Camden's account of the rumors following the 1571 Act of Treason. It must have been soon after that the Queen left off her dalliance with Leicester to take up with her son, Lord Oxford. Or was the Earl of Southampton already preparing a cover-up, just in case the Queen should

happen to conceive and then choose to hand the child over to him and his wife to raise?

While it's possible that terms such as "mother" and "son" could be exchanged between members of a non-biological relationship, it seems unlikely in this case, based on the nature and frequency of their use in all extant correspondence between or about Mary, Countess of Southampton, and Henry, the third Earl, especially as these documents so often incorporate reference to the Queen. One written soon after the Essex Rebellion to "Mr. Leiuennant of the Tower" serves as a typical example, wherein Wriothesley is referred to as

the late⁵ Earle of Southampton [who] is now an humble suitor (for the ease and comforte of his minde) to have the favour to see his mother and to conferre with her and some others that were putt in trust with his estate, his hope beinge thereby to obtaine at her hands some favour towards his childe, from whom his great offence hath taken all which otherwise should discend unto her, wee do hereby give you to understand that her Majesty is pleased, and the rather at the humble and importunate suite of the Countesse his mother, to give you warrant to admytte her Ladishippe and any two of those persons whom he shall desire that have bin dealers in his estate to repaire unto him in this thyme of his indisposition. (APC 32.175)

There is the 1601 letter from the Countess to Robert Cecil, seemingly steeped in motherly affection, as she pleads for Southampton's life:

God of heaven knows I can scarce hold my hand steady to write, and less hold steady in my heart how to write, only for what I know, which is to pray mercy to my miserable son. Good Mr. Secretary, let the bitter passion of a perplexed mother move you to plead for her only son. . . . Nothing is fitter than her [the Queen's] safety, nor any virtue can better become her place and power than mercy, which let my prayer move you to beg for me, and God move her Majesty to grant the most sorrowful and afflicted mother. (SP 11.71-2)

Consider the letters to Robert Dudley of 14 and 25 October 1581 written soon after the second Earl's death, from which PT theorists will quote the Countess's "impersonal" references to "the chylde" and "my boye." It is rarely mentioned that in these same letters she also calls him "my lyttyle sonne," refers to the second earl as "his father," and refers to Henry and his sister as "my chyldern" (Stopes 9-10); while the second Earl refers to them in his will as "my little infants" (Stopes 5). There is the Countess's own will of 22 April 1607 in which she writes, "I leave to my Honorable and deare sonne Henrie Earle of Southampton . . . Sixtene loose diamonds, which my desire is that my said deare sonne should set in a George of gold, and weare in memory of me, his loving mother" (Stopes 333-4); which would seem

rather an extreme act of generosity towards a grown man, if he was not, after all, her son.

Similar examples exist for Oxford, such as the aforementioned will of John de Vere, or the 11 October 1563 letter from Margery Vere to William Cecil, in which she thanks him for his "gentylnes and fatherly frendshippe towards my Sonne," and closes by praying that he "imparte my lyke hartly commendations to my good La. your bedfellowe and to my Sonne, with goddes blessinge and myne and well to doo to his lyves end" (BLMS Lansdowne 6/34) which, rather than cold and detached, sounds to us like a genuinely poignant leave-taking from a mother who, through no fault of her own, has been parted from her only son.

"Edward, my sonne"

The latest PT theorists hold that all evidence of Oxford as the son of the sixteenth Earl and Margery Golding has been manufactured, primarily by William Cecil. This might be more compelling if they were able to point to a single instance in history when the same had been done with another heir. On the contrary, the evidence of Oxford's origins as who he was claimed to be and who he himself claimed to be are so plentiful and so entirely consistent with what is to be seen with other peers of his time, that it should be incumbent on those who question the record to provide proofs supporting their contention, something they consistently fail to do.

To see just how thorough the cover-up must have been from the very beginning, let us review just a few of the relevant documents. This from a contemporary account of the sixteenth Earl of Oxford's death and progeny:

This John Vere, erl of Oxford, dysseased at his castell of Hemyngham in Essex on Monday the 3. of August, in the 4. yere of the queen our soveraigne lady Elizabeth . . . married first Doraty, doughter of Raff erle of Westmerland, and had issue Kateren wyff to Edward lord Wyndesor; secondly, Margery doughter of Golding, syster to sir Thomas Goldinge, and had issue Edward erl of Oxford, and Mary. (Machyn 391)

Sir James Dyer's 1571 account touching on the Act of Parliament that reversed Somerset's indenture of conveyance of the 16th Earl of Oxford's lands and possessions, utilizes similar language:

. . . by auctoritie of parliament that the saied indenture of convaiances should be utterlie voyde and that the saied fine should be [and be] deemed to be to the use of the same earle for terme of his life without impeachment of wast, the remainder in use to the eldest issue male of his boddie lawefullie begotten. . . . At the makinge of which act the earle had issue his eldest male Edward, nowe earle of

Oxforde, beinge yet within aige and bothe for his boddie and a thirde parte of all the premises in warde to the queen. (Dyer 196-7)

Of the indenture of 30 January 1575, immediately prior to Oxford's continental travel, Professor Alan Nelson writes on his website that "Lack of signatures, together [with] the presence of seal-tags which seem never to have had seals attached, suggests that the document was not implemented." Because of this, there are some who dispute that the indenture reflects Oxford's true intentions. Whether implemented or not, if it was not Oxford's intention to implement it, then its existence must be explained. Because the extant copy we have was evidently neither signed nor sealed (which was not necessarily required by this copy since the indenture itself indicates the parties had "Interchaungeablye putt their Seall"), PT theorists question whether it is the same document to which Burghley refers in his memo of 10 July 1576:

. . . I both hope and assure myself that my L. of Oxford doth now understand that the conceptions which he had gathered to think unkindness in me towards him were grounded upon untrue reports of others. . . . Whosoever saith that I was the occasion or privy that, in my Lord of Oxford's absence, a certain book of his entailing of his lands to his heirs males was not enrolled in the Chancery, saith therein utterly untruly. . . . I say and swear that I was no deviser of that book of entail, nor was privy to my L.'s sealing and delivery thereof, nor had any trust committed to me to enrol the same, nor yet did hear or understand, during the time my L. was absent, nor until almost one month after his return, whether it was enrolled or not enrolled. (CP 157/131-2)

The internal evidence here and in the rest of this memo indicates that the book of entail is the same 1575 indenture we have, which, as it stands, flatly refutes every aspect of the various PT theories:

And therefore the saide nowe Erle of Oxenforde remembrynge and considerynge the longe contynuanse of his saide house & famylie, in the name of the Veers, whereof he is lyneallye discended. . . . And considering that at this p{res}nte, he hathe not anye yssue of his boddye as yett borne . . . the lady Marye Veer sister of the saide Erle, beinge next of his kynne of the whole bloode. . . . (ERO D/DRg2/25)

Many Oxfordians maintain that just about anything from those great manipulators of history, Burghley and son Robert, is essentially worthless, in that they wrote down for posterity the "truth" they would have us believe, and cleansed the record of everything they wished forgotten. The following note from Burghley's hand in reference to Oxford's behavior after

his return from the continent in 1576 is yet another that requires explaining:

25 April, 1576. — . . . Nota: no land assuerd to his daughter, though he have no other child. (SP 2.131)⁶

Some Oxfordians, PT theorists in particular, have been suspicious of Burghley's 1576 entry in his "A Table collected of the yeares of oure Lorde God" in which he recorded Oxford's birth as "1550, April 12—Edw. Co. Oxon natus." (SP 13.142) More impressive is a document recently brought to light by Nelson in which, on 17 April 1550, the Privy Council authorized a warrant for the delivery of a baptismal cup to the sixteenth Earl of Oxford for the christening of his son five days after the received date of birth for Edward de Vere. Note that the addressee is Sir Anthony Aucher, the same man who would collect "the late Lord Admyrales" plate fifteen months hence (which is as good as to say the plate of the late Mary Seymour, since it was legally hers at the time of the remittance). Nelson's transcription is as follows:

To our loving frende Sir Anthony Aucher Knight Master of the Kinges Iuelles and plate. / The kynges maiestes pleasure by our advise is that ye delyver vnto Phillip Manwaring gentleman Vssher to the Kinges maiestie one standing cup guilte with a cover weing twentye and seven ounces quarter by hym to be delyuered as the kinges maiestes guyft at the Christening of our very goode Lorde the Erle of Oxfordes Sonne / And these our lettres shalbe your sufficient warraunte and discharge therin Youen [=Given] at the Kinges maiesties mannour at Grenewich the xvijth of Aprell the iijth yere of his highnes moast prosperous Reigne King Edward the sixte 1550. (BLMS Add. 5751A, f. 283 - formerly 291)

It becomes disconcertingly easy after a point for material like this to be relegated to the weaving of a great web of deceit that began at Edward's birth and continued for generations after. Take the 1 July 1562 Indenture of covenants "made between John Earl of Oxford and Henry Earl of Huntingdon, for the marriage of Lord Bulbeck, son and heir of the former, within a month after his reaching the age of eighteen, with Elizabeth or Mary, sisters of the latter . . ." (Hastings 1.319) Or consult Henry Machyn's account of the sixteenth Earl's death wherein there "cam rydyng owt of Essex from [the funeral] of the yerle of Oxford [h]ys father the yonge yerle of Oxford. . . ." (291); or the many listings to be found in the Proceedings in Chancery in which Edward de Vere is found as Plaintiff, such as "The Manor of Hayes in Stowe Maryshe late the estate of John de Veer Earl of Oxford, deceased, plaintiff's father" (2.283); or ". . . which descended to plaintiff as son and heir of the late earl. . . ." (2.278). See the Inquisition of 4 March 1611 taken at the *White Lyon* in Kelvedon, that refers to the relationship between the fifteenth and seventeenth Earls of Oxford with the words "Edward

Devere late Earle of Oxenford grandchilde to the said Iohn” (PRO C93/4/9, No. 7 [Essex]).

The same may be said of all accounts for Henry Wriothesley, such as a 1598 Bill of reviver in which he is listed as “Plaintiff in this bill, among other estates which he holds in descent from his grandfather, and which belonged to the late dissolved monastery of Hyde” (CEC 3.71-2). Lacking all evidence that these references are false, products of ignorance, or a cover-up, if we’re to believe in the possibility then we need to be shown some instance during the era in question in which it is proven that a changeling was raised in the manner suggested for Oxford and/or Southampton.

PT believers have no choice but to consign to the façade all documentation from what they term the “straight record,” including the note of Offices and Rights regarding Oxford and Waltham Forest:

The Earle can shewe also graunt{es} made by his Auncestors in the tyme of King Edw{ard} the 4th Hen{ry} the 7th and H{enry} 8 of the Lyveten{a}untshipp [=Lieutenantship] of the fforrest and deputac{i}ons to keepe the house and Parke of Havering. (PRO SP14/2, f. 160)

These are but a few of the many documents testifying to Edward de Vere’s identity as the son of the sixteenth Earl, documents that PT theorists shrug off as simply what one would expect to find in the case of a changeling who had taken on an identity not his by birth. It is not so easy, however, to shrug off Oxford’s own language in his letter of 7 May 1603 to Robert Cecil, regarding the above matter of the stewardship of Waltham Forest:

My very good Lord I vnderstande by Mr Atturnye that he hathe reported the state of my Tytell to the keepershippe of Waltham foreste, and of the housse and parke of Haueringe, wherby yt appears to hys Magestye what ryght and aequite [=equity] ys therin. Tyll the 12th of Henry the 8th myne Auncesters haue possessed the same, almost sythence the tyme of William Conqueroure, and at that tyme whiche was the 12th yeare of Henrye the 8th the kynge tooke yt for terme of hys lyfe from my grandfather, sythence whiche tyme, what by the alterationes of princes, and wardshipes, I haue bene kept from my ryghtfull possessione, yet frome tyme to tyme, boothe my father and my selfe, we haue as oportunites fell owt not neglected owre clayme. . . . So that by thys and the former meanes, I haue bene thus longe disposeste. but I hoope, truthe ys subiect to noo prescriptione, for truthe ys truthe though never so owlde, and tyme cannot make that falsse whiche was once trwe. and though the thys threscore yeares boothe my father and my selfe have bene disposessed therof. . . . (CP 99/16)

Oxford has his details in perfect order here; they match exactly those in the Deed poll

dated 22 February, 12 Henry VIII and signed and sealed by his grandfather, "John Oxinford," (CAD 5.514-15), which consigns the forest of Waltham to Henry VIII until "when, after the king's death, vacancies occur, the earl and his heirs [are] to have the appointment." Is Oxford's letter to Robert Cecil merely another case of the Tudor heir bending under the necessity of his own self-preservation? How are we to accept this kind of duplicity if we are also to accept that he took pride in the significance and application of truth, his name meaning "Truth," and his motto: *Vero Nihil Verius* or "Nothing Truer than Truth"?⁷

Oxfordians, PT theorists included, like to quote de Vere's ringing words from this letter: "for truth is truth though never so old, and time cannot make that false which was once true," a paraphrase of language from Act 5 Scene 1 of *Measure for Measure*: "for truth is truth to the end of reckoning." We find it difficult to understand how Paul Streitz, and all who adhere to the theory that Oxford was the Queen's son, can reconcile their version of Oxford with these words, written specifically, and with great feeling, about John de Vere and his own Vere heritage?

Then there is Oxford's letter to Burghley dated 20? June 1583. Oxford had just been restored to favor with the Queen and Court, "after so long absence and so many disgraces," as Sir Walter Raleigh had written to Burghley the month before (Ward 244). Obviously Oxford felt that, of all his kinsmen, all but one during this time of travail held him a pariah:

I have bene an earnest suter vnto yowre Lordship, for my Lord Lumley, that it would pleas yow for my sake to stand his good Lord and friend whiche as I perceyve yowre Lordshi[p] hathe alreadie very honorablye p[erformed,] f[or] the which [I] am in a number of thinges more then I can reken bound vnto yowre Lordship so am I in this lekwise especially. for he hathe mached withe a near kinswoman of myne, to whose father I allwayes was behouldinge vnto, for his assured and kind disposition vnto me. further amonge all the rest of my blud, this only remaynes in account ether of me or els of them, as yowre Lordship dothe knowe very well, the rest havinge imbraced further alliances, to leave thear nearer consanguinite. (BLMS Lansdowne 38/62, ff. 158-9)

B.M. Ward expounds on the kinship expressed in this letter: "Lord Lumley had married secondly Elizabeth Darcy, daughter of John, second Lord Darcy of Chiche (1525-82). Her grandmother was Elizabeth de Vere, Lord Oxford's aunt" (246). Would Oxford speak thus of Lord Lumley's wife as his "near kinswoman," and go on to state that all the rest of his "blood" had abandoned him for other alliances, although he is "their nearer consanguinity," had he been as fixated on his blood relationship to the Queen and/or Southampton as Streitz and other PT believers claim in their reading of the Sonnets? The OED defines *consanguinity* as: "The condition of being of the same blood; relationship by descent from a common ancestor;

blood-relationship.” (522) Why say it if he knew it wasn’t true, to Burghley, who would certainly also know that it wasn’t true? Would he really expect to get any help for Lumley with such a pack of lies? Who, then, was he fooling?

We find four of the same words from this context in the mouth of Cressida: “I haue forgot my Father: I know no touch of consanguinitie: no kin, no loue, no bloud, no soule, so neere me, as the sweet Troylus” (FF 606.2358-60 [cf. 4.2.98-101]). Cressida, false-hearted as she was, was not so false as to pretend to be something she was not. Are PT theorists prepared to accept Oxford as one of the bigger hypocrites in the history of mankind?

Finally, what is perhaps the most compelling evidence for Henry Wriothesley’s blood relationship to the Countess of Southampton, a letter from Henry Howard to the Earl of Essex of 12 November 1598 (originally mis-calendared as [1598, ? about Sept.]). While Howard may have been a “subtle serpent,” he would have had no reason in his offhand comments to try to pull the wool over Essex’ eyes, or his own for that matter, for if there were anyone else in Elizabethan England besides the Cecils who would know, or suspect, the truth of the matter, surely they would include Henry Howard and Robert Devereux.

LORD H. HOWARD to the EARL OF ESSEX, Earl Marshal:

According to your direction, my most dear and worthy lord, I have pressed my honourable friend [dowager Countess of Southampton] to enlarge her meaning touching the mystery you were desirous to understand; and found her no less favourably attentive to my motion than warily discreet in her answer. Upon acquainting her with your demand of me (not out of curiosity but love and honour), whether she were married, as many thought, or at the very point of marriage, as some gave out, she did assure me on her honour that the knot of marriage [between herself and William Harvey, a much younger man whom her son did not want her to marry] was yet to tie, although she would be stinted at no certain time, but ever reserve her own liberty to dispose of herself where and when it pleased her. She told me that you in your discourse with her had so wisely tempered your affection to her son with care of herself as she would ever value your advice . . . during her son’s disgrace . . . such a strange contempt at a mother’s hand. . . . I told her that you spake not this out of partiality to my lord her son . . . fearing also lest unkindness might hereafter grow between her husband and her son upon the marriage . . . her son’s unkindness . . . my lady told me that her son could take no exception . . . but hoped that her son would look for no account of her proceedings in the course of marriage that made her so great a stranger to his own. . . . She said that children by the laws of God ought duty to their parents, not parents to those that sprang of them. Nature bound her to love,

but nature and the law of God bound him both to love and reverence . . . she said that Sir Harvy would speak with her son before the marriage . . . but ever stood upon the quality of the person, her son's strange dealing to herself and her own liberty. (SP 8.371-3)

While the Countess's remarks are secondhand, we may feel certain from what we have seen of her own letters that Howard has embellished neither her intention nor her meaning. Certainly, if the unusual interest shown Southampton upon his arrival at Court was connected with the "fact" that he was the Queen's own son and thus, as claimed by PT theorists, a possible candidate for the throne, it is unlikely that either Howard or Essex would have been ignorant of it (leaving aside Streit's declaration that Essex, too, was a son of the Queen and therefore Southampton's, as well as Oxford's, half-brother!). What must be dealt with here is not merely the repetition of the words "son" and "mother," but a contemporary account of the Countess herself claiming that the third Earl owed her particular respect because he "sprang" from her and that the love which bound them to each other was derived from "nature." It hardly need be said that "nature," in the sense the Countess was using it, derives from the Latin *natura* or *natus*, meaning "nativity," "born," or "blood-relationship" and that it was precisely such a blood-relationship that made her "his own."

Essex, in a letter to Southampton himself a mere four days later, makes reference to and encloses this very letter of Howard's (in the third of the excerpts which follow):

The EARL OF ESSEX to the EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON: 4 November, 1598: I have according to my promise been this evening with my lady your mother. I have told her how sad I found you, how the grounds of it were her unkindness, the discomfort and discontentment you took in her marriage, and scorn that Sir William Harvy should think to offer any scorn to you. . . . I made her see what a certain pillar and bulk she had to lean to in having so noble a son, what a fire would be kindled in her house, if she did not satisfy you, and what need she was like to have of you; if she divide herself from you how dangerous and miserable a life she was like to lead. (SP 14.79-80)

The same to the same: 5 November 1598: This day about ten o'clock Sir William Harvy came to me, directed as he said by my Lady your mother . . . to those I say he answered, laying the first to your Mother's charge. . . . (SP 14.80-1)

The same to the same: 16 November 1598: Your Lordship shall by the sight of this enclosed letter* know the success of my Lord Harry [i.e. Howard] his negociation. Since which time that he writes of I spake with my Lady your moth-

er this afternoon in the privy chamber. The apartment served not for long conference or for private; but she doth profess to be very kind to me and saith she told the Q[ueen] enough to make her see that I and she were kind one to the other. [*This appears to be the letter from Lord Harry to Essex, printed in C.P. VIII., 371, under [?1598--Sept.], but it should be November, c. 12th.] (SP 14.81)

And so

If Paul Streitz hopes to be taken seriously as a scholar, he must deal with the issues raised above. He needs to show solid proof that all evidence that Oxford was in fact the son of Margery Golding and the sixteenth Earl of Oxford, and that Southampton was in fact the son of Mary Browne and the second Earl of Southampton, was falsified or intended to mislead, as he claims. We would also want to see evidence that somewhere during the period in question a royal bastard had been raised in the household of a peer as his own child. It is not enough to simply dismiss this requirement with the pretext: "To expect a substantial written historical record of events that persons in high places wanted kept secret would be to expect a historical record that never would have been created in the first place[;] . . . the superiority of hard historical evidence, such as letters and other documents, is somewhat overstated" (xiv). We are not even seeking "substantial" evidence, but *any* evidence at all. Until such has been provided we must regard the PT "theory" as a story that has evolved, not out of any problem with the facts as we have them, but out of the native human desire to know the kind of truth about a great individual that can rarely be known about anyone, even our own neighbors and family members. We find sufficient evidence that it was the repressive politics of the period, Oxford's rank and social standing, and the concern of his family that their reputations would be damaged if the world knew who wrote the plays, that explains why he chose to publish under a pseudonym. Until Paul Streitz or some other can explain why royal incest and the "succession" are the only possible explanations for "Shakespeare's" hidden identity, we prefer to follow the paper trail as it has been provided by generations of capable and intelligent scholars. _____ ©

NOTES:

1 Volume 1 of Alfred Dodd's *Francis Bacon's Personal Life Story* was first published in 1910 (BL Shelfmark: 87/04964 & YN.1986.b.394). This, along with his *The Personal Poems of Francis Bacon (Our Shake-Speare) The Son of Queen Elizabeth* (1931) and *The Marriage of Elizabeth Tudor* (1940), actually offers a much stronger evidentiary case than anything offered so far by the Oxfordians.

2 Cf. *Lord Oxford & "Shakespeare": A reply to John Drinkwater* (BL Shelfmark 011761.de.60). Additionally, Allen published a 15-page pamphlet on the theory in 1936, co-authored by Captain B.M. Ward, titled *An Enquiry into the Relations between Lord Oxford as "Shakespeare," Queen Elizabeth and the Fair Youth of Shakespeare's Sonnets* (BL Shelfmark: 11767.c.2). Allen published still another article promoting the theory in 1943 titled: "Who Were the Dark Lady and Fair Youth of Shakespeare's Sonnets?"

3 Paul Streitz informed the present writer via personal e-mail dated 11 June 2002, that in the second printing of his book, he has "given [Oxford's] birth date as July 21st, 1548."

4 This petition (CSPD [Elizabeth] 29.8.225; PRO SP 12/29[8], ff. 11-12) was in reference to the 1563 lawsuit filed by Katherine Vere (then wife to Edward, Baron Windsor), on the grounds that John de Vere's 1548 marriage to Margery Golding had been bigamous. Katherine evidently claimed that her father had married either Joan Jockey and/or Anne of Tilbury Hall while still married to her mother, Dorothy Neville, which would have invalidated the marriage to Margery Golding, rendering Edward de Vere and his sister Mary illegitimate. The case was revisited in 1585 (Huntington Library EL5870 19-20 January 27E1). The upshot is that the charge did not stick.

5 The term "late" in this instance did not mean deceased. Following the ill-fated Essex Rebellion, the Earl of Southampton, having been convicted of treason, attainted, and confined to the Tower, signed himself ". . . of late Southampton, but now . . . H. WRIOTHESLEY" (Stopes 226).

6 Burghley included this note in his "Memorial touching the [Earl of Oxford]," wherein he summarized events leading up to and following the [2 July 1575] birth of Elizabeth Vere. Oxford claimed he was not the father, and disowned the child for many years. The point being that Burghley states that Oxford had no other child in 1576 but his daughter, whereas Henry Wriothesley was two-and-a-half-years-old at that time. Was Burghley elsewhere secretly building a case for Oxford as heir to the throne (and his daughter, Anne, as Queen), as maintained by Streitz? If so, we see no evidence of it.

7 There does not appear to be any evidence of this motto, or posy, among the Earls of Oxford prior to the seventeenth Earl's generation, in which it gained wide popularity and association with Edward de Vere; cf. (among others) the c. 1580 dedication to Oxford in *Phioravanti vppon Chirurgerie &c.*, in which John Hester writes "that according to your name and poesie, your name and property may be to protect the truth. . .," or Anthony Munday's impressive acrostic rendition in the handsomely produced *The Mirroure of Mutabilitie*, c. 1579.

* * * * *

NOTE: I am indebted to Nina Green for her preliminary research on Roger Ascham's 8 July 1548 letter to William Ireland; the Latin transcription and correct translation of *minorem quatordecem annorum* in Arthur Golding's petition of 28 June 1563; and her assistance in the examination of Somerset's indenture of conveyance of the sixteenth Earl of Oxford's lands and possessions as detailed in CPR 4.37; also for hosting the stimulating and informative cyber forum: *Phaeton*. Many thanks, Nina.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- APC *Acts of the Privy Council of England*. New Series, 1542 et seq. 46 vols. London: 1890.
- BBH *Bibliography of British History, Tudor Period 1485-1603*. R. 725. Ed. Conyers Read. 2nd Ed. Hassocks, UK: Harvester, 1978.
- BL British Library
- BLMS British Library Manuscript
- CAD *A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds in the Public Records Office*. 6 vols. London: 1890-1915.
- CP Cecil Papers.
- CEC *Calendars of the proceedings in Chancery*, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; to which are prefixed examples of earlier proceedings in that court, namely, from the reign of Richard II to that of Queen Elizabeth, inclusive. 3 vols. London: G. Eyre and A. Strahan, 1827-32.
- CPR *Calendar of the patent rolls*, preserved in the Public Record Office, [Edward VI]. 73 vols. London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1891.
- CSPD *Calendar of State Papers: domestic series* of the reign of Edward VI, 1547-1553. Public Record Office. Rev. ed. London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1992.
- CSPS *Calendar of the State Papers relating to Scotland and Mary, Queen of Scots, 1547-1603*. Public Record Office, British Museum, and elsewhere in England. 13 vols. Edinburgh: H. M. General Register House, 1898-1969.
- ERO Essex Record Office. Alan Nelson.
- FF *First Folio: Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*. 1623. Facsimile. Ed. Helge Kökeritz. New Haven: Yale UP, 1954.
- OED *Oxford English Dictionary*. Compact ed. 1986.
- PRO Public Records Office. Alan Nelson.
- SP Salisbury Papers. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquis of Salisbury at Hatfield House*. 24 vols. London: 1883-1976. [The Cecil Papers and Salisbury Papers are the same, all being at Hatfield House. The former are the originals, the latter the printed Calendars, where the same articles appear as abstracts.]
- SR *Statutes of the Realm*: printed by command of His Majesty King George the Third . . . from original records and authentic manuscripts. 11 vols. London: Dawsons, 1963.

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