



“Shakespeare”: Lord Oxford Or Lord Derby?

by John Thomas Looney

Explanatory note by James Warren: After publishing “*Shakespeare*” Identified in 1920 and his collection of Edward de Vere’s poems in 1921, John Thomas Looney wrote ten shorter pieces defending his conclusion that de Vere authored the literary works traditionally attributed to William Shakespeare. The first of these appears here. It is a lengthy letter to the editor of *The National Review* that appeared in the February 1922 issue (pp. 801-809). *The National Review* was published in London from 1883 to 1960. The magazine’s editor at the time, Leopold James Maxse, was an early supporter of the idea of de Vere’s authorship, and, with Looney and Abel Lefranc, was one of the three original vice presidents of the Shakespeare Fellowship founded in November 1922 (Sir George Greenwood was president and Col. B. R. Ward served as honorary secretary and treasurer).

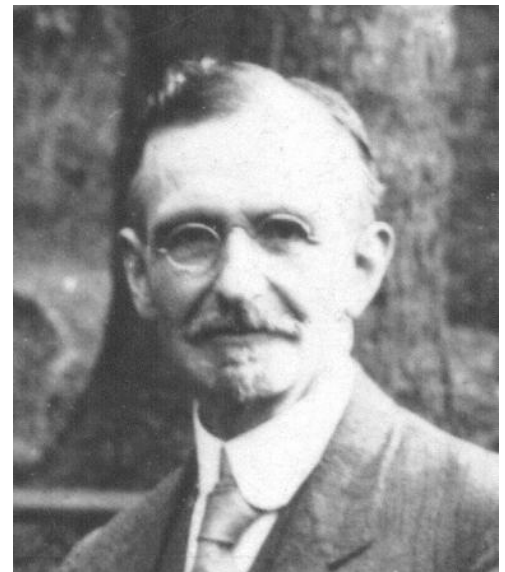
Looney’s letter was in response to one by R. MacDonald Lucas published in the November 1921 issue under the title “Did Lord Derby write Shakespeare?” In it, Lucas compared the case for de Vere’s authorship as stated by Looney in “*Shakespeare*” Identified (1920) with the case for William Stanley, Earl of Derby as stated by Abel Lefranc in *Sous le Masque de William Shakespeare: William Stanley, VI Comte de Derby* (1918, 1919), and decided in favor of Derby. Lucas later laid out his reasoning more fully in *Shakespeare’s Vital Secret (Known to His Queen)* (Keighley, Yorkshire: Wadsworth, 1937).

In “*Shakespeare*” Identified, Looney had written: “Seeing, then, that the Derby theory arose from the simple fact that in 1599 the Earl of Derby had been occupied in ‘penning’ plays, whilst nothing is known of his composing them, it is not an unreasonable supposition that, as husband to Oxford’s favourite daughter, he may have been assisting his father-in-law in the actual penning of ‘Shakespeare’s’ plays” (448-449). In his letter, Looney addressed Lucas’s criticism of his reasoning in support of de Vere’s authorship and offered criticism of his own about Lucas’s reasoning in support of Derby’s. I have added some explanatory numbered endnotes; the note with an asterisk appeared in the original.

The old view of the authorship of the so-called “Shakespeare” plays has now been abandoned by a body of men and women sufficiently numerous and reputable to make clear the reality of the problem, and to call for its competent examination in responsible reviews. Sensible people are at last realizing that the attempts made to attribute “heterodoxy” to eccentricity are not always disinterested, and are becoming somewhat stereotyped and altogether unconvincing. On the other hand, few of the sceptics have

as yet adopted any of the solutions hitherto put forward. Having run its course for some years, and also, it must be confessed, having won the adhesion of several very distinguished men, the Baconian solution is, in our day, ceasing to make any real appeal to men of judgment. The evidence in its favour has proved altogether too insubstantial, and the evidence against it too formidable, to warrant a future for the Baconian theory. The Rutland theory, though still young, contains too serious a flaw for it ever to take firm root anywhere, and may, I hope without disrespect to its ardent Belgian advocate,¹ be definitely laid aside with the Baconian idea. As things at present stand, the only real choice—if choice there be—seems to lie between Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, and his son-in-law, William Stanley, sixth Earl of Derby.

The Derby theory has been fortunate in having for its champion a Frenchman of vast erudition and well deserved academic honours.² The Earl of Oxford, although he has already won the adhesion of several eminent literary men in England, America, and the British colonies, is still, for the most part, dependent for public advocacy upon the pen of one who was previously unknown to the literary world.³ The De Vere theory, therefore, labours for the time being under a distinct disadvantage; and the amount of attention it has already attracted in spite of this is a striking testimony to the natural strength of the evidence which supports it.



(Continued on page 12)

From the President:

Dear friends,

There have been several exciting developments in the SOF in recent months:

Headstone for J.T. & Elizabeth Looney

As many of you know, we recently learned that J. Thomas Looney, the man who unraveled the Shakespeare Authorship Question with his 1920 book, *"Shakespeare" Identified*, lies buried, along with his wife Elizabeth, in an unmarked grave in Saltwell Cemetery in Gateshead, a small village in northeast England. Kathryn Sharpe, the Chair of our Committee preparing for the 2020 centennial celebration of *"Shakespeare" Identified* (we call it the "SI-100" Committee for short), discovered this fact after contacting and communicating with Alan Bodell, Looney's grandson. Looney died in 1944, when World War II was still raging and people were living on rations. Even after the war ended, it took some time for England to recover economically. Mrs. Looney couldn't obtain the type of granite she wanted for her husband's headstone, and eventually, as the needs of the living took priority, the Looney burial site remained unmarked.

I don't know how you feel on hearing this news, but my immediate reaction and, I think, that of other members of the SI-100 Committee, was that we must do something to make sure that there is a headstone on the Looney grave. Initially, I envisioned one that would identify JTL

as the author of *"Shakespeare" Identified* or credit him as the father of the Oxfordian movement. In talking to his grandson Alan, however, Kathryn learned that he would prefer a plain headstone for Mr. and Mrs. Looney. Anything more than a simple headstone would be, he felt, ostentatious. He would also be uneasy with extensive publicity about his ancestor. We realized that we must respect the family's wishes in this regard.

Kathryn broached the idea of our helping to pay for a headstone. Alan liked the idea, and felt that the family should pay a substantial amount as well. He found a stonemason who would construct a historically suitable headstone and surround, which would cost about \$5,000. We in the SOF set a goal of raising \$3,000 toward funding the headstone.

With the approval of the SOF Board, I sent an email to our members explaining the situation and asking them to donate to the cause of providing a proper headstone for J.T. and Elizabeth Looney. Within a matter of days, we had met our goal of \$3,000, and that money has already been sent to the stonemason so that the work may begin. The stonemason informs me that once the family has determined the specifications of the headstone, it will be about twenty weeks until the job is done. That means that there should be a headstone on the Looney grave some time in the latter half of 2017.

We give our deepest thanks to all of you who contributed so generously and so willingly when you heard the call!

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The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship pursues its mission by supporting research, educational and scholarly initiatives, annual conferences, website and social media, and by publishing this Newsletter and an annual scholarly journal, *The Oxfordian*.

The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship was formed in 2013 when the Shakespeare Oxford Society, founded in 1957, and the Shakespeare Fellowship, founded in 2001, united to form a single organization. Dues, grants and contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

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SOF Launches Video Contest

On May 1, 2017, the SOF launched a video contest on the subject of “Who Wrote Shakespeare?” The contest offers a \$1,000 first prize, a \$500 second prize, and free one-year SOF memberships, with newsletter, to up to sixteen contestants who reach the final round. Videos must be under three minutes long and must promote discussion of the Shakespeare authorship question in a format that is entertaining, engaging, and witty.

We hope that the contest will attract many new people to our website. The deadline for submissions is July 31, 2017. See the article on page 11 of this issue for more information. For complete contest rules and to enter, follow this link: <https://filmfreeway.com/festival/WhoWroteShakespeareVideoContest>. Feel free to share this link with your friends through email and social media.

Research Grant Program for 2017

The SOF’s Research Grant Program will continue this year. See the announcement from RGP Committee Chair John Hamill and the 2017 rules for applicants on pages 10-11. We have already raised almost \$3,000 for this year’s RGP, and we hope to raise a total of \$10,000 in donations, which will be doubled by our Matching Funds Program. If you would like to contribute, mail in the special insert in this newsletter or go online to shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org (click on “Donate” on the Menu Bar, then select “Research Grant Fund” from the dropdown menu).

Chicago Conference, October 12-15, 2017

Our annual conference, which will take place in Chicago this year, is starting to look very exciting (see page 32). Alexander Waugh and Kevin Gilvary, the current Chair and President, respectively, of the De Vere Society, both plan to come from England to speak at the conference. We are also diligently working to add a theatrical excursion to the program. Further developments will be

posted in this newsletter and on our website. For details on how you can attend, see page 8 of our Winter 2017 *Newsletter* or our website at <http://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/2017-sof-conference/>. If you have not yet made your reservations at the Chicago Marriott Downtown, please do so as soon as possible because rooms at our special group rate of \$179/night are going fast! Call the Marriott at 877-303-0104 or go online to <https://aws.passkey.com/e/49043966>.

The program committee has received a number of proposals for presentations and has already selected some speakers. You still have until June 15 to submit a proposal for a presentation. Send your proposal by e-mail to any of the program committee members: Earl Showerman, Chair – earlees@charter.net; Bonner Cutting – jandbcutting@comcast.net; John Hamill – hamillx@pacbell.net; Don Rubin – drubin@yorku.ca.

SCOTUS Committee

As many of us remember, three U.S. Supreme Court justices presided over a moot court on the authorship question in 1987. Based partly on the slanted way in which the issue was framed and the burden of proof was allocated, all three justices voted for the Stratford man, but two of them later recanted and came out publicly in favor of Oxford.

Would you like to see a new Supreme Court moot court on the authorship question, in the light of the last thirty years’ worth of research, and with perhaps a different outcome? That is the goal of the SOF’s new SCOTUS (Supreme Court of the United States) Committee, chaired by William Camarinos. If you would like to take part in this project, send an email to: info@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org.

Thanks for all that you do in helping bring the truth to light!

– Tom Regnier, President

From the Editor:

Happy Springtime! Maybe some of you will curl up with this issue on a patio or porch; others may have it on their bedside table. Anyway, I’m sure you’ll find lots of thought-provoking stuff here.

Our cover article is 95 years old. It’s by John Thomas Looney himself. In connection with the Looney Centennial in 2020, our own James Warren is tracking down as many articles and letters from Looney as he can find. With help from Bill Boyle, James recently located this one from 1922 and sent it along, adding some helpful annotations to provide context.

I’m happy to be reprinting (with her kind permission) “Oxford’s Authorship in a Nutshell,” by Stephanie Hopkins Hughes. It was originally published a few weeks

ago on Stephanie’s blog, politicworm.com. If you’ve already seen it, great. It’s well worth a second read. It is a succinct summary of the case for Oxford as Shakespeare, but at the same time it demonstrates that the authorship issue is truly multidisciplinary—it involves issues of history, class, religion, politics, and culture. Stephanie Hughes has probably read and digested more material than any other living Oxfordian, and it shows. As many of you may know, Stephanie founded *The Oxordian* in 1998, and served as its editor until 2008. If you haven’t bookmarked her blog, politicworm.com, you should.

Correction: in my article, “After ‘Thought Exercise,’ Folger Is Even More Certain Shakspeare Is Shakespeare” (*Newsletter*, Winter 2017 issue), I wrote that the term “anti-Shakespeareans,” used in reference to authorship doubters, was “coined” by Stanley Wells and

Paul Edmondson in their 2013 book, *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt*. It wasn't. The term was in use at least as early as the mid-1960s, as can be seen in several Folger editions of Shakespeare plays. Nevertheless, even if Wells and Edmondson didn't "coin" the term, they embraced it enthusiastically.

What's the most head-smacking item in this issue? Well, for me it's in Bill Boyle's report of Marjorie Garber's April lecture, "Searching for Shakespeare," at the Boston Public Library (see page 16). When asked (by Boyle) if knowing the exact "wrong" alluded to in Sonnet 35 would help our understanding of the poem, the Harvard professor answered, "no."

Let me see if I understand that correctly—being able to connect a real-life person or event to a work of literature, specifically a poem, does not help our ability to understand it? How about a little example from, uh, pop music—songs are a form of a poetry, aren't they? Suppose I'm listening to John Lennon's love song, "Julia," from *The Beatles* [aka *The White Album*] (1968). Will I appreciate it more, or differently, if I learn that Julia was the name of John's mother, that she wasn't a big part of his life for much of his childhood (he was raised by his Aunt Mimi, Julia's sister), and that she was killed in an accident when John was seventeen? Doesn't that give additional meaning to the opening lines: "Half of what I say is meaningless, But I say it just to reach you, Julia"? No???

Finally, speaking of pop musicians, in the news note in the Winter 2017 issue about authorship doubter Mark Rylance being knighted, we mentioned that rocker Ray Davies (who founded the Kinks in 1963 with his younger

brother, Dave Davies) was also knighted. I recently ran across a 2010 interview with Ray Davies, where he spoke about his creative process:

I'm a writer, I like writing new songs. The thing is I'm a songwriter, I'm not really a rock star. . . . The real [rock] star was my brother. I love performing songs and that's the whole point of writing them, but I'm kind of a shy person, really.

I write songs. I don't write songs for Ray Davies to sing, 'cause Ray Davies is the interpreter. It's like an actor fitting in a role. That's why the Kinks' material was so diverse and so different. It was the same guy that wrote "Waterloo Sunset" that wrote "All Day and All of the Night," two completely different types of songs. Because I come at it from what I want to write rather than what I want to play.

I draw my inspiration—you know, I didn't grow up on Route 66 in the South in America. I was in an R&B covers band—that's what the Kinks were. When I had to write songs, I thought I was writing blues songs, but they had London topics. So that's why I write what I know about.

Yep, once again we learn that writers write what they know about. [For an in-depth view of Ray Davies, check out "Ray Davies On the Record," an eleven-part interview from 2009 conducted by music journalist Will Hodgkinson. It's on YouTube.com.]

– Alex McNeil, Editor

Letters to the Editor

Thanks for your article "After 'Thought Exercise' Folger Is Even More Certain Shakspeare is Shakespeare" in the last issue of the *Newsletter* (Winter 2017, 15-16). Your readers may be interested in knowing that, in response, I read the article by Heather Wolfe and Folger director Michael Witmore (<http://collation.folger.edu/2017/01/william-shakespeare-postgentleman/>) and disputed their claim in an email that read in part:

"You propose that Ralph Brooke's reference to Shakspeare of Stratford as a 'player' was derogatory, in line with his treatment of other applicants for coats of arms that he considered unworthy. It's true that 'player' was a low-status occupation at the time, so Brooke may well have meant for it to be derogatory, but you infer that Brooke's reference to Shakspeare 'gestures at his actually being something more than, not merely, an actor.' That's one possible interpretation, but the proposition that Brooke meant the reference to be derogatory is also consistent with it being accurate. The fact that derogatory references

to others were distorted doesn't prove that this one was distorted. If the truth about Shakspeare was unflattering, it may have served Brooke's agenda to tell the truth in his case.

"But even if we were to accept your basic inference, being a poet-dramatist was not the only possible 'something more.' There is a better-documented alternative. Mr. Shakspeare was a shareholder in the Globe Theatre, and I believe there's better contemporary evidence for that than for his alleged career as a poet-dramatist. Calling him a mere 'player' may have been meant to derogatorily disregard his status as a shareholder who may have held important managerial responsibilities. Granting Brooke's apparent derogatory agenda in referring to others, is it plausible that he could have derided the author of the hugely popular *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, and many well-known plays, as a mere 'player'? It seems much more plausible that he might credibly dismiss a theatre shareholder or manager in that way. Why disregard that possible explanation, which seems better supported by documentary evidence?

“In addition, we have other, more authoritative evidence that Mr. Shakspeare’s role in the acting company was something other than chief dramatist. In 1635, Cuthbert Burbage petitioned Philip Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, in a legal case. The Burbages were the founder-investors in the Globe Theatre, and William Shakspeare had been a shareholder; so Cuthbert clearly knew the role he had played in their company. In his petition, Burbage names the other investors. He names ‘Shakspeare,’ and ‘Shakespeare,’ as one of several ‘deserving men,’ and one of several ‘men players.’ These terms don’t seem to suggest that Cuthbert Burbage thought of him as the famous playwright William Shakespeare, but, rather, as just another member of the acting company. After all, Philip Herbert was a dedicatee of the first two published folios of Shakespeare’s plays. If Burbage knew that the ‘deserving man’ and ‘man player’ was also their playwright, one would think he would have mentioned it to strengthen his petition. What reason would he have to denigrate Shakespeare as a ‘player’ in this petition to Herbert in 1635? His description shows that he knew Shakspeare was not ‘Shakespeare.’ It corroborates Brooke’s description and calls into question your reinterpretation of it. No?”

Wolfe and Witmore replied: “Thanks very much for your message about our recent blog post. As you note, we leave the interpretation of the derogatory remark open—Brooke could be referring to Shakespeare as a shareholder or as a writer.”

I responded: “Thanks for acknowledging that Brooke’s derogatory reference to Shakspeare as a ‘player’ does not constitute evidence that he was the author Shakespeare. You open your blog post quoting *The Guardian*’s description of your discoveries as ‘a decisive blow to the belief that Shakespeare was a front man for someone else—a smoking gun that disproves the claims for other candidates.’ Of course they are no such thing and in fact tend to call his authorship claim into question because one would expect that if he were the author Shakespeare he would not be denigrated by any knowledgeable person as a mere ‘player’ as late as 1602. Cuthbert Burbage’s references to Shakspeare in his 1635 petition to Philip Herbert tend to confirm that his role with the company was limited to sharer and player.

“While we are on the topic, you point out that ‘[William] Camden knew Shakespeare.’ I agree that Camden must have known him, or at least who he was, due to Camden’s role in ‘co-granting ... an exemplification of arms to John Shakespeare in 1599.’ It is therefore surprising that in the 1607 edition of his book *Britannia*, and in subsequent editions, in the section on Stratford-upon-Avon Camden describes the town as owing ‘all its consequence to two natives—John de Stratford, later Archbishop of Canterbury, who built the church, and Hugh Clopton, later mayor of London, who

built the Clopton bridge across the Avon’ (*Britannia* 2, 445). There is no mention of the poet-playwright William Shakespeare—another example of someone who knew Shakspeare but didn’t associate him with the author.”

Wolfe and Witmore did not reply.

John Shahan
Claremont, CA

In taking up the problem of Hamlet’s intent and legal culpability in the slaying of Polonius, Patrick McCarthy (“Hamlet’s Intent: A Comment and Query,” *Newsletter*, Winter 2017) might have raised the very similar problem of Edward de Vere’s intent when he killed Thomas Bricknell, a Cecil House cook, who, like Polonius, was very possibly acting as a spy. This is the sort of parallel between Oxford’s real life and Hamlet’s fictional one that helps to confirm de Vere as the true author.

Also, there is a striking similarity between young Oxford’s plea and the gravedigger’s legalistic speech concerning Ophelia’s suicide. Seventeen-year-old de Vere escaped a murder or manslaughter conviction by testimony that he had been rushed upon by the cook, who impaled himself deliberately or accidentally on Edward’s exposed sword. This sounds like a power play more than the truth; only a great lord could have gotten away with it.

To argue that the stabbed man came to the sword, not that the sword came to him, is very nearly matched by the gravedigger’s comic analysis of suicide by drowning—and equally ridiculous:

Gravedigger: Give me leave. Here lies the water—good. Here stands the man—good. If the man go to this water and drown himself, it is, will he will he, he goes, mark you that. But if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself. Argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

The parallel is clear. It is impossible that the water rose up to drown Ophelia, and equally preposterous that the cook charged an unbated sword. Whatever motivated him to allude to that painful memory in drama years later, it is evident that Edward de Vere, in reprising his own story, is the author of *Hamlet*.

Allan R. Shickman
St. Louis, MO

Patrick McCarthy responds:

The inquest in the matter of Bricknell’s death was held on July 23, 1567. The case of *Hales v. Petit*, to which the gravedigger comically alludes, involved the consequences of inheritance relating to Hales’s suicide. Hales forfeited a lease to the Crown as a result of a finding that he feloniously took his own life. This deprived his widow of a share of his estate. J. Anthony Burton found “a consistent and coherent pattern of legal allusions to

defeated expectations of inheritance” in *Hamlet* in his article, “An Unrecognized Theme in ‘Hamlet’: Lost Inheritance ...,” *The Shakespeare Newsletter* (Fall 2000, at 71), citing Thomas Glyn Watkin, “*Hamlet* and the Law of Homicide,” *Law Quarterly Review* 100 (1984): 282-310; see also Thomas Regnier, “Could Shakespeare Think Like a Lawyer?” in *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?* (eds. John Shahan and Alexander Waugh, 2013), 86-98. The Admission Register for Gray’s Inn lists “Edward Vere (Earl of Oxford)” as an enrollee for the period “1566-67 (Feb. 1).” Although Hales’s death occurred in 1554, the case was not decided until 1562. The Bard’s legal

erudition has long been noted. The intersection of the felonious taking of a life and its significance for burial and inheritance, as played out at Ophelia’s gravesite, underlines the legal sophistication of its author. See also note 8 to my article, “*Hamlet’s Intent*,” citing Mark Anderson’s reference to the Bricknell inquest in his book, *Shakespeare By Another Name*. [Patrick McCarthy is a Northern California lawyer. He can be reached at patrick@mccarthylaw.us]



What’s the News?

Oxfordians Speak on Authorship Issue

During the winter and early spring, several Oxfordians gave presentations on the Shakespeare Authorship issue.

On February 3, **Tom Townsend** provided an introduction to the Shakespeare Authorship Question at Mirabella, an active retirement community, in Seattle. He was invited to present by Nancy Lucht, an SOF member.

Because the Mirabella audience came from various backgrounds and experiences, Townsend added a short context on the Elizabethan era. Approximately fifty people attended. During the Q & A period, several persons asked about other authorship candidates; there were also inquiries about why Edward de Vere would have used a pseudonym. Interestingly, no one even mentioned the Stratford Man.

Townsend was invited back again two weeks later. This time he reprised the *Romeo and Juliet* talk he gave at the joint SF/SOS conference in 2011, modified to include a summary of the SAQ. Despite a smaller audience, the discussion continued to center on how the Man from Stratford could have had the ability to include astonishing details about Verona, as seen in *Romeo and Juliet*. (Of course, as we know, Edward de Vere actually visited there in 1575-76.)



Questions this time included: “Why haven’t I heard about this Authorship issue before?” “Was Queen Elizabeth involved in any way in this issue?” and “Are the Books on Your List about Edward de Vere as the Author?” Before each of these meetings, Townsend and Nancy furnished a list of Oxfordian reference material so those interested could continue to investigate the SAQ topic.

Both Nancy Lucht and co-director of the Mirabella Lifelong Learning, Carolyn Blount, indicated they were pleased with Townsend’s presentations. Nancy Lucht said, “It’s exciting to think that some minds are being opened up.”

Newton Frohlich, author of the Oxfordian novel *The Shakespeare Mask*, gave two talks on Cape Cod in February. On February 18 he spoke at the Brewster (Mass.) Lawn Society on “The Man Behind Hamlet.” Afterward, the chairman of the meeting, former State Senator Henri Rauschenbach, reported that the interest in the authorship issue was unusually intense, and was favorable to the Oxfordian position. A week later Frohlich spoke again, this time to the Friends of South Yarmouth Library. The talk was entitled “Myths.” He was invited to speak about the updated edition of his earlier historical novel, *1492: The World of Christopher Columbus* (published by St. Martin’s Press years ago, it was recently reissued after *The Shakespeare Mask* was awarded the Benjamin Franklin Gold Medal for Best Historical Novel by the Independent Book Publishers Association). But during his talk Frohlich pointed out several interesting similarities between the myth of the Stratford man’s authorship and the identity of Christopher Columbus and the financing of his voyage of discovery. Again the audience reacted with enthusiasm with extended comments afterward.

Hank Whittemore gave two presentations in March at Rockland Community College in Suffern, New York, each time to an audience of about 100. Whittemore noted that “the main topic that interested the students was the political history of the time, including the government’s censorship and need to control the printing press and the public theater.” He added: “The students demonstrated genuine curiosity about the history involved and had no

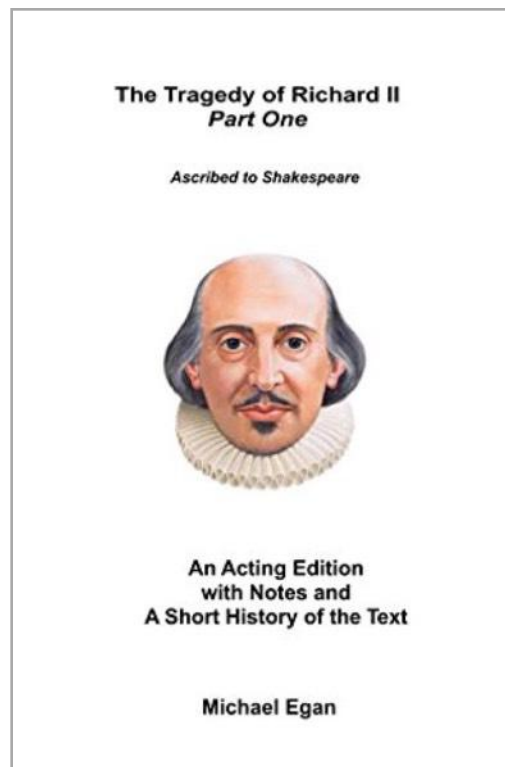
problem dealing with any aspect of the authorship question. Most seemed quite open to hearing that the Stratfordian story is wrong, and equally open to new information and/or speculation. They love being on the ‘inside’ of something that challenges traditional thinking; and they become especially interested in whatever political aspects of the history might be involved.” Whittemore has spoken at RCC numerous times, at the invitation of Christopher Plummer, director of the Cultural Arts Theater at this college of the State University. A distant relative of the Canadian actor of the same name, Plummer is also co-founder and co-artistic director (with Patty Maloney, Chair of Performing Arts) of the Rockland Shakespeare Company. An adjunct professor, he has introduced the SAQ in his classes ever since reading Whittemore’s book *The Monument* (2005) and has been researching the issue on his own. Plummer expressed his thanks to Whittemore “for opening up the question to a new generation of doubters in the hopes that they carry the torch and keep it burning until the question of authorship is answered definitively.”

On March 17 **Bonner Miller Cutting** spoke at the North Palm Beach (Florida) Library. As Cutting explained, “what I was trying to do in this talk was not just present the case against the Stratford man versus the case for Oxford (both of which are powerful), but to try to tell Oxford’s story! The genesis of this approach is a conversation I had with Richard Whalen at the Houston conference in 2009. We discussed that we need to make Oxford a more sympathetic figure—and Richard said this is hard to do.” She reported that the audience was quite interested. “I think the best understood point that I made was a slide with the maps of Italy side by side from Mark Anderson’s *Shakespeare By Another Name* and Dick Roe’s *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy*. It felt like there was a little gasp from the audience as they saw for themselves that the maps match; i.e., the cities where Oxford went on his Italy trip are the places where ‘Shakespeare’ set the Italian plays!” Afterward, questions from the audience included one about whether Anne Cecil’s tomb still exists (yes, it does, in Westminster Abbey, where it was the tallest tomb at the time [and may still be so today]). Another audience member recalled being taught that Shakespeare “stood alone,” that his writings could not be connected to a historical context. Cutting responded that Sir Philip Sidney’s sonnet cycle *Astrophel and Stella* is now understood to be based on real persons (Sidney and Penelope Rich), which, of course, shows that Elizabethan writers did indeed base works on personal experience. The event was organized by local Oxfordian Margaret Robson as part of a regular S.A.Q. discussion series at the North Palm Beach Library.

Michael Egan’s New Book Available

Dr. Michael Egan informs us that his edition of *Richard II, Part One*, also known as *Thomas of Woodstock*, is now available on Amazon. Titled *The Tragedy of Richard II, Part One: An Acting Edition with Notes and A Short History of the Text*, this unique edition is the only one based on a computerized analysis of the anonymous, handwritten manuscript in the British Library. Designed for actors and directors, but including scholarly notes and a comparative review of the manuscript’s thirteen earlier editions, the meticulously edited text concludes with a “conjectural emendation” in the Elizabethan manner winding up the story. Is it by Shakespeare? This long-forgotten masterpiece completes the “Hollow Crown” cycle by filling in the narrative between Edward III and Shakespeare’s *Richard II*, which begins immediately after its dramatic depiction of King Richard’s deposition and restoration in December 1387.

Michael Egan is a former English professor and Scholar in Residence at Brigham Young University, Hawaii. He served as editor of *The Oxfordian* from 2009 to 2014, and as editor of this *Newsletter* from 2010 to 2013.



In Memoriam: Ted Alexander (1953-2017)



Longtime Oxfordian Robert Edward “Ted” Alexander passed away on April 2, 2017. He was 63. An IT expert, Ted ran his own business, TedTech, in suburban Toronto. His expertise was put to good use in the early days of the Shakespeare Fellowship, as he was instrumental in designing and implementing its original website. Ted was a regular at the SOS/SF Joint Conferences. He was also passionate about music, film, and preserving the environment.

Former SF President Lynne Kositsky notes that Ted was “a good friend of ours, and when we lived in Toronto he always insisted on fixing my computer when he stopped by at our house for an hour or two while visiting clients in our area. Sometimes he and I were both so busy that the only place we could meet up was at the airport when I was coming back from a short reading tour; he lived close to Toronto Airport. I remember him picking me up and driving me to Ann Arbor for the conference one year.” SF founding member Roger Stritmatter remembers “Ted fondly as a warm, intelligent, quiet man who was already ready to lend his help on technical matters. His technical support of the Fellowship’s forays into cyberspace in the early days was always freely offered and greatly valued. He will be greatly missed in our movement.”

Ted is survived by his wife, Shelley Lockhart, his daughter, Katerina, and several nieces and nephews.

Report of the Nominations Committee

The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship Nominations Committee is pleased to present the SOF membership with a slate of three outstanding candidates to stand for election for three-year terms on the Board of Directors at the annual membership meeting October 12-15 in Chicago. The Nominations Committee is also responsible for nominating a trustee of the SOF Board for the office of President.

Nominations to the Board and to the office of President may also be initiated by written petition of at least ten members in good standing, so long as the petition is submitted to the Nominations Committee by August 15, 2017, which is the required sixty days before the annual meeting. The results of the Board election will be posted on the SOF website immediately after the annual meeting and reported in the *Newsletter*.

Nominees for three-year terms to the SOF Board:

Don Rubin has been a working scholar and theatre critic for more than forty years, and is currently Professor Emeritus of Theatre at Toronto’s York University. The editor of Routledge’s six-volume *World Encyclopedia of Contemporary Theatre* series, he is a former chair of the Department of Theatre at York and a founder of its M.A. and Ph.D. programs in theatre studies. From 2012 to 2016, Prof. Rubin offered a popular senior-level undergraduate course at York on Shakespeare: The Authorship Question.

The Founding editor of Canada’s national theatre quarterly, *Canadian Theatre Review*, and the editor of the standard volume *Canadian Theatre History: Selected Readings*, he has been President of both the Canadian

Theatre Critics Association and the Canadian Center of UNESCO-affiliated International Theatre Institute.

Prof. Rubin is also a graduate of New York’s famous High School of Performing Arts. He later studied Shakespeare at Hofstra University with Bernard Beckerman, author of *Shakespeare at the Globe*, and appeared in several plays there, performing on John Cranford Adams’s version of the original Globe stage. He has been active on the SOF board for three years.

Walter (Wally) Hurst studied English, Economics and Political Science at Duke University and has a degree in Law from University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law, where he served as Assistant Managing Editor of the *Law Journal* and authored several law review articles, including a major article on legislative intent. He earned an M.A. in Shakespeare Authorship Studies from Brunel University (2013), where his dissertation title was “‘What’s your authority for that statement?’ The Need for Standardized Criteria in Determining the Veracity and Validity of External Evidence in the Designation of Early Modern Authorship.”

He currently serves as Director of the Norris Theatre at Louisburg College in North Carolina, which produces course-oriented shows, professional shows, and community theater productions. His teaching experience includes courses in public speaking, acting, introduction to drama, writing, and political science. From 1997 to 2012 he served as Managing Director of the Lakeland Theatre Company. He has directed and acted in a number of Shakespeare productions.

Julie Sandys Bianchi earned a Master’s Degree in Drama at San Francisco State University and worked in a variety of theater settings in California, Colorado, Missouri

and Virginia, both on the stage as an actress and behind the scenes as a designer, stage manager and theater educator. While a member of the community of Redding, California, she served on the Columbia School District Board and in St Louis County, Missouri, was a member of the University City Arts Commission. Because of her interest in her paternal heritage as a descendant of the Treasurer of the Virginia Company of London, she has over forty years of experience as a family historian specializing in the gentry families of England and their emigration to colonial Virginia. She presented at the 2014 SOF conference in Madison on the use of DNA in solving Elizabethan ancestral mysteries and in 2016 in Boston on card-playing imagery in the First Folio.

Nominee for a one-year term for SOF President:

In proposing a candidate for president, and in accordance with the SOF bylaws, the members of the nominations committee took the unprecedented step of requesting the SOF board approve Tom Regnier's nomination to serve a fourth one-year term as SOF President. By a unanimous vote, the board approved this motion at its March meeting.

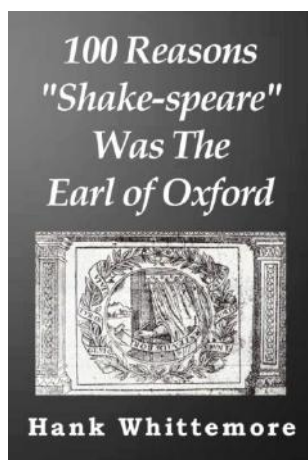
Tom Regnier is an appellate attorney with his own practice in the South Florida area, and has served as

President of the SOF for the past three years. Tom received his J.D., *summa cum laude*, from the University of Miami School of Law, and his LL.M. from Columbia Law School, where he was a Harlan F. Stone Scholar. He has taught at the University of Miami School of Law (including a course on Shakespeare and the Law) and at Chicago's John Marshall Law School. Tom has frequently spoken at authorship conferences on aspects of law in Shakespeare's works, and he wrote chapters in *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?* and *Contested Year*. Tom's leadership on the Board has been instrumental in promoting the goals of the SOF, including the creation of the SOF YouTube channel and promoting the Shakespeare authorship question through social media.

Submitted by SOF Nominations Committee: Earl Showerman (Chair), Bonner Cutting, and Joan Leon.



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Announcing the SOF 2017 Research Grant Program

I am pleased to announce that the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship will continue, for a fourth consecutive year, to support the Research Grant Program. We invite you to apply for a research grant, or help us raise the funds for additional research on the Shakespeare Authorship Question. Three-time research grant winners Michael Delahoyde and Coleen Moriarty will go back to Italy this summer to continue their research on Oxford in Italy (see their two reports in the Winter 2016 *Newsletter* and on page 26 of this issue). We are all very excited to learn what they will uncover this time! Last year, we also awarded grants to Eddi Jolly of England for research in French archives, and Nina Green of Canada for research in the College of Arms (see page 5 of the Fall 2016 *Newsletter*). Roger Stritmatter and John Lavendoski, who received grants in 2014, are still finalizing their research results and should have reports soon.

Below are the rules and instructions for submitting applications to the 2017 Grant Program (deadline October 31, 2017). The SOF has again set aside \$10,000 as matching funds for the RGP. That means that the power of your donation is doubled—if you donate \$100, the RGP receives \$200; if you donate \$500, the RGP receives \$1,000. We welcome all donations, large and small.

Our goal is to raise \$10,000, so that, with the matching funds, we can have a total of \$20,000 available for research grants. We have received \$2,936 from members as part of our annual donations solicitation, so we are already at almost 30% of our goal! Please use the special insert enclosed in this *Newsletter* to make a donation, of whatever amount you can afford, to the Research Grant Program. Or you may donate on our website (shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org) by choosing “Donate” from the menu bar and then clicking on “Research Grant Fund.” Or simply send the SOF a check at P.O. Box 66083, Auburndale, MA 02466, and write “RGP” on it. Please do what you can to help us bring additional evidence of Oxford’s authorship to light.

We are the only institution in the world that provides grants for Oxfordian research—please support us! Thanks to those of you who have donated already.

Cheers!

John Hamill, Chair, Research Grant Committee

Summary of Major Points

The purpose of this grant program is to promote new research about Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford: new research about his biography, his literary life, and evidence for, and supporting evidence for, his case as the true author of the Shakespeare canon.

The plan for 2017 is to award \$20,000 in grants, depending on the amount of money raised.

- Funds will be raised from membership and friends.
- Approximately two to four grants are envisioned, amounts depending on project proposals submitted.

- Grant recipients must be (or become) members of SOF to receive funds.
- Financial need will be taken into account if noted on the application.
- New, unpublished applicants will be preferred to encourage new researchers.
- In addition to basic purpose (see Rules 2 and 3 below), applicants and the SOF Board may suggest topics or activities that they are interested in.
- **Proposals will be accepted through October 31, 2017**, with the Selection Committee’s decision announced after January 1, 2018.
- Members of the Selection Committee are: Katherine Chiljan, Bonner Cutting, Ramon Jiménez, John Hamill and Don Rubin.

Grant Program Rules

1. The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship intends to make two to four cash grants to scholars and researchers for the purpose of developing new knowledge about the 17th Earl of Oxford, and new knowledge that advances his case for the Shakespeare Authorship. Members of this RGP committee and of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship Board of Trustees are not eligible for consideration for a grant.
2. Grant applicants must focus on a specific topic for research, not general research. Applicants must outline a specific plan of action, identify the expected results, and how this will advance Oxfordian and Shakespeare Authorship studies. Applicants must have pre-researched the topic, feeling confident of expected results. Applicants must already have information about the archives involved, verified access to use them, know the time when the archives are open, etc. If archives are in a foreign language (Latin, Italian, etc.), competence is required. Applicants are advised that proposals for “outreach” activities (i.e., efforts to bring the authorship issue to academic, youth, or other communities) will not be funded under the Research Grant Program. Such proposals should be directed to the SOF’s Outreach Committee.
3. A successful grant application will propose one or more of the following:
 - a. Examination of a neglected or previously unknown archive, library or document that might lead to a discovery of importance about the 17th Earl of Oxford and his case for the Shakespeare Authorship.
 - b. Research that will identify a previously unknown person or place mentioned in the Shakespeare canon that is related to the 17th Earl of Oxford, and that will support his case for the Shakespeare Authorship.
 - c. Examples of specific research projects follow:
 - Search for surviving letters of Oxford’s secretary, Antony Munday (or John Lyly, Sturmius of Germany, et al.), and examine them for new information about Oxford.
 - Research in archives of Italian cities for existing letters of Baptista Nigrone and Pasquino Spinola, who helped with Oxford’s finances during his European tour.
 - New research on actor/author Robert Armin, who possibly referred to Oxford when he wrote that he would “take my journey (to wait on the right honorable good Lord my Master whom I serve) to Hackney.”
 - Research in a private library in the United Kingdom that may have a connection with the Earl of Oxford or his descendants for documents hitherto unknown.
 - New research on the founder of Oxfordianism, J.T. Looney, for the centennial celebration.
 - d. Projects not recommended are: research based on cryptograms, ciphers, stylometry or computer analysis.
4. Grants will not be made to finance a student’s degree program unless they meet one or more of the above criteria.
5. Grant funds may be used for travel, materials, fees and, where appropriate, living expenses.

6. Each applicant must describe the process and methods of his or her research project and explain how it meets one or more of the criteria listed above.
7. Each applicant must specify the amounts requested for travel, materials, fees, and living expenses, where appropriate, and why they are necessary. Awards will not cover salaries or personal stipends for the principal investigator.
8. Each applicant must be a member in good standing of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship in order to receive funds.
9. Proposals will be judged by a selection committee appointed by the SOF President, made up of individuals who are familiar with Oxfordian and Shakespeare Authorship studies.
10. Grants will be financed by specific donations to the Program, to a maximum of \$20,000.
11. The grant proposal period will run through October 31, 2017, with the successful applicants announced after January 1, 2018. The donation period will run indefinitely.
12. Depending on the amount raised, the Fellowship will make one or more grants of \$2,000 to \$20,000.
13. Grantees will be expected to complete their research within nine months of receiving their grant award and submit a written report to the SOF Board of Trustees within the following three months. A summary of the project will be published in one of the SOF publications, whether or not the project achieved the expected results. The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship will announce the names of the grantees in the newsletter along with the amount of the award, and either the title of the research grant or the general subject matter (in case confidentiality is necessary). Grantees must accept their grant funds in 2018. No grants for 2017 winners will be funded after December 31, 2018.
14. Grantees will be encouraged to submit papers of their research to mainstream journals. If this is unsuccessful, the Fellowship will consider such papers for one of its publications.
15. Applications should be submitted to John Hamill at hamillx@pacbell.net.

Instructions for submission:

1. Submit by email to John Hamill at hamillx@pacbell.net.
2. 12-point type, double spaced, four-page maximum narrative. We will not accept submittals longer than four pages.
3. Grant funds are limited; the SOF prefers to give the grant to a person who would not be able to do the project as well, or at all, without it. The SOF grant may only partially fund your project; in that case will you be able to find the other funds needed or reduce the scale of the project? SOF grants will range from \$2,000 to \$20,000.

Contents of narrative:

1. Name of applicant(s) (please asterisk* principal researcher)
2. Address of principal applicant
3. E-MAIL of principal applicant
4. Short title of research project
5. Amount sought from SOF
6. Description of project (1,000 words maximum)
7. Ideal outcome (200 words maximum)
8. Why you believe this can be achieved (500 words maximum)
9. Activities you expect to undertake with this grant (200 words maximum)
10. Background of principal researcher (500 words maximum)
11. Name, background and function of other researchers(s), if any
12. Are you a member of SOF? If not, are you willing to join SOF if you are given a grant and allow SOF to announce the short title of this grant?
13. How will realization of this application be affected if SOF can only give you, for example, 50% of what you are seeking?

14. Itemized budget (Total amounts for each and brief explanations)
 - Travel
 - Accommodations
 - Meals
 - Other

Total Sought (should agree with Item 5 above)

Please submit your application by October 31, 2017, to John Hamill, Chair, Research Grant Program, Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship at the following e-mail: hamillx@pacbell.net

Criteria (50 points total):

- 35 points—research hypothesis and plan
- 7 points—background of applicant
- 4 points—need
- 4 points—new researcher (applicant has not yet published a Shakespeare Authorship article)

You are welcome to make a donation to the Research Grant Program by mail or through our website.

Make a Viral Video! SOF Launches Authorship Video Contest

May 1, 2017 – The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship has launched a video contest on the topic, “Who Wrote Shakespeare?” with a **first prize of \$1,000**, a second prize of \$500, and prizes of one-year memberships in the SOF to up to 16 contestants who make it to the final round.

The mission of the “Who Wrote Shakespeare?” Video Contest is to promote evidence that supports reasonable doubt about the Shakespeare authorship and encourages its discussion. The contest is designed to attract new viewers to its website to learn more about the authorship question. Videos by the 16 Finalists will be available for public voting, which we hope will arouse even more interest in authorship.

Videos must be a maximum of 3 minutes in length and must present an issue that promotes discussion of the Shakespeare authorship question in a format that is entertaining, engaging, and witty.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS JULY 31, 2017.

Finalists will be announced on September 1, 2017, and their videos will be available for public viewing and voting from September 1, 2017, to October 1, 2017. The winners will be announced publicly on the SOF website on October 15, 2017.

For Complete Contest Rules and to Enter, follow this link: <https://filmfreeway.com/festival/WhoWroteShakespeareVideoContest>

Feel free to share this link with your friends by email and social media.

Only U.S. residents who are at least 18 years old are eligible to enter. There is no fee for submitting an entry, and no purchase is necessary.



SHAKESPEARE

OXFORD FELLOWSHIP

Help Bring the Truth to Light by Supporting the SOF 2017 Research Grant Program!

The Power of Your Donation will be Doubled through Matching Funds!

The SOF's Research Grant Program has uncovered a previously unknown document signed by Edward de Vere that proves Oxford's whereabouts in the summer of 1575 and his interest in art, and it suggests that other documents signed by him or referring to him are to be found in these archives. Michael Delahoyde and Coleen Moriarty, who found the document, will return to northern Italy for another exploration of archives this summer supported by an SOF research grant.

Another grant recipient, John Lavendoski, has uncovered 16th century documents that confirm the existence of the canal system in Italy. Stratfordian scholars have for years scoffed at Shakespeare for thinking that one could travel from Verona to Milan by boat, but these documents show that Shakespeare was right about Italy. We are also awaiting results of recent grants to Eddi Jolly for research in France and Nina Green for research in the College of Arms.

The SOF once again will provide up to \$10,000 in matching funds. This doubles the impact of your donation. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 in donations, so that, with the matching funds, we can have a total of \$20,000 available for research. The RGP has received \$2,936 from members as part of our annual donations solicitation, so we are already at almost 30% of our goal!

DONATE TODAY! Use this form to pay by check or credit card, or go online to: shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org (click on "Donate" on the Menu Bar, then select "Research Grant Fund" from the drop-down menu).

Thank you! John Hamill, Chair, Research Grant Program

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("Oxford Or Derby," cont. from page 1)

It is essential, at the outset, that the complete independence of the two investigations should be emphasized. Naturally, Professor Lefranc had not advertised the fact of his being engaged on these researches, and my own work was conducted with all possible privacy. When my investigations were sufficiently advanced, I arranged for a sealed document on the subject to be deposited with Sir Frederick Kenyon, of the British Museum,⁴ and this document would, I believe, actually be delivered in London on the identical day upon which Professor Lefranc announced in the French daily press the approaching publication of his work on the same subject.⁵ This, of course, is only a curious coincidence; but the fact that two perfectly independent investigations should have led us to two men in intimate family association hardly looks like mere coincidence. It suggests that, at any rate, we are on the right track; that "Shakespeare's" family has been located, and the search for the author considerably narrowed.

My present purpose is not to attempt a comparison of the mass of evidence collected on each side, but rather to deal with one particular aspect of it—in my opinion, however, a quite decisive aspect—raised in the *National Review*, November 1921: namely the bearing of chronology upon the respective claims. Before doing this I would, however, draw attention to one or two other points.

So far as contemporary records are concerned, the evidence of Oxford's poetic and dramatic eminence is emphatic and continuous. Webbe in 1586, Puttenham in 1589, and Meres in 1598, all accord him a foremost position, whilst not one of these important authorities so much as mentions Derby as a poet or dramatist. Within a few years of his death (the reference has, however, been lost, and I shall be grateful to any reader who can recover it for me) Oxford's fame as a dramatist was reiterated; and from that time to the present day the tradition of his dramatic pre-eminence has been intermittently repeated, accompanied always with the regret that no drama of his has survived, all being "lost or worn out." To this, not only does Derby present no parallel, but *there does not exist a single parallel case in the dramatic history of those times.*

Even the mysteriousness and secrecy in which he had chosen to veil his productions were noted and commented on in his own day. Thus, in Puttenham's *Arte of Poesie*, 1589, we have the following:

In Her Majesty's time that now is are sprung up another crew of courtly makers [poets], noblemen and gentlemen, who have written excellently well, as it would appear, *if their doings could be found out and made public* with the rest, of which number is first that noble gentleman, Edward Earl of Oxford.

—Arber's *Reprint*, p. 75.

Again, nothing comparable exists in the literary history of the times respecting the Earl of Derby, or any other recognized poet dramatist. Derby may have been one of the

group of whom Oxford was evidently the recognized chief; and modern "Shakespeare" study all tends to show that in this literature there was one dominant mind, some of whose writings were completed and augmented by "understudies." All is conjecture, however, so far as Derby is concerned, whilst Oxford's position, and even his ascendancy, stands permanently on record.

Much of the evidence in support of Professor Lefranc's case or my own turns upon the identification of contemporary prototypes for the *personae* in the Shakespeare dramas; and, as some of the critics have affected to deride the method, certain clear truths must be stated in regard to it. Probably the source from which Elizabethan literature drew much of its vitality was the general practice of representing contemporary personalities. Everyone who has at all studied the work of Spenser, Lyly and Jonson is familiar with it, whilst the work of Shakespeare has hitherto been regarded as somewhat of an exception. As the natural inference is that this is due to the false authorship, one test of a new authorship theory must be whether or not it furnishes a key by which prototypes can be identified and the great dramas thus brought into line with the literary practices of the time.

Now, the way in which outstanding particulars of Oxford's life are reproduced in definite and striking combination in the "Shakespeare" dramas—and in weighing the evidence of probabilities it is not merely the mass of collected facts but always the manner of their combination, that counts—leaves no reasonable room for doubt respecting certain of the identifications I have proposed. These, I take it, Mr. R. Macdonald Lucas, in last November's *National Review*, accepts in the main. Only, he would appropriate them for the Derby case. The Earl of Derby, he claims, being Oxford's son-in-law, would be acquainted with the career of his wife's father, and used the material in composing the dramas. The obvious retort, of course, is that I have an equal right to appropriate the evidence collected on the other side. Oxford would know the career of his daughter's husband, and could use this material in composing *his* dramas. Those, then, who must judge between us will have to decide, in view of the contemporary records, which of the two was more likely to have dramatized the other.

It is the distinctive nature of the specific identifications, however, which is the vital consideration. For example, one of the best supported identifications—one which several hostile critics have been inclined to concede—is that of Oxford with Hamlet. Suppose, then, we accept the identification of Oxford with Hamlet and Derby with Jacques (*As You Like It*), whether is Hamlet or Jacques more likely to be the author's work of self-delineation? The question is, of course, superfluous; for not once nor twice, but times without number, have the most competent authorities insisted that Hamlet is "Shakespeare's" special work of self-revelation. When, then, in addition to Hamlet, we have a whole galaxy of "Shakespeare's" characters linked to Oxford by striking

combinations of actual objective detail: Othello, Romeo, Biron (*Love's Labour's Lost*), Bertram (*All's Well*), Fenton (*Merry Wives*), the lord in the induction in *Taming of the Shrew*—in the old play, Christopher Sly, believing himself to be this lord, and wishing to assume an aristocratic name, calls himself Don Christo Vary* (just as Oxford pronounced his name “Vere” in his echo poem)—anyone undertaking to weigh the evidence will have to consider whether so extraordinary a repetition of one contemporary personality through a succession of the great Shakespeare dramas was more likely to be due to his own pen or to that of his son-in-law.

Now we turn to matters chronological; and first I shall state the bare facts of the case. The Earl of Oxford was born in 1550 and died in 1604. The Earl of Derby was born in 1561 and died in 1642.

Commenting on the date of Oxford's death, Mr. Lucas says of my case: “*It is hopeless*. There is no other word for it. Oxford died in 1604.” It is this statement I now purpose answering.

First, as to the “Shakespeare” dates. This name first appeared in English literature with the publication of *Venus and Adonis* in 1593; 1594 saw the publication of *The Rape of Lucrece*. In 1597 there began the anonymous publication of the great dramas, and in 1598 the name of “Shakespeare” made its first appearance as that of a dramatist. This was followed by a rapid outpouring of plays: five in one year (1600); and the series closed abruptly with the authorized publication of *Hamlet* in 1604—the year of Oxford's death.

Nothing further was published till 1608-09, when three additional plays appeared. One of these was *Pericles*, a disputed play, which the editors of the 1623 Folio deliberately excluded; a second was *Troilus and Cressida*, which had been entered in the Stationers' Register in 1602; and the third was *King Lear*, the date of which is a vexed question, although it contains an amount of serious rhymed dialogue (see Act I, sc. 1) which, in other cases, is accepted as evidence of early work; and a play of this name, but of unknown authorship, was actually extant in 1594. At the time of the publication of these three plays the complete set of Shakespeare's sonnets was given to the world; begun about 1590, these poems, the best authorities agree, were finished about 1603-4, and when they appeared in 1609 their author was referred to as “*our ever-living poet*”; the kind of expression invariably reserved for the dead. After this nothing of “Shakespeare's” acknowledged work appeared until *Othello* in 1622, and the great First Folio in 1623; the latter containing some nineteen plays never previously published.

Since that time, and especially during the past century, this literature and all the attendant circumstances of its publication have been subjected to the most minute examination, such as neither the author himself nor those who acted for him could possibly have foreseen; and certain broad facts have now been established beyond dispute. The first is that quite a number of the plays first published in 1623 had actually been written some years



John Thomas Looney, c. 1890

before several that had already been published in 1597-1604. This means (1) we have a *proved* interval of at least some thirty years between the actual writing and publication of plays, thus making an exact dating of the works well-nigh impossible; (2) the 1597-1604 publication was an outpouring from a large accumulated stock, and when it stopped suddenly with the authorized *Hamlet* in 1604 there were still on hand many plays which had never been published.

The second great fact established by our scholars is that the volume published in 1623 as “Shakespeare's” dramas contained an amount of work which was not from the hand of the great dramatist, although the editors gave no hint of this fact, but, on the contrary, implied that it was all his own. These are facts which no Shakespeare scholar of repute would think of questioning; and the general reader cannot possibly adjust himself to the authorship problem unless he has first assimilated them.

Turn now to the conjectural dating of the works first published in 1623. Here our authorities have had to depend largely upon internal evidence, in which the literary style, when compared with that of the 1597-1604 work, has been a governing factor. The 1604 *Hamlet*, for example, furnished something immovably fixed; and the line of the writer's development once perceived, all obviously less mature work had perforce to be assigned to some previous date. As a matter of fact, Shakespeare scholars have found themselves faced with problems that, on Stratfordian assumptions, have defied solution; but with every temptation to find in the work first published in 1623 the fruits of the labor of Wm. Shakspeare's later years (1604-16), the utmost that could be managed was a rapid thinning-off of output, which could not by any means be stretched beyond the year 1613. And it is the surprising nature of the work allotted to the years following Oxford's death that forms one of the strongest arguments in his favour. Here I shall state the facts in the words of three leading Shakespeare authorities.

Sir Sidney Lee:

Although Shakespeare's powers showed no sign of exhaustion, he reverted in 1607 to his earlier habit of collaboration.⁶

Sir Walter Raleigh:

Towards the end of his career his work is once more found mixed with the work of other men, but this time there is generally reason to believe that it is those others that have laid him under contribution . . . completing his unfinished work by additions of their own.—*English Men of Letters*, p. 109.⁷

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch:

The more we consider these later plays . . . the more we are forced to feel that *something had happened* [my italics] . . . the *tours de force* mixed up with other men's botch work . . . confused in *The Winter's Tale* with serious scamping of artistry.—*Shakespeare's Workmanship*, p. 296.⁸

The last writer also points out the very significant fact that some of the best things said in these later plays had already been said by Shakespeare—and said better—elsewhere.

To these general statements we would add Messrs. Clark and Wright's remarks upon one play, *Macbeth* (usually dated 1607, but with an optional margin 1603-7):

The text, though not so corrupt as that of some other plays—*Coriolanus*, for example—is yet in many cases very faulty. [A number of passages, some very lengthy, are indicated, which] Shakespeare did not write: [and others which], though not unworthy of Shakespeare . . . do not rise above the level of his contemporaries. . . . On the whole we incline to think that the play was interpolated, after Shakespeare's death, or at least after he had withdrawn from all connection with the theatre.⁹

Such, then, is the character of the work usually attributed to the years immediately following Oxford's death: magnificent fragments left by the master pen, then finished, and finished badly, by other writers who had evidently studied "Shakespeare" closely. In the guesswork system of dating the plays, the placing of some of the work on *either* side of the 1604 point involves some form of inconsistency, if we assume the author to have lived after 1604; the assumption that he died in 1604, and that others then made free with what he had left, removes all the anomalies.

The date of Oxford's death, then, instead of presenting an insuperable difficulty, furnishes an element of evidence in his favour, so precise and many-sided that Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke, and other Shakespeareans of their day, were led to suppose that 1604 was the exact year of Wm. Shakespeare's leaving London.¹⁰ The only real difficulty concerns *The Tempest*,

which I have discussed at length in the Appendix to *Shakespeare Identified*; suffice it to say here that the objections to placing this work on either side of the 1604 point have caused Shakespeare scholars of world-wide repute to differ by seventeen years (1596-1613) respecting its date.

Nothing is more vital in comparing the respective claims of Edward de Vere and William Stanley than the publication of the 1623 Folio. If "Shakespeare" was alive at the time, this must have been to him the crowning achievement of a long dramatic and literary career; and in preparing the work for the press he would have had fully ten years (1613-23) in which to concentrate his extraordinary powers on its literary elaboration after his last play had been composed. And it was just in those years that William Stanley entered upon a period of quietude and ease such as he had probably never enjoyed before. On the Derby theory the First Folio ought, therefore, to have been a masterpiece of Shakespeare's craftsmanship. Let me indicate what, in reality, it was, taking as my chief authority Mr. Alfred W. Pollard's invaluable work on the *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos* (1909).¹¹

1. It contained and rendered permanent the "botch work": contributions of other men, as well as whole plays now given up by our best authorities. (This is common knowledge.)

2. Certain genuine Shakespeare plays had been excluded or overlooked, then "inserted in the only positions available at the eleventh hour" (Pollard, pp. 124-5).

3. The general arrangement of the plays had been dictated by considerations peculiar to the editors, and to the exclusion of the *author's* point of view (pp. 123-8).

4. In several cases it presented versions of the plays actually inferior to what had already appeared in some of the early quartos (p. 128).

5. Some of the plays were properly divided into acts and scenes, others only into acts, and others were without any division whatever. Even so important a work as *Hamlet* was divided only up to Act II, sc. 2; all the remainder being left undivided (p. 124).

6. Some had "small pains spent on them," others were edited with extreme care; one most carefully edited being that which Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch mentions as being most disfigured by other men's "botch work" (pp. 125-8).

7. In some cases the usual stage directions were given, in others these were replaced by "literary notes intended to help the reader to understand the play" (p. 125).

This does not by any means exhaust its defects; but everything about it bespeaks the confusion due to the absence of the only hand which could have given effective guidance. The editors regretted that the author had not lived to "oversee" the publication of his plays, and the sincerity of their regret has found an echo in the writings of almost every reputable Shakespearean in

modern times. To anyone who will spend a couple of hours in the study of Mr. Pollard's work, and in weighing the pronouncements of our best authorities upon the later "Shakespeare" plays, the idea that the author of the plays was alive and in possession of his faculties in the years preceding the publication of the First Folio will be utterly unthinkable.

Nine years after the publication of the First Folio, the Second Folio (1632) made its appearance, and as to its general character we shall again quote from Mr. A. W. Pollard's work on the Folios and Quartos:

The actual editors of the successive Folios, probably in each case the printer's ordinary correctors of the press, took a humble but not too timorous view of their functions. They subjected the spelling of the First Folio to a continuous modernization, and various slight grammatical or syntactical irregularities are smoothed away. All this was, of course, of the nature of what we are pleased to call emendation. There is not the slightest reason to believe that any new original sources were brought into use for improving the text. (Otherwise) they would have been vaunted on the title-page. . . . It is not until we come down as late as Dr. Johnson that we find any *clear recognition of the superiority of the First Folio over the later ones* [my italics]. We now know that the Second Folio was a reprint from the First. . . . Each editor . . . made certain changes to which he drew attention (p. 153).

(Quoting from Mr. C. Alphonso Smith, of Louisiana State University:)

Passages in the First Folio that one might think even a child might have rectified are left by the editors of the Second Folio. . . . The Second Folio . . . attempts to render more bookish the unfettered syntax of the First (p. 156).¹²

(Quoting from Dr. Howard Furness:)

Where the Second Folio corrects the First, [the corrections] are insignificant, and are not beyond the chance corrections of a good compositor, who, however, sometimes overshot the mark (p. 157).

It is obvious that the [1632] emendation was done at haphazard, and that many glaring misprints passed unnoticed (p. 158).¹³

Briefly, we may say that in 1632 there was a distinct effort made to improve the work of the First Folio, that the effort only succeeded where improvement was easy—in minor editorial details—that even here it failed badly in many respects, that it left all the fundamental defects untouched, and produced a volume distinctly worse on the whole than the very faulty one it was intended to supersede.

In addition, we have to suppose, on the Derby theory, that for the last thirty years of his life "Shakespeare" did not produce a single new play or poem, and that what he had produced even in the ten previous years were mainly incomplete works that others dealt with pretty much as

they liked. Finally, we have to suppose that England's greatest sonneteer, after penning sonnets during many years, stopped suddenly when his father-in-law died, and for nearly forty years stubbornly refused to compose another sonnet.

One naturally would not wish to be wanting in respect to a great scholar and an earnest investigator; but, from the point of view of chronology, we are bound to say that the Derby theory asks us to accept views almost as preposterous as anything contained in the old Stratfordian creed. "*It is hopeless. There is no other word for it.*" Derby did not die till 1642.

* Although one of the most characteristically Shakespearean pieces in the old (presumably pirated) play, this is *deliberately omitted from the authentic version*; it practically gave away the secret. For the pronunciation of "Vere," the spelling in Dr. Grosart's edition of the echo poem must be consulted.

¹ Belgian politician, teacher and writer Célestin Demblon (1859-1924) promoted the view that Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland, authored Shakespeare's works in *Lord Rutland est Shakespeare* (1912) and *L'Auteur d'Hamlet et son monde* (1914).

² Abel Lefranc.

³ Looney is, of course, referring to himself.

⁴ Sir Frederick Kenyon (1863-1952) was Director and Principal Librarian of the British Museum from 1909 to 1931.

⁵ That work was Abel Lefranc's two-volume *Sous le Masque de William Shakespeare: William Stanley, VI Comte de Derby* (Paris: Payot & Cie, 1918, 1919). It was translated into English by Cecil Cragg and published as *Under the Mask of William Shakespeare* by Braunton and Devon through Merlin Books in 1988.

⁶ Sir Sidney Lee, *A Life of William Shakespeare* (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1898), 242.

⁷ Sir Walter Raleigh, *Shakespeare*, published in the *Eminent Men of Letters* series (London: Macmillan & Co., 1907).

⁸ Arthur Quiller-Couch, *Shakespeare's Workmanship* (Folcroft, PA: Folcroft Library Editions, 1973 reprint). The first part of the quote is from p. 267, the middle part from p. 268, and the final part from p. 296.

⁹ William George Clark and William Aldis Wright, eds., *The Works of William Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Macmillan & Co., 1863-66). In "*Shakespeare*" *Identified* (at 411), Looney cited the quote as coming from *Variorum Shakespeare*, Clarendon Press Series (see note 13, below).

¹⁰ Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke, *The Works of William Shakespeare* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1866). This work was apparently reprinted in London in 1869 by Bickers and Son. In "*Shakespeare*" *Identified* (at 424) Looney had cited the Clarks' belief that Shakspeare left London in 1604: "Not only does the time of the death of De Vere mark an arrest in the publication of 'Shakespeare's' works, it also marks, according to orthodox authorities, some kind of a crisis in the affairs of William Shakespeare. Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke, in the *Life of Shakspeare* published along with their edition of the plays, date his retirement to Stratford in the year 1604 precisely. After pointing out that in 1605 he is described as 'William

Shakspeare, Gentleman, of Stratford-on-Avon,' they continued: 'Several things conduced to make him resolve upon ceasing to be an actor, and 1604 has generally been considered the date when he did so.'" Looney continued: "Several other writers, less well known, repeat this date; and works of reference, written for the most part some years ago, place his retirement in the same year: 'There is no doubt he never meant to return to London, except for business visits after 1604' (National Encyclopedia)."

¹¹ Alfred W. Pollard, *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos: A Study in the Bibliography of Shakespeare's Plays, 1594-1685* (London: Methuen & Co., 1909).

¹² Pollard's quote is from C. Alphonso Smith, *The Chief Difference Between the First and Second Folios of Shakespeare* (Leipzig: O. R. Reisland, 1901).

¹³ Pollard's quote is from Horace Howard Furness, ed., *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1871).



Desperately Avoiding the Story

by Bill Boyle

As the year-long commemorative celebration of Shakespeare's life and work wraps up this spring, on April 6 the Boston Public Library hosted a talk by Professor Marjorie Garber of Harvard University as part of its "Author Talks and Lectures" series. The lecture, titled "Desperately Seeking Shakespeare," was billed as one that was part of:

[A] renewed surge of energy in an industry already running at top speed—the quest to find something about Shakespeare that would explain his astonishing accomplishments. History, neuroscience, biography, and genetics have all been consulted. Marjorie Garber takes account of such investigative explorations and the questions that underlie them.

Conspicuously absent from the list of things consulted is the authorship question, which, Oxfordians can confidently argue, has played a significant role in recent decades in this search to explain Shakespeare's "astonishing accomplishments." But such an approach is obviously off limits, especially in a lecture by a Harvard professor.

About 75 people were in attendance on a cool, rainy Thursday evening. Standing on a large empty stage with a podium on one side, Garber asked if we wanted to hear a lecture or engage in a discussion. The lecture won easily, and the professor immediately turned to her notes and proceeded at a brisk pace for nearly one hour.

The talk began with observations on truth in today's world. She noted the phenomenon of reality TV vs. truth, the notion of "truthiness" as described by Stephen Colbert, "fictional" biographies seemingly everywhere (which try to tell the truth), the age of Trump as an example of all these things, and more. She remarked that "historical truth" is a "value added," and quoted Nietzsche:

What then is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms—in short, a sum of human relations, which have been enhanced,



transposed, and embellished poetically and rhetorically, and which after long use seem firm, canonical, and obligatory to a people: truths are illusions about which one has forgotten that is what they are; metaphors which are worn out and without sensuous power; coins which have lost their pictures and now matter only as metal, no longer as coins.

"Authors project and speculate," she noted, and asked two rhetorical questions: "Shakespeare—how did he really feel?" "And what do we really know?"

She cited Ben Jonson in the First Folio ("Who casts to write...") speaking of how an author writes and rewrites. From this Garber observed that Shakespeare was engaged in "creating his thoughts" through the hard work of writing and revising. Her point—that writing is work (with which we can certainly all agree)—set the stage for her next point, that we should not then expect to find one-to-one matches between reality and an author's creation. As a direct result of the laborious process of writing and rewriting, the latter becomes further removed from reality with each successive draft.

Reciting the familiar line that "reading the plays as autobiography reveals more about ourselves than about Shakespeare," Garber said she agreed with that statement. "Let's talk about writing," she continued. "It is not necessary to have experienced something in order to write about it." In her brief discussion of the Sonnets and the questions of "Who was the Fair Youth?" and "Who was the Dark Lady?" she provided no answers, but did observe, "I believe that Shakespeare is in his plays and poems." A moment later she added, "No one character can be said to be showing us Shakespeare himself."

Finally, we got to “Desperately Seeking Shakespeare” (the title taken from the 1985 film *Desperately Seeking Susan*), which, Garber said, would be discussed under three “main points” that would conclude her talk:

- 1) Facts and new facts
- 2) Adaptations
- 3) Shakespeare MIA

Under “Facts” she quoted from Ralph Waldo Emerson and Gary Taylor, and noted all the others who have been searching for new facts and new works. She observed how works such as “Shall I fly” and “Funeral Elegy” came and went as part of the canon, solely because so many scholars have been searching (desperately?) for new facts or new works.

Moving on to “Adaptation” she discussed trends with which we are all familiar, such as the updating of time and place and the modernizing of language. She mentioned Orson Welles, Taylor Swift (who apparently rewrote *Romeo and Juliet* with a happy ending), an old rewrite of *Lear* with a happy ending, etc. She reminded us that Shakespeare himself “adapted,” in that he wrote “cover plays” for Arthur Brooke (*Romeus and Juliet*), took history from Holinshed’s *Chronicles*, etc. In short, Garber opined, modernizing is okay. She said she was not “anti-technology,” but was definitely “pro-language,” meaning, she explained, “Shakespeare’s language.” She spoke about a 2003 book, *Bard on the Brain*, which reported on research that demonstrated that the brain was stimulated when subjects were reading famous Shakespeare passages (see also “Shakespeare Makes You Smarter?” *Shakespeare Matters*, Fall 2011 issue). Just studying Shakespeare’s language made the brain better!

Then things took an unexpected turn, as Garber suddenly said, “Let’s consider the case of Charles Beauclerk,” a leading British Oxfordian during the 1990s who drew large audiences for several years as he toured the U.S. talking on Shakespeare. She noted he billed himself as a “living heir” (she also made it clear that she “had never seen or heard him”). What fascinated her were the large audiences that Beauclerk attracted. She explained that they were somehow trying to relate to Shakespeare’s DNA, which at first confused me. But in hindsight, her point was that audiences were attracted by two things: Shakespeare being discussed by someone who seemed to personify Britishness while doing so, and who claimed to be a descendant of the true Shakespeare. So, other than uttering the word “Oxfordian,” she had nothing to say about the authorship question itself, let alone any effect it could be having on all this “desperate(ly) seeking.”

In the last part of her talk—“Shakespeare MIA”—Garber told two stories. First, while attending a conference she was asked, “Why do scholars expect to

find history? . . . It was different then.” She said that the larger truth to be taken from this question was that looking for history in literature is difficult, if not futile.

Second, she recalled attending a seminar on “Shakespeare and the Renaissance,” where it became apparent to her that “we don’t know everything” and “there is always more to know.” She related how she had presented materials to her students on “the text and the language,” and that in the end there were “profound changes” in the students just from studying the language.

In closing she brought up the Sanders portrait as yet another example of everyone trying to know more about Shakespeare. Is it really him? How can we know? She said that if the portrait is the Shakespeare that the public wants, then that’s all right.

During the Q&A I was able to ask a question about the Sonnets. Citing the first line of Sonnet 35 (“No more be grieved at that which thou hast done”), I asked that, since it appears to matter to the Poet what he is talking to the Youth about, shouldn’t it also matter to us readers what he is talking about (i.e., what did the Fair Youth do?), and can’t that only enhance our understanding of the sonnets? Garber answered “no,” and added that knowing what the youth did would in fact ruin the poem. She said that it would “collapse” if we knew the actual

Garber and many of her colleagues are adamant about two related points: don’t go seeking history, and don’t go seeking the actual story behind anything.

story, because the Sonnets have a “sonnet plot” that Shakespeare is using (meaning, I thought to myself later, that any sonnet sequence uses sonnet conventions, and “plot” is one of them, such as, for example, a love triangle, etc.).

To sum up, this lecture was a perfect example of the current state of the authorship debate. Everyone is seeking answers to the Shakespeare mystery, but Garber and many of her colleagues are adamant about two related points: don’t go seeking history, and don’t go seeking the actual story behind anything. Just as was said at the Folger’s “Problem of Biography” conference in 2014 (see my report in the Spring 2014 *Newsletter*), understanding Shakespeare requires understanding only the text, as Garber’s stories about *Bard on the Brain* and the students at the Renaissance conference revealed. Nothing more is needed. If you do go looking for the “real” Shakespeare in his works, you’ll only find yourself. Which is probably why her talk ended with the line, “Your Shakespeare has been there all along.”

As an Oxfordian I can only shake my head in amazement. The entire Oxfordian argument that Hamlet is Shakespeare and Oxford is Hamlet is thus negated with the simple comeback that the works are a mirror, and you’re only looking at (and finding) yourself. In the spring of 2017, such an answer sounds downright “Trumpian.”



Oxford's Authorship in a Nutshell

by Stephanie Hopkins Hughes

This seems like the right time to restate the argument that lies at the heart of all the material collected here over the past decade and a half. It's a complex thesis, based on a multitude of lesser arguments. A monolith like the Stratford biography, and all the anomalous notions that have accrued to it over the centuries, will not be replaced with a single article, blog, or book.

Stated simply, the argument, as presented here, holds that the name that adorns the works that laid the foundation for the English we speak today was purchased from its original possessor by the acting company that performed the "Shakespeare" plays. That company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, was forced to do this when, after roughly a decade of performance, it became evident that the plays would have to be published, which meant that there had to be a name on the title page where by tradition there could be seen the author's name. Since the real author could not be named (for a whole host of reasons), for the first four years of publication there was nothing but a blank on the plays published at that time where the author's name should have been.

It was William of Stratford whose name was chosen to fill this slot primarily because it lent itself to a pun that describes the author as shaking a spear. Thus, although it was a real name, one that a real living and breathing individual could answer to, it was also a signal to the handful of readers who cared about such things that it represented someone who found it necessary to hide his identity. Such tactics were nothing new at that time. One of the major failures of the academics who publish on this issue is their blindness to the constant use of anonymity, pen names, pun names, mythological names and initials that we see on and in all these early works, which said academics report without noting it as rather unique in the history of literature, thus relieving them of any need for an explanation.

The issue of who actually wrote these incredible plays, who was actually meant by the pun name Shakespeare, remained well below the horizon of public awareness until midway through the 19th century. When it finally reached the public through [Delia Bacon's book](#) it launched the present inquiry as one candidate after another was proposed and discussed until 1920 when a British schoolteacher introduced the Earl of Oxford, at which point all oddities and anomalies finally clicked into place. We're now three years from the centennial of that revelation, and still the argument remains just that, an argument. So why keep trying? Why is this particular argument so important?

[Because it matters](#) who wrote the Shakespeare canon! The shibboleth: "we have the plays, what does it matter who wrote them?" is nothing more than a tiresome excuse for ignorance. Does it really matter all that much to most of us whether the earth is round or flat, or that it goes

around the sun, rather than the other way round, or that my desk is made, not of wood, but of atoms and electrons, or that the water in my glass is actually a combination of two kinds of gas? If these matter, then surely the source of the language we share with millions of others all over the world matters!

Scorned for centuries as brazen, brash, and bawdy, it was not until a later generation of wits and poets discovered the depths in Shakespeare and the beauties of his language that gradually he's become revered as one of the greatest psychologists of all time. Even so, the dullness of the philologists who have inherited the plays continues to maintain this ignorance of how he fought with his pen to keep ancient Humanism (Platonism) alive at a time when it was in danger of being destroyed by the [ugly visions](#) of hellfire and damnation thundered from the pulpit by Calvinists who, having commandeered the English Reformation, made use of it to spread their hateful doctrine.

If anything matters beyond the getting and spending of our daily dollar, surely it matters who it was that accomplished this amazing feat, plus others for which he's yet to be credited. For not only did he write these groundbreaking plays, more than any other single being, it was he who created the forum whereby they reached their audience, the rash of purpose-built theaters that housed what we'll call **the London Stage**, at the same time leading the handful of writers and printers who launched the commercial periodical press, which we'll call **the British Free Press**. Taken together, these two, the infant Stage and the infant Press, constituted the first manifestations of what today we call **the Media**, the Fourth Estate of Government, the *vox populi*, the voice of the people. If Shakespeare was not the only harbinger of what we've come to call [Freedom of Speech](#), he was certainly one of the most effective.

These plays were not merely entertainments spun to tease a lord or set a lady laughing. Even the comedies, but certainly the dramas and the tragedies, were pleas for human understanding ("O Iago, the pity of it, Iago!") and at a moment in time when they were not merely welcomed but desperately needed. Further, that they have been purposely and determinedly divorced from their true source, not just by the authorities at the time, but by the author himself and his closest supporters, is in itself a tale worth telling. If we're to fully understand the history of the English-speaking peoples, who they are and what they've done with the language he created, it's essential that we know this story.

Born into chaos

The author, it seems, was *born into hiding*. His father, scion of one of England's oldest and most prestigious families, appears to have been the product of an ancient

bloodline sliding into the decadence inevitable to such very old families, but from which Oxford was saved perhaps by his mother's less rarified genes. His great uncle, the 14th Earl, an [ignominious wastrel](#), had spent his heritage on a Disney World version of a [feudal palace](#) which collapsed into ruin not long after his death at age twenty-six. The 15th Earl, stripped of several of his ancient prerogatives by the disease-crazed Henry VIII, managed to hang onto the earldom, but shortly before Oxford's birth, his father, the 16th earl, came perilously close to losing it to the greed of Protector Somerset, uncle of Henry's son, the Boy King, Edward VI.

Although Earl John and his domain were saved by the palace coup of 1549 during which Somerset was overthrown by his own Privy Council, he and his domain remained vulnerable to whatever determined gang would next take over the Crown. That was John Dudley, Earl of Northumberland, but with the death of the [poor little King](#) four years later, Northumberland and his followers were themselves overthrown by a nation nostalgic for a time not all that long ago when Church ales and merry-making had not yet become the road to damnation.

The bloodbath, however, was far from over, as Edward's sister Mary, a determined Catholic, proceeded to marry Philip of Spain, son of her cousin, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. Their interest in the marriage alliance was invested in the hope that they could reestablish Catholicism in what under Edward and Somerset had become the most dangerously heretical nation in Europe.

As the merry-making that followed their marriage fell silent, and the nation prepared for a new round of treason trials, hangings and burnings, Earl John and his supporters did what they could to prepare. The Oxford domain was particularly vulnerable due to its location along the coast that faced those European nations where Protestantism had taken deepest root and was most threatening to the European Catholic hegemony. Earl John himself was suspected of complicity in the first Protestant effort to overturn Mary's rule, the so-called Dudley conspiracy of 1555.

As Shakespeare demonstrates in more than one of his plays, in nations ruled by the whims of heredity, underage heirs of monarchs, and of great noblemen as well, were particularly vulnerable during moments of national revolution. As the Christmas holidays of 1554 came to a close, and Mary's henchmen began gearing up for the bloodbath with which she hoped to end the great heresy perpetrated on her people by her brother, the four-year-old heir to the great Oxford domain was removed from the dangers threatening his unstable father. Quietly, without notice or surviving letter, [he was placed](#) with the man who would be his tutor and surrogate father for the next eight years of his life.

Thus it was due to the political chaos of the time that [Sir Thomas Smith](#), former Secretary of State under



Stephanie Hopkins Hughes

Somerset, and before that Vice-Chamberlain of Cambridge University, was given the humble task of "bringing up" the boy who would give the world the Shakespeare canon. It was this great educator, statesman, polymath and follower of Plato's philosophy who gave Oxford the [education](#) that we see reflected in the works of Shakespeare, an education to which almost no one else in England at that time could have had access. Among the hundreds of books in Smith's library were the plays of the great Greek and Roman playwrights, Euripides, Sophocles and Plautus, favorites at that time for teaching boys Greek and Latin due to the fact that their plots and characters were better suited to capture the restless attention of teenagers than the proverbs of Erasmus or the letters of Cicero.

The hiding continues

With his removal to London in 1562, the twelve-year-old Oxford found himself a member of a coterie of young translators employed by Secretary of State Sir William Cecil and his friend Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, as they sought to get the major works of Calvinist doctrine translated from Latin and French into English. As for this crew of translator-poets, most of them six to ten years Oxford's senior, would this [budding genius](#) have forced himself to sit by modestly, constrained by the tradition that forbade peers of the realm from competing with ordinary artists, or would he, unable to resist, reveal his talent by tackling the most demanding translation of all, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, famous as ancient Rome's masterpiece of Latin literature, its first four books published just three years later under the name

of his uncle, the translator Arthur Golding? Is it just my wild imagination that hears in [Golding's *Metamorphoses*](#) the same youthful voice, in a meter and rhyme scheme similar to the groundbreaking poem [Romeus and Juliet](#) (attributed to another member of the Cecil House coterie), and published almost as soon as he arrived in London?

By 1573, desperate to escape the Court and those servants who were forever spying on him for his father-in-law, Oxford's genius for disappearing is rather humorously revealed in Alan Nelson's account of his preparation for a journey to Ireland (that never took place). Over five pages (*Monstrous Adversary*, 100-104) Nelson details efforts by Burghley's agents to pin him down long enough to get his signature on papers that, doubtless, put Burghley in control of his estates, should he die while overseas.

Let them quibble as they would, by late 1574, Oxford had the Queen's permission to travel to Italy, and travel he did. While it's unlikely that he managed to ditch all those who seemed most likely to report back to Burghley, or that over the summer of 1575 he sailed the Mediterranean totally without companionship, there remains no evidence that he took anyone with him on that supreme adventure. No one, at least, whose name has survived.

He vanishes from the record

With his return to England in April of 1576, followed by the sudden appearance in London of the first two commercially successful [purpose-built theaters](#) in English history, the kind of reporting that tracks him during his early days at Court dries up almost completely. While a poem or two surfaces in anthologies, his own efforts to get himself and other poets published appear to cease. Why? Because he has begun what has become a lifelong concentration on producing plays for the Court, the public theaters, and most significantly, the parliaments that gathered in London every three or four years, and which provided him with his most influential audience, leading men of education and significance from all the shires and towns of England.

Playwriting had several advantages over publishing. First, since only a handful of Londoners could read at that time, plays could reach a far greater audience; second, it satisfied his appetite for dramatic action in ways that poems and tales were lame by comparison; and third, it did not rouse the anxieties of the authorities as did published works since no one outside the Court establishment paid any attention to who was writing the scripts. His coterie knew; the officials knew; but neither the public nor the outside reading world knew, and most of these did not care. So long as he wrote nothing objectionable to the worldview purveyed by the religious and political authorities of his time (most notably his in-laws) he was allowed to continue. Even Burghley was doing what he could in 1580 to assist the Earl of Oxford's acting company in gaining access to the

universities (something the universities continued to reject).

Yet sooner or later a break was bound to come between two such differing worldviews. With the banishment from Court that followed his affair with the Queen's Maid of Honor in 1581, if it cut him off from Her Majesty's favor, it also meant he was free to give vent to his own personal concerns in plays for his favorite audience, the "gentlemen of the Inns of Court," from the eastern half of Westminster. In works that erupted from his frustrations with the Court, his fury at the Queen and his rivals for her favor, and his knowledge of English and Roman history, it was then that he wrote *The Spanish Tragedy*, plus the earliest (now lost) versions of *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Coriolanus*, and *The Merchant of Venice*, plays that would certainly not have pleased either the Queen or his Calvinist in-laws.

Brought back to Court in 1583, probably by his tutor's old State Department friend, [Sir Francis Walsingham](#), now Secretary of State, who needed him to help launch the newly formed traveling company, the Queen's Men, for them Oxford wrote early versions of what would later evolve into plays like *Edward III*, *Henry V*, *King John*, plus some that never made it into the canon, such as *Thomas of Woodstock* and *Edmund Ironside*.

The coming of Shakespeare

When his wife died just before the attack of the Armada, Lord Treasurer Burghley, furious with his son-in-law for his perceived mistreatment of Anne, not to mention his mistreatment of Burghley himself as Polonius (and perhaps also Shylock), put a stop to his obnoxious play-making by seeing to it that his credit was destroyed. Forced to sell his home of ten years and disband his staff of secretaries, Oxford spent three years, from 1589 through 1591, in penurious disgrace. During this period, while the Stage too was under attack by his in-laws, he occupied himself with writing sonnets, some to his one remaining patron, the young Earl of Southampton, others to Emilia Bassano (Lanier), [mistress of the Queen's Lord Chamberlain](#), who shortly would reinstate him as the main provider of plays for the newly created Lord Chamberlain's Men.

Thus was launched the company that would bring fame to the plays that Oxford, doubtless glad to be back with his favorite team of actors and now, in his forties, at the peak of the matured style that we know from [the First Folio](#), would mostly recreate from plays he'd written originally for the Court and parliamentarians over the past twenty years. Some, chiefly old comedies like *As You Like it* and *Love's Labor's Lost*, he revised to suit the temper of the times; some, like *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, he wrote in response to current issues.

Because [Lord Chamberlain Hunsdon](#) worked hand in glove with his son-in-law, Lord Admiral Charles Howard, both longtime patrons of the London Stage, to bring an

end to the theatrical chaos created by Burghley's son Robert Cecil, who, now as Secretary of State was using his power to destroy the London Stage, they formed new companies which, doubtless they promised the Queen, would conform to their new set of rules.

Henceforth there would be two licensed companies: [the Lord Admiral's Men](#), patronized by Howard, would operate out of the Rose Theater on Bankside; the other, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, out of [Burbage's Theatre](#) in Shoreditch. Plays that in times past had been shared between the two companies were to be divided, with those that Oxford was interested in revising assigned to the Lord Chamberlain's Men, and those that he no longer cared about, or that had become so identified with [Edward Alleyn](#), the leading actor at the Rose, assigned to the Lord Admiral's company. These they identified by stating on the title page what companies had performed that particular play.

At this point the issue of what author's name to put on the published plays arose in such a way that it simply could not be dismissed. For the first four years, from 1594 to 1598, the Company simply ignored the problem by leaving blank the space where the author's name was normally placed. Then, in the fall of 1597, with the opening of the Queen's ninth parliament, came the inevitable showdown between the Lord Chamberlain's Men and Robert Cecil, who had eliminated the most popular playwright in London and most recently saw to it that there would be no theaters available to them for the near future. Clearly Cecil was determined to destroy his brother-in-law's bully pulpit before it could trouble him during his first turn before Parliament as the Queen's new Secretary of State.

Oxford shakes his spear

Faced with the loss of both their theaters, their father and manager James Burbage having died following the previous holiday season, and their great patron and protector, Lord Hunsdon, having also died recently and suddenly, Oxford unleashed the devastating power of his pen. Revising his earlier and milder version of *Richard III*, now, with Richard Burbage as the evil King, adopting Cecil's perpetual black attire, his manner of speaking and his wobbling walk, Burbage and Company trashed their enemy to such an extent that, despite the official heights to which, as first Baron Cranborn, then Earl of Salisbury, he eventually rose, there was from then on [no more hated man](#) in all of England.

This [showdown](#), while almost totally erased from history, obviously demanded adjudication by the only one in a position to do it, namely the Queen. Though missing from the record, the results clearly left Oxford and his company untouched (she could not do without her holiday solace), while Cecil, officially as powerful as ever, was forced to live from then on with his unofficial

reputation utterly and permanently destroyed, a situation that must have lent a bitter and resentful force to the vicious brutalities with which he would rule England under King James until his death in 1612.

Interest in the authorship of this play, which must have thundered through the pubs and wine shops both in London and in the towns throughout England to which the MPs returned early in 1598, each with a copy of the published play in his pocket, must have been what finally compelled the Lord Chamberlain's Men to publish a second edition of *Richard III*, this time with a name on the title page. Thus was the name of the humble wool dealer's son from the market town two days journey from London to escalate into a permanent and everlasting brand.

Richly recompensed for the use of his name, the wool dealer's son soon bought himself the biggest house in his hometown; for his respected sire he bought the crest that had once been denied him as "without right," and ordered an impressive monument to be placed in the local church in which his father's bust, clutching a sack of wool, dominated a spot high on the wall beside the altar.

Years later, when both William of Stratford and his wife were past questioning, the vicar of Trinity Church would enjoy emoluments brought him by a team from London whose job it was to [replace the image](#) of the mustachioed Shakspeare Sr. with a more gentlemanly figure and the woosack replaced with a quill pen and a pillow. Whatever had once been the message, if any, beneath the bust, was replaced by something in Latin that seemed to suggest that William Shakspeare had been something of a modern Nestor, a character from ancient history whose only importance was due to how old he had been when he died. Nothing to do with drama or literature. No mention of Plautus or Euripides.

Meanwhile, the Burbages' company, protected by the Queen and raised to an even greater level of importance by her successor, who demonstrated his patronage in a way that she never had by allowing them to call themselves The King's Men, went on to ever greater acclaim and great financial success. Of course by this time the official name of their playwright had become so installed in men's minds that there could never be any possibility of changing it, even if the Company, or the Court, had wished to do so, which they most certainly did not, for reasons that were not only political, but deeply personal to those involved. Thus was the brand name irrevocably wedded to the canon, and so was also launched the centuries of failed attempts to bring their location in time and their relation to the events reflected in the plays into alignment with the biography of the illiterate original owner of the name, whose birth date, sometime in April of 1564, presented such a problem when it came to dating the plays.

Our evidence

What evidence is there at for this scenario? If there is as yet no “smoking gun,” there is certainly enough to support what we describe here. Without the slightest doubt it’s the Stratford biography alone that is the sole cause of what the uber-academic E.K. Chambers identified in 1925 as the two major aspects of “the Shakespeare Problem”: “Problems of Authenticity”: i.e., who actually wrote the canon; and “Problems of Chronology”: i.e., the issues created by the 15-year displacement forced on scholars by the impossible birth date of William of Stratford.

With the Earl of Oxford as the true author, all of these problems vanish. The plays appear right where they

so obviously belong in the timestream of historical events; all the early plays that “foreshadow Shakespeare’s style,” and that academics have been forced to attribute to various nameless or weaker writers, take their proper place as the missing Shakespeare juvenilia; and Shakespeare (the poet) is finally free to jump to the forefront as the original inspiration for writers like Marlowe, Daniel, and Chapman—not, as the Stratford biography demands, the other way round.



Assessing the Linguistic Evidence for Oxford

by Gary Goldstein

In October 2016 the German publisher Verlag Laugwitz brought out a collection of my essays on the authorship, *Reflections on the True Shakespeare*, which included two chapters on the linguistic correspondences between Oxford’s twenty known poems and seventy-seven private letters and the language of the Shakespeare canon. I sent a copy to Steven May, Professor of English Emeritus at Georgetown College (Kentucky) and modern editor of Oxford’s poetry, requesting the favor of a critical response, which he recently provided.

In addition to his modern edition of Oxford’s poetry, May wrote about Oxford’s verse in his book *The Elizabethan Courtier Poets*, and reviewed Alan Nelson’s biography of Oxford, *Monstrous Adversary*, for *Shakespeare Quarterly*, so he is widely considered among academics as the leading authority on Oxford.

Analyzing his detailed response to my argument that Oxford’s poetry is Shakespeare’s juvenilia, Oxfordians will discover a continuing refusal to seriously consider any evidence that is not prima facie proof, in other words, mathematical proof, when advancing the Oxfordian argument.

An Overview

For decades, Oxfordian scholars have focused on two lines of evidence in making the case for Oxford’s authorship—the public testimonials by Oxford’s contemporaries regarding his poetry and drama, and the biographical parallels between the Shakespeare plays and particular aspects of Oxford’s life.

In counterpoint, Stratfordian academics claim the testimonials are too generic to be more than the flattering tributes generally paid to noblemen such as Oxford who served as patrons (Oxford had thirty books dedicated to him and was patron of two acting troupes for twenty years). As to any biographical parallels, they make two arguments. First, that such parallels are purely coincidental, because writers in Shakespeare’s time did

not base their creative works on personal experience or observation, but rather on imagination and—especially in Shakespeare’s case—other writers’ works. Second, that if there are any true parallels, they were inserted by Shakespeare to ingratiate himself with Oxford, or possibly for commercial compensation from him so that de Vere could promote himself with fellow courtiers and officials of Elizabeth’s government.

Missing from modern Oxfordian arguments are the philological parallels in both his poetry and his private letters and the language of the canon. To illustrate, I will provide several examples.

Linguistic Parallels in the Poetry

J. T. Looney’s core argument was that the lyrical verse of Oxford was deeply interwoven with that of Shakespeare’s in literary style, psychology and moral disposition. By way of example, he contrasted Oxford’s Echo poem, “Sitting Alone Upon My Thought,” with stanzas from *Venus and Adonis* (139).

Oxford:

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,

[This is followed by the echoing]

Shakespeare:

And now she beats her heart whereat it groans,
That all the neighbor caves as seeming troubled,
Make verbal repetition of her moans:

She marking them begins a wailing note
And sings extemporally a woeful ditty.

[This is again followed by the echoing]

In each case a female pours out her woes and is answered by echoes from caves; in each, the echoing is preceded by three identical conceptions in identical order: She beats her heart, the caves are moved to pity, and she breaks into song, after which comes the echo.

In the same vein, compare the correspondences between the final three lines of Oxford's poem "Even as the wax doth melt," which was published in 1576 (*Paradise of Dainty Devices*), with verse from *Romeo and Juliet*, which first appeared in print in 1597 (I.i.112):

Oxford:

That with the careful culver climbs the worn and
withered tree,
To entertain my thoughts, and there my hap to moan,
That never am less idle, lo, than when I am alone.

Shakespeare:

And stole into the covert of the wood;
I, measuring his affections with my own,
That most are busied when they're most alone.

Here we have three lines expressive of identical ideas in an identical order: the hiding in the woods, the internal life of thought and affection, and the third lines, which are an exact paraphrase of one another. These are not mere commonplaces of the period; they demonstrate a similar psychology of thought.

Further evidence of this shared poetic sensibility was noted by the Shakespeare scholar Sidney Lee, who wrote that Oxford's ditty about desire finds its analog in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*.

When wert thou born, Desire?
In pomp and prime of May
By whom, sweet boy, wert thou begot?
By fond Conceit, men say.

When Shakespeare takes up the same idea, he offers us the following:

Tell me, where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head? (*MOV* III.ii.)

Lee pointed out that these verses by Oxford and Shakespeare are written "in a kindred key" (Lee 1910, 227).

More famous is Oxford's philosophical poem, "Were I a King." Comparing this short poem to Shakespeare's verse, we find explicit parallels in theme and vocabulary from two of the history plays.

Oxford:

Were I a king, I could command content;

Shakespeare:

Was ever king that joy'd an earthly throne,

And could command no more content than I? (2
Henry VI, IV.ix.2)

Oxford:

Were I obscure, hidden should be my cares;
Or were I dead, no cares should me torment,
Nor hopes, nor hates, nor loves, nor griefs, nor fears,
A doubtful choice, of these three which to crave,
A kingdom, or a cottage, or a grave.

Shakespeare:

The king shall be contented... I'll give my...
Gorgeous palace for a hermitage...
And my large kingdom for a little grave,
A little, little grave, an obscure grave (*Richard II*,
III.iii.145)

In the chapter on Oxford's poetry in *Reflections on the True Shakespeare*, I provided many more examples of Oxford's verse echoing that of Shakespeare's in terms of language and philosophical ideas.

In his 1980 edition of Oxford's poetry, Professor May argued that the verbal parallels with Shakespeare's poetry were nothing more than poetic commonplaces to be found throughout the works of Elizabethan writers:

Elizabethan poets drew upon a broad, common range of motifs, rhetorical devices, allusions and adages, so that, given the relative abundance of Shakespeare's verse, it would be surprising indeed to find a contemporary poet whose themes and phrasing did not correspond at some point and in some way with a passage or two by the Bard. (May 1980, 11-12)

May did not actually try to prove the validity of this objection until 2004 in an essay. When he did, he provided only a single poetic commonplace for each of three poems that he selected: haggard hawks, the lily and the rose, and the trope called amplification. But the Oxfordian case is grounded upon more than a handful of literary correspondences; it is based on a pervasive similarity to Shakespeare's works in the characteristics of diction, cohesion and unity, and also in the similes employed.

May's most recent critique, which is more elaborate, was laid out in his email to me in March 2017, in response to my book:

Yes, I did go over much of your book, especially the chapter on "Shakespeare's Juvenilia." I'd like to say I found your argument about the cumulative weight of the parallel passages persuasive, but I don't, and I feel sure the profession won't either for reasons of its flawed methodology:

First, the argument assumes that Shakespeare repeated himself, expressing the same ideas over and over with similar wording. Did he? I don't think he

did. Second, if any of the verbal parallels with Oxford's poems are, in fact, unusual, weren't most of them in print and available for Shakespeare to plagiarize? Third, where the wording in your examples is quite similar, it is evidence of a single authorship ONLY if you can demonstrate that Oxford, Shakespeare, and no one else used these phrases. But that isn't the case. I ran a few through EEBO [Early English Books Online] with the following results between 1580 and 1610:

the world afford/ 6 hits/ affords	24 hits
ebbs and flows	258 hits
sad despair	23 hits
heaven. . . hell	45 hits

Others don't need to be tested: "patience perforce" and "fain would I," for instance, are well known commonplaces in Elizabethan English. In short, the occurrence of this phrasing in the work of any two authors, or ten authors, or in anonymous writings of the period cannot be used to establish authorship because it was ubiquitous. No matter how many examples you find, the repetitions have no evidentiary value.

First, it should be noted that May did not address the linguistic evidence contained in Oxford's letters, probably because he cannot explain how a commoner could access a nobleman's private correspondence.

Second, his belief that Shakespeare would not dwell upon the same ideas in his poetry over time is actually evidence in favor of the artist's creative development as he matured.

Third, the examples that May selected to find "commonplaces" were two- and three-word clusters rather than specific examples of unusual metaphors and similes. Obviously, these simple phrases were "commonplace." He completely avoided the unusual linguistic parallels since these were not commonplaces.

Perhaps May's critical position regarding Oxford's verse continues to be colored by his opinion of the man, revealed in his review of Alan Nelson's polemical life of Oxford, *Monstrous Adversary*, for *Shakespeare Quarterly*. "Oxford's career unfolds as the story of a teflon earl, a supreme egotist whose self-indulgence caused misery and even death to those who got in his way. It is a fascinating account, yet de Vere suffered no serious consequences for a lifetime of irresponsible and illegal behavior. His biography stands as a striking example of Elizabethan deference to noble birth without regard for the ignoble life that followed." (*SQ*, 214)

In the same review May was equally contemptuous in his assessment of the Oxfordian hypothesis, writing that, "The earl of Oxford's biography warrants a review in *Shakespeare Quarterly* only in part because the authorship controversy so ardently pursued by

'Oxfordians' poses a challenge to Shakespeare studies equivalent to that leveled at the biological sciences by creationism."

The Linguistic Evidence in Oxford's Letters

Based on the preceding information, I think the best way to advance the hypothesis is to focus on the literary correspondences between Oxford's writings and the Shakespeare canon, especially between his unpublished letters and the Shakespeare canon. Unlike some of Oxford's poetry, which was published during Shakespeare's time, there is no way for academics to claim that Shakespeare could plagiarize the ideas and language contained within private correspondence by the country's senior Earl written to the country's Lord Treasurer, Lord Burghley, and to its Secretary of State, Robert Cecil.

The following examples were culled from the work of William Plumer Fowler and Joseph Sobran. Compare both the ideas and vocabulary in Oxford's private letters, on a line-by-line basis, with the language and ideas in the plays and poems of Shakespeare. As Professor Roger Stritmatter of Coppin State University recently commented on the use of forensic linguistics to determine authorial identity, "As soon as you are able to compare strings of words, and see the same idea in the same grammatical structure but just with different surface features, and the surface features in each case follow their own sound pattern logic, you have a good idea that you might be working with the same author."

To bury my hopes in the deep abyss and bottom of despair. (Oxford)

In the dark backward and abysm of time? (*The Tempest*, I.ii)

In the deep bosom of the ocean buried. (*Richard III*, I.i)

In all kindness and kindred. (Oxford)

A little more than kin, and less than kind. (*Hamlet*, I.ii)

An end according to mine expectation. (Oxford)

Our expectation hath this day an end. (*Henry V*, III.iii)

It is my hap according to the English proverb to starve like the horse, while the grass doth grow. (Oxford)

Ay, sir, but while the grass grows—the proverb is something musty. (*Hamlet*, III.ii)

I serve her Majesty, and I am that I am, and by alliance near to your Lordship, but free. (Oxford)

No, I am that I am, and they that level/At my abuses reckon up their own. (Sonnet 121)

To bring all my hope in her Majesty's gracious words to smoke. (Oxford)
This helpless smoke of words. (*Lucrece*, 1027)

To bury and insevill your works in the grave of oblivion. (Oxford)
And deeper than oblivion do we bury/The incensing relics of it. (*All's Well That Ends Well*, V.iii)

But now time and truth have unmasked all difficulties. (Oxford)
Time's glory is to calm contending kings/To unmask falsehood and bring truth to light. (*Lucrece*, 939-940)

Having passed the pikes of so many adversaries. (Oxford)
Of bristly pikes that ever threat his foes. (*Venus and Adonis*, 620)

When the serpent lay hid in the herb. (Oxford)
Look like the innocent flower/But be the serpent under it. (*Macbeth*, I.v)

Decked with pearls and precious stones. (Oxford)
Not decked with diamonds and Indian stones. (3 *Henry VI*, III.i)

Finis coronat opus [The end crowns the work]. (Oxford)
The end crowns all. (*Troilus and Cressida*, IV.v)
La fin couronne les oeuvres. (2 *Henry VI*, V.ii)
All's well that ends well. Still, the fine's the crown.
What'er the course, the end is the renown. (*All's Well that Ends Well*, IV.iv)

Will make the end answerable to the rest of your most friendly proceeding. (Oxford)
If his own life answer the straightness of his proceeding. (*Measure for Measure*, III.ii)
Were but a feigned friend to our proceedings. (3 *Henry VI*, IV.ii)
Of equal friendship and proceeding. (*Henry VIII*, II.iv)

But the world is so cunning as of a shadow they can make a substance, and of a likelihood a truth. (Oxford)
He takes false shadows for true substances. (*Titus Andronicus*, III.ii)
What is your substance, whereof you are made,
That millions of strange shadows on you tend?
(Sonnet 53)

For truth is truth though never so old, and time cannot make that false which was once true. (Oxford)

For truth is truth to the end of reckoning. (*Measure for Measure*, V.i)
Is not the truth the truth? (*1 Henry IV*, II.iv)
A truth's a truth. (*All's Well That Ends Well*, IV.v)

The multiple allusions to the truth in the Shakespeare plays may be oblique plays on the motto of the de Veres, *Vero nihil verius*, "nothing is truer than truth."

No two writers are likely to overlap this much in their choice of words, even those words which show no special distinction.

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Vanishing Vere in Venice

by Michael Delahoyde and Coleen Moriarty

“I have done the State some service, and they know ’t,” adamantly asserts Othello, the Moor of Venice, in the tragic final summation of his life.¹ Considering that this claim falls extraneously between the homicide and the suicide, we sense a strange pointedness and confident dignity in his otherwise reticent remark.

Hot out of the gate last summer, far more familiar with archival work, we picked up our previous year’s trail in northern Italy,² focused on Oxford’s travels in 1575-1576 with an energetic research plan, more fluent in Italian, now grasping archival systems and procedures, with a much better kind of depth perception in our ability to read the original documents, and, of course, with the even more generous funding of the SOF Research Grant. At the end of our 2016 researches, we now speculate that Oxford is speaking autobiographically through Othello about his State service, and that he does not mean just service in the form of writing the plays that finally gave England a cultural Renaissance and a national identity, presumably backed with the 1000-pound annuity from the “secret service” funds, nor even that he is responsible for the rise of the English madrigal. Rather, he is reminding the governmental authorities of something internationally political rather than artistically cultural; he is disturbed, like Hamlet, at leaving behind some matters left potentially unknown and therefore unappreciated.

Ultimately, last summer, we would help arrange for the Oxford-in-Italy tour group’s access to the closed Sala di Troia in the Mantuan Ducal Palace³ (important to Shakespeare’s knowledge of art in *The Rape of Lucrece*)⁴ and to the Mantuan archive (which visit was reported in the local newspaper).⁵ We would have a cordial exchange with world-famous Shakespearean Stanley Wells, who remembered quoting—“not very favorably, I’m afraid”—and “retweeting” Michael in the past year. We would view an innovative, site-specific, outdoor production of *The Merchant in Venice* (in honor of the 500-year anniversary of the establishment of the ghetto); receive an invitation to be part of a Giulio Romano celebration in 2017-2018; meet with Noemi Magri’s brother and assure him that she has been the foremost Oxfordian Italian scholar of note⁶; publicize the artwork of Daniela Savini, an archive enthusiast; charm and enlist the help of the previously perplexed Mantuan archive ladies; widen our network of local experts in history and archival research; support local winemakers; and pinpoint what paintings were available to Oxford’s eyes in the Venetian Doge’s Palace in 1575.⁷ We hope for a similarly diverse and geographically widening set of accomplishments this coming summer.

Oxford’s continental tour of 1575-1576 has generally been viewed as a dilettante’s indulgent year-long escape

from the stifling and artistically backward English court: an escape and cultural spree for himself.⁸ Our last-minute discovery in summer 2015 of Oxford’s signatures in Italian and Latin, on a document indicating his desire to be allowed access to the secret chambers of the Council of Ten in the Venetian Doge’s Palace, we thought confirmed this perhaps limited view of Oxford solely as culture-vulture, ravenous for sensory experiences especially of an artistic nature and unavailable in England. He was not asking to be present at a meeting of the intimidating Council. Rather, the rooms to which he requested access were covered, walls and ceilings, with the works of Italian Renaissance masters such as Veronese, Tintoretto, Aliense, Vassilacchi, and Zelotti.

Of course, travel to this Catholic country required permission of the royal court, and even if Elizabeth was agreeing to indulge the Earl, it seems likely, if not certain, that before departure Oxford would have been advised regarding what to say and warned what not to say in the European courts and among the network of diplomats and ambassadors whose connections he needed in order to proceed in his travels.

Our first day at the Venetian archive in the summer of 2016 began one more trail toward finding the original ambassadorial letters concerning Oxford’s 1575 arrival in Paris and his departure through the French court in 1576. Excerpted notices have been available since the late 1800s, and we owe a debt to Rawdon Brown, who spent fifty years culling and translating a calendar of Venetian state papers related to Anglo-Italian political history;⁹ however, the transcriptions are questionable and incomplete English translations, there were confusions in the dating system, and the original documents mentioning Oxford are too frail for public availability. A tremendous and valuable effort, but with fallibilities: what else might Brown have missed? We persisted politely in requesting access until one functionary agreed that we needed to see these documents clearly so important for the research. Much to our delight, we were escorted into the back-upstairs chambers of the archive, where the director for reproductions showed us the inaccessible documents and carefully turned the crumbling pages.¹⁰ Excitement built when we were promised images of the documents before we left Italy months later, including a passage in ambassadorial secret code (since Brown’s transcriptions were incomplete excerpts); but the file is in need of restoration work, and we have yet to receive these images. Our persistence was diplomatic, and we are still hopeful for the results agreed upon. But (cue the *Godfather* theme) we may need to do a little bit more . . .

We explained our work to, and often intrigued, the

archivists and other local historians and experts, solicited their insights and help, and accepted every promising suggestion and lead. We pored over not only ambassadorial dispatches, again often in code, but also the gossipy *bolletinos* with their steady streams of news concerning the movements of the current luminaries such as Don John of Austria and the French Duc d'Alençon, and have attained an understanding of the bigger picture within which Oxford was moving, the ambassadorial connections creating an intricate network throughout Europe.

We know that a nobleman of Oxford's caliber—Lord Great Chamberlain of England—even if he had merely been indulging in a “continental tour,” should have been written of, as we now have an understanding of the processes used when foreign dignitaries arrived in Italian cities such as Venice: how one had to receive licenses, permissions, letters of introduction and privileges of safe conduct from various branches of royal courts and governments in order to move between cities and countries on the continent. When Philip Sidney traveled through in 1574, he had to register his presence and seek a license for carrying arms and maintaining a household for which he accepted

responsibility. Foreigners, nobility, and even locals were required to register any relocations. Sidney appears in the Venetian registry, but where is Oxford? We found him our previous year in the *Capi del Consiglio di dieci, lettere (busta 76), lettere secrete* (Head of the Council of Ten, secret letters of 1575), making his special request to view the secret chambers with

all the artwork. But long prior to this request of late June 1575, on arrival in Venice and regarding his doings there, he should be showing up somewhere in the dozens of *buste* we scoured. There should be a record of his presentation at some of the bureaucratic offices, the first stops for anyone of note received at the Doge's Palace: the *Capi del Consiglio di dieci, Dispacci (lettere) degli ambasciatori* (dispatches of ambassadors); the *Consiglio di dieci, Deliberazioni* (deliberations); the *Collegio* (College); *Notatorio* (Notary); the *Senato, Deliberazioni, Terra* (Senate deliberations concerning land matters); the *Senato Deliberazioni, Secreti*; the *Ceremoniali*; the *Notarile, Atti* (acts); the *Bollettino storico, notizario estero* (historical bulletins and newsletters concerning foreign matters); the *Cancellaria* (Chancellory); the *Esecutori delle deliberazioni del Senato* (executors of decisions by the Senate); the *Capi di Consiglio, licenze per visitare ambasciatori e personaggi esteri* (licenses for visiting ambassadors and foreign persons). And he should be registered somewhere in the *Antichi Inventari dell'Archivio Gonzaga*.

We know that a nobleman of Oxford's caliber—Lord Great Chamberlain of England—even if he had merely been indulging in a “continental tour,” should have been written of, as we now have an understanding of the processes used when foreign dignitaries arrived in Italian cities such as Venice.

One is reminded of Shakespeare's “astonishing capacity to be everywhere and nowhere, to assume all positions and to slip free of all constraints.”¹¹ We shook the archive *buste* upside down, releasing moths, microbes, and a few remarkable findings. But it is truly peculiar that no mention of Oxford would occur in the thousands of documents we examined, other than the recorded privilege of access to the secret chambers of the Council of Ten we discovered in 2015 (and overlooked by previously published accounts of Venetian State Calendars). Besides the letters Burghley chose to retain and the very few mentions among Spanish records, Oxford can't just disappear from the Parisian court, show up briefly in Venice and disappear again until returning through Paris. Oxford was a far more important personage than most we see written of, so how did he skate past the registration process? What were the “numerous courtesies” and privileges he was reported to have received enthusiastically in Venice,¹² besides being allowed to see the Consiglio chambers? How did he bypass the introductions but make it into the center of the labyrinth unless he was on a diplomatic mission for the Elizabethan court of sufficient importance that he could

have skirted the bureaucracies and been escorted secretly and immediately into the interior circles of power? Even Venetians had to report when they left the city for a short period, so where is Oxford? Might he have been riding on the coattails of some other luminary such as Don John, the hero of the battle of Lepanto? Did Oxford seek

to gondola under the radar, another early chapter in his eternal curse of anonymity?

The facile Earl was known for his slippery abilities. His disappearance act registers for a brief period in July 1574, when Oxford seems to have semi-defected: “Spanish agents in the Low Countries reported that Elizabeth's court was ‘completely shaken and full of apprehension after the Earl of Oxford ... has with my lord Edward brother of the earl of Hertford, passed incognito across the sea to Flanders.’”¹³ In early 1575, Oxford was also able to slip away from one of Burghley's agents: “There is no definite record of Lord Oxford's whereabouts in the summer months of 1575. William Lewyn, the painter, who had accompanied him thus far from Paris, lost track of his Lordship and reported to Burghley that he did not know whether he had gone to Greece or was still in Italy.... Thus we find that Burghley was employing the portrait-painter, whom Ambassador Dale had recommended, as a spy. The meddlesome Earl of Oxford had obviously discovered

what was up and had escaped in no little disgust.”¹⁴

The year 1575 was near the midpoint of a long gap in official Anglo-Italian relations, with no ambassador from Venice appointed in England between 1557 and 1602, partially due to anti-Protestant pressure from Rome that England be shunned. Yet with Venice’s concerns regarding piracy of merchant ships, negotiations did take place. We now believe that Oxford, rather than merely enjoying his cultural spree, served a diplomatic role in the complex political pressures in Anglo-Italian relations. Oxford sought early in his travels to escape detection by Burghley, giving Burghley’s spy the slip prior to entering Italy. Did he want no fanfare because of the nature of his mission, knowing he had Elizabeth’s support in petitioning the Venetian court to appoint an ambassador? While Oxford was in Italy, Elizabeth was entertaining four young Venetian noblemen and pressing for ambassadorial representation. Was Oxford the impressive young English nobleman simultaneously pressing the case for Venetian recognition of Elizabeth’s court? On Oxford’s return through Paris, the Venetian ambassador to the French court reports his surprise to learn of the Earl’s assurance that Venice is on the brink of appointing a new ambassador to the English court. What was Oxford’s role in promoting that notion, more rumor than reality, as it turns out, until 1602?

Even three months we spent exploring two archives concerning one year were not sufficient in 2016. We have worked through the most significant and bulky of the Mantuan archive indexes focused on the Mantuan central family, but was Oxford brought to Mantua through another branch of the Gonzaga family? Sidney met Torquato Tasso at the height of the latter’s fame. Oxford would have wanted to make that acquaintance also, and Tasso was connected to the Ferrara branch of the Gonzaga family. One more pass at Mantua is needed, and some more time in the Venice archive looking at slightly more obscure *buste*. We have not yet had time to investigate music history resources in the Marciana library there. Because we know from letters to Burghley that Oxford visited other northern Italian cities, we hope to carry on our research in Milan, Siena, Florence, Ferrara, Padua, and Verona—archives of other interstices in the web of ambassadorial and royal connections.

Venturing more widely outside of Oxford’s travel dates, also to be explored is news of his return to England and, after the restoration of ambassadorial relations between England and Venice, if any mention appears of our “Italianate gentleman” in his final years.

We submit this article on the eve of our departure for our third exciting summer research venture in Italy. By the time you are reading this, know that you are coming along with us as we plunge into the archives, continue along the trail, immerse ourselves in the investigation, hoping to return with something to show of how

Oxford’s Italian experiences turned him into Shakespeare. *Mille grazie* to all those supporting our research: in spirit, in substance, in spritz. *Saluti a tutti!*

¹ *Othello*, V.ii.339, in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin (1997).

² Michael Delahoyde and Coleen Moriarty, “New Evidence of Oxford in Venice,” *The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* 52.1 (Winter 2016), 1, 29-32.

³ Alex McNeil and Ann Zakelj, “Shakespeare in Italy 2016: The Tour,” *The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* 52.3 (Summer 2016), 1, 19-26.

⁴ Michael Delahoyde, “De Vere’s *Lucrece* and Romano’s *Sala di Troia*,” *The Oxfordian* 9 (2006), 50-65.

⁵ “Un gruppo di americani in visita all’Archivio di stato,” *Gazzetta di Mantova* 6 July 2016, 40.

⁶ Sr. Carl’ Alberto Magri, who speaks no English and therefore cannot appreciate the esteem in which his sister, Noemi Magri, is held for her Oxfordian publications (e.g., *Such Fruits Out of Italy*, Buchholtz: Laugwitz Verlag, 2014) was puzzled by why we were visiting until Michael remembered that he had supplied a glowing blurb on the back cover of that book, demonstrating that her work is valued.

⁷ Guidebooks to Venetian art, such as Marion Kaminsky’s *Art and Architecture: Venice*, NY: Barnes & Noble (1999), and Michela Knezevich’s *The Doge’s Palace in Venice*, trans. David Stanton, Milan: Electa Art Guides (1994), are seldom precise enough for us to know if particular pieces were on display in 1575-1576.

⁸ That Oxford may have been given some diplomatic work to do on the continent is proposed by Mark Anderson, “*Shakespeare*” *By Another Name*. NY: Gotham Books/Penguin (2005), esp. 74-75, 461, and by W. Ron Hess, *The Dark Side of Shakespeare, Vol. II*, iUniverse (2003).

⁹ Rawdon Brown, ed., *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts. Venice. Vol. VII. 1558-1580*, London (1890).

¹⁰ *Senato, Dispacci degli ambasciatori e residente, Francia: filze* 9.

¹¹ Stephen Greenblatt, *Will in the World*. NY: W.W. Norton & Co. (2004), 242.

¹² Reported from Paris in Brown, *Calendar*, April 3, 1576.

¹³ Anderson, 70.

¹⁴ Dorothy Ogburn and Charlton Ogburn, *This Star of England*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press (1952), 84.



The Two Cinnas: a Covert Allusion to the Two Shakespeares?

by Emanuel E. Garcia, M.D.

Few would question the assertion that Shakespeare is the greatest of psychologists. His works are replete with observations about the most fundamental aspects of human mentation and experience as part of, arguably, the richest description of the human condition in our species' history.

One profound example, among the myriad, occurs in Act 3, Scene 3 of *Julius Caesar*, when Cinna the poet is killed by an angry mob simply because he shares the same name as Cinna the conspirator.

Cinna the Poet: I am not Cinna the conspirator.
Fourth Citizen: It is no matter, his name's Cinna; pluck but his name out of his heart, and turn him going.

To the crowd in the throes of passionate emotion, riled up as they have been by Marc Antony's sly speech over Caesar's mutilated body, it matters not that the poet is a friend to Caesar. Mob psychology, like infantile or primary process thinking, as Freud would have put it, creates identities based on superficial elements and obeys the laws of the irrational unconscious, the same laws that govern dreams and childlike perception.

The scene, however, is a curious one insofar as it is hardly indispensable to the unfolding of the drama, and as no further mention of any Cinna occurs thereafter. It is

the kind of gratuitous element that would be anathema to the formalists of theatre because it is not essential; but it is peculiarly Shakespearean because it represents a rich, colourful and profound touch—a “throwaway” scene that speaks volumes about the fickle madness of groups.

These kinds of asides may also serve other purposes, and it is reasonable to look beyond the surface for further meaning, especially if we consider that the omission of this little scene would have had no effect on the denouement of the play.

I believe that the “further meaning” may reflect directly upon the authorship issue. It may in fact be a very wily allusion on the part of the real author of the Shakespearean *oeuvre* to the injustice that he, the true poet and only begetter of the sonnets and plays, must suffer at the hands of the ignorant who cannot distinguish between two other men who share the same name: the Earl of Oxford and the man from Stratford.

De Vere, as the sonnets show in particular, was fully aware of the value of his immortal words. I wonder if this telling scene is a veiled *cri de coeur* by a man who realized that future unknowing generations would fail to recognize the true author behind a pseudonym that was all too similar to the name of an untutored provincial, and thus figuratively murder a poet while allowing a conspiratorial fraudster to go scot free.



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A Late Summer Daydream

by Stanley Shur, Elizabeth J. Rosenthal and Alex McNeil

From our wire services, received April 1st

A recently discovered document, authenticated by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, has finally dispelled any questions about the true identity of the author of the works attributed to William Shakespeare. This epochal bombshell was unexpectedly unearthed by a quartet of renowned Shakespeare scholars: Professor Jonathan Bate of the University of Oxford, Professor James Shapiro of Columbia University, and Stanley Wells and Paul Edmondson of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

“By sheer coincidence,” Bate explained, “we all bumped into each other one morning at the Folger Shakespeare Library. We got to talking, and Paul—or maybe it was Stanley, actually it might have been Jim—anyway, somebody said, ‘Why don’t we see if we can find something here that will lay to rest this ridiculous authorship question?’ I said, ‘Oh, you mean some kind of smoking gun?’ And Stanley—or maybe it was Paul—said, ‘No, I was thinking more of some kind of document.’ Then Jim—I’m pretty sure it was Jim—said, ‘There are a lot of documents here.’ I explained to Jim that was because we were in a library. Jim said, ‘I don’t think you understand my point. My point is how do we go about finding this smoking document, or whatever it is?’ I said, ‘Let’s just start looking. We’ll know it when we see it.’”

Shapiro picked up the story. “So we started looking in the stacks. Wouldn’t you know it, in the very first place we looked we found the diary of Henry Wriothesley, Third Earl of Southampton. It was sitting between a rare copy of a sixteenth century Geneva Bible and a thin volume of guidance to a son penned by William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Queen Elizabeth’s trusted aide and guardian to prominent sons of the nobility.” The Geneva Bible, Shapiro noted, “had belonged to a nobleman—I forget his name, it may have had a ‘V’ in it. Whoever he was, he certainly wasn’t Shakespeare. I doubt he even read it.”

Paul Edmondson was able to authenticate the volume immediately. “Actually, it was pretty easy,” he said. “The title page says ‘MY DIARY BY HENRY WRIOTHESLEY,’ so it must be his. If an author’s name is on a title page, that’s conclusive proof. I am Head of Knowledge and Research for the SBT, you know.”

The diary, which spans the period from 1589 to 1594, reveals a very unusual, yet intimate, friendship between the high-ranking nobleman and the talented Warwickshire commoner. It describes a growing friendship and generous patronage that served as a springboard to the most illustrious writings of Western Civilization. Particularly interesting is the narration, with documentary detail, of Southampton’s sponsorship of Shakespeare’s lengthy trip through France and Italy, which apparently provided the geographical and cultural background to Shakespeare’s “Italian plays.” It is also clear that the beneficent courtier sponsored Shakespeare’s years of study at Cambridge and the Inns of Court under a pseudonym, “Mr. W. H.” (There is some early discussion among scholars that the

pseudonym may have been resurrected in the 1609 dedication to Shakespeare’s sonnets.)

The timing of the Earl’s patronage provides the long-awaited explanation for Shakespeare’s dedications of *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* to the Earl of Southampton.

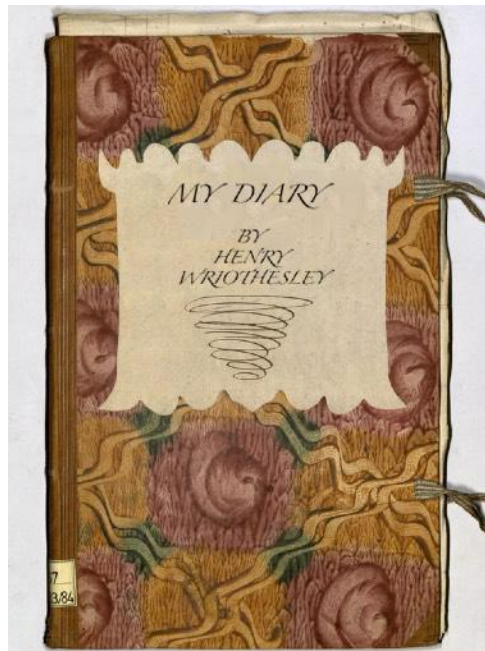
Additionally, according to Edmondson, “This God-sent treasure trove [Edmondson is also an Anglican priest] explains the breadth of cultural experience that underpins the heretofore unexplained richness of the Bard’s canon. It was acquired in the House of Southampton!”

“Nobody’s asked me for a quote,” remarked Wells, “but I’ll give you one anyway. I’ve always said that when evidence on the authorship issue is found, we’d be the ones to

find it!”

When questioned by a student why Wriothesley’s diary had not been catalogued, a spokesperson for the Folger Library promised to look into the matter. “We have a lot of documents here,” she explained.

The diary of the great Earl is expected to be published next year by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.



“Shakespeare” Identified, 100 Years On

by @edevere17

There once was a teacher named Looney
 Wrote a book much derided as phoney.
 The Stratfordians abused him
 And never excused him,
 Their attitudes hardened and stony.

They would ridicule Looney’s odd name
 As if that made his arguments lame,
 Then employ misdirection
 With caustic inflection
 In various ways, to defame.

But Tom Looney stood up to all that:
 Said, “De Vere’s what the ev’dence begat!
 His life fits with the art
 It’s all clear if you’re smart
 And you don’t have a need to stand pat.”

Yet the problem exists to this day
 As the Stratforders still won’t give way.
 There’s so much that’s at stake
 Reputations to make
 Or to lose, because wrong doesn’t pay.

Therefore raise up your glass to old Tom
 For the grief that he took with aplomb
 So that maybe someday
 We’ll at last find a way
 William Shakspeare to finally embalm.

Looking at the Lighter Side

by Margaret Becker

The Easter Bunny went to England. When he landed at the airport he asked a hedgehog how to go to Stratford-upon-Avon, and the hedgehog explained that he must find the grey cobbled road. So the Easter Bunny went all around, you wouldn’t believe where, to find the grey cobbled road. He thought he might find a tin man or a lion, but no such luck. At one point as he was hopping along he did manage to speak to some sheep that were eating grass and clover on the other side of a fence. He told them he was on his way to Stratford-upon-Avon and they said that when he came to the circle that he must go around it two-and-a-half times. After quite a long time he paused to sit down and rest awhile (and also rest his lucky rabbit foot that he had sprained the year before). Before he got up a ladybug came along and asked, “Why are you sitting down? You will lose the race.” The Easter Bunny replied, “But I’m not in a race. I’m trying to find Stratford-upon-Avon. It says to go there because they advertised this great auction of eggs that they are having too many of. There are quite a few chicken eggs, a large number of quail and duck eggs, and a larger number of examinations with goose eggs, which will be great for Easter.”

At that point a fieldmouse chimed in and said, “My relatives always say that is because they answer all the questions wrong about the author who wrote Shakespeare.”

In the words of Warren Buffett:
 “What the human being is best at doing
 is interpreting all new information
 so that their prior conclusions
 remain intact.”



2017 Conference Program Taking Shape

Alexander Waugh, Chairman of the De Vere Society, will be one of the featured speakers at the SOF Annual Conference, which will be held in Chicago from October 12 to 15, 2017. Waugh will follow up on his recent paper to the DVS in London, which argued that the epitaph of the Stratford Monument contains a riddle revealing that Shakespeare is buried not at Stratford, but alongside Chaucer, Spenser and Beaumont in Poets Corner at Westminster Abbey. Waugh will corroborate his theory with references to the title page of the 1609 edition of the *Sonnets*.

After the first call for papers, the SOF Programming Committee (Earl Showerman, Bonner Cutting, John Hamill and Don Rubin) met by conference call and chose eighteen speakers. Six more speakers will be chosen after the second call for papers on June 15.

Other confirmed speakers include SOF President Tom Regnier on the history of the authorship movement through the work of the SOS and SOF; Michael Delahoyde and Coleen Moriarty on their ongoing de Vere research in Italian archives; Ren Draya, Jan Scheffer and Ron Hess on the need to create authorship dictionaries in the style of the many existing orthodox Shakespeare dictionaries now; Prof. Roger Stritmatter on the development of a Shakespeare allusion book that he is working on with Alexander Waugh; and Bonner Cutting on de Vere's "tin mining letters" showing parallels between their "business" vocabulary and the vocabulary of Shakespeare's plays.

Other speakers are Richard Waugaman ("An Oxfreudian in Academia"), Earl Showerman ("The Value of Authorship Studies"), John Hamill ("Antonio Perez, Penelope Rich and Avisá"), Elizabeth Waugaman ("Shakespeare's Knowledge of French in Literature, Aristocracy and History"), Sabrina Feldman ("The Shakespeare Apocrypha"), Cheryl Eagan-Donovan ("Thomas Looney on The Long Poems and the Sonnets"), Wally Hurst ("Academic Freedom and the Authorship Question"), Heward Wilkinson ("Hamlet as Detective") and Michelle Stelling ("Evidence of Oxford in *Taming of the Shrew*").

"The Program Committee was very impressed with the large number of proposals received on this first call," said Committee Chair Earl Showerman. "We went through every proposal closely and accepted eighteen. Others have indicated that they are still working on proposals and we will hold spaces for a few more in the next and final round. From the range and quality of proposals I've seen so far, I think it will be an enormously exciting conference."

The final list of speakers will appear in the next issue of the *Newsletter*. Anyone interested in submitting a proposal should contact the Programming Committee by June 15 at the following e-mail: earlees@charter.net. (See page 3 for information on attending.)

Waugh vs. Bate on Shakespeare Authorship



As this issue goes to press, Alexander Waugh has announced that he'll be debating Jonathan Bate on the Shakespeare Authorship Question. The event, sponsored by the How To Academy in London, will take place on September 21, 2017, from 6:45 to 8:15 PM at the Royal Institution Venue Conference Room, 21 Albemarle Street, London. Tickets are available at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/how-to-the-great-shakespeare-debate-the-man-from-stratford-william-shakespeare-did-not-write-a-tickets-34216843500#tickets>. Waugh is currently the Chairman of the De Vere Society, and the Honorary President of the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition. He has written extensively on the Authorship Question. Bate, a well known Shakespeare scholar, is Professor of English Literature at Oxford University; he has also written extensively about Shakespeare. We expect to have further information in the Summer issue.

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