



THE SHAKESPEARE OXFORD NEWSLETTER

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Shakespeare in Italy 2016: The Tour

by Alex McNeil and Ann Zakelj

In June 2016 a group of Oxfordians went on a “Shakespeare in Italy” tour. While there may be other such “Shakespeare”-related tours of Italy, this one was special because it kept Edward de Vere in mind. It was organized by SOF member Ann Zakelj, who put together the pioneering “On the Trail of Edward de Vere” in England in 2013 (see *Newsletter*, Fall 2013); Zakelj again used London-based Pax Travel Ltd. as the tour operator. Inspired by Richard Roe’s 2011 book, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy*, Zakelj set up an eight-day itinerary that included Venice, Padua, Verona, Mantua, Bassano del Grappa, and Sabbioneta. An additional five-day trip to Siena was offered as well.

Day One: Padua

Our group numbered twenty-three in all; fifteen were from the US, five from England, two from Germany and one from Denmark. Actually, not everyone was an Oxfordian —one person had learned about the trip from the Pax Travel website and liked the itinerary, and one or two



Edward deVere’s church in Venice



(Continued on page 19)

From the President:

Taking the SOF to Greater Heights

The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship has helped the Oxfordian movement make great strides in past years, yet we still have a long way to go to overcome a well-funded and entrenched establishment that has a vested interest in perpetuating the Stratford myth. There are many things we would be able to do if we had the money and the personnel that the Stratfordians have. Recently, I have heard many suggestions from our members of worthwhile projects that the SOF might undertake to further the Oxfordian cause. Often, these suggestions are very constructive, but we are unable to implement them because we don't have the time or the money to do so. The SOF has only four paid part-time staff—the journal editors and webmaster—who work as independent contractors. We have no full-time paid staff. Compare this to the Stratfordian establishment, in which thousands of people make very nice livings promoting the traditional authorship theory. We are clearly at a disadvantage.

But, as cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” These words are very resonant to me

because I've been part of a small group that made an impact that was greatly out of proportion to its numbers. This happened in the late 1990s when I was a leader of a campaign to reform the ballot access laws in my state by amending the state constitution. During the course of this two-year process, we had a core group of about 100 to 150 activists who spoke out at public hearings, wrote letters to editors and government officials, posted yard signs and bumper stickers, and donated money for radio ads. We had minimal funds, but did our homework and had the facts at our fingertips. To succeed, we had to reach a majority of the eight million registered voters in the state and persuade them to support us. In the end, we won with almost 65% of the vote. I still marvel that this small core of determined people could create such an effect.

Winning the authorship debate is more of a long-range project than amending a state constitution, but the Oxfordian movement has benefited from the combined efforts of many of us over the years. If you would like to do more to help, and have some free time, there are ways you can contribute your time. The SOF accomplishes a great deal of its work through committees. All of our Trustees (who, by the way, receive no salary under state law and our bylaws) work on several committees. SOF members who are not Trustees also serve on all of our committees. Committees explore particular projects, work

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The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to investigating the Shakespeare authorship question and disseminating the evidence that Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604), is the true author of the poems and plays written under the pseudonym “William Shakespeare.”

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 two annual scholarly journals, *The Oxfordian* and *Brief Chronicles*.

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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Articles, essays, commentary, book reviews, letters and news items of interest to the Shakespeare Oxfordian community are welcome. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship. As provided in the bylaws, “The conferences, publications, and other educational projects of the Fellowship will be open forums for all aspects of the Oxfordian theory of authorship.”

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out plans for accomplishing the projects, and then present the plans for approval to the Board of Trustees. For example, the Conference Committee works out a myriad of details about where, when, and how the annual conference will take place. The “*Shakespeare*” *Identified Centennial* Committee, to give another example, has been diligently researching and planning for the 100th anniversary, in 2020, of Thomas Looney’s groundbreaking book, which introduced the Oxfordian theory to the modern world.

In other words, the SOF is not a top-down organization in which the Board issues directives from on high. We are more successful when the Board receives proposals from individuals or committees who have done the research on a particular project and worked out a detailed plan for the Board to accept, reject, or perhaps modify. If you have an idea about how the SOF can be more effective, perhaps you would like to volunteer for a committee that addresses that issue. If there isn’t a committee that addresses it, we can create one. A number of committees were created to address particular needs of the organization.

Following is a list of existing SOF committees and their purposes. If you see one on which you think you could be helpful, please contact me at: info@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org. Similarly, if you have a bright idea that is in search of a committee, contact me and we can discuss the possibility of creating one on which you can serve to help put your idea into effect.

Communications Committee: promotes the Oxfordian message through any and all available media; oversees the publication of the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*, *Brief Chronicles*, and *The Oxfordian*; oversees the SOF website, email list, and social media. This committee needs more individuals who can write online news posts on developments in the Oxfordian movement.

Conference Committee: organizes the annual conference and business meeting.

Membership Committee: recruits and keeps track of SOF members, recommends membership dues structure to the SOF Board.

Finance Committee: oversees the SOF financial picture, creates budget, files annual tax return.

Fundraising Committee: raises money for the SOF through donations, bequests, and grants, both for the SOF general fund and the Research Grant Program.

Investments Committee: explores ways to make the SOF’s endowment earn greater interest.

“Shakespeare” Identified Centennial Committee: plans and prepares for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Looney’s book in 2020.

First Folio Committee: coordinates responses to the Folger Library’s First Folio tour.

Secondary Education Committee: explores ways to disseminate the Oxfordian theory to secondary school students and teachers; plans to create a page on the SOF website directed to secondary school students.

Speakers’ Bureau Committee: helps publicize and promote live introductory talks on the Shakespeare authorship question throughout the U.S. and Canada. Nearly thirty persons have volunteered to give such talks. More volunteers are welcome.

Outreach Committee: explores ways to help the Oxfordian message reach more people by creating and funding specific projects. Perhaps you have a project to submit to this committee.

Data Preservation Committee: devoted to ensuring the preservation of online Oxfordian materials, including those of the SOF and other Oxfordian researchers.

I look forward to hearing your ideas for helping the SOF make the Oxfordian movement grow.

Research Grant Fundraising Reaches Its Goal

In our last newsletter, I mentioned that the SOF’s Research Grant Program had raised over \$7,500 toward its goal of \$10,000 in donations. I’m now happy to report that we have reached that goal! Many thanks to all of you who contributed. As you may know, the entire \$10,000 will be doubled due to matching funds that are available this year, aided by a grant from the Joe W. & Dorothy Dorsett Brown Foundation. The RGP therefore has \$20,000 to award in grants. The RGP Selection Committee has received numerous applications and is now considering which applicants will receive grant money. The grantees will be announced by August 31.

Annual Conference Adds *Hamlet* Production

We are excited about our upcoming annual conference, which will be in Newton, Massachusetts, November 3-6. Our conference planners have added to the schedule a production of *Hamlet* by the Actors’ Shakespeare Project on November 4. Tickets are reasonably priced at \$35 each, and transportation arrangements are being made. There is also an exciting list of speakers and topics to be heard at the conference. See p. 14 of this newsletter for more information. Don’t miss this one.

I hope to see you at the conference or, perhaps, on an SOF committee.

—Tom Regnier, President



What's the News?

Alexander Waugh Retranslates Two Letters From Queen Elizabeth About Oxford

As he reported on a Facebook discussion group in July 2016, Alexander Waugh decided to take another look at two items of correspondence from Queen Elizabeth, both written in Latin in January 1575 (1574, old style), shortly before Oxford left for the Continent. Below is an edited version of what Waugh had to say.

Alan Nelson (in *Monstrous Adversary*, p. 119) mentions two letters by Queen Elizabeth concerning Oxford as he was setting out on his foreign travels. Needless to say, he tries to dismiss them as standard letters prepared by a clerk for the Queen to sign off. He ignores one letter entirely (addressed to European monarchs) and in the few lines of translation of the other that he provides (addressed to the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian) he avoids the Latin word *ingenio* entirely, because he does not want Oxford to be credited with any natural talent or genius. Both letters were written in Latin and survive as transcripts (once held in the library of Ely Cathedral) and are now held in the Cambridge University Library. After quite a sweat and a consultation with two serious Latin scholars I have come up with the following translations:

1. Elizabeth, by the grace of God, etc.
To all individual kings, etc.
An illustrious and highly accomplished young man, our beloved cousin, Edward Vere, Earl of Oxford, Viscount Bulbeck, Lord of Scales and Badelsmore, Great Chamberlain of England, plans (with our good grace) to travel overseas to gain knowledge and understanding of the ways of men in different cities and regions. We therefore sincerely request your servants, your most excellent educators and your own kindness, that when he comes into any kingdom, territory, land or jurisdiction of yours, not only will he be permitted to stay there freely and to pass through without impediment, but he will be treated with all kindness for our sake, and will be welcomed so that we may see your friendship and benevolence towards us reflected in your treatment of this most noble earl, our kinsman (whom we favour not in the ordinary way, but in all sincerity, on account of his outstanding intellect and virtue).
When this young nobleman shows himself worthy of your kindness by virtue of his manners, we too, as a sign of thanks for things great and small, shall never forget to repay you generously, and by any means, when the time and occasion may arise.
In witness whereof etc. Hampton, 24 January 1574, in the seventeenth year of our reign.

2. Elizabeth by the grace of God etc.
To the most powerful Prince and Lord Maximilian the Second, Holy Roman Emperor, King of Hungary and Bohemia, eternally Augustus, our brother and kinsman and dear friend, greetings.
An illustrious young man, greatly adorned with many virtues —Edward Vere, Earl of Oxford, Viscount Bolbeck, Lord of Scales and Badelsmere, Lord High Chamberlain of England, our most beloved subject and cousin—is presently setting out from England to visit your royal court of many princes and will be passing through the cities and regions of your empire, to benefit from the knowledge thereof. He is endowed, by his very nature, with manners, virtue and learning. We therefore earnestly desire your Imperial Majesty to protect this young nobleman by your authority, to grant him your favour, to help him with recommendations, and to favour him with all kindness, so that he may understand that our greatest recommendation holds weight with your Imperial Majesty. Nothing else could give us greater joy. May God preserve your Imperial Majesty in health and safety.
Hampton [Court], 24 January 1574, in the seventeenth year of our reign.

What I think is really tremendous about this is that Elizabeth says that her recommendation of Oxford is not the normal thing, but “in all sincerity” (*ex animo*) or “from the heart,” because of his “outstanding intellect” (*praestantes animi*) or “outstanding mind.”

Shakspeare's Coat of Arms—Yet Another Smoking Gun?

As 2016 is, of course, the 400th anniversary of “Shakespeare's” death, it's hardly surprising that any new scrap of information about Will Shakspeare will garner headlines. So it was on June 30, when the *New York Times* ran a lengthy piece about allegedly newly discovered documents concerning John Shakspeare and son Will's efforts to obtain a coat of arms between 1596 and 1600. The article stated that Heather Wolfe, curator of manuscripts at the Folger Shakespeare Library, unearthed several records at the College of Arms in London. Chief among them was a sketch of the arms, “dated to around 1600,” containing the words “Shakespeare the player” (a much later copy of the sketch has long been known). According to Wolfe, the documents (mostly sketches) “are all from the 17th century,” and “more than half associate the arms with ‘Shakespeare the player,’ or with William, not John.”

The *Times* turned to Columbia University's James Shapiro for comment, and he did not disappoint. “It's all

about trying to figure out, what was he like? Anytime we can substitute something solid for speculation, that's significant." The *Times* then stated: "The new documents, Mr. Shapiro added, also come with a nice bonus: they clearly refute skeptics who [continue](#) to argue—to the [deep exasperation](#) of most scholars—that William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon was not actually the author of the works attributed to him. 'It's always been clear that Shakespeare of Stratford and 'Shakespeare the player' were one and the same,' Mr. Shapiro said. 'But if you hold the documents Heather has discovered together, that is the smoking gun.'"

The *Times* failed to follow up about this "smoking gun." How exactly does corroboration of Shakspeare's position as an actor "prove" that he was a writer? No one asked Professor Shapiro why, if he really were "Shakespeare," would Will Shakspeare (or anyone else) describe him in 1600 as a mere "player," and not a "poet," "playwright" or "writer"? After all, *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* had been published in 1593 and 1594, respectively, and were hugely popular; moreover, plays with the name "Shakespeare" had begun to appear in print in 1598. The *Times* noted Heather Wolfe's comment that other applicants for coats of arms were sometimes "given a lowly job description," but "player" is about as "lowly" as one can get.

Moreover, no one asked why, if obtaining it was so vitally important to Will Shakspeare, is there no coat of arms depicted on the oversize picture of "Shakespeare" that adorns the First Folio?

Several Oxfordians wrote letters to the *Times*, and the SOF issued a press release (<http://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/ny-times-smoking-gun-is-nothing-but-smoke-and-mirrors/>), but to little avail.

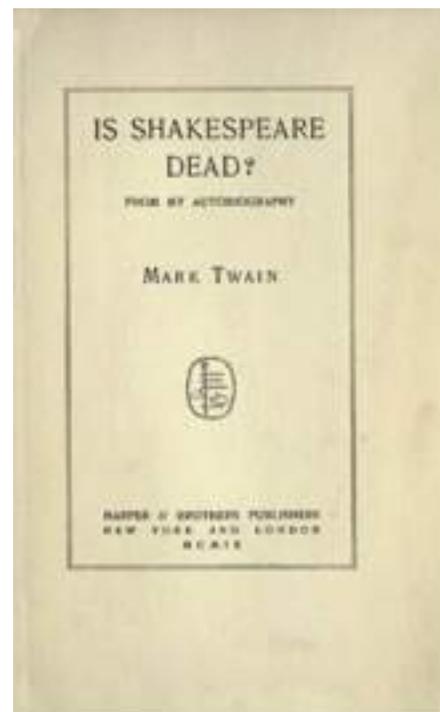
Ironically, perhaps the most accurate assessment of the newly discovered documents came from retired professor (and Oxford biographer) Alan Nelson, who told the *Times* that the new material "helps to confirm everything we know about the arc of Shakespeare's career and the way he understood himself in the context of his society." Precisely so, Professor Nelson. Will Shakspeare understood himself—correctly—as a player, not as a poet or playwright.

Is Mark Twain's *Is Shakespeare Dead?* Part of His Autobiography or Not?

Earlier this year the editors of the Mark Twain Project Online at University of California, Berkeley, announced that they did not intend to publish Twain's 1909 *Is Shakespeare Dead?* as part of his autobiography. This decision was puzzling for two reasons: first, the stated intention of the MTPO is to "produce a digital critical edition, fully annotated, of everything Mark Twain wrote," and second, the printed subtitle of "Is Shakespeare Dead?" is "From My Autobiography."

On May 12, on behalf of the SOF Board, President Tom Regnier wrote to the editors to express concern. A week later he received a reply from Benjamin Griffin, one of the editors. Griffin wrote that "it goes without saying that we intend to edit and publish *Is Shakespeare Dead?*" The question that the editors were dealing with was whether the work properly belongs in the "Autobiography" section of Twain's writings. Griffin cited conflicting evidence—that in January 1909, when the manuscript first went into book form, Twain did not revise the subtitle "From My Autobiography"; but in March, Twain did not include *Is Shakespeare Dead?* in the sequence of materials from which he constructed his *Autobiography* (Twain died in April 1910). On the latter basis, the editors "concluded that Mark Twain was satisfied with *Dead*'s final disposition as a free-standing book," and omitted it from the Autobiography section of their web site, "not . . . [due to] disdain for the book's thesis."

With the SOF Board's approval, Regnier responded to Griffin on June 13, expressing "relief[f]" that *Is Shakespeare Dead?* will indeed be included in MTPO, and asking if there was an estimated time for its appearance. Regnier again noted that the work states that is "From My Autobiography," and added "that the book contains significant autobiographical material concerning Twain's riverboat experiences." He also cited earlier correspondence between SOF member Linda Theil and another MPTO staff person, in which the latter seemed to denigrate *Is Shakespeare Dead?* To date he has not received a reply.



"From My Autobiography" or not—that is the question

Curtain Excavation Surprises Archaeologists

Scholars and archaeologists were surprised this spring when they finally uncovered the foundation of the fabled Curtain Theater, built in 1577, and considered the second purpose-built theater in London. What they found were the foundations of a rectangular building about 100 feet by 72 feet that could hold 1,000 spectators. For many decades, scholars and archaeologists have claimed that the Curtain was an amphitheater, an oval or circular building, and that it was one of two probable venues for a performance of *Henry V* in 1599, in which the Prologue refers to “this wooden O.”

“This is palpably not a circle,” declared Julian Bowsher, Senior Archaeologist at the Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA). He now suspects that the Curtain was not built from scratch, but was converted from an existing building. “Out of the nine playhouses that we know in Tudor London, there are only two that have no reference to construction,” he said—including the Curtain. “It’s beginning to make sense now.” The dig was conducted by MOLA near Curtain Road in Shoreditch, described now as “a scruffy-chic, fast-gentryfying area on the edge of London’s financial district.” The site of another purpose-built playhouse in Shoreditch, called The Theatre and built in 1576, was discovered by MOLA in 2008.

Most scholars think that the Lord Chamberlain’s Men played at the Curtain between 1597 and 1599, just prior to their move to the Globe in 1599. There is clear documentation that it was the site of plays by Shakespeare, Jonson, Heywood and others, but its precise location and shape have never been securely verified. It was also a popular fencing venue.

Reacting to the discovery of a rectangular foundation, Heather Knight, another Senior Archaeologist at MOLA, suggested that *Henry V* may still have premiered at the Curtain in 1599, but without the prologue. “There’s a school of thought now that says prologues were actually a later addition,” she said.

Walls survive up to five feet high in places, and workers have uncovered sections of the theater’s gravel yard where “groundlings” stood, as well as inner walls that held the galleries where wealthier spectators would have sat. They also discovered artifacts, including a fragmentary ceramic bird whistle, dating from the late 16th century. According to the MOLA web site, “bird whistles were children’s toys but in this context may have been used for sound effects in theatrical performances. In Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, probably staged at the Curtain in the late 16th century, there are numerous references to bird song.”

The remains were first discovered four years ago beneath a Victorian warehouse, as reported in the June 2012 issue of *Current Archaeology*. It was not until further excavations were made this past spring that the

rectangular shape of the theater was determined. Once the dig is complete, the remains of the Curtain will be preserved in-situ, and the finds will be on view in a proposed cultural and visitor center. A good color photo of the dig can be seen at the MOLA web site.

(Contributed by Ramon Jiménez)

A Word from Shakespeare

The relationship between English and Latin is known, but not always appreciated. The Latin verb *duco-ere* (“to lead, bring, take, or guide”) gives not only “leader” (*duce* in Italian, *duke* in English plus many constructs like aqueduct [to guide water] and related words such as *adduce*, *reduce*, *induce* which have clear meanings), but others like *seduce* and, less commonly, *traduce*. *Traduce* originally meant “to lead aside or astray,” and “to lead across, over, or down.” The first meaning is commonly related with sexual congress, and the second now means to calumniate or defame. Samuel Johnson once said, “I would not traduce any gentleman, but wasn’t that man a lawyer?” The word *trado* means specifically to hand down.

Now consider the Latin word *nexus*. It is the past participle of the verb *necto-nectere* (“to tie, fasten, or bind”) from which we obtain English constructs such as *connect* (“to bring together”). We read in *The Merchant of Venice*:

Bring them I pray thee, with imagin’d speed
Unto the tranect, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words.
(3.4.32-34)

The standard desperate gloss for *tranect* is that “Shakespeare may have heard the word ‘Tranect’ from some one acquainted with a local peculiarity; or he may have fashioned it himself either from the Italian *traghetto*.” But if one knows Latin and wishes to indicate the spot where the canal, on land, comes close to the ferry landing, at sea level, so the two do not “connect,” what would you call it but a *tranect*?

(Contributed by Sam Saunders)

Regnier to Address Bar Association

SOF President Tom Regnier has been chosen by the The Dade County Bar Association to be one of the speakers in its Justice Thurgood Marshall Distinguished Lecture Series. According to the DCBA, “the series provides an opportunity for South Florida’s most experienced and respected practitioners to lecture on the topics of their choice.” Regnier will be presenting his talk on “Hamlet and the Law of Homicide” that he gave at the Cosmos Club in Washington, DC, and at the SOF 2014 Annual Conference in Madison, WI. The presentation will be September 8 at 10:30 AM at the DCBA Office in Miami.

Shakespeare and the Courtesan

Paul Streitz informs us that a play he has written and directed, *Shakespeare and the Courtesan*, will be presented at the Ripley-Grier Studio in New York City on Monday, September 19, at 1 and 6 P.M. The reading is for industry professionals such as managers, producers, agents and non-profit theaters.

The play has a cast of ten; the two principal characters are Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, and Veronica Franco, a Venetian poet of the period whose works were published. There are several books about her and a feature film, *Dangerous Beauty* (1998), about her life. Three

supporting actors will play other characters in Oxford's life such as Queen Elizabeth, William Cecil, Prospero and Shaxspere. The play is set in Italy in the 1500s when Oxford toured the country.

"The play is a biography of the Earl of Oxford," says Streitz. "By using flashbacks, flashforwards and non-linear writing, the play shows the key events of Oxford's life. The small number in the cast will allow smaller experimental and avant garde theaters throughout the world to present this view of 'Who was Shakespeare.'"

Further information can be found at www.shakespeareandthecourtesan.com.

First SOF Summer Seminar Held at Ashland, Oregon

by Earl Showerman, M.D.

More than twenty enthusiastic Oxfordians attended the first Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship summer seminar in Ashland, Oregon, from August 1 to 5. The SOF fall conferences in Ashland have traditionally been designed to focus on the plays in production at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. This season the OSF featured *Timon of Athens*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Hamlet* and *Twelfth Night*.

The seminar faculty—Professor Michael Delahoyde of Washington State University and Professor Roger Stritmatter of Coppin State University—gave presentations about those four works. Dr. Stritmatter is the general editor of one of the SOF's annual journals, *Brief Chronicles*, and Dr. Delahoyde is its managing editor.

The past two summers Dr. Delahoyde and his colleague, Coleen Moriarty, have investigated the archives of northern Italy and in 2015 they made a remarkable Oxfordian discovery in Venice. In addition to talks on *The Winter's Tale* and *Twelfth Night*, Dr. Delahoyde presented on "The Art of Railing" and the challenges of doing documentary research in Italy. Dr. Stritmatter is co-author (with Lynne Kositsky) of *On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare's The Tempest* (2013). His lectures concentrated on *Hamlet* and *Timon of Athens*. I gave presentations on the Greek sources in the plays, and on several allusions from the mid-1580s that strongly suggest very early dating for *Timon of Athens* and *Troilus and Cressida*.

The seminar kicked off with an opening reception at the home of Jane Maynard. Daily sessions were held at the Hannon Library of Southern Oregon University, where the group enjoyed a special exhibit of 17th and 18th century Folio editions from the Margery Bailey Collection. Evenings were spent watching the plays.

Audiences were treated to a very "Brechtian" staging of *Timon*, and *Twelfth Night* was staged in a 1930s-era Hollywood style. All were well received and provoked excellent discussions during the seminar sessions.

Below are some comments from seminar participants:

Diana Reynolds Roome: What could be more illuminating than five days of scholarship, time travel, and lively camaraderie, each day rounded off with a striking theatrical experience? Revelations and reverberations from ancient Greek drama, Italian art and archives in the footsteps of Edward De Vere, and close textual examination of Shakespeare's evolving writing process were among the treats. All were the result of resourcefulness, rigor and dedication on the part of Roger Stritmatter, Michael Delahoyde, and Earl Showerman. Seminar participants, many of whom have done impressive research too, eagerly shared their insights. As a relative newcomer to this field of inquiry, I found my understanding of Shakespearean authorship issues pushed into a whole new realm by this seminar.

Paul Arnold, M.D.: Not only were all of the arrangements excellent, but the presentations were incredibly detailed and enlightening. I really appreciated the different approach to teaching all three of our professors demonstrated. Depending on one's best manner of learning, there was something for everyone. The syllabus and handouts were also very helpful – a resource for us in the days to come. And best of all, we all made new, stimulating friends; friends I look forward to seeing again at future SOF symposia. I have already purchased three new Oxford oriented books!

Prof. Virginia Evans: Because this was a 'seminar' (more an 'intensive') of committed Oxfordians, I knew that the discussions would be engaging. But I had not foreseen the atomic fusion of genuine scholarship and humanity afforded by four days of studying, one by one, four plays and attending their performance in such congenial company of Oxford detectives. Thank you, and may there be many more occasions of such gatherings.

Sundra Malcolm: The seminar was well planned and almost perfectly executed. It is a completely different experience to deal with issues about authorship in a congenial social setting. It is also fascinating to meet the faces behind the words that we read in our journals. There is a lot of brainpower among the leaders of our authorship studies and it is fun to encounter that factor up close and personal. It gives depth and dimension to their articles and books.

Prof. Bryan Wildenthal: I found the summer seminar a great chance to hear from and talk with our leading Oxfordian experts and interact with other authorship enthusiasts. As fun as the annual SOF meetings are, the seminar allows considerably more time to relax and really explore the issues. And having it in Ashland is a huge bonus, with the chance

to see multiple world-class productions at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

Prof. Rima Greenhill: The seminar was informative and enjoyable and contained a perfect combination of academics, camaraderie and entertainment. The morning and afternoon sessions gave us an opportunity to discuss the more subtle points of each play and to grapple with its idiosyncrasies, while the evening performance and "the morning after" dissection gave everyone a chance to express their opinion as to what worked and what did not work, and how specific issues, addressed the day before, were handled by the actors and director. It was wonderful to have the sessions presented by such knowledgeable Oxfordians. I also found the handouts and the articles in the seminar's folder to be a useful and valuable resource for the future.

While the seminar was an eye opening experience for the new cohort of future Oxfordians who signed up for it, for those of us who tend to live in our narrow world of individual research, the seminar provided a welcoming place to share new findings with friends who share the same interests and enthusiasm.



Prof. Roger Stritmatter lectures at the first SOF Summer seminar

End of an Oxfordian Era on the Supreme Court?

Remembering Justice Antonin Scalia (1936-2016)

by Bryan H. Wildenthal¹

With the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, 79, on February 13 of this year, the United States Supreme Court lost one of its most brilliant and influential members—and Oxfordians lost one of the most distinguished figures ever to support the theory that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, was the true author of the works of “William Shakespeare.”

Justice Scalia, the first Italian American to serve on the nation’s highest tribunal, was appointed by President Reagan to the U.S. Court of Appeals in 1982 and then to the Supreme Court in 1986. He is best known as the intellectual leader of the Court’s conservative wing, an articulate exponent, sometimes caustic and controversial, of the closely allied legal philosophies of “textualism” and “originalism.” His firm belief was that laws—most importantly, the U.S. Constitution—should be read faithfully according to their text, informed by evidence of how they were publicly understood when enacted but without what he viewed as subjective and manipulable inquiries into the “intent” of the framers or “legislative history.” He flatly declared: “It is the *law* that governs, not the intent of the lawgiver.”² As a legal scholar and an Oxfordian, who has taught and written on Justice Scalia’s judicial philosophy,³ I have a deep interest in his combined legacy for the law and the Shakespeare authorship question (SAQ).

We know few details of Justice Scalia’s Oxfordian views. Alas, I did not broach the subject on the four occasions between 2001 and 2007 when he spoke at Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego and I had the honor of meeting him.⁴ Scalia’s views were not widely known before publication of a 2009 *Wall Street Journal* article, which quoted him recalling that as a child he’d received from a family friend “a monograph propounding de Vere’s cause.”⁵

The “monograph” may have been John Thomas Looney’s 1920 book launching the Oxfordian theory, or possibly *This Star of England* published in 1952,⁶ when Scalia was a sixteen-year-old student at Xavier High School, a Jesuit academy in Manhattan. The leading biography of Scalia notes that while at Xavier he “discovered his ability as an orator and a thespian and, as a senior, won the lead in *Macbeth*.”⁷ As a Georgetown University history major, Scalia maintained his interest in drama as president of the Mask and Bauble Theatre Club.⁸

All this suggests that Scalia was a Shakespeare lover and Oxfordian from a young age. There is something almost Falstaffian in his biographer’s description of him as “a connoisseur of food and drink, an opera lover, an enthusiast of many intellectual pursuits.”⁹ The apple did not fall far from the tree. His father, Salvatore Eugene Scalia, immigrated from Sicily in 1920 at age seventeen and became a professor at Brooklyn College, a scholar of



Justice Antonin Scalia and Prof. Bryan Wildenthal

Romance languages, translator, and expert on Dante. His mother, Catherine Panaro Scalia, daughter of Italian immigrants herself, was a schoolteacher.¹⁰ While Ben Jonson teasingly questioned whether Shakespeare knew “small Latin and less Greek,”¹¹ Scalia studied both for years.¹²

There appear to be some fascinating linkages between Scalia’s careful attention to the literal text of the law and his father’s belief in a literalist approach to translation. Anticipating his son’s constitutional originalism, Professor Scalia *père* believed that works of literature can truly be appreciated “only by direct ‘communion’ with the original ‘page’ itself ... only by being able to interact directly with the text’s original, and not translated, words.”¹³ One can imagine Scalia *filis* developing a fascination with the text of Shakespeare’s works that may in turn have led him to an abiding curiosity about who wrote that text—even if the identity and intent of the original author were mysteries whose importance he discounted in the field of law. But perhaps this biographical approach is too speculative—too much in the Stratfordian mode?

Fittingly, a recent study found both that Shakespeare tied Lewis Carroll (another pseudonym) among literary authors of fiction and drama, for most citations in Supreme Court opinions by justices then on the Court, and that Justice Scalia led by far in the total number of such citations.¹⁴ For example, upholding a criminal defendant’s Sixth Amendment right to confront his accuser at trial, Scalia offered one of the most vividly compelling uses of the Bard in the Court’s history: “Shakespeare was ... describing the root meaning of confrontation when he had Richard the Second say: ‘Then call them to our presence—face to face, and frowning brow to brow, ourselves will hear the accuser and the accused freely speak’”¹⁵ He seemed to delight in working in a bit of Shakespeare even when it didn’t really fit. Drawing a strained analogy in an employment

discrimination case, he could not resist quoting the memorable exchange between Glendower and Hotspur, the former darkly boasting, “I can call Spirits from the vasty Deep,” Hotspur retorting, “Why, so can I, or so can any man. But will they come ... ?”¹⁶

It would be fascinating to know if Scalia’s parents or children shared (or share) his love of Shakespeare—and possibly his dissent from Stratfordian orthodoxy? We Oxfordians know that such views often tend to “run in the family.” Scalia’s widow Maureen, a Radcliffe English major and his beloved wife for more than fifty-five years, apparently shared his love for Shakespeare and literature generally. By his own account, she registered a sharp spousal dissent on the authorship question. Acknowledging that she “is a much better expert in literature than I am,” he good-humoredly confessed that she had “berated” him with the suggestion that “we Oxfordians ... can’t believe that a commoner” wrote the works. Ever the zesty debater, however, Justice Scalia offered the insightful rejoinder that it may be “more likely” that *Stratfordians* “are affected by a democratic bias than the Oxfordians are ... by an aristocratic bias.”¹⁷

It is poignant to realize that Justice Scalia’s appointment to the Supreme Court marked, in retrospect, the beginning of an Oxfordian Golden Age on the Court, and that his passing now signals that era may be drawing to a close, even as the Oxfordian cause advances overall. Unbeknownst to the public and probably to him, in 1986 the newly seated Scalia joined no fewer than *four justices already sitting* on the Court who either then, or some years later, rejected the prevailing orthodox view that the Stratfordian theory of authorship has been established beyond any reasonable doubt. Of those four—

Justices Harry A. Blackmun, Lewis F. Powell, Jr., John Paul Stevens, and Sandra Day O’Connor—two (Blackmun and Stevens, plus possibly O’Connor) were or became Oxfordians like Scalia. This tantalizing 5-4 majority on the nation’s highest tribunal lasted only for the 1986-87 term, until Justice Powell’s retirement, and not all had yet



Justice John Paul Stevens



Justice Sandra Day O’Connor

developed their authorship views. But for one term, at least 33%, possibly 44%, of the nine sitting justices were then or future Oxfordians—and fully 56% were then or future anti-Stratfordians!

Things started to get even more interesting on September 25, 1987, just a few months after Powell’s retirement, when Justices Blackmun and Stevens and their senior colleague Justice William J. Brennan, Jr., presided over the famous American University authorship debate between law professors posing as counsel for William Shakspeare of Stratford and Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford. The panel unanimously found that the Oxfordians failed to satisfy the high burden of proof —“clear and convincing evidence,” *both* that the Stratford man did *not* write the works *and* that Oxford *did*—rather arbitrarily imposed on them by Brennan at the outset, as presiding judge. Brennan announced the “clear and convincing” benchmark without consulting his colleagues, instead of the lower “preponderance of the evidence” standard far more common in civil lawsuits, a standard often equated with “more likely than not” or above a 50% probability.¹⁸ Two decades later, the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition (SAC) under John Shahan’s leadership better articulated what should be the standard: whether “reasonable doubt” exists about the traditional Stratfordian attribution, doubt sufficient to stop the unjust ridicule and marginalization of authorship doubters and to justify serious and respectful public and academic study and debate.¹⁹

The 1987 panel comments contained hints of what was to come. Justice Brennan seemed a staunchly convinced Stratfordian, and as far as is known remained so to his retirement in 1990 and death in 1997. But Justice Blackmun, speaking next, began his remarks with: “Well ... I suppose that’s the legal answer. Whether it is the correct one causes me greater doubt” Rather intriguingly, he continued:

[T]he secondary question which has been emphasized today is whether the Oxfordians have proved their case. My own feeling is that they come closer to proving it than anyone else has, and whether that is enough is something that we're supposed to say, I suppose; and yet, I am reluctant to say it.²⁰

Hardly a ringing endorsement of the Stratford theory!

Justice Stevens also concurred that “the burden of proof was not met,”²¹ but the remainder of his comments were open, and even sympathetic to, the unorthodox position. He confessed to “gnawing doubts that this great author may perhaps have been someone else,”²² thus already adopting the minimalist position of the SAC’s 2007 Declaration of Reasonable Doubt, which he signed in 2009 along with Justice O’Connor.²³

Even more telling, Stevens made clear he had actually read Charlton Ogburn, Jr.’s landmark 1984 book²⁴ and said flatly that he was “persuaded that, if the author was not the man from Stratford, then there is a high probability that it was Edward de Vere,” and that Oxford’s “claim is by far the strongest of those [alternative authors] that have been put forward.” He correctly dismissed the anti-Oxfordian argument that some plays were supposedly written after Oxford’s death in 1604, noting that the “dating of the plays ... is sort of a self-generating thing, where some of the dates were established on the assumption that Shakespeare [of Stratford] was in fact the author.” Best of all, Stevens emphasized the importance of carrying on a respectful debate recognizing “the good faith and the honorable motives” of all participants,²⁵ and he expressly validated both the Oxfordian cause and the importance of the authorship inquiry itself—an implicit and powerful rebuke to all those who impatiently dismiss the issue. He specifically thanked Oxfordians for “putting forth honest views that are based on careful and deliberate study and interest in a very, very difficult problem,” and declared that “this really incomparable author who has given so much to our civilization ... does continue to merit the study that we have seen today and that led up to this controversy.” Finally, he concluded, “the doctrine of *res judicata*”—the rule that a lawsuit, once finally resolved, may not generally be relitigated—“does not apply to this.”²⁶

Justice Stevens firmly identified himself as an Oxfordian when interviewed by the *Wall Street Journal* in 2009, recalling that he and Justice Blackmun started developing more authorship doubts right after the 1987 debate.²⁷ Stevens accepted the “Oxfordian of the Year” Award later in 2009, jointly bestowed by the Shakespeare Oxford Society and Shakespeare Fellowship.²⁸ Less than four years after the 1987 debate, Stevens delivered a speech (published in 1992) strongly hinting at his support for the Oxfordian theory.²⁹ Blackmun went even further by 1992; the second edition of Ogburn’s book quoted him stating that “Oxfordians have presented a very strong—almost fully convincing—case,” and that if he again “had

to rule on the evidence presented, it would be in favor of the Oxfordians.”³⁰

Thus, within just a few years, fulfilling Stevens’s prediction that the matter would not stay settled, Oxfordians achieved an effective reversal of the initial apparent verdict of 1987. We ultimately won what amounts to a 2-to-1 judgment against the Stratford theory and in favor of de Vere—from the *only* neutral panel of professional judges ever to read and hear such a thorough presentation of the evidence and arguments. It should be kept in mind that the evidence in favor of the Oxfordian theory has been substantially augmented since 1987—perhaps most notably by Professor Roger Stritmatter’s breakthrough study of de Vere’s Geneva Bible annotations, Mark Anderson’s compelling biography of de Vere, and Richard Paul Roe’s study of Shakespeare’s Italian references—while still more holes have been blown in the capsizing Stratfordian theory, again by Roe and, for example, Diana Price’s study of Shakespeare’s missing literary paper trail.³¹

Justice Powell also came out as (at least) an authorship doubter in Ogburn’s 1992 book, and his doubts apparently long preceded the 1987 debate. He stated that he had “never thought that the man of Stratford-on-Avon wrote the plays of Shakespeare.”³²

This anti-Stratfordian “era” on the U.S. Supreme Court, however, now seems mostly over. Powell retired in 1987 and died in 1998. Blackmun retired in 1994 and died in 1999. Scalia’s views, as noted earlier, were not (to my knowledge) publicly revealed until 2009. Nor were Justice O’Connor’s, and she had already retired in 2006 (she is now 86). The 2009 *Wall Street Journal* article made clear that O’Connor is a non-Stratfordian, but was less clear about whether she is an Oxfordian and revealed nothing about the origins of her views. Stevens eagerly testified that she leaned toward Oxford: “Sandra is persuaded that it definitely was not Shakespeare” and that “it’s more likely de Vere than any other candidate.” But O’Connor herself, in line with her 2009 signing of the SAC’s Declaration of Reasonable Doubt, stated for the record only that “it might well have been someone other than our Stratford man.”³³ SAC chair John Shahan reports that Scalia declined an invitation to sign the Declaration, citing a general policy against signing petitions and expressing surprise that anyone would care about his views on the issue. Powell and Blackmun died before the Declaration was issued, but are listed as prominent past authorship doubters.³⁴ Justice Stevens retired in 2010. Scalia was the last known Oxfordian among actively serving justices, and Stevens (absent further clarification from O’Connor) is now, at age 96, the last known Oxfordian justice still living.

There are signs of possible reinforcements. Authorship doubters continue to reach out to the current justices. The same 2009 article, published just months before Justice David H. Souter retired (he is now 76), quoted him as having “no idea” who the true author of the works of Shakespeare was. Justice Ruth Bader

Ginsburg, a Shakespeare aficionado³⁵ and close personal friend of Scalia,³⁶ said in the same article that she had “no informed views” about authorship but expressed some interest in alternative candidates (though not endorsing any). Ginsburg is still in active service at age 83. Neither Souter nor Ginsburg has signed the SAC Declaration, and it would be a stretch to call either an anti-Stratfordian, but it is interesting that they decline to endorse the view of leading academic Stratfordians that no educated person should have any doubt about the orthodox attribution. With Stevens and Scalia still actively serving Oxfordians in 2009, and Chief Justice John Roberts, Jr., and Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito, Jr., declining to comment on the issue to the *Wall Street Journal* reporter, this left Stratfordians in a somewhat embarrassing position, able to claim only two overt supporters (Justices Anthony Kennedy and Stephen Breyer)—a mere 22% of the active Court in 2009!³⁷

As we look back on the last thirty years, we can reflect on a remarkable period in the Supreme Court’s history. Justice Scalia, given his strongly stated views on so many difficult issues that came before the Court, will probably always be controversial.³⁸ But we should remember and admire him for his patriotism, his dedication to public service, his intellectual brilliance, and his sheer love of family, life, and literature. It should also be recalled that he was a man of deeply abiding religious faith who loved the ancient traditions of his Roman Catholic Church. Readers may note that I have not yet commented on this aspect of his life or views. That is mainly because Justice Scalia himself insisted it had no consequence or influence on his legal philosophy or role as a judge.³⁹ Nor am I aware of any reason to draw a connection between his religion and his views on the authorship of Shakespeare.

The history recounted here is a good reminder, in an unusually divisive and troubling political year, that the Shakespeare authorship question is a shared enthusiasm that can and does bring together people of otherwise dramatically diverse political and other views. However, a mystery I have not been able to illuminate is the extent to which the Supreme Court justices may have influenced each other’s views about Shakespeare. It is well known among Court-watching lawyers that the Justices have surprisingly little influence on each other’s legal views, typically operating almost like nine separate law offices. Nor, according to many accounts, are the Court’s private conferences (contrary to what one might hope) the scene for much deep philosophical discussion—rather, apparently, more like what diplomats call “an exchange of views.” The Justices seem to debate each other mostly through the public media of oral arguments and published opinions.

What we do know, as traced above, suggests that Stevens and Blackmun interacted quite a bit regarding their Oxfordian interests, and perhaps with O’Connor, too. But Scalia’s and Powell’s views appear to have been

well set long before they came to the Court. And even though Scalia and Ginsburg were known to be close friends who shared interests in opera and literature, no suggestion has yet emerged that the authorship question cropped up in their *tête-à-têtes*. Still, as we have seen, Ginsburg has demurely declined to endorse the Stratfordian theory and has expressed some interest in the issue. Perhaps more will emerge in time.

In any event, the authorship-doubting justices have spanned the entire ideological spectrum on the Court, from Scalia on the “right,” to O’Connor and Powell in the “center,” to Stevens and Blackmun on the “left”—though the constitutional law teacher in me compels the cautionary caveat that such simplistic labels fall far short of capturing the complexity and unpredictability of all of these judges. They all take seriously their oath to uphold the Constitution. We should also take seriously, as so many of them have, our pursuit of the truth about who wrote Shakespeare.

¹ Professor, Thomas Jefferson School of Law (San Diego), and member, Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship. I thank my beloved husband (and fellow Oxfordian), Ashish Agrawal, for his unstinting support of my lifelong studies in both law and Shakespeare.

² Scalia, “Common-Law Courts in a Civil-Law System: The Role of United States Federal Courts in Interpreting the Constitution and Laws,” in Scalia et al., *A Matter of Interpretation: Federal Courts and the Law* (Amy Gutmann ed. 1997), 17 (emphasis in original), quoted in Wildenthal, “Nationalizing the Bill of Rights: Revisiting the Original Understanding of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1866-67,” 68 *Ohio State Law Journal* 1509, 1529 (2007). My 2007 article was itself, in a nice twist, cited several times in the opinion of the Court joined by Justice Scalia in *McDonald v. Chicago*, 561 U.S. 742, 763 n.10 (2010) (upholding application to state and local governments of the Bill of Rights, in particular the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms, via the Fourteenth Amendment); see also *id.* at 829 n.10, 830 n.12, 841 (Thomas, J., concurring in part and concurring in judgment, also citing my article). For more on Scalia’s constitutional philosophy, see, e.g., Scalia, “Originalism: The Lesser Evil,” 57 *University of Cincinnati Law Review* 849 (1989), George Kannar, “The Constitutional Catechism of Antonin Scalia,” 99 *Yale Law Journal* 1297, 1303-1308 (1990), Ralph A. Rossum, *Antonin Scalia’s Jurisprudence: Text and Tradition* (2006), and James B. Staab, *The Political Thought of Justice Antonin Scalia: A Hamiltonian on the Supreme Court* (2006).

³ In addition to my 2007 article (cited n.2), see, e.g., Wildenthal, “The Right of Confrontation, Justice Scalia, and the Power and Limits of Textualism,” 48 *Washington & Lee Law Review* 1323 (1991).

⁴ Justice Scalia was a friend, as is Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, of my own dear friend Professor Susan Tiefenbrun, a faculty colleague. Thanks largely to her efforts, both Justices have generously visited our school multiple times. Odd as it may seem, Justices Scalia and Ginsburg themselves, poles apart ideologically (admired heroes of the Right and Left respectively), were themselves longtime personal friends. The photograph accompanying this article was taken in 2006 by Susan’s husband, Dr. Jonathan Tiefenbrun. I became interested in the SAQ around 2000, but did not really develop my Oxfordian views until after 2005. On the last occasion I met Scalia (in 2007), Susan and I enjoyed a private lunch with him and two other faculty colleagues. It would have been the perfect opportunity to discuss the SAQ! Instead, we chatted about other safely historical topics. I am strongly sympathetic to the textualist-originalist constitutional philosophy, though my take on it varies from Scalia’s. That, and what I now know to be our shared Oxfordian views, make me feel a certain kinship with him, despite our many disagreements.

⁵ Jess Bravin, "Justice Stevens Renders an Opinion on Who Wrote Shakespeare's Plays," *Wall Street Journal*, April 18, 2009, p. A1.

⁶ Looney, "Shakespeare" Identified in Edward de Vere the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford (1920); Dorothy Ogburn & Charlton Ogburn (Sr.), *This Star of England* (1952).

⁷ Joan Biskupic, *American Original: The Life and Constitution of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia* (2009), 21.

⁸ Biskupic, 24.

⁹ Biskupic, 67.

¹⁰ Biskupic, 11-17.

¹¹ This famous line in Jonson's First Folio dedication poem, apparently playful and ambiguous, is most properly read (according to strict grammar) in a conditional sense ("though thou hadst ... I would not seek" = "even if you had," etc.), a point apparently first noted in 1879 by a Stratfordian scholar but typically overlooked or ignored by Stratfordians ever since. C.M. Ingleby, *Shakespeare's Centurie of Prayse* (1879), 151-152, cited in Charlton Ogburn, Jr., *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality* (1984), 231-233, and Richard F. Whalen, "'Look Not on This Picture': Ambiguity in the Shakespeare First Folio Preface," *Shakespeare Matters* 10:3 (Summer 2011), 1, 29, 35; see also George Greenwood, *The Shakespeare Problem Restated* (1908), 474-475 & n. 1; Ogburn & Ogburn, 1215-1216 & n.17; Whalen, *Shakespeare: Who Was He?* (1994), 55, 158 n.10.

¹² Kannar, 1316.

¹³ Kannar, 1316.

¹⁴ Scott Dodson & Ami Dodson, "Literary Justice," 18 *Green Bag* 2d 429 (2015).

¹⁵ *Coy v. Iowa*, 487 U.S. 1012, 1016 (1988) (quoting *Richard II*, act I, sc. 1), quoted in Wildenthal, "Right of Confrontation," 1333 & n.48 (also recalling a memorable clash between Justices Douglas and Harlan over the meaning of Edmund's "Why bastard, wherefore base?" soliloquy, *King Lear*, act I, sc. 2, in a 1968 case concerning the law of illegitimacy).

¹⁶ *Henry IV, Part 1*, act III, sc. 1, quoted in *Johnson v. Santa Clara County Transportation Agency*, 480 U.S. 616, 674 (1987) (Scalia, J., dissenting). Scalia's point was to mock the majority's claim that Johnson, the purported victim of affirmative action favoring women, was not "automatically excluded from consideration," but was "able to have [his] qualifications weighed against those of other applicants." *Id.* at 638, 674. *Au contraire*, Scalia apparently meant to suggest: Johnson, like Glendower, could call upon "consideration" but it was a foregone conclusion that no favorable decision would "come."

¹⁷ Bravin.

¹⁸ After Justice Blackmun weakly protested that "you didn't clear that with the rest of us," Justice Brennan bluntly reasserted his ruling and stated that if his colleagues disagreed, "let them write the dissents." Justice Stevens then joked that the standard could be "beyond a reasonable doubt" to match the letters of the "Bard." Brennan offered nothing to support his high bar except a false premise: that no authorship doubts were expressed prior to the 1700s. "In re Shakespeare: The Authorship of Shakespeare on Trial—Opinions of the Justices," 37 *American University Law Review* 819 & n.* (1988). See generally pp. 609-826, for the preface by David Lloyd Kreeger (the lawyer and philanthropist who was the main organizer of the event), articles and briefs by American University Law Professors Peter Jaszi (for Oxford) and James Boyle (for Stratford), and the transcript of the Justices' comments (video of the entire debate may be streamed for free, or downloaded for 99 cents, with DVD available for \$29.95, at <https://www.c-span.org/video/?618-1/shakespeare-author-pseudonym>). For a useful account of the whole affair, see James Lardner, "The Authorship Question," *New Yorker*, April 11, 1988, 87-106.

¹⁹ See generally SAC (<https://doubtaboutwill.org>).

²⁰ "Opinions of the Justices" (cited n.18), 822.

²¹ "Opinions of the Justices" 824.

²² "Opinions of the Justices" 825.

²³ SAC, "Notable Signatories" (<https://doubtaboutwill.org/signatories/notable>).

²⁴ Ogburn (1984).

²⁵ "Opinions of the Justices" 825.

²⁶ "Opinions of the Justices" 826.

²⁷ Bravin.

²⁸ *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* 45:3 (Dec. 2009), 1.

²⁹ Stevens, "The Shakespeare Canon of Statutory Construction," 140 *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 1373 (1992) (based on his 1991 Max Rosenn Lecture at Wilkes [PA] University); see also Stevens, "Section 43(a) of the Shakespeare Canon of Statutory Construction," 1 *John Marshall Review of Intellectual Property Law* 179 (2002) (based on his 2001 Beverly W. Pattishall Inaugural Lecture in Trademark Law at John Marshall Law School, Chicago).

³⁰ Charlton Ogburn, Jr., *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality* (2d. ed. 1992), vi.

³¹ See, e.g., Diana Price, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography: New Evidence of an Authorship Problem* (2001, rev. 2012) (with supplemental discussion at <http://www.shakespeare-authorship.com>), Mark Anderson, "Shakespeare" By Another Name: *The Life of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, the Man Who Was Shakespeare* (2005), Richard Paul Roe, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy: Retracing the Bard's Unknown Travels* (2011), and Professor Stritmatter's web site (<http://shake-speares-bible.com/about>). See generally *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?: Exposing an Industry in Denial* (John M. Shahan & Alexander Waugh eds. 2013).

³² Ogburn (1992) vi.

³³ Bravin.

³⁴ See SAC, "Past Doubters" (<https://doubtaboutwill.org/past-doubters>) (also noting that Powell's and Blackmun's comments quoted in Ogburn [1992] vi, were stated in letters written to Ogburn after the 1987 debate).

³⁵ She has participated in several Shakespeare-related events, most recently a mock appeal by Shylock, the antihero of *The Merchant of Venice*. Rachel Donadio, "Ginsburg Weighs Fate of Shylock," *New York Times*, July 28, 2016, C1.

³⁶ See note 4.

³⁷ Bravin.

³⁸ The vacancy created by Scalia's unexpected death has been consumed by an unseemly political brouhaha, in which a majority of the U.S. Senate is engaging in an astonishing and historically unprecedented degree of obstruction by refusing even to consider President Obama's nominee to replace him. See, e.g., Wildenthal, Academic Commentary, *Jurist* (Feb. 21, 2016, <http://www.jurist.org/forum/2016/02/bryan-wildenthal-republicans-court.php>); Wildenthal, "Memorandum on Supreme Court Vacancies and Confirmations During Presidential Election Years," Thomas Jefferson School of Law Research Paper No. 2735256 (Feb. 20, 2016, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2735256>).

³⁹ A fair-minded summary of his Catholic religious upbringing, and how it may generally have influenced him, is provided in Biskupic, 19-26, 185-210.



SOF Conference, November 3-6, 2016

Some two dozen major names in authorship and Oxfordian studies from the U.S., Canada and the U.K.—and a few whose names are not yet so well-known—will speak at the upcoming SOF Conference at the Boston Marriott Newton Hotel in Newton, MA, November 3-6.

At press time, the full schedule was not finalized, but the presenters listed below are **confirmed**.

Also planned is a panel moderated by SOF President Tom Regnier with the four editors of Oxfordian publications: Roger Stritmatter and Michael Delahoyde of *Brief Chronicles*, Chris Pannell of *The Oxfordian* and Alex McNeil of the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*.

Other highlights will include attending an evening show of the Actors' Shakespeare Project production of *Hamlet*, and a public reading of a musical play for young people by long-time Oxfordian and former SOF Board member Lynne Kositsky and her husband, composer Michael Kositsky. The musical, *A Question of Will*, is based on her own young adult novel of the same name and will feature a reading cast of eighteen Oxfordians (see box on opposite page).

Actors' Shakespeare Project (ASP), founded in 2004, is an award-winning professional theater company boasting extensive education, youth and community programs. ASP performs and works in found spaces, schools, theaters and neighborhoods. Its production of

Hamlet, directed by Doug Lockwood, is on Friday, November 4, at 7:30 P.M. at the historic Church of the Covenant on Newbury Street in Boston. Tickets are \$35 and may be ordered through the SOF website.

Information on transportation to the show will be available at the conference. For more information about the production and the company, please visit <http://www.actorsshakespeareproject.org/>

Other events taking place in Boston that members may wish to visit include the Boston Public Library's two exhibits celebrating Shakespeare. From the BPL:

Shakespeare Unauthorized, a major gallery exhibition on view from October 14, 2016 through March 31, 2017, will include extraordinarily rare first and early editions of familiar and beloved plays like *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, and *The Merchant of Venice*, as well as all four Shakespearean folios, most notably the BPL's own copy of the world-famous *First Folio*.

Shakespeare Unauthorized also contains surprising rarities and mysterious objects; scandalous forgeries made by con men and accomplished scholars; books from the luxurious private libraries of early English aristocrats; and memorabilia from four centuries of acting and stagecraft.

Bonner Cutting	"A Sufficient Warrant: Taking a Closer Look at Oxford's 1,000 Pound Annuity."
Earl Showerman	"1584: Shakespeare's Greek Satires on Misanthropy and War."
Ramon Jiménez	"A 1584 dating for <i>Henry V</i> ."
Wally Hurst	"Playing Hardball: Practical Politics for the Authorship Issue."
John Hamill	"An Elizabethan Quadrangle: Penelope Rich, Henry, Edward and Elizabeth."
Ron Hess	"Two Latin Dedications to Oxford by Munday and Greene."
Peter Dickson	"The Great Debate: Was Shakespeare a Secret Catholic?"
Anne Elezabeth Pluto	"I am arm'd and well prepared: A History of the Oxford Street Players of Lesley University."
Christopher Carolan	"Authorship Attitudes and Allusions: 1750-1830."
Tom Townsend	"De Vere's Lesser Legacy: The Legal Concept of Equity."
James Warren	"Motivating Stratfordians to Examine the Evidence."
Julie Sandys Bianchi	"Renaissance Card Games and the First Folio."
Shelly Maycock	"Branding the Author: Assessing the Folger First Folio Tour."
Sky Gilbert	"A Pagan Play About Language: Challenging the Traditional Dating of <i>Macbeth</i> ."
Bob Meyers	"Breaking In," the editor of the popular "How I Became an Oxfordian" series looks at ways to get journalists interested in the authorship issue.
Michael Morse	"Another View of the Sonnets."
Mike Wainwright *	"Ramus's Pedantry and Oxford's Pedants."
Patricia Costello	"Shakespeare's Knowledge of Neoplatonism"
Heward Wilkinson	"Secrets and the Shakespeare Authorship."
William Camarinos	"Who Wrote Shakespeare? Revisiting the 1987 Supreme Court Panel."

The Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library, an independent, non-profit institution, will feature a complementary exhibition *Shakespeare's World* opening September 3, 2016, and running through February 2017. William Shakespeare's comedies, tragedies, and histories take place in a number of fascinating and often picturesque locations throughout Europe, Asia and Africa, in eras from classical times to the Renaissance. In this exhibition of forty maps, images and three-dimensional objects, visitors will visit these locales by seeing items from Shakespeare's lifetime, learning about the world in the time of Shakespeare, and understanding the symbolic role that geography held to the dramas. Kronborg Castle in Denmark, known as Elsinore in *Hamlet*, will be highlighted in the exhibition. A 1629 Dutch map depicting the Danish Kingdom, along with a vignette illustrating "Elsenor," will be on display. Complementing this map will be an original print of "Cronenburg" from Samuel von Pufendorf's 1696 historical atlas. Geographically-significant quotes from the dramas will set the stage for visitors, who will also see Heinrich Bünting's famous "Clover leaf map" from 1581 and Abraham Ortelius' 1570 edition of *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*.

These exhibits are free and open to the public from 10 to 7 Monday through Thursday, 10 to 5 Friday and Saturday, and 1 to 5 on Sunday.

Also playing on Saturday, November 5, at 7:30 and 10:30 P.M. is the American Repertory Theatre's production of *The Donkey Show*, a disco retelling of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, at Oberon in Harvard Square, Cambridge. From the website:

Tony Award-winner Diane Paulus's celebrated smash hit *The Donkey Show*, brings you the ultimate disco experience—a crazy circus of mirror balls and feathered divas, of roller skaters and hustle queens inspired by Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Come party on the dance floor to all the 70s disco hits you know by heart as the show unfolds around you. After the show, the party continues into the night so you can live out your own fantasy of disco fever!

While these last two events are not part of the formal conference program, a private tour of the library exhibits and group tickets for *The Donkey Show* can be arranged if there is significant member interest. Please indicate this on your registration form.

As usual, the SOF will also hold its annual business meeting and an award will be given to the Oxfordian of the Year. A screening of the video of the 1987 Supreme

Court panel debate will be included in the evening program during the first day of the program.

Following the conference, on Monday, November 7, at 6 P.M., there will be a special screening of the documentary *Nothing is Truer than Truth* at the Boston Public Library. The film will open the *Shakespeare on Film* series curated by Brattle Theater director Ned Hinkle as part the of library's "Shakespeare 400" celebrations. A post-screening panel discussion of recent discoveries in Shakespeare authorship research, moderated by the film's director, Cheryl Eagan-Donovan, will feature SOF members Tom Regnier, Earl Showerman, and Mark Anderson.



CASTING PREVIEW:
A Question of Will
by Lynne and Michael Kositsky

Perin/Willow	Michele Mauler
Shaksper	Walter Hurst
de Vere (Oxford)/Gaoler	Tom Regnier
John Pyke	Karen Fanale
Burbage	Roger Stritmatter
Samantha/Queen Bess	Anon.
Ben Jonson/Goffe/Thomas	Chris Pannell
Melissa/Bridget	Theresa Laurincela
Narrator/Kemp	Mark Anderson
Francisco/Admiral's	
Apprentice II/Baker	Maria Hurst
Mrs. Lewes	Pat Storrer
Peter/Grocer	William Storrer
Tailor	Shelley Maycock
Ms. Smithson	Sarah Smith
Heminges/	
Tireman/Large Boy	Earl Showerman
Barnardo/	
Admiral's Apprentice I	Heward Wilkinson
Spencer	Michael Kositsky
Swing	Rebecca Briley



SHAKESPEARE OXFORD FELLOWSHIP

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Full conference registration, November 3-6 (includes all conference presentations):

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Single conference days (specify day(s): _____)	\$65 x	_____ = _____
Sunday banquet luncheon only: (banquet is included with full conference registration)	\$40 x	_____ = _____

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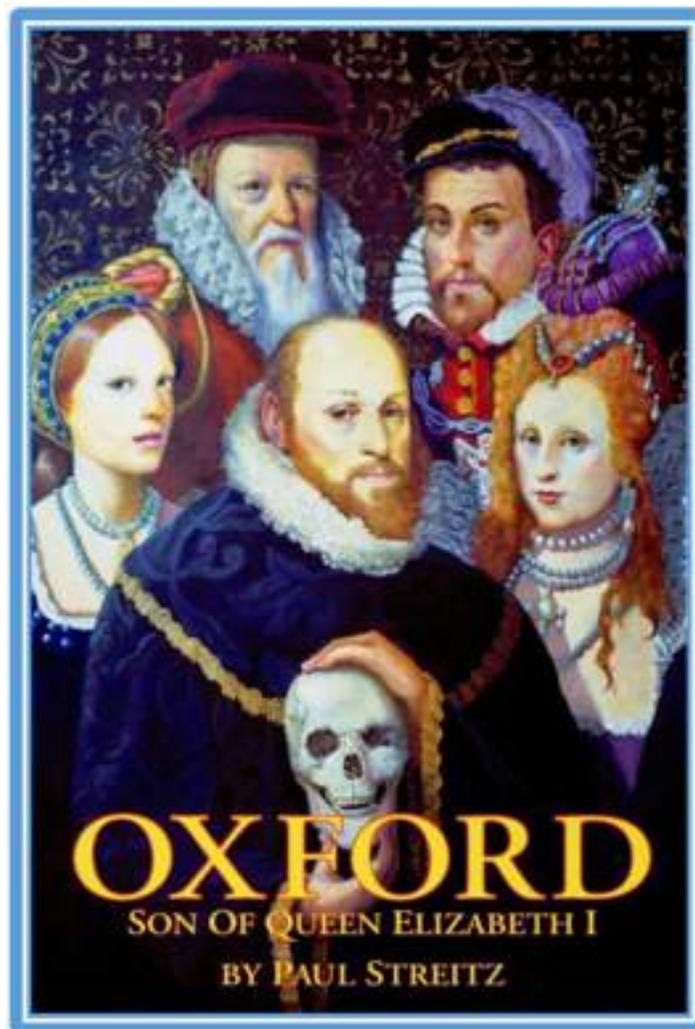
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Advertisement

**Reviews**

In this very well researched, scholarly work, he clears away much of the mysticism surrounding William Shakespeare and in a shocking deviation from standard history texts, recounts the evidence that Queen Elizabeth I, at the tender age of thirteen, became the mother of a male child by her stepfather, Thomas Seymour.

If you have any interest in Tudor England, this is the one book you **MUST** read; it is an accomplishment of outstanding significance with more surprises on every page. Currently accepted history is ...history.

Beverly J. Rowe *MyShelf.Com*

...his marvelous understanding of and insight into the plays and sonnets attributed to Shake-speare...enable him to present a convincing and plausible scenario that points to Oxford (de Vere) as the true and only Shake-speare...absolutely the most marvelous read of the season.

Dr. Linda L. Labin *Best Reads*

Reader Comments

Intrigued by Streitz's analysis of the significance of "Venus and Adonis," I left off his book and fetched my copy of the poem and read it straight through. Frankly, considering the poem's content in view of Mr. Streitz's suggested context was not only stunning but left me with chills for some time thereafter. His context renders the poem not merely darkly erotic but shatteringly so. Viewed relative to the whole of Streitz's theory, it is absolutely chilling.

Her Dotnesson

The author presents new, major evidence that Oxford did not die in 1604, an attacking point for many critics against the Oxford thesis. Streitz comments that the first recorded recognition that he was dead was in January 1608, and then the First Folio was in April of that year. Finally, looking at the King James Bible and the controversy around that version, the author has boldly concluded that Oxford wrote/created the KJV! If that doesn't get you to the bookstore, I don't know what will.

Donald A. Collinson

Available on Amazon.com

Or, \$22.50, postage paid from Paul Streitz, PO Box 2303, Darien, CT 06820

Making a Planned Gift to the SOF

by Joan Leon, SOF Trustee and Fundraising Committee Chair

Anyone reading a single page of this newsletter will see that the SOF is an organization made up of people who are passionate about the authorship issue. It's a subject that has excited our members for five decades and will do so for many more—until the day when the rest of the world recognizes Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, as Shakespeare.

As devoted members of the SOF, we already provide annual support toward the work of the organization. But what about the future? Many of us may not be in the position to make a major gift to the SOF during our lifetime, but we can make a planned gift through our estate. Such gifts, whether small or large, are a very important way to insure that the organization's work will continue uninterrupted and undiminished.

Before you read any further, I want to draw your attention to one way of making a planned gift that is quick and easy, and allows you the maximum flexibility during your lifetime. It is the **POD account**. You can set it up at your bank (see next page). And keep in mind that other members of the SOF are available to offer you advice and additional information. Please ask us, and help us build a strong SOF that will last until its work is accomplished.

Why Planned Gifts Are A Good Idea

By making a charitable bequest in your will or living trust you can ensure that the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship will continue to be a strong voice for the identification of Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, as the real author of the Shakespeare canon. While your planned gift will help the SOF, it is also likely to enable you to gain valuable tax and income benefits.

Planned Gifts Ensure the Future

Planned gifts differ from other gifts in that they are not made out of current discretionary funds, but come from a person's financial and/or estate plan. They usually are delayed until a date determined by the donor, or are a part of a donor's will. While the SOF spends the funds raised each year on ongoing work, these gifts provide the assurance needed to enable the organization to take on longer-term projects that require a multi-year effort to be maximally effective.

Adopting a Future-Looking Agenda

For the SOF, gifts that look to the future are now a top priority. You can see this in our new agenda, which is clearly multi-year and focuses on exposing the authorship hoax as rapidly as possible. Members requested this agenda at our 2015 Annual Meeting in Ashland, Oregon. Members told the SOF Board that they wanted the organization to take a more proactive role, increasing its support of research, its encouragement and promotion of

books and papers by our members and others, and projecting a stronger voice in public education and advocacy. That is what, with your help, the SOF is now doing with its 2016-and-beyond agenda.

The SOF 2016-And-Beyond Agenda

The SOF Board consolidated members' recommendations into an expanded agenda that includes all current activities and also creates or strengthens the following initiatives:

- Strengthening our Research Grant Program (This year a grant from the Joe W. & Dorothy Dorsett Brown Foundation is helping the SOF accumulate matching funds for the grant program, up to \$10,000.)
- Setting up a new Outreach Support Program providing funds for special events that increase awareness and understanding of authorship research. (In 2016, \$5,000 has been budgeted for such efforts.)
- Hiring subject experts with public relations experience to bring new books and scholarship to the attention of the media, critics and academia. This effort is being funded by members' annual donations.
- Making our website more engaging and informative for the general reader (funded in 2015 and 2016 from member donations).

The Board agreed on a second group of initiatives to be implemented as additional funds allow:

- Implementing a multi-faceted public education program with hands-on guidance and support to teachers, students, actors, and others who want to explore the authorship issue and share it with others;
- Disseminating our journals and newsletter to more libraries and educational institutions;
- Improving our collection, preservation and dissemination of Oxfordian research and scholarship.

To support these initiatives, the SOF is pursuing a planned giving campaign to stimulate gifts for the future, and is seeking support from foundations, corporations and special events.

How to Make a Planned Gift to the SOF

Bequests. One of the most popular ways to make a planned gift to a nonprofit organization is by including a bequest to the organization in your will or trust. This can be in the form of a specific amount or a percentage of the estate. An example of the latter is the Trust of T. Robert Chapman, a longtime member of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, who died in 1997. Mr. Chapman specified that 5% of the assets remaining after the death of his heir should go to the SOS (now SOF). As a result we received \$52,600 in 2012.

To include a bequest in your will, you will need to use language similar to the following:

I hereby give, devise and bequeath \$ _____ or _____ (specific asset), or _____ % of rest, residue and remainder of my estate to the Shakespeare Oxford Society (d/b/a the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of New York.

A Payable on Death (POD) Account at your Bank.

By far the easiest and quickest way to make a planned gift to the SOF is by a “Payable On Death” (POD) account at your financial institution. This can be a new account opened for this purpose or an existing account where you change the beneficiary to the SOF. You continue to retain complete control of the account during your lifetime, adding or withdrawing funds at will. After your death, the remaining funds will go to the beneficiary without probate. These accounts used to be known as Totten Trusts. Banks have forms already printed up for these accounts. The forms ask for the following information:

*Name: Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship,
Address: P.O. Box 66083, Auburndale, MA 02466,
Tax Identification number: 13-6105314.*

IRA and Retirement Plan Assets. A donor can name the SOF as the designated beneficiary of a retirement plan such as an IRA, 401(k) or 403(b). This is an effective way to make a charitable gift since it is not subject to estate or income taxes, which would be incurred if the funds were left to someone other than a spouse.

Life Insurance. For many of us there comes a time when a life insurance policy that was necessary years ago is no longer needed. Such policies are ideal charitable gifts. One makes a gift of life insurance by irrevocably designating the SOF as the owner and beneficiary of the policy. Paid up policies (i.e., where there are no more premiums payable) work best. A donor can also name the SOF as a partial or contingent beneficiary of a policy on the donor’s life while retaining ownership of the policy.

Charitable Gift Annuity. This type of gift allows the donor to make a charitable gift and still receive income. The donor (and possibly others) may receive immediate or deferred income through this arrangement. Age and amount limitations apply, so it will most certainly require the participation of the donor’s professional advisor, but it does allow the donor to support the SOF, receive an immediate charitable income tax deduction, and lock in fixed, partially tax-free payments for life.

Charitable Remainder/Lead Trusts. The donor can realize the tax advantages of making a gift now—especially of appreciated assets—while still receiving income from the assets through a charitable remainder or charitable lead trust. With a charitable remainder trust, after providing income to the donor (and possibly others) during one’s lifetime, the remaining assets are donated to the SOF. With a charitable lead trust, the gift “leads” in the sense that the trust distributes income to the SOF for a period of years or during the donor’s lifetime at which point the remaining assets return to the surviving family members.

Securities. A gift of securities (e.g., stocks, bonds or mutual funds) offers a number of advantages including significant tax savings. If the securities have appreciated and have been held for at least twelve months, you can donate them to the SOF while deducting their full fair market value. To avoid a capital gains tax, it is necessary to donate the securities themselves rather than to sell them and donate the cash.

Contact Us for Further Information. Several SOF members have recently explored the domain of planned gifts and have chosen a gift plan most suitable for their own circumstances. These persons would be happy to help you consider your options. Please contact us at the address below or contact Thomas Rucker, the SOF’s treasurer, at [thomas.rucker17 @yahoo.com](mailto:thomas.rucker17@yahoo.com) for this information.

SOF Legacy Society. We are pleased to announce the formation of the SOF Legacy Society to provide lifetime recognition to those who have included the SOF in their estate plans. Please look for information about this group in the next Annual Report of the SOF.

If you make a planned gif to the SOF, please let us know.

For more information about planned gifts, please contact us at:

Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship
P.O. Box 66083
Auburndale, MA
02466-0083
or
[thomas.rucker17 @yahoo.com](mailto:thomas.rucker17@yahoo.com).



(Italy Tour - continued from page 1)

others were travel companions of Oxfordians. Our home base for the eight-day segment, which began on June 14, was the Albergo Verdi hotel in Padua, a small hotel centrally located near the tree-shaded Piazza Capitaniato (a few stayed in a nearby hotel). There we met our tour leader, Paola Balzo, and accompanied her to a get-acquainted dinner at the Ristorante Isola di Caprera.

Day Two: Sabbioneta

The next morning we met Paola and took a short walk to our private tour bus for the longest excursion of the tour, to Sabbioneta. This small village, located about 85 miles west of Padua, is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site in recognition of its application of “Renaissance urban planning theories.” The 16th-century equivalent of a planned community, it was designed by a local duke, Vespasiano Gonzaga (1531-1591), a military leader who was also keenly interested in architecture. Gonzaga personally supervised the construction of the town, which took place between 1556 and 1591. Our local guide, Sabita, showed us the Palazzo Giardino, the duke’s recreational palace with its sculptures and frescoes, the Teatro all’ Antica, a theater (completed in 1590, it is said to be the first one in Italy built specifically for that purpose), the Palazzo Ducale (the duke’s residence) and a historic synagogue.

One may well wonder what all this has to do with Shakespeare or Oxford. Richard Roe devotes a short chapter to Sabbioneta in his book, with some tantalizing clues that it may be the inspiration for the setting of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. In his travels in Italy, Roe happened upon Sabbioneta by chance, arriving there just in time for a guided tour. On that tour he learned that during the late 1500s, Vespasiano Gonzaga liked to invite notable artists and intellectuals to Sabbioneta, and that the town became known as “la piccola Atena,” or “Little Athens.” Of course, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is set in Athens; furthermore, as Roe points out, there are no references in the play to any other places in Greece and the local ruler is known as the Duke; there were no dukes in ancient Athens. A second possible link is that one of the two town gates, Porta della Vittoria, was also known as “la Quercia dei Duca,” or “the Duke’s Oak.” And in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, where do the mechanicals decide to rehearse their play? In Quince’s words, “At the Duke’s Oak we meet.” The town’s two original gates are still in use, by the way. Each is wide enough to accommodate one lane of vehicular traffic, and perhaps 1,000 people now live within the town’s old walls.

To be sure, more work is needed to firm up the connection between Sabbioneta and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. There is no evidence that Oxford visited the town, though it is easy to imagine that he would have

been interested in such a place and that Vespasiano Gonzaga would have been just as interested in meeting him. In any event, it was an interesting excursion for all of us to a place that’s a bit off the beaten path. Suitably impressed, we boarded the bus and were back in Padua for dinner.

Day Three: Verona

Paola collected us after breakfast and we boarded the tour bus for Verona, which is about thirty miles northwest of Padua. There we met our local guide, Katia. Situated on the Adige River, Verona has been inhabited for more than 2,000 years. There are traces of three sets of city walls—one from Roman times, one from the 1200s and the third from the 1500s. It was outside the latter walls that we made our first stop, to look at several stands of sycamore trees, which are the remnants of the “sycamore grove” mentioned in *Romeo and Juliet*. As Shakespeare accurately placed it, the sycamores (still) lie just beyond the western walls of the city.

The driver then found his way to a large tour bus parking lot, where we disembarked. Verona is a very popular tourist destination, and it’s no exaggeration to say that Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* has made it so. The city could well be nicknamed “Stratford-on-Adige,” because of the connection and also because many of the local attractions are based on tradition, rather than on historical accuracy. Katia led us to the Franciscan monastery, which is the site of “Juliet’s tomb.” However, as Katia explained, that’s all based on tradition. The original site (probably from the 14th century) contained an unmarked grave; all the bones were removed from the site some decades later (no one knows where they went); the sarcophagus itself has been moved more than once; and for many years people broke off chips of the current sarcophagus as souvenirs. So, to sum up, “Juliet’s tomb” consists of an empty, damaged sarcophagus in a different location, and we have no idea who was originally buried in it.

But the power of myth endures. Katia told us that “Juliet” in Verona still receives about 5,000 letters a year from the lovelorn; all are duly answered by the members of the Juliet Club, which was formed for that purpose.

We then walked through the downtown area, past the Arena (built by the Romans, it’s older than the Colosseum in Rome and is still used for operas and concerts), the Piazza dei Signori, and stopped briefly in front of the house said to be “Romeo’s house.” It’s privately owned, and is not open to the public, so it doesn’t get as much attention as “Juliet’s house,” which is probably the most popular attraction in the city. It’s located in a small courtyard just off a main street. When our group got there just before lunch, the place was packed—there was a bottleneck of tourists (many in

organized groups) making their way through the narrow passageway that leads from the street into the courtyard. Katia smartly advised us to come back after lunch, when there would be fewer groups. She was right; it was less congested after lunch. The passageway into the courtyard is completely covered with graffiti, so much so that it looks oddly artistic. Once inside the courtyard, one sees “Juliet’s house” in one corner, in front of which is a statue of Juliet. On two other sides of the courtyard are gift shops selling every conceivable Romeo-and-Juliet-related trinket.

The “house” is open to the public. You can make your way up to the second floor and actually stand on Juliet’s balcony. Except, of course, there is no “balcony” in the play (or anywhere else in Shakespeare). As Richard Roe astutely notes, it’s clear from the text that Juliet appears at her “window.” Katia informed us that the current balcony on this house was taken from another dwelling and installed here in the 1930s.

The statue of Juliet is at least as popular as the house. This is because of the superstition that if you touch Juliet’s right breast, you’ll be lucky in love. So, all day long there’s a parade of people—male, female, young and old—standing alongside the statue, posing for photos with their hand on Juliet’s breast. As Katia told us, the current statute was erected to replace one on which the right breast had been completely worn away.

As we walked back to the bus we got a glimpse of the church of San Pietro Incarnario, which Roe identified as the “St. Peter’s church” mentioned in *Romeo and Juliet*. The building has been extensively rebuilt since the 1500s and is now an Orthodox church.

On the way back to Padua, we made a brief stop at Villafranca di Verona, a small town about ten miles from Verona. It is the site of the Castello Scaligero, built in the 1200s. Roe has identified this town as the “Old Freetown” mentioned in the play, where commercial disputes were often adjudicated.

Of course, Shakespeare chose to set two plays in Verona, in whole or in part. But Katia explained to us that the locals are not particularly interested in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, because only part of the play takes place in Verona and because it lacks the specific local geographical references that permeate *Romeo and Juliet*. We spoke to her briefly about the authorship issue, a topic that she was aware of; she even knew that an Italian, John Florio, has recently been suggested as an alternative candidate. She was not familiar with Roe’s book (which has not been translated into any other languages), but promised to order it.

Day Four: Padua and Bassano del Grappa

Today’s tour began in Padua (or Padova, as it’s known in the non-English speaking world). We walked

about fifteen minutes to the Cappella degli Scrovegni, where we met Katerina, our local guide. Truly an artistic masterpiece, this chapel was built in the early 1300s by Enrico Scrovegni, and has been extensively restored during the last hundred years. It is known for the stunning frescoes by Giotto on the walls and the ceiling, depicting the life of the Virgin Mary. The wall frescoes are arranged in three horizontal rows along three walls of the chapel; they tell a chronological story of Mary’s life, but there is also a thematic artistic link that connects each vertical array of three frescoes.

Scientists are doing their best to preserve the artwork. Access to the chapel is limited to groups of twenty-five at a time. Each group must pass through a climate-controlled entryway, and can remain in the chapel for only fifteen minutes.

From there we walked to the University of Padua, which was also founded in the 1300s. Among its former faculty members are Copernicus and Galileo. Some of its older classrooms are still in use.

Next stop was the baptistery at the Cattedrale del Duomo, where we saw frescoes painted by a student of Giotto. From there our group split up. Some walked a short distance to a spot on Via 20 Settembre where Richard Roe conjectured that Act 1, scene 1, of *The Taming of the Shrew* was set. Katerina also called our attention to an inscription on a building wall just a few yards from our hotel, which contained (in English and Italian) excerpts from Lucentio’s first speech:

For the great desire I had to see fair Padua, nursery of arts, I am arrived . . . and am to Padua come as he that leaves a shallow plash to plunge him in the deep, and with satiety seeks to quench his thirst.

After lunch it was back on the bus, this time to Bassano del Grappa, a fashionable little town nestled at the foot of the Alps, famous for its *grappa* (an after-dinner wine made from the second pressing of grapes) and the Ponte Vecchio/Ponte degli Alpini, a wooden bridge on the River Brenta designed by Andrea Palladio. The town also boasts a favorite son, the painter Jacopo dal Ponte, better known as Jacopo Bassano. The reason for our visit was to see his “monkey frescoes,” which once graced the façade of the Dal Corno family home on the Piazzotto del Sale, “the little square of salt.” En route, our resident expert on the topic, Julia Cleave, gave us an introduction to their *Othello* connection.

In the Museo Civico, we were ushered into another climate-controlled gallery, this one dominated by Bassano’s *Facciata afferescata di casa Dal Corno*. Detached in 1975 to avoid further deterioration, the faded fresco now fills an entire wall with its complex iconography. The artist incorporated female nudes,

heraldic insignia, Old Testament scenes, cherubs, animals, tools, books and musical instruments into four horizontal friezes of various heights, but our focus was on a few specific elements relating to Shakespeare. The musical instruments depicted may well reflect Bassano's family, instrument makers and musicians in the English court during Shakespeare's time, while Emilia Lanier (née Bassano), the artist's cousin, is speculated by some to be the "Dark Lady" of the Sonnets. Near the instruments are the figures of a goat and a monkey, and beneath them a female nude described as Prudenza in the museum's guidebook, but referred to as Truth by at least one scholar. She is holding a torch aloft while standing between two arched spaces where a door and a window with "jalousies" once hung. The nearby scene of a naked Noah, looking like a drunken fool, completes the set of images possibly seen by the author of these lines in Act III, scene iii of *Othello*:

It is impossible you should see this,
 Were they as prime as Goats, as hot as Monkeys,
 As salt as Wolves in pride, and Fools as gross
 As Ignorance, made drunk. But yet, I say,
 If imputation, and strong circumstances,
 Which lead directly to the door of Truth,
 Will give you satisfaction, you might have't.

As with Sabbioneta, the visit to idyllic Bassano del Grappa was a welcome relief from the hordes of tourists encountered in the larger cities.

Day Five: Mantua

Today's sojourn was to Mantua (aka Mantova), which lies about two hours west of Padua. Mantua is a much smaller city than Padua or Verona, but is famous for, among other things, two palaces built by members of the Gonzaga family who ruled Mantua for about 380 years from the 1300s to the early 1700s (this is a different branch of the family from Vespasiano Gonzaga, who designed Sabbioneta). Our local guide, Lorenzo, was an art historian. We first toured the Palazzo Ducale, an enormous building of more than 500 rooms (more than 900 "spaces," if one counts corridors and foyers), constructed over the course of several generations. The Gonzagas were art collectors. Many of the rooms contain frescoes, which have been restored to varying degrees. Originally, many other rooms also contained paintings collected or commissioned by the Gonzagas, but most of these were sold in 1627 when the family found itself in serious financial trouble; ironically, the purchaser of many of the paintings was King Charles I of England.

At the end of the morning tour we met Prof. Michael Delahoyde of Washington State University and his colleague, Coleen Moriarty, in a palace courtyard.

Delahoyde and Moriarty received a research grant in 2015 from the SOF (see "New Evidence of Oxford in Venice," Winter 2016 issue of the *Newsletter*). On the basis of their 2015 work, they received a second grant this year, and were spending part of their time in Mantua. Delahoyde and Moriarty introduced us to one of the museum directors, Dr. Asman, who gave us a private tour of some rooms not open to the public. This part of the tour ended in a room (possibly originally used as a guest bedroom) that contained wall and ceiling frescoes depicting the Trojan War.



Achilles "himself behind . . . his spear"—an inspiration to "Shakespeare" in *Lucrece*?

This room, with its artwork, offers the most intriguing possible connection linking Oxford (as "Shakespeare") and Mantua. In his 1594 poem *The Rape of Lucrece*, Shakespeare devotes some 217 lines—more than one-ninth of the entire poem—to the traumatized Lucrece staring at (or so recalling) "a piece of skillful painting, made for Priam's Troy." Why did the poet include such a long and painstakingly detailed description? Of particular interest is one septet:

That for Achilles' image stood his spear,
Grip'd in an armed hand; himself behind,
Was left unseen, save to the eye of mind;
A hand, a foot, a face, a leg, a head,
Stood for the whole to be imagined. [1422-1428]

And what does one see in the fresco itself? Yes, it's just as Shakespeare described—Achilles is hidden behind his *spear*.

To date, there is no documentary evidence that Oxford visited Mantua, but Delahoyde and Moriarty are hoping to find something. That is why they're spending part of their time in the office of the Mantua Archives (which we also visited after leaving the palace). If they're successful, that will provide powerful corroborative evidence that the Palazzo Ducale frescoes of the Trojan War directly inspired Shakespeare. It may be a bit like trying to find a needle in a haystack, but the city Archives appear to be well organized and are at least partially indexed.

After lunch we toured the Palazzo Te, located on the other side of town. It was built between 1524 and 1534 by Federico Gonzaga II as his "leisure" palace. Gonzaga's mistress lived here, while his wife resided in the Palazzo Ducale. The palace was built and decorated by Giulio Romano, who was known not only as a painter and sculptor, but also as an architect, set designer and costume designer. As our guide Lorenzo pointed out, because it was a "leisure" home, almost all of the artwork is secular in nature. As a matter of fact, some of it is *quite* secular, even sexually explicit. Most rooms are devoted to a particular theme. Perhaps the most impressive was the one depicting "The Fall of the Giants," with Zeus dispatching thunder and lightning to topple the giants' tower. As Lorenzo explained, the room originally had rounded corners and a sloping floor, so that it seemed almost spherical, and Gonzaga had servants hidden in alcoves with braziers and whips to simulate lightning and thunder. Truly, it was the Renaissance equivalent of "special effects."

In response to a question, Lorenzo stated that Giulio Romano was well known in England during Shakespeare's day. One wonders, however, if that statement is true. Is it possible that Lorenzo and others are reasoning backwards, i.e., that because Romano was mentioned by Shakespeare, he must have been well known?

Day Six: Free Day

There was nothing on the official itinerary today. Some people caught up on their sleep and took it easy. Two or three took the train to Bologna. A larger group booked passage on the river boat *Il Burchiello*, which afforded the only opportunity to visit Villa Foscari, generally closed to the public except in conjunction with this all-day cruise on the River Brenta.

In the early morning, several taxis ferried our group to the landing at Padua's Porta Portello. We were soon cruising east at a leisurely pace along the original course of the 18th century Venetian *burchielli*. Sitting on the open upper deck or below, we listened to a live narrative describing points of interest on shore and explanations of the mechanics behind the movable bridges and five locks encountered along the way. There is little doubt that a traveler in Shakespeare's time could traverse the great distance between Padua and Venice relatively safely and swiftly via this route.

Ashore, we toured the Villa Pisani, grand home of the 114th Doge, and the much smaller but equally elegant Villa Widmann and its gardens. Our last stop was in Malcontenta at Villa Foscari, Andrea Palladio's architectural masterpiece and the presumed model for Portia's Belmont in *The Merchant of Venice*. Palladio's strict adherence to symmetry and rules of composition is enhanced by a cycle of frescoes on the *piano nobile*, the main or "noble" floor. Battista Franco's and Battista Zelotti's pastel scenes from Roman mythology still delight, despite years of abuse when the building was used for the storage of grain and livestock. After many decades and a series of owners, the villa is again in the hands of Venice's Foscari family who use it for special occasions.

A 16th century drawing in Roe's book shows that the grounds and embankment have been greatly altered, but one could easily picture guests alighting at a watery slip just to the west of the villa, accessing it via a narrow path. Visible from the second story portico, the slip could conceivably have facilitated a visit of "imagin'd speed."

Onboard again, our burchiello passed Fusina and the general area that was once the site of "the Tranect" where passengers transferred from the smaller river barges to larger vessels with sails, more fit to cross the wide expanse of the Venice Lagoon. We spent a few lovely hours in Venice having dinner away from the madding crowd and then we caught one of the last trains back to Padua.

Day Seven: Venice

We took a city bus to the Padua train station, where we boarded a train for the 45-minute trip to Santa Lucia Station in Venice. There we met our local guide, Rita, who was born and raised in the city. We walked over bridges, and through some hidden gardens, to our first stop, the Ghetto. Rita explained that before the 1500s, Jews had long been permitted to be in Venice during the day, but could not remain there at night. Venetian authorities changed that policy around 1515, when they established permanent living space for Jews within the city. Because Jews were not Christians, the authorities sought a location that was not near a Roman Catholic church, i.e., not on "consecrated ground." They selected

selected an island that had been used as a metal foundry, known as “Geti.” This word is the origin of the word “ghetto.” Within a few years, Jews were also permitted to live on two other adjacent islands. Though they could now live in Venice, Jews still did not have complete freedom of movement. They could be in other parts of the city during the day, but were still required to return to the Ghetto at night, where the gates would be locked and guarded. (Rita added that Jewish physicians were permitted to leave the Ghetto at night to administer to the sick. She also explained that similar restrictions were imposed on other groups who were seen as “outsiders,” such as Lutherans.)

Rita noted that Venice’s Jews came from different ethnic groups—Spanish, German, Eastern European, Middle Eastern, etc. This led to the establishment of different synagogues within the Ghetto, some of which were only rooms within houses. Shakespeare, of course, was fully aware of the diversity of Venice’s Jewish community, as is evident when Shylock speaks of “my tribe” in *The Merchant of Venice*.

As we passed out of the Ghetto, we encountered a film crew shooting a scene from *Young Mozart*, possibly an upcoming film or TV series. We noticed, of course, that all the equipment had to be brought in by boat—there are still no cars, trucks or buses in the 118-island city of Venice. Canals are still vital arteries for commerce and travel. As we walked, we were able to see municipal boats picking up trash, an ambulance boat, and even a gondola that had been prepared for a funeral; it was draped in black cloth and had four gondoliers dressed in black and violet.

We made a special stop at the Church of the Greeks, where Edward de Vere himself worshipped during his five-month stay in Venice in 1575. It is still in use as a Greek Orthodox church. Photography was prohibited inside the building, which contains impressive artwork, much of it mosaics.

After lunch, we assembled at St. Mark’s Square, which, as is usual in the warmer months, was thronged with visitors from all over the world. (Rita told us that Venice hosts 80,000 tourists each day.) We first toured Saint Mark’s Basilica, which was founded in the 800s (the current building dates mainly from the 1200s) and admired its artwork, much of which is also mosaics. Then we had a lengthy tour of the adjacent Palazzo Ducale, famous for its artwork and for the “Bridge of Sighs,” an enclosed bridge where prisoners were transported from interrogation rooms in the palace to an adjacent prison.

We then took a water taxi (it’s more like a water bus, as it holds about 100 people and makes regular stops) back to Santa Lucia Station and boarded a train to Padua. There we had dinner at Osteria Antico Brolo, where we said goodbye to Paola, our tour manager, and where those of us who were going home said goodbye to each other.

Day Eight: Padua to Siena

Today was the day of departure for all but six members of our group who had booked the add-on tour. Before our farewells, Ann Zakelj took a stroll in our Padua neighborhood in search of elements relating to *The Taming of the Shrew*. Just a short walk from our hotel and a stone’s throw from the Ponte Gregorio Barbarigo is the Chiesa di San Luca. Almost hidden behind a pile of construction rubble and inaccessible due to a high fence, the little church where Bianca and Kate were married still stands. Across the bridge is the building designated as the *osteria* on an 18th century map in Roe’s book. Today, it’s the home of the Dipartimento Astronomia of the University of Padua. Back at the Verdi, our small group boarded a minivan and traveled about 180 miles southwest to Siena, where we would spend the next five nights at the four-star Hotel Athena.

Day Nine: Siena

Accompanied by our new Pax tour manager, Cristina Lambathakis, we made our way through the canyons of Siena’s old town, many of its buildings a burnt sienna, the color to which the city lends its name. On the Piazza del Duomo we were met by our city guide, Stella Soldani. Looming over the square is the Duomo di Siena, the 13th-century cathedral famed for its lacy façade and its marble stripes in symbolic black and white, the heraldic colors of the city.

Stella suggested we see the cathedral at a later time, since on our immediate agenda was a visit to the Archivio di Stato di Siena. There, our host led us first down a hallway and onto a narrow wrought iron balcony from whose lofty vantage point we could see the entire Piazza del Campo, the huge shell-shaped public square which was being prepared that day for Siena’s famous horse race, the Palio. Standing guard over the piazza is Torre del Mangia, symbol of the city and once the tallest civic structure in medieval Italy.

The state archives include the Museo delle Biccherna, which houses the Tavolette di Biccherna, the Biccherna Tablets, large wooden covers for the administrative records of the city’s oldest, most important financial bureau. Beginning in 1257, its magistrates commissioned the best local artists to create covers for its public ledgers and balance sheets, and 105 of these beautiful works of art are on display. We were given access to rooms with floor-to-ceiling shelves stacked with rare books, as well as frescoed chambers (resembling more a church interior than a museum) lined with documents under glass, including a letter of introduction by Francesco Lando of Catherine of Siena to Pope Urban VI, a letter in Dante Alighieri’s own hand, and the last will and testament of Giovanni Boccaccio, in which he left his books to his heirs.

Free for the rest of the day, our group members scattered to pursue individual interests. I (Ann) happened upon a little restaurant carved into the volcanic rock on



Mantua - A maze on the ceiling at the Palazzo Ducale



Mantua - Admiring the depiction of the Trojan War in the Palazzo Ducale



Padua - The wall plaque near our hotel



... FOR THE GREAT DESIRE I HAD
TO SEE FAIR PADUA, NURSERY OF ARTS
I AM ARRIVED ...
AND AM TO PADUA COME AS HE THAT LEAVES
A SHALLOW PLASH TO PLVNGE HIM IN THE DEEP,
AND WITH SATIETY SEEKS TO QVENCH HIS THIRST
SHAKESPEARE
(THE TAMING OF THE SHREW - ACT 1 - SCENE 1)

... PER IL GRANDE DESIDERIO CHE AVEVO
DI VEDERE LA BELLA PADOVA, CVLLA DELLE ARTI
SONO ARRIVATO ...
ED A PADOVA SON VENITO COME CHI LA SCIA
VNO STAGNO PER TYFFARSI NEL MARE,
ED A SAZIETA CERCA DI PLACARE LA SVA SETE
SHAKESPEARE
(LA BISBETICA DOMATA - ATTO 1 - SCENA 1)



Padua - Frescoes at the Cappella deli Scrovegni



Break time



Venice - The Ghetto



Artwork at the Palazzo Te



Villa Foscari on the River Brenta: Portia's house?

which the city is built. Occupying what was once an Etruscan subterranean grotto, Antica Osteria da Divo was a reminder of the many layers of history that can be explored in this “medieval” town.

Next was a visit to the Duomo, whose official name is the Cattedrale Metropolitana di Santa Maria Assunta. The interior mirrors the black and white exterior, a color combination which is derived from the legend of the city’s founders, Seno and Ascanio, sons of Remus, who entered Siena riding black and white horses. The massive columns dividing the two aisles from the nave each carry a flag representing one of Siena’s seventeen neighborhoods, or *contrade*, a colorful addition to the dichromatic scheme. The *pièce de résistance* of this magnificent cathedral are the floor mosaics. Fifty-six in all and 175 years in the making, they cover the entire floor with images derived from the Old Testament and allusions to Greek and Roman mythology. Here were two mosaics with connections to Shakespeare: *The Seven Ages of Man* (temporarily off-limits due to its restoration; see *Newsletter*, Summer 2002) and *Hermes Mercurius Trimegistus Contemporaneus Moyse*. As reflected in the text, the “thrice-greatest” Hermes was regarded during the Renaissance as an actual historical figure and a contemporary of Moses. Putatively an Egyptian, he is generally acknowledged as the author of the sacred *Corpus Hermeticum*, a theoretical treatise which sets forth the nature and principles of alchemy, the “Hermetic art.” In *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, when attempting to raise Thaisa from the dead, the physician Lord Cerimon says:

For look how fresh she looks....
 Death may usurp on nature many hours,
 And yet the fire of life kindle again
 The o’erpress’d spirits. I heard of *an Egyptian*
 That had nine hours lien dead,
 Who was by good appliance recovered.

Did Oxford see these mosaics during his sojourn here?

Day Ten: Florence

We met our Florence city guide before the Basilica of Santa Croce, whose enormous piazza had recently been transformed into a stadium for the annual Calcio Storico Fiorentino, a combination of soccer, rugby and wrestling, which originated in 16th century Florence and is reenacted today in historical costume. We avoided the crowded area and were led on a walking tour of the city. Included were the standard points of interest: Ponte Vecchio, Piazza Signoria, the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiori with Brunelleschi’s dome, Giotto’s Campanile, the Baptistery of San Giovanni and Ghiberti’s Gates of Paradise. We all understood the impossibility of seeing even a small fraction of Florence’s many treasures during a six-hour visit, so four of us refocused our attention on Shakespeare and set out to find “the Port.”



Our visit to the Mantua City Archives made the local paper!

Using Roe’s book as a guide, we easily found two places that he deduced were described in *All’s Well That Ends Well*. Piazza Goldoni, a square at the foot of Ponte alla Carraia, was where the Widow must have stood as she directed Helen toward her lodging:

Widow: Whither are you bound?
 Helen: To Saint Jacques le Grand. Where do the
 palmers lodge?
 Widow: At the Saint Francis here beside the [P]ort.

Radiating west from the Piazza Goldoni is the Borgo Ognissanti, a street that leads to the Piazza Ognissanti, for many centuries referred to as “the Port” when it was used as such by merchants and craftsmen moving their wares. On the square stands the impressive Chiesa di Ognissanti, the Church of All Saints. Just a few steps beyond it is a typical doorway, made distinctly atypical by a bas relief above it: an escutcheon with two crossed forearms, those of Christ and St. Francis, both bearing the marks of crucifixion. We had found the entrance to the former St. Francis pilgrim’s hostel, thanks to Richard Roe’s detective work.

Days Eleven and Twelve: *Finito!*

Visits to laid-back Passignano, Greve in Chianti and San Gimignano gave us an opportunity to wind down and begin to process the tremendous amount of information gleaned. Our tour schedule had been rigorous and the itinerary comprehensive. For almost two weeks, we followed in the footsteps of Shakespeare along a path illuminated by the research of Richard Paul Roe. Thanks to the many who made *Shakespeare in Italy 2016* a reality. It was a great success. *Grazie mille!*



Porta della Vittoria, Sabbioneta:
“The Duke’s Oak”?



Verona: Juliet wants to hear from you!



Verona - Romeo's House

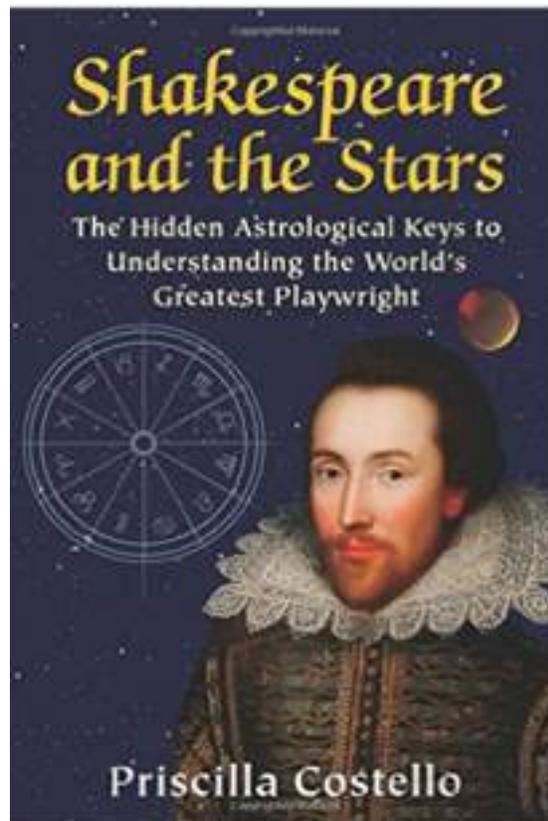


BOOK REVIEWS

Shakespeare and the Stars: The Hidden Astrological Keys to Understanding the World's Greatest Playwright by Priscilla Costello (IBIS Press, Lake Worth, FL)
Reviewed by R. Adams

Shakespeare and the Stars by Priscilla Costello is a comprehensive and insightful study of the Shakespearean canon through the paradigm of astrology. Costello demonstrates that the Elizabethan and Renaissance worldviews were grounded in the ancient cosmology of planetary influence, sometimes manifesting as human temperaments and physiological humors related to the planets and sometimes operating as planet-based archetypes and allegories.

Priscilla Costello is a professional astrologer. She spoke at the 2013 Joint SOS/SF Conference in Toronto, Ontario. Her book's in-depth analysis of six plays—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and*



Juliet, The Merchant of Venice, Macbeth, The Tempest and *King Lear*—reveals the astrological influences encoded in plot, character, and dialogue, providing a fresh perspective for understanding and interpretation. Costello's extensive research, referencing astrology, psychology, alchemy, and even quantum physics, offers a view which enriches our understanding of Shakespeare's literary cosmology. *Shakespeare and the Stars* is an original and valuable addition to modern Shakespeare criticism. It is available in a Kindle edition or in paperback through Amazon.com.

The Death of Shakespeare: As it was Accomplisht in 1616 & the Causes Thereof (Part One)

By Jon Benson

Reviewed by Gary Goldstein

Besides the three Elizabethan novels by George Garrett published in the 1970s and 1980s—*Death of the Fox*, *The Succession*, and *Entered from the Sun*—this is the best historical fiction of the period I have read. The Garrett titles focus on Sir Walter Raleigh, the succession to Queen Elizabeth I, and the murder of Christopher Marlowe, respectively, but ignore Shakespeare. *The Death of Shakespeare (Part One)*, on the other hand, focuses on Shakespeare, the plays and the authorship issue, all from an Oxfordian perspective.

The author, a pseudonymous Jon Benson, has clearly spent considerable time researching the society and politics of the Elizabethan era as well as the Oxfordian hypothesis, all of which are interwoven into the plot of this 600-page novel. The plotting and writing are superb, which indicates that the author is a professional who does not wish his identity to become public.

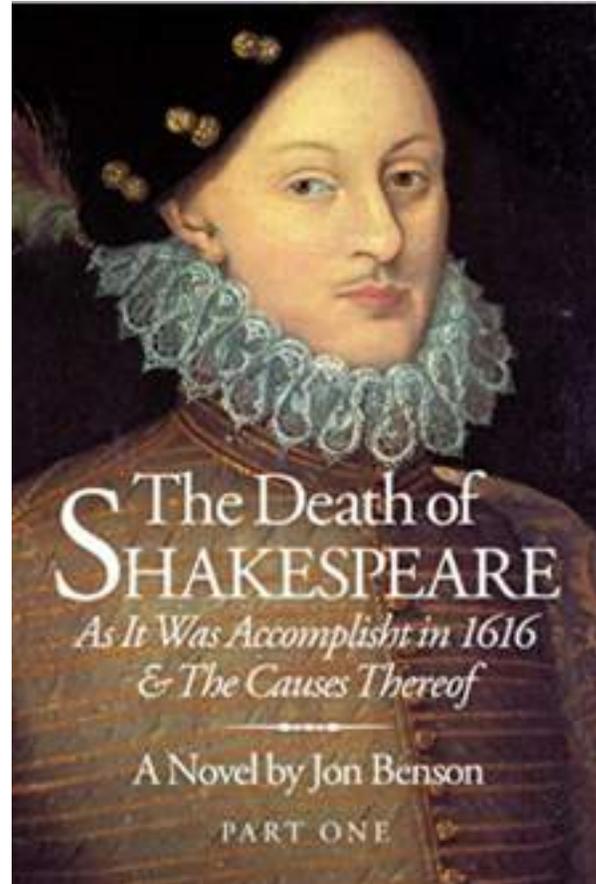
The plot is revealed economically in relatively short chapters, while the crisp prose, natural dialog, and sophisticated psychology employed in delineating even minor characters all make the novel a compelling read. One can judge the quality of the author's style from this description of Oxford's haberdashery:

He held up a doublet of grey silk woven with a tiny thread the shade of green one sees only on the surface of a small pond in August. The front of the doublet was speckled with small tufts that appeared to be pearls but which, upon closer examination, were a complicated weaving of satin thread the color of polished pewter.

Benson's portrayal of minor characters is also first-rate. To illustrate the personality of one of Oxford's servants we encounter this incisive portrait:

Nigel shook his head. His master was in a bantering mood, which always made Nigel feel awkward. He preferred to serve in silence. He had no time for frivolity. Work filled his day. As chief steward, he had to deal with the Folly, as well as Castle Hedingham in Essex, Oxford Court in London, and the Earl's other properties. Rising before dawn, he would open a leather book and list the tasks for that day, checking them off as he completed them. He also had no sense of humor, a grave failing for anyone in service to the Earl of Oxford.

Especially intriguing is the novel's conception of Oxford's method of playwriting. It encompasses his intellectual knowledge, theatrical experience, and creative inspiration, but includes advice from associates, such as William Shakspeare and even a teenage page in Oxford's



service, not to mention audience reactions to performances. In short, Benson holds the dramatic process to be a social phenomenon as much as a personal effort. Oxford is shown providing John Lyly with plots for plays and themes for pamphlets, even as William Shakspeare pesters Oxford for comedies that he can sell to Philip Henslowe at The Rose.

This following exchange between Oxford and his young page gives us a taste of what Mr. Benson believes to be Oxford's wonder at the magic of words and how Oxford the playwright coined so many new words for his plays:

Oxford: ...the last line lacks two syllables! It has kept me up half the night!

Robin: "Embrace," my lord.

Oxford: Which means?

Robin: To take or clasp in the arms, to press to the bosom, to hug.

Oxford: Perfect! But how came you by this word?

Robin: From "brace" for a pair of arms. The "em" reinforces the wrapping of the arms.

Oxford: Yes. Well done, Scribbler. Any more words?

Robin: You mean, new ones? ... I have to have a setting, something that spurs me on. ... I like fat, buttery words.

Oxford: Fat, buttery words?

Robin: Like oily, ooze, unctuous.

Oxford: And?

Robin: Uh, sniggly words, like cowlick, gurgle, babble, and bump.

Oxford: ...good words all. I will charge you with bringing them to the table while I work.

As entertaining as this may be, I doubt that Oxford ever consulted with juvenile servants while composing his works.

A more significant attraction of the novel are the undocumented gaps in the Oxfordian case that are “solved” by the author—from Shakspeare’s role in the authorship project and his relationship with Oxford; the rationale for writing individual plays, starting with *Titus Andronicus*; Oxford’s relationship with the Queen and the Cecils; and a richly textured depiction of Oxford’s personal life, which for me was the primary pleasure of the novel. Benson has depicted Oxford as a proud and highly intelligent aristocrat and sybarite, as well as a compulsive artist possessing a hairtrigger temper and an extraordinary need to indulge in public displays of wit, even in the presence of the Queen and Lord Burghley.

Since the novel is written as a mystery, it would undermine much of the reason for reading *The Death of Shakespeare* if I revealed the author’s many conceits that fill the gaps in the authorship narrative. They will likely comprise much of the novel’s allure for anyone interested in discovering what the key players and their contributions were at each step of the story.

What I can reveal is that Benson portrays the relationship between Oxford and the Cecils as a hostile one; there is a working relationship between Oxford and the Stratford Shakspeare; there is a rather benign view of Shakspeare the man; and the Queen plays a key role in determining what Oxford does as a secret playwright in the overall scheme of things.

Aside from these concerns, perhaps the question for Oxfordian readers is whether Jon Benson’s general conception of the Shakespeare story is logical and coherent. For some aspects of the narrative, it is. As to other elements, they strike me as not entirely plausible, even though they are always original and work well as melodrama. Overall, the number of credible scenarios vastly outnumbers those I found inadequate.

In the end, we have a well-researched and well-written novel that offers a comprehensive view of the authorship issue by framing it within the larger milieu in which it took place. The intellectual aspects of this contentious subject thus come alive for readers in a way that non-fiction efforts can never match.

Available separately is *The Reader’s Companion, Part One: 1588-1594*, in which Benson provides the historical background and source materials for the novel on a chapter-by-chapter basis, as well as a bibliography with recommendations for conducting research into the period, the authorship issue and Oxford’s life. Some readers will find it fascinating to trace the author’s working method by comparing the historical materials

with the imaginative re-creations and reinterpretations of them into fiction.

The novel and *The Reader’s Companion* are available in both paperback and Kindle format via Amazon.com (*The Reader’s Companion* is also available in a pdf format). For more information, go to doshakespeare.com. More exciting to me is that this is the first of a two-part novel.

There is another aspect of *The Death of Shakespeare* we can be thankful for. In my opinion, the most prominent Oxfordian novel previously published was *The Lost Chronicle of Edward de Vere* by the Australian writer Andrew Field. It appeared a generation ago, in 1990. Though it was brought out in both hard and softcover editions by Viking and Penguin, respectively, the work never achieved critical or commercial success. For these reasons, I hope Jon Benson’s engrossing novel finds a wide readership.

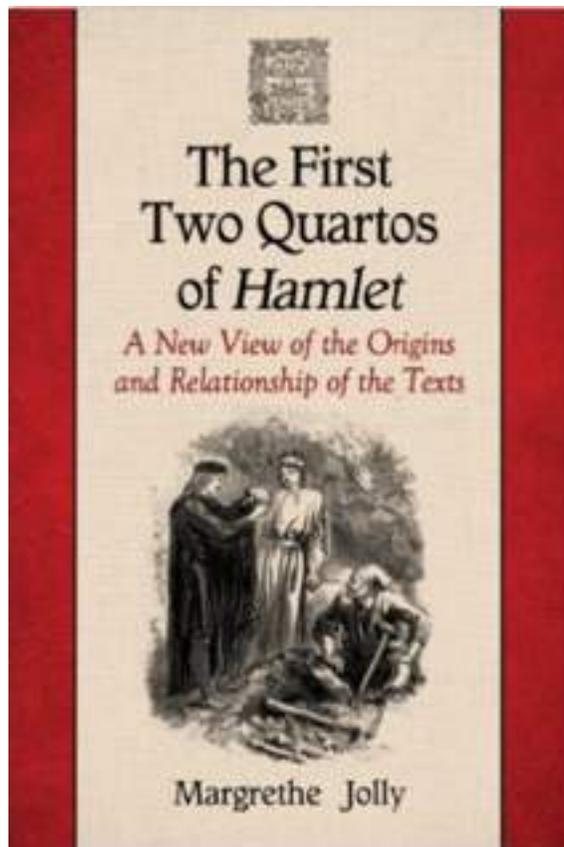
The First Two Quartos of Hamlet, A New View of the Origins and Relationship of the Texts
by Margrethe Jolly

McFarland, 2014 (available in paperback and Kindle editions).

Reviewed by Ramon Jiménez

This story begins in 1823, when an English army general, Sir Henry Bunbury, decided to clear out a closet in his home near Bury St. Edmunds, in Suffolk. In it he found a cache of eleven Shakespeare Quartos among a collection of books he had inherited two years earlier. Ranging from the 1598 Quarto of *1 Henry IV* to the 1634 Quarto of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, they were bound in a single volume that had belonged to his grandfather, an ardent collector of old dramas. All the quartos in the volume were known in other copies, except one—a 1603 Quarto of *Hamlet*, an edition entirely new to Shakespeare scholars. Until then, there were only two known versions of *Hamlet*, the Quarto of 1604, reprinted nearly unchanged three times, and the slightly modified text printed in the First Folio. The 1603 quarto became known as Q1, and the 1604 quarto as Q2.

Bunbury’s discovery set off a spate of speculation that has persisted to this day. Q1 of *Hamlet* has commanded more attention than almost any other edition of a Shakespeare play. Two new editions have been published just in the last decade. The 1603 Quarto was initially accepted as Shakespeare’s first version, one critic describing it as the “comparatively feeble expression of a great mind.” But within a generation, scholars began to express doubts about its provenance, and the idea emerged that Q1 was derived from an earlier performance of the play that was printed in Q2 a year later. The method proposed was “memorial reconstruction” of the original play by one or more actors, or even a spectator; this remains the dominant explanation of Q1 of *Hamlet*, as well as several other versions of Shakespeare’s plays.



Examining internal evidence, Margrethe Jolly cites the subtle changes occurring in the English language during the last decades of the sixteenth century, and supplies examples of the different uses in the two Quartos. For instance, Q1 uses the older forms *doth* and *hath*, rather than the newer *does* and *has*, at twice the rate they are used in Q2, in which the newer forms predominate. In another example, she compares the use of “colloquialisms,” i.e., elisions, contractions and relaxed pronunciations. Shakespeare used more colloquialisms the later he wrote. Q2 contains a wider range of colloquialisms, and a higher rate per line.

Jolly also examines a dozen historical and literary allusions in the two Quartos for any evidence that one precedes the other. Most of them supply no useful dating evidence because either the direction of borrowing cannot be established, or the allusion is to a work that cannot be securely dated. However, one allusion is obviously significant. Claudius’s counselor is named Corambis in Q1, and Polonius in Q2 and the Folio. The latter name appears to have been taken from *De Optimo Senatore*, a book by a Polish courtier that was translated into English as *The Counsellor* in 1598, suggesting a later date for Q2.

The second type of evidence that Jolly examines is the use in each Quarto of the acknowledged chief source of *Hamlet*. There is a consensus that the underlying source is the third story in the fifth volume of François de Belleforest’s *Les Histoires Tragiques*, a volume published in 1570. (Twelve characters in Belleforest, including the

Ghost, appear in both Quartos.) Because there is a near-consensus that Q1 derived from Q2, there has been little or no effort to examine the relationship between each of the two Quartos and the source story in Belleforest. This is where Jolly breaks new ground.

In just four paragraphs, she lists twenty-five instances of verbal matches and plot elements in Belleforest that appear in one or both of the Quartos. Some are exclusive to Q1 and others are exclusive to Q2. But the fact that Q1 is only half the length of Q2 indicates a greater reliance in Q1 on Belleforest. The age of Hamlet is one of the more significant cases in point. In Belleforest he is consistently and uniformly referred to as a young person, not yet at the age of majority. He is also described this way throughout Q1, as a teenager. But in Q2, although he is called “young” on three occasions (twice by much older men), the Gravedigger unambiguously gives Hamlet’s age as thirty. Jolly speculates that “Q2’s older Hamlet in 1604-5 would permit an older Richard Burbage, aged about thirty-six at this time, to (continue to) play Hamlet convincingly.”

Another way to compare the Belleforest source with the two Quartos is to trace ideas that evolve across the texts. The idea behind the so-called “nunnery scene,” for instance, originates in Belleforest, where the King attempts to learn the truth about the Prince’s apparent madness by using a woman to trap him into revealing his true feelings. It is a fairly simple affair in Belleforest, taking only a page of text. The episode in Q1 is similarly straightforward and brief, and takes place at the same point in the story. But in Q2 the plan is drawn out and discussed extensively by several characters, and it is not until 600 lines later, in a subsequent scene, that the entrapment occurs. The scheme has been elaborated and moved to a different place in the text, suggesting Shakespeare’s development of the idea and revision of the text.

The episode of Hamlet’s stabbing the eavesdropper, Hamlet’s reaction to his mother’s actions, and the different promises each Queen makes to her son are all additional examples of ideas originating in Belleforest and evolving into something slightly different in each ensuing text. In every case, the version in Q1 is closer to the source than the version in Q2.

In Part Two, Jolly considers the evidence for memorial reconstruction, the prevailing theory about Q1, and for simple abridgement, a theory most prominently advanced by Albert Weiner in his 1962 edition of Q1. She addresses the memorial reconstruction theory by examining the metrical, thematic and linguistic differences between the texts, as well as the differences in the behavior of the characters, the transpositions of incidents, and even the stage directions. In every instance of comparison she presents a stronger case for Q1 as an earlier draft, and for Q2 as the author’s revision, probably much later.

Proponents of memorial reconstruction claim that one

or more of eight specific actors in the performance of Q2 reconstructed the entire play from memory to produce the Q1 text. But Jolly points out that, among them, the eight characters are on stage in less than half the scenes in Q2, and their combined roles amount to only 2% to 4% of the text, not a very promising basis for recollecting the 2,221 lines in Q1.

The two most commonly proposed actors are those who played Marcellus and Voltemand, who had sixty-three and twenty-two lines, respectively, in Q2. But neither of them seems to be a good fit for reconstructing a text. Marcellus apparently cannot recall all his own lines, reporting some of them incorrectly in the Q1 text. And Voltemand cannot even get his own name right, as he appears in Q1 as Voltemar. Perhaps the most striking example of unexplained memory failure is one of the best-remembered lines in all of Shakespeare—"To be or not to be; that is the question." In Q1 the actor's alleged recollection of it is "To be or not to be, ay there's the point." There can hardly be a more flagrant contradiction of memorial reconstruction.

Further, it seems that there are no verified examples of memorially reconstructed play texts until the eighteenth century. Jolly discusses the circumstances of a documented memorial reconstruction of Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* in 1779, an instance cited by the theory's leading advocate, G. I. Duthie, in 1941. The need for such a reconstruction arose before the play was published, when actor John Bernard wanted to stage it in Exeter, but found himself legally barred from copying the manuscript. Bernard had appeared in the play many times, and he obtained copies of their parts from eight actors who had performed major roles in it numerous times, amounting in all to about 80% of the text. One or more of them had appeared in every scene. There is no evidence that any of these advantages were enjoyed by the alleged reconstructors of *Hamlet*. Nor, of course, is there any documentation of such an effort.

Another proposed explanation for Q1 is that it was printed from a manuscript that had been deliberately abridged for performance, a claim most recently repeated by James Shapiro. But this theory fares no better than memorial reconstruction. To begin with, the abridgement theory suffers from the same contradictions. Q1 is demonstrably closer to the source in Belleforest than Q2 in terms of verbal matches and plot elements. It contains more of the older verbal inflections than Q2 and fewer of the newer ones. Moreover, the text of Q1 is only 55% as long as that of Q2, a far more drastic cut than is seen in documented cases of abridgement. At 2,221 lines, the text of Q1 is also significantly shorter than the average length of plays during Elizabeth's reign, which has been calculated by Alfred Hart to be about 2,500 lines.

Lastly, Jolly demonstrates by close textual analysis that the shorter versions in Q1 of certain scenes that occur in both Quartos, such as the opening lines in the first scene in both texts, and a later scene (scene 14 in Q1 and IV.vi in Q2), cannot be the result of abridgement. In the

opening scene of Q2 the two sentinels have names, and their five-line exchange is "dense with information." In Q1 there are no names, and the three-line exchange tells us nothing. Why would the names Bernardo and Francisco be jettisoned in either a memorial reconstruction or an abridgement? Similarly, in Q2 Horatio reports, in an efficient ten lines, that Hamlet has returned safely to Denmark. In Q1 the Queen has been added to the exchange, and it has been expanded to more than twenty lines. Such examples—and there are several others—suggest the precedence of Q1.

The *Ur* and other *Hamlets*

In her discussion of the so-called *Ur-Hamlet*, or any other *Hamlet* earlier than 1603, Jolly provides us with several scholarly gems—one being a lengthy analysis of Thomas Nashe's cryptic remarks about "whole *Hamlets*" and "the Kid in *Aesop*" in his prefatory epistle to Robert Greene's *Menaphon* in 1589. These allusions have led many scholars to speculate that a long-lost forerunner of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*—which they dub *Ur-Hamlet*—existed by 1589, and may have been written by Thomas Kyd. Jolly's conclusions are that Nashe's words "let us infer" that a *Hamlet* play was on the boards in 1589, and that his reference to "the Kid in *Aesop*" had nothing to do with Thomas Kyd. A second gem is a revealing table listing the authors and works that Francis Meres included in *Palladis Tamia* in 1598, and the already-known works by the same authors that he omitted. The two lists demonstrate that Meres's omission of *Hamlet*, as well as four other already-published canonical plays, does not mean that they had yet to be written.

A remark that Jolly makes twice I found puzzling. In the final sentence of her introduction, she allows that Shakespeare was "clearly a genius, but perhaps also a grafter." In the final sentence of her conclusion, she writes that he was "not only a supremely inventive poet, but also a grafter." I cannot find a meaning of the word "grafter" that seems appropriate to what Shakespeare has done. I assume that she is making a figurative use of the word as it applies to the practice of botanical grafting. But this seems a strange word to use to describe a playwright who undertakes a revision, even a drastic one, of his own play.

Jolly avoids any mention of the Earl of Oxford and the authorship question, but her analysis of the evidence of the several early allusions to other *Hamlets* in 1589 and the 1590s suggests that Shakespeare composed a version of *Hamlet* in the 1580s, perhaps before his "creative prime." This may be the reason that her book has so far been ignored by the Shakespearean academia. Although it was issued more than two and a half years ago by a major publisher, I can find no review of it anywhere, except a few sentences on Amazon's web site.

Jolly's book is a model of careful scholarship. She backs up her claims in the narrative with a dozen tables, and more than twenty pages of appendices that graphically display details that recur throughout the

Quartos and the Folio. She takes great pains to consider every aspect of the prevailing theories, and acknowledges the instances, few as they are, where the evidence supports them. Her language is moderate, even modest, in contrast to the bombastic pronouncements of such scholars as Harold Jenkins, who asserted that “the conception of Shakespeare as an artist much given to revision of his own past work is quite without evidence or plausibility.”

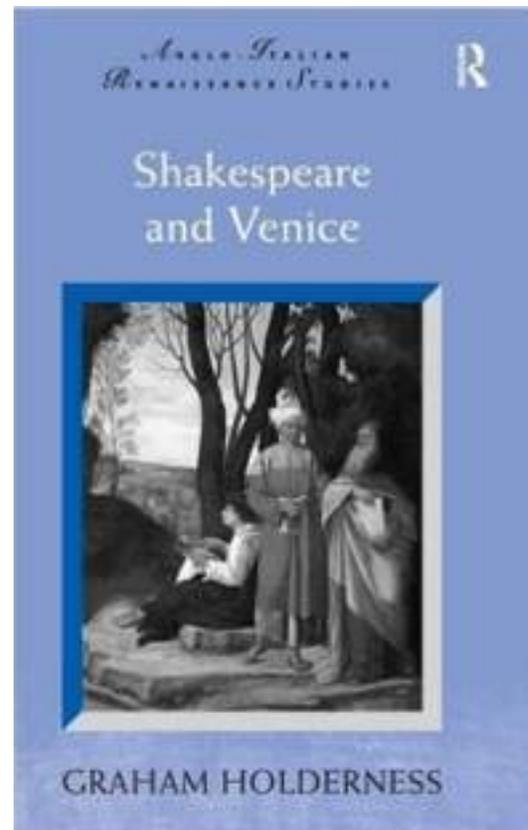
Besides clarifying the order of Q1 and Q2, *The First Two Quartos of Hamlet* is an important work of research for another reason. It also lends credence to the idea that several anonymous plays published in the 1590s, long dismissed by orthodox scholars as inferior work by other playwrights, are actually Shakespeare’s own first drafts of nearly identical plays in the canon.

Shakespeare and Venice, by Graham Holderness
Ashgate Publishing, 2010, 155 pp.
Reviewed by W. Ron Hess

This 2010 book is part of the “Anglo-Italian Renaissance Studies” series, with series general editor Michelle Marrapodi, of the University of Palermo, Italy. Written by a University of Hertfordshire Professor, it is a fairly recent addition to the growing Stratfordian assault on the idea that Shakespeare (whoever he was) “had to have traveled to Italy.” Its consistent premise is that there existed a “myth of Venice” which provided would-be travelers to—and writers about—Venice with a great deal of pre-packaged expectations of what to find in the most extraordinary city on the Adriatic Sea, and its environs. Thus, Holderness concedes that the Shakespeare “plays evince a breadth of understanding and a depth of immersion in what Lewes Lewkenor [translator of 1599 *The Commonwealth and Gouernment of Venice*] called the ‘particularities’ of the place that has prompted some scholars to argue for a direct Shakespearean acquaintance; and the idea of the Bard in Venice has populated some fictional spaces with the compelling image of Shakespeare literally wandering among the streets and canals of Venice, finding his way into the Ghetto, eavesdropping on the tongues of barbarous ethnics, noting the qualities of the people” (135). As it so happens, that neatly summarizes our anti-Stratfordian view. And there’s no doubt that Holderness gives much detail about Venice, and Shakespeare’s apparent knowledge of it, which can only improve our knowledge, although some of it is superfluous to our interests. Its table of contents includes: (1) “Renaissance Venice”; (2) “Jew and Moor”; (3) “Merchant and Jew of Venice”; (4) “Moor and Whore of Venice”; (5) “Shakespeare’s Venice in Fiction” (much of it modern fiction); and (6) “Shakespeare’s Venice on Film” (which includes allusions to the likes of James Bond in *From Russia*

With Love, the end of which involves Venice and the island chain approaching it).

And yet, throughout the slim book, wherever concessions like the above were made, Holderness soon continued with language such as his conclusion: “But this is not a necessary, or even a to-be-wished-for, assumption [i.e., it would queer his side’s preconception of Shakespeare the rustic from Warwickshire, who traveled no farther than London]. ... Venice was very well known throughout Europe, long before Shakespeare’s time, as a great commercial city-state, with lucrative maritime trade links across the globe, an extensive empire and an unusually diverse and international population. It also had a reputation as one of the most beautiful of modern cities, with exemplary political systems and a remarkable degree of tolerance towards liberty of thought and speech. It was considered a place of high culture and civilization, displaying not only great wealth, but good taste in matters of fashion, ornament, finery, and a thriving



intellectual culture, with its free public philosophy lectures and its elegant printing presses. It was known as a great capital of pleasure, with codes of morality that seemed to some visitors enviably free.”

Since the book is pricy (on Amazon a used copy can be had at \$108, and a new one for \$120), readers should consider obtaining a copy through their local library, if possible. Even the Kindle edition is expensive

(now offered at \$99.95). But if money is no object, then by all means buy!

However, an even graver failing of this book diminishes its value to us: Holderness chooses to concentrate almost exclusively on Venice, to the relative exclusion of Shakespeare's allusions to other Italian localities. This is understandable in that it boils down what could be a massive tome into a slim treatise. But in doing so, it (likely purposely) sidesteps the full extent of our view about Shakespeare's travels, since Venice was an important, but certainly not the only, venue in Italy that anti-Stratfordians point to. Regardless of their particular candidate, most anti-Stratfordians believe that each viable candidate had significant travels on the continent, almost invariably including Paris and Venice, and that some, if not all, of the Shakespeare allusions to Italy can imply a datable framework (e.g., two allusions to "Friar Patrick's cell" in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* may help date that play's inspiration to circa 1575-76, when Friar Patrick O'Hely traveled to Spain and Italy to urge an invasion of England via Ireland, before he returned to County Mayo as a newly frocked Bishop, and was hanged by the English in 1578 in the midst of suppressing an actual Italian-Spanish invasion of precisely that Irish locale).

The fuller anti-Stratfordian discussion of the Bard's travels was most persuasively laid out for our Derbyite cousins in Georges Lambin's *Voyages de Shakespeare en France et en Italie* (1962), which was translated (by permission) in its entirety in Appendix A to Vol. I of my *The Dark Side of Shakespeare* in 2002 (BN.com or iUniverse.com), in which I added a "Senior Editor's" preface and endnotes to transform Lambin's persuasive work into a far more powerful Oxfordian one. As plausible as Lambin was overall, most of his arguments in support of the 6th Earl of Derby's travels and experiences in 1582-87 were relative misfits for the Bard's travel allusions when compared to Oxford's 1574-76 travels.

In Appendix C to my 2003 Vol. II, I laid out a detailed scenario for Oxford's 1574-76 travels to Belgium, France, Venice, Greece, and "the rest" of Italy. I argued that Oxford was no mere tourist, but rather was on a vital mission—to destabilize the capability of Spain's most powerful war-man, Don Juan of Austria (the bastard half-brother of Spain's King Philip II), to pursue his own rather public mission from the Pope to invade England, free Mary Stuart, put Mary on the throne, and then marry her. I was pleased to see that Mark Anderson's 2005 "*Shakespeare*" *By Another Name* laid out a very similar travel scenario for Oxford.

Further studies in articles by the late Dr. Noemi Magri and in the book by the late Richard Paul Roe (2011, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy: Retracing the Bard's Unknown Travels*), and others, have given us more insights into Shakespeare's travel allusions. On the whole they are consistent with the insights of Lambin and myself. Our collective view of Oxford's travels correlates solidly and forcefully with Shakespeare's travel allusions. In a time

when foreign travel was a perilous and ruinously expensive undertaking, that correlation comes as close to "cause and effect" as any other set of arguments that can be made in "the Shakespeare Authorship Question."

I've elaborated on these Oxfordian studies not just because my works are included in them, but because, taken together they underscore the error in Holderness's approach of treating Venice as if it "proves" the Stratfordian argument that Shakspeare could have written his thirteen Italian-set plays by reading the likes of Lewkenor's 1599 work, the 1549 *Historie of Italie* translation by William Thomas, or early 17th century works by other writers; and of course whatever he mythically absorbed through sharing glasses of stout or sack at the "Mermaid Tavern" with itinerant hypothetical Italians. Venice was an exception not just because of the elaborate "myth of Venice" which appears to have existed, but because virtually every viable candidate for writing the Shakespeare canon can be found to have visited Venice, and thus that city gives no particular advantage to any candidate, unless *not* having visited Venice can be perversely made into an advantage, as Holderness apparently wants us to believe.

Shakespeare's travel allusions span thirteen plays, not just *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice* (the two set partly in Venice or its surrounds). The silly notion that the Bard was ignorant in his travel knowledge only betrays the ignorance of modern critics and commentators. In fact, if Oxford's travels had not so marvelously coincided with Shakespeare's collective travel allusions, I would have likely chosen a candidate with better travels. Oxford's "literary mentor," as I have dubbed him, Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst and Earl of Dorset, had impressive travels, with a documented stay in Venice in 1565-66, as did Oxford's son-in-law, 6th Earl of Derby, in Rome, 1582-83 and a brief visit to Venice in 1599. Even Sir Henry Neville and Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland, reached Venice, while failure to visit Italy at all is a critical blow to the insufficient Baconian theories.

Except for Oxford, no viable candidates had documented visits to Milan (importantly described in great detail in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*) or to Florence (with detailed sight and acoustics information about its interior in *All's Well That Ends Well*). Oxford visited Milan at least twice (per letters sent to Burghley by bankers) and allegedly dwelled in Florence (per a letter from Oxford listing it as his destination, another from Siena, just south of Florence, and evidence cited [albeit with exaggeration] over a century later by John Aubrey). It was those two cities, not just Venice, which have made me into a devoted Oxfordian, not a Sackvillian or Derbyite! I trust that each reader has arrived at much the same conclusion after careful considerations—the travels made "our man!"



Oxfordians Are Now a Major Presence in Libraries Worldwide

by Gary Goldstein

Over the past 100 years, Oxfordian books, brought out by commercial, academic and private publishers, have found their way onto library shelves around the world in public and university libraries. The extent to which we have achieved this success may not be apparent to many Oxfordians. Those who are interested in this aspect of educational outreach may want to log onto www.worldcat.org to track individual titles and where they are available. Keep in mind that this article offers a selection and not a comprehensive look at Oxfordian titles.

The strategic value of library acceptance is that it offers Oxfordian scholarship to students, teachers and the general public at no charge into the distant future. This prevents the scholarly wheel from being reinvented and also becomes an international resource that extends the authorship debate beyond the borders of the US and the UK.

Before examining the extent to which Oxfordian scholarship has been disseminated, we should look briefly at two titles that traditional Shakespeareans have

recently published, books attacking the Oxfordian hypothesis. These are *Contested Will* by James Shapiro, professor of English at Columbia University, and *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt*, with contributing essays by more than a dozen academicians under the aegis of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and Cambridge University Press.

Contested Will is shelved in a total of 1,590 libraries worldwide, a considerable achievement due largely to the global marketing reach of its publisher, Simon and Schuster. *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt* has only found a home in 340 libraries. Sadly, however, the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition's comprehensive response to the SBT effort, *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?*, is only in nineteen libraries altogether.

The good news is that every major Oxfordian title is in hundreds of libraries. Heading the list is Charlton Ogburn, Jr.'s *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, now in 770 libraries. In second place is Joseph Sobran's *Alias Shakespeare (700)*, followed by Richard Whalen's *Shakespeare: Who Was He? (625)*.

The image shows a screenshot of the WorldCat website. At the top, there are navigation links for "Home" and "Search". Below this is the WorldCat logo, which consists of a colorful circular icon and the text "OCLC WorldCat". The main content area has a blue background with the heading "Find items in libraries near you" and the subtext "2 billion items available here through a library". There are several tabs for search categories: "Everything", "Books", "DVDs", "CDs", and "Articles". A search bar is present with a magnifying glass icon and the text "Search everything". Below the search bar, there are links for "Advanced search" and "Find a library". At the bottom of the main content area, there is a line of text: "WorldCat connects you to the collections and services of more than 10,000 libraries worldwide" followed by a "Learn more" link. Below this is a promotional banner for "WorldCat Mobile" with the heading "'Find in a library' on your mobile device with WorldCat Mobile". The banner includes two bullet points: "Go to www.worldcat.org/m/ to find and search libraries on the mobile Web" and "Choose an iPhone or Android app to find an item in a library near you". There is also a "Learn more and find an app" link.

A decline occurs before we arrive at Richard Roe's *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy*, now in 450 libraries. In the same range are Warren Hope's two editions of *The Shakespeare Controversy* (440), and all the editions of J. Thomas Looney's pioneering book, *Shakespeare Identified* (435). It should be noted that, outside of libraries, *Shakespeare Identified* is now available from six publishers, as well as on Kindle via Amazon.com for just one dollar. Diana Price's book, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography*, can be found in 410 libraries.

At this point we come to a slightly lower level of library penetration, starting with *The Oxfordian*, one of the annual journals of the SOF, being offered by 350 libraries. The other annual Oxfordian journal, *Brief Chronicles*, is in 120 libraries, and *The Elizabethan Review*, a semiannual journal that I published from 1993 to 1999, is in thirty libraries.

Several Oxfordian books published by the library science publisher, McFarland and Company, are in libraries in the US and internationally, though with moderate penetration. In addition to the book by Warren Hope, mentioned above, McFarland has published three other Oxfordian titles: *De Vere as Shakespeare* by William Farina (160 libraries); *On the date, sources and design of Shakespeare's The Tempest*, by Roger Stritmatter and Lynne Kositsky (130); and Richard Malim's *The Earl of Oxford and the Making of Shakespeare* (120).

Great Oxford, the collection of essays published by The De Vere Society, is in sixty libraries, as is the book by the German journalist Kurt Kreiler, *Anonymous Shakespeare* (German language edition). Katherine Chiljan's *Shakespeare Suppressed* is in fifty libraries.

Turning to biographies, Mark Anderson's life of Oxford, *Shakespeare by Another Name*, can be found in 570 libraries. On the other hand, the highly biased biography of Oxford by Alan Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary*, is available in 510 libraries. The only other Oxfordian biography, written in 1928 by Bernard Ward, *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, can still be found in 150 libraries. Rounding out this line of texts is Daphne Pearson's published dissertation, *Edward de Vere: the crisis and consequences of wardship*, to be found in 88 libraries. (Pearson's methodology and findings were effectively challenged by Nina Green in "The Fall of the House of Oxford," *Brief Chronicles* I, 41-94 [2009].)

Other points to consider in evaluating library outreach include the extent to which university libraries are offering our research, and the number of libraries overseas which do so.

There is widespread availability of Oxfordian texts by university libraries across the spectrum of titles published—as a whole, I estimate about 70% of the books are to be found in university libraries compared with 30% in public libraries. Individual titles should be investigated by those interested in particular authors through the Worldcat.org website to find distribution tallies for a particular work.

All this evidence should reassure those who think professors of English have intimidated university librarians into boycotting Oxfordian research.

In fact, both the Folger Shakespeare Library and Harvard University stock numerous Oxfordian titles; in the Folger, many are shelved in their open stacks.

Internationally, there is considerable interest by European librarians in the authorship issue, especially in England, Germany and France. In Asia there is good penetration only in Australia and New Zealand, with occasional titles finding their way into libraries in Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

In the Middle East, select Oxfordian titles, such as Hope's *The Shakespeare Controversy* and Roe's *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy*, are in university or national libraries in Israel, Egypt, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Abu Dhabi. In the Arab countries, it's usually the American Universities that have the titles. Unfortunately, not a single Oxfordian title seems to have found a home in any libraries in Latin America.

Joseph Sobran's *Alias Shakespeare* appears to have the greatest presence internationally. This should not be surprising since it is supposed to have sold 15,000 copies since publication in 1997.

To augment this record of success, I think the best way forward is for individual Oxfordians to donate copies of their favorite books to their *alma mater* since librarians are highly responsive to requests by professors and alumni. Similarly, Oxfordians should also consider donating their favorite titles to their local public library, since these librarians are equally hospitable to members of the local community which they serve.



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What Are the Implications of the Spelling “Shake-Speare” in Ben Jonson’s 1616 Folio?

by Richard M. Waugaman, M.D.

Lois Potter was introduced at the Folger Shakespeare Library 2014 conference on “Shakespeare and the Problem of Biography” as the world’s expert on early editions of Elizabethan plays. So during a break I asked her what she makes of the “Shake-Speare” spelling in the list of principal actors of the first performance of Ben Jonson’s play *Sejanus*. She candidly replied that she was unaware of this spelling.

Therein lies a tale, worth telling. Among the irrational defenses of the traditional authorship theory is the slander that authorship skeptics do not know how to evaluate evidence. In this particular case, our failing instead seems to be that we did not properly *ignore* evidence that is inconvenient to the Stratfordian hegemony. The Stratfordian methodology for interpretation, on close examination, regularly relies on circular thinking. It has apparently become so automatic that it is unlikely Shakespeare scholars are even aware of this self-serving cognitive distortion.

Some years ago, examining first editions of Ben Jonson’s 1616 *Workes* at the Folger Shakespeare Library, I noticed this unusual spelling. As James Shapiro, Gary Taylor, and other Stratfordians have attempted to explain away the hyphen that appears in many early instances of the author’s name “Shake-speare,” I came back to the fact that, this one time, Ben Jonson went a step further, in using two capital S’s in spelling the name. As though he anticipated the day when Shakespeare scholars would try to ignore the meaning of the hyphen.

Some background on hyphenated names, first. Everyone knows how common hyphenated last names are in Britain. What few people know, however, is that this was not the case in Elizabethan England. With rare exceptions, hyphenated last names became common only after a 19th century inheritance law popularized them. The only commonly hyphenated last names in Elizabethan England were those that began with “Fitz-.” “Fitz” comes from the French *films*, alluding to “son of.” The rare exceptions include the printer Robert Waldegrave and Edward Allde, who both hyphenated their last names on title pages of books they printed. It is true that William Camden’s 1605 *Remaines of a Greater Worke* (London: G.E.) includes the hyphenated “Shake-Speare” along with other hyphenated last names. But his intent is clearly to speculate about the etymology of these names—viz., “Long-sword,” “Broad-speare and Breake-speare,” and Shake-Speare (p. 111). Even here, Camden uses two capital letters only in *one* of his four examples: Shake-Speare.

Jonson uses the same Capitalized-hyphen-Capitalized format in the names of the following comic characters in the 1616 edition of his plays and poems:

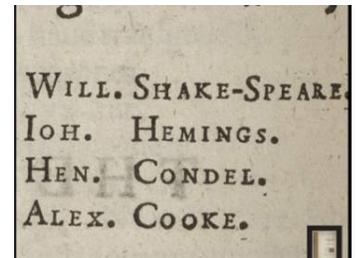
”Brane-Worme,” “Shoo-Maker,” “La-Foole,” and “Love-Wit.”

These spellings can be found either in the list of characters, or at the headings of new scenes. Jonson also includes epigrams to “Court-Parrat” and “Poet-Ape.”

That’s the company that Shake-Speare keeps in Jonson’s *Workes*: six instances that are transparently invented names, plus the name the Stratfordians still insist is the author’s actual name. Jonson also gives us other hyphenated comical names that have only the first word capitalized: “Downe-right,” “Well-bred,” “True-wit,” “Teare-sheet,” “Brayne-hardie,” “Courte-worme,” Sir and Lady Luckless “Woo-all,” and Politique and Madame “Would-bee.”

But surely names of real actors and other people are also hyphenated in this 1,000-page folio? Not so, to the best of my knowledge. That is the complete list of hyphenated names in Jonson’s 1616 *Workes* (I’m grateful to Alexander Waugh for his assistance on this list).

So, whenever the hyphen in Shake-speare is discussed, I hope we will inform everyone about the significance and context of Ben Jonson’s good friend, “Shake-Speare.”



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