



# THE SHAKESPEARE OXFORD NEWSLETTER

Vol. 57, No. 4

Published by the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship

Fall 2021

## No Shirt, No Shoes, No Problem—SOF Fall Conference

by Alex McNeil

For the second year in a row, the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship's Annual Conference took place online, rather than in person. Three sessions were conducted via Zoom—one on Friday, October 8, and two on Saturday, October 9. Registration was free; about 150 persons "attended" the Friday session, and more than 200 joined for both of the Saturday sessions. The sessions were recorded and are available (also free of charge) on the SOF's YouTube channel.

### Friday Session

[Here is the link to this session on the SOF's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30cBEbqMByE>]

Introduced by SOF immediate past president **John Hamill**, SOF President **Bob Meyers** hosted the 105-minute session. It was designed as "Authorship 101," aimed principally at persons who are new to the Shakespeare Authorship Question. Meyers, who edits the SOF's popular online column "How I Became an Oxfordian," explained briefly how he himself became an Oxfordian; Meyers was already an authorship skeptic while in high school, and had an "aha" moment while reading *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in college, when it became clear that someone with Will Shakspeare's modest background could not possibly have depicted such an inside picture of court life. Meyers then introduced a video, "Did Shakespeare Really Write Shakespeare? Or Did Someone Else?" which featured the late **Tom Regnier**, who was SOF President from 2014 to 2018. At this talk, given at a library in Florida in early 2016, Regnier spent about thirty minutes outlining the weaknesses in the case for Will Shakspeare of Stratford as the author, and then turned to the case for Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, noting some of the many parallels between events in de Vere's life and incidents in Shakespeare's plays.

Regnier's video was followed by a fifteen-minute presentation from **John Shahan**, founder and chairman of the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition. Its goal is "to legitimize the issue [of whether Shakspeare of Stratford

wrote the Shakespeare works] in academia so students, teachers and professors can feel free to pursue it. This is necessary because the issue is widely viewed as settled in academia and is treated as a taboo subject. We believe that an open-minded examination of the evidence shows that the issue should be taken seriously." In 2007 the Coalition launched the Declaration of Reasonable Doubt About the Identity of William Shakespeare, a 3,000-word document that outlines the anomalies in the case for the Stratford man. Neither the Declaration nor the SAC advocates for any particular alternative candidate. As of early October 2021, the Declaration has 4,832 signatories. In his talk Shahan again highlighted some of



(Continued on p. 33)

## The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

Published quarterly by the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship, P.O. Box 66083, Auburndale, MA 02466-0083.

[www.ShakespeareOxfordFellowship.org](http://www.ShakespeareOxfordFellowship.org).

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 an annual scholarly journal, *The Oxfordian*.

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

### TRUSTEES

**Robert Meyers**, President; Communications Comm. Chair

**Richard Foulke**, Treasurer; Finance/Investments Chair

**Bonner Miller Cutting**, Secretary

**Ben August**, Trustee; Membership/Fundraising Co-chair

**Julie Sandys Bianchi**, Trustee; Video Contest Chair

**Dorothea Dickerman**, Trustee

**Catherine Hatinguais**, Trustee

**Don Rubin**, Trustee; Conference Committee Chair

**Tom Woosnam**, Trustee

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."

Alex McNeil, Newsletter editor: ([newsletter@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org](mailto:newsletter@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org))

Jill McNeil, Newsletter layout

Printed by Minuteman Press, West Newton, MA.

© 2021 by the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship

## President's Column

I'm honored and humbled by the support from SOF members who have trusted me with this important position. I will do my very best in support of our mission to see Edward de Vere recognized as the true author of the Shakespeare works.

This is an open invitation for all of us to work together. I will flop, and we will flop, unless we are focused, innovative and thick-skinned (the Strats, you know).

Our recent Zoom symposium drew hundreds of viewers on both Friday night and Saturday, October 8 and 9 (see page 1). Those presentations are now available on our YouTube channel.

We know that face-to-face meetings among Oxfordians are highly desirable, rather than just visiting with each other through the technological wizardry of Zoom. Right now the Board of Trustees is working diligently to determine the location of our next annual fall conference. We are eager to go back to Ashland, but climate conditions as well as the global pandemic may interfere with that again. We will keep you informed.

Various committees are looking at things we might do to benefit members, and there are some exciting ideas on the table. More soon.

One thing we are doing is opening up the SOF webpage to highlight activities of various groups. For example, Richard Joyrich has written a very interesting article on the Oberon Shakespeare Study Group, in southeast Michigan. Members of other groups are invited to contact me if they would like to write about their group – [bob@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org](mailto:bob@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org).

Finally, money. There is always a need for it. One way that my family supports SOF is through a smile.amazon.com account. This is the charity of the retail giant Amazon. SOF is a registered 501(c)(3) organization, and we are on their list of charities. The Amazon foundation gives the equivalent of one-half of one percent of your purchases to your selected charity. Mine is SOF. They make disbursements quarterly. I recently received a note stating that something like \$48.00 had been sent to SOF. I never knew I was that generous! Might be something for you to consider.

Bob Meyers, President

## Letters

I really enjoyed the Summer 2021 issue. Alexander Waugh is a wonderful champion of the cause and always entertaining. I very much enjoy the point/ counterpoint presentation of opposing viewpoints such as you had with Waugh and Peter Dickson.

Also very interesting was "From the Data Preservation Committee" column, in which Terry Euchner pointed out that the French translation of "A Winter's Tale" is "Le Conte D'Hiver," a pun on Oxford's name and title ("comte" being the French equivalent of "earl"). I agree that it is haunting and very suggestive of Oxford being the author.

I think that the canon is rife with hidden messages, including ones that point to authorship. Obviously, one can go too far in looking for them, as I think some of the acrostic enthusiasts do. But perhaps the most promising territory for finding smoking guns as to authorship are in the foreign languages with which Oxford was familiar, or in contemporary foreign-language correspondence or scholarship, such as in places Oxford visited. Maybe even in places he did not visit (I don't believe) such as Germany, where there was such huge enthusiasm for his works among the Sturm-und-Drang writers of the nineteenth century. Foreign writers, whether of the sixteenth or the nineteenth century, would not have been so encumbered by the taboos and prejudices (such as those prompted by the penal laws against Catholicism) as were British writers of those times.

Charles Baylor  
Topeka, Kansas

Katherine Chiljan's "A Vere of 'great Vertue' Wrote the Shakespeare Plays" (*Newsletter*, Summer 2021) might prove more meritorious than she thinks. She emphatically discusses Gervase Markham's *Honour in His Perfection* (1624), noting:

Markham refers to an unidentified Scripture phrase "which is to make one name to contain another." The examples he cites, 'Adam' containing the name Eve and 'man' containing the word 'woman,' are inapposite, as neither is literally possible. Markham apparently is describing counterparts, *associative* names or words. This is confirmed in Markham's next example....

'Adam' itself "means 'human' and can be used either collectively ('humankind') or individually ('a human')." *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (David Noel Freedman ed. 2000), 18.

Thus 'Adam' (humankind) embraces the female. Consistently therewith runs this Scriptural phrasing: "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day

that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day they were created" (Genesis 5:1-2, KJV). So Gervase might be asking: "Which part of 'Man contains woman' don't you understand?" Although it later will be the *male* who labels the female 'Woman' (Genesis 2:23), all along 'Adam' (humankind) embraces the female (named or not).

If Markham's initial examples (Adam/Eve, man/woman) prove "associative" overtly, then weigh disregarding the phrase "literally possible."

George Steven Swan  
Greensboro, North Carolina

Jim Warren's *Shakespeare Revolutionized* is truly a colossal achievement. I am pleased and proud to report that I have completed reading all 700-plus pages of his masterpiece. Hurrah!

William J. Camarinos  
Alexandria, VA

[See the reviews on pages 26 and 27 of this issue. – Ed.]

### It's Time to Renew Your Membership!



All SOF memberships are on a calendar year basis, so it's time to renew your membership for 2022.

To renew online, go to: <https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/product/membership/>

If you prefer to renew by mail, you can use the insert that is included with this issue.

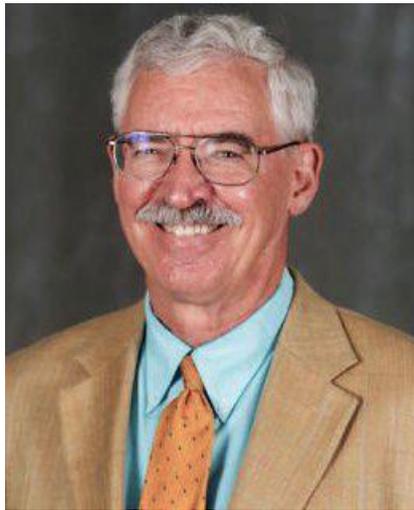
Rates are the same as for 2021; there has been no increase in membership fees.

Renewing promptly saves us time, effort and money!

## What's the News?

### Richard Waugaman Named 2021 Oxfordian of the Year

The final event of the recent SOF online conference was the announcement of the Oxfordian of the Year. Cheryl Eagan-Donovan, 2019 Oxfordian of the Year and chair of this year's selection committee, noted that the committee's decision was unanimous. She introduced James A. Warren, the 2020 honoree, who announced the selection of Richard Waugaman, MD, Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Georgetown University.



Warren emphasized that "Rick, as he is known to his many Oxfordian friends, has achieved much in *both* of the Fellowship's priority areas: his *research* has significantly strengthened the Oxfordian claim to authorship of the 'Shakespeare' works and his *outreach and promotion* of the Oxfordian idea has been extensive and effective."

Eagan-Donovan added: "Rick is a true friend and mentor to many in the Shakespeare community. He is outspoken and innovative in his approach but always modest and gracious. He has been instrumental in connecting people, bringing together scholars and Shakespeare enthusiasts."

Waugaman said that receiving this year's award "is a wonderful surprise," and noted that he became interested in the authorship question after reading William Niederkorn's 2002 *New York Times* article about Roger Stritmatter's doctoral research on Oxford's Geneva Bible.

In addition to his faculty position at Georgetown, Professor Waugaman is Training and Supervising Analyst Emeritus at the Washington Psychoanalytic Institute. Among his more than 200 publications (many on psychiatry), are around 100 (and counting) on Shakespeare and the authorship question, including its psychoanalytical aspects. Many of the latter were accepted and published in mainstream peer-reviewed academic journals. He has also published two e-books: *It's Time to Re-Vere the Works of 'Shake-Speare'*:

*A Psychoanalyst Reads the Works of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford* (2014), and *Newly Discovered Works by 'William Shake-Speare': a.k.a. Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford* (2014, 2d ed. 2017).

The great pioneering psychoanalyst Dr. Sigmund Freud was an early and ardent convert to the Oxfordian case. Dr. Waugaman has written his own aptly titled essay: "How I Became an Oxfreudian." As Warren noted in announcing today's recognition of Dr. Waugaman: "Not since the days of Bronson Feldman more than half a century ago has anyone promoted awareness of Edward de Vere as Shakespeare so extensively in the field of psychology."

Most of Dr. Waugaman's Shakespearean publications are available on his [Georgetown faculty webpage](#). He has also provided interesting material on his personal website, "[The Oxfreudian](#)." He has given many well-received lectures, including in Chicago (2017), "An Oxfreudian in Academia," and in Hartford (2019) on the "Meanings of Pen Names."

Rick and his wife, Dr. Elisabeth P. Waugaman, are both longtime members of the Oxfordian community. They each delivered presentations at this year's online conference (see pp. 34 and 35).

### Tom Regnier Veritas Award Given to Lynne Kositsky

At the recent SOF online conference, it was announced that the Tom Regnier Veritas Award had been given to Lynne Kositsky, who has been a champion of the Oxfordian movement for more than twenty years. She is the co-author, with Professor Roger Stritmatter, of *On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare's The Tempest*, published by McFarland & Co. in 2013, a book that goes far to establish that the play had been written well before the 1609 shipwreck that many traditional scholars believe was its inspiration. She is also a poet and the author of many books for young readers, including the Oxfordian historical novel *A Question of Will*.



She has won numerous awards, including the E.J. Pratt Medal and Award for Poetry and the Canadian

Jewish Book Award for Youth. Lynne and her husband, composer Michael Kositsky—both beloved members of the Oxfordian community—have written a musical version of *A Question of Will*, which received a staged reading at the SOF Annual Conference in Boston in 2016.

Professor Stritmatter accepted the award on Lynne Kositsky's behalf. "I am delighted that Lynne has received this richly deserved award," he said, adding that her "deep contributions to the Oxfordian movement have yet to achieve their full recognition." He also read a statement from Lynne herself: "This award means more to me than anything I could have wished for."

In 2005 Lynne Kositsky was instrumental in persuading the Shakespeare Oxford Society and the Shakespeare Fellowship, which existed as two separate organizations, to hold a joint conference. The first such conference was held that year in Ashland, Oregon, and they continued every year thereafter until the two organizations merged in late 2013.

The SOF Board of Trustees created this new award earlier this year to honor the memory of its beloved president Tom Regnier, who passed away in April 2020. Lynne is the second recipient of this high honor. The inaugural recipient, in April 2021, was SOF Website Design and Technology Editor Jennifer Newton.

## SOF 2021 Video Contest Winners

The three winning videos from this year's video contest were announced, and shown, at the SOF's recent online Conference. The winning videos, and the videos submitted by the other seven finalists, may be seen here: <https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/past-video-winners/>.

The third-place award went to Frank Lawler, for "Schrodinger's Bard in a Box." He will receive \$412 (the amount signifies Oxford's birthday, April 12). The second-place award went to Thomas Price, for "The Tale of Wondrous William"; Price will receive \$717 (signifying "lucky 7" and the "17<sup>th</sup>" Earl of Oxford). The first-place winner, as announced by Julie Sandys Bianchi, chair of the Video Contest Committee, was Jonathan



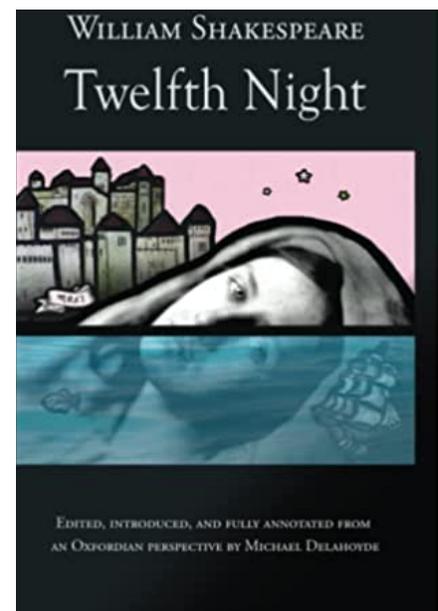
First Place Winner Jonathan Dixon

Dixon, for "What Does It Matter Who Wrote the Works of Shakespeare?" Dixon will receive \$1,550 (signifying Oxford's birth year). He was the winner of the second-place award in last year's video contest, for "Interview with a Stratfordian."

The contest invited participants to submit a video no longer than three minutes, "presenting an issue that promotes reasonable doubt about the traditional attribution of the Shakespeare works in a format that is entertaining, engaging, and witty."

## Oxfordian Edition of *Twelfth Night*

Michael Delahoyde's Oxfordian edition of *Twelfth Night* is now available for purchase from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). The edition, designed by Jennifer Newton, includes a general introduction to Oxford as Shakespeare by Earl Showerman, an introductory essay on the play by Delahoyde, and hundreds of textual notes that, in addition to translating obscure wordings, pinpoint Oxford's intentions and court in-jokes, and point readers toward solutions to several long-standing critical puzzles, including the odd choice for the comedy's title and the "M.O.A.I." enigma. Delahoyde coordinates all the best scholarship from the past and proceeds to a fuller explanation for this elusive and sophisticated comedy. There is more to "Shake-speare" than ever has been suspected.



## Lady Macbeth Takes Center Stage in New ART Production

*Macbeth in Stride*, a new take on the Shakespeare play, recently had its world premiere at the American Repertory Theater (ART) in Cambridge, Mass. Created by Whitney White, it features a cast of five and a four-piece rock band. In a newspaper interview published before the premiere, White explained that her show tells the story from Lady Macbeth's perspective. "We know this story," she told the *Boston Globe*. "The man gets the opportunity; a woman has no other way to get what she wants except to push her husband forward." White plays the lead character, known simply as Woman.



stories . . . being recontextualized onstage to foreground . . . long-muted voices."

*Macbeth in Stride* is the first of a planned five-part series of works by White focusing on Shakespeare's women; each has been commissioned by ART. Future subjects will include Juliet (with "a pop sound"), Cleopatra ("funk, soul, hip-hop and pop"), Emilia from *Othello* ("a blues vibe"), and a fifth woman White is "keeping . . . under wraps for now."



White uses music to propel the story. "Music helps set a mood, and the music of the 60s and 70s is 'grounded rock' that evokes a certain time, place and feeling." Inspired by the music of such artists as the Doors, Ike and Tina Turner, and others, White composed all original tunes for the show. White's script blends language from the play with new dialogue.

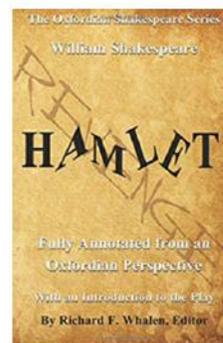
Growing up in Chicago, White encountered Shakespeare's works as a teenager. "Shakespeare speaks to everyone with so much emotion—ambition, fear, doubt, weakness, love, the stories still resonate."

In a review published a few days later, *Globe* critic Don Aucoin hailed the show, calling White's performance "galvanizing." "The question that hovers over *Macbeth in Stride*," Aucoin wrote, "hovers over the audience by White early in the performance: 'What's the story that framed you before you were even you?' . . . White wants us to see, and understand the destructive effects of, the low ceiling imposed on women's aspirations." He also noted: "White delivers on her determination, voiced early in the performance, to 'just climb all the way in and down' in a search for truths, however uncomfortable." He concluded that "*Macbeth in Stride* is a vitalizing addition to [the] theatrical category" of "oft-told

Advertisement

### Have you read *Hamlet* lately?

It's the most famous play in the world, although the Stratfordian commentators call it "enigmatic" and don't know what to make of it. But *Hamlet* makes perfect sense and great entertainment, including its surprise ending, when read knowing all the details showing that it was written by Edward de Vere, the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford.



For its illuminating details and many insights get the fully annotated Oxfordian edition of *Hamlet* with its enlightening Introduction by Richard F. Whalen, the edition's editor (and general editor and publisher of the Oxfordian Shakespeare Series) with Jack Shuttleworth, who is chairman emeritus of the English department at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Then get Whalen's editions of *Macbeth* and *Othello* (with Professor Ren Draya) for their Oxfordian insights and details, some quite surprising. Did you realize that *Macbeth* is not at all ambitious for the throne of Scotland and that *Othello the Moor* is not a heroic, noble figure but a boasting, swashbuckling, credulous fool?

For paperback copies, search Amazon books with the name of the play and Whalen. (Kindle editions do not—yet—work for the play text and line notes on facing pages.)

## Bad Reviews? Send Them Along!

*Daniel Steven Crafts, a composer and SOF member who lives in New Mexico, recently contacted us, asking for some help from fellow members. He writes:*

Hello everyone, I'm wondering if perhaps you can help me with a project I'm attempting to undertake. Every classically trained musician is familiar with Nicolas Slonimsky's book, *Lexicon of Musical Invective*. It is a collection of critical reviews trashing composers from Beethoven up until the mid-20th century when the book was written.

In that same spirit I would like to compile a collection of *ad hominem* attacks on doubters by Stratfordians. I'm convinced that such a compendium would not only provide a hilarious read and some measure of revenge on our part, but it would also document the exceptional defensiveness exhibited by academia on the subject. It would also provide a glimpse into the psychological phenomenon of believing what one wants to believe, regardless of evidence.

I'm hoping that anyone victimized by such attacks saved the text (or can describe the conversation) and would be willing to send them along—the more vicious, the better!

I'm also contemplating a second section, tentatively called "Stratfordians Say the Darndest Things." Here's an example that was easy to find: "Shakespeare lived in a world that rivaled our own in terms of an unprecedented access to information" (from an Amazon.com review of Richard Roe's *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy*).

If you'd like to submit something, or if you have questions, please contact me at the e-mail address I've set up for this project:

[slingsandarrows21@hotmail.com](mailto:slingsandarrows21@hotmail.com)

You can learn more about this project on the "Going Gonzo" episode of Steven Sabel's "Don't Quill the Messenger" podcast (September 1, 2021):

<https://www.dragonwagonradio.com/dontquillthemessenger>

Many thanks,  
Daniel Steven Crafts

## Recent Oxfordian Books in Libraries

by Gary Goldstein

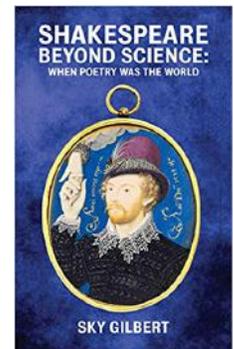
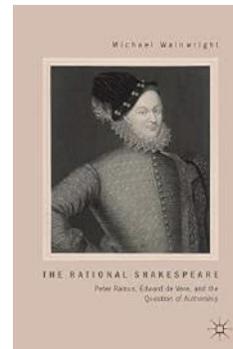
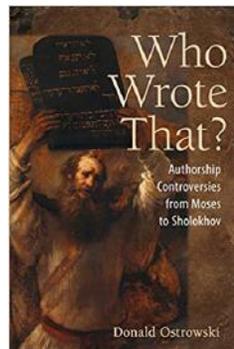
I recently logged onto the World Catalog of Books ([worldcat.org](http://worldcat.org)) to discover that three recent Oxfordian books issued by established publishers are doing well.

The big win is Don Ostrowski's book, *Who Wrote That? Authorship Controversies from Moses to Sholokhov*, which includes the detailed chapter on the Shakespeare authorship issue and Oxford's candidacy. It is now in 647 libraries, mostly university libraries. It was published by Cornell University Press two years ago (see reviews, *Newsletter*, Summer 2020, and *The Oxfordian* 22 [2020]). Ostrowski is research advisor in the social sciences and lecturer at the Harvard Extension School, where he teaches world history. He also chairs the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies' Early Slavists Seminars at Harvard University. Two other older Oxfordian books are in that range (carried by 600-700 libraries): Joseph Sobran's *Alias Shakespeare* (1997) and Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (1984, 1992).

The second recent Oxfordian book is *The Rational Shakespeare: Peter Ramus, Edward de Vere, and the Question of Authorship* by the English academic Michael Wainwright, published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2018. Wainwright is an English instructor at London University. His book is in 166 libraries. (Reviewed in *The Oxfordian* 22 [2020].)

Third, Sky Gilbert's *Shakespeare Beyond Science: When Poetry Was the World*, published last year by Guernica Editions, is in fifty-four libraries. He may have lost library sales due to the book only coming out in paperback. (Reviewed in *The Oxfordian* 22 [2020].)

These library holdings show that Oxford is not a death sentence for academic acceptance despite the ongoing campaign by the Stratfordian academic establishment to demonize him. I think this is a major achievement for the movement in engaging the academics – albeit through their libraries. They still boycott us in the classroom, at conferences and in mainstream journals.



## The Oxfordian, Volume 23, Is Now Available

The largest issue ever published of the SOF annual peer-reviewed scholarly journal, *The Oxfordian*, is now available. Edited by Gary Goldstein, it contains nine research papers and four book and movie reviews, and is available in print on Amazon for only \$14.99. SOF members receive free access to the entire issue in PDF form [on our website](#) and non-members may freely access two important articles. The 373-page volume is 100 pages longer than the next-largest issue. The contents include:

- A monograph by doctoral candidate Matthew Hutchinson of Australia, who examines William Shakspeare's six signatures and concludes that all six were actually written by Jacobean law clerks
- Gabriel Ready on the 1623 First Folio, re-examining the theory that the key impetus for publishing it was the political crisis attendant on the Spanish Match policy of King James; Ready shows how printing practices in Jacobean England and the intricacies of domestic and foreign politics call for a reappraisal of that hypothesis.
- John M. Shahan makes a detailed case that the Dedication in *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (1609) is a double cryptogram revealing that Edward de Vere is the author and that the dedicatee, "Mr. W.H.," is Henry Wriothesley, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Southampton.
- Ramon Jiménez examines same dedication and finds that it was written by the publisher, Thomas Thorpe, contains no hidden message, and that the dedicatee is London stationer William Hall.
- Richard M. Waugaman investigates whether de Vere wrote the first English translation, published in 1620, of Boccaccio's *The Decameron*.
- Elisabeth P. Waugaman examines whether de Vere was the sitter in the portrait owned by Katherine Chiljan (auctioned by Christie's) of an Elizabethan gentleman *circa* 1580.
- Katherine Chiljan demonstrates that the Renaissance Italian politician Lord Prospero Visconti of Milan was the main source for Shakespeare's portrayal of the magus Propspero in *The Tempest*.
- Michael Hyde contributes new evidence that complements existing scholarship on the authorship



of *Troilus and Cressida* — including Elizabethan theatre productions, medieval manuscripts of Chaucer's *magnum opus*, *The Canterbury Tales*, and the use in the play by Oxford (de Vere) of his family motto.

- The new issue also has three book reviews and a survey of the best film adaptations of Shakespeare plays.
- Finally, we discover in the archives of the Folger Shakespeare Library *prima facie* evidence that Edward de Vere (Oxford) did indeed serve on Queen Elizabeth's Privy Council.

*The Oxfordian* was founded in 1998 by Stephanie Hopkins Hughes, who was editor of its first ten volumes. Volumes 17 - 23 are now available in print on Amazon. Almost all contents of volumes before Volume 23 are available for free to anyone in PDF form [on our website](#).



## In Memoriam: Frank Davis (1935-2021)

Dr. Frank Davis, former president of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, passed away at a hospital in Savannah, Georgia, on August 7, 2021, after a lengthy illness. He was eighty-six.

Frank Massey Davis was born in Montgomery, Alabama, and later moved to Atlanta, Georgia. He was a graduate of Emory University and Tulane University School of Medicine. A board-certified neurosurgeon, he practiced neurosurgery in Tallahassee, Florida, until his retirement. He was the cofounder of the Tallahassee Neurological Clinic, past president of the Florida Neurological Society, member of both the Southern Neurological Society and the American College of Surgeons. Frank was a proud veteran, having served in active duty as a Lieutenant in the Medical Corps of the US Navy. After his retirement, he and his wife eventually settled in Savannah.

Frank was a member of the Skidaway Island United Methodist Church and the Landings Club. Frank was an accomplished pianist, an avid boater and golfer, Life Master bridge player and dedicated Florida State Seminoles fan.

Frank is perhaps best remembered by Oxfordians for his service with the Shakespeare Oxford Society. He joined the Board of Trustees in 2001, and served as President from 2002 to 2004; he remained on the Board until 2007. He was a regular attendee at the organization's annual conferences.

His widow, Judy Davis, informs us that interest in the authorship controversy began years before his retirement. "We were watching a *Firing Line* program interviewing Charlton Ogburn," she recalled, "and Frank mentioned to me that he was aware of the controversy. It just so happened that soon after moving to Beaufort [South Carolina], we saw an article about Charlton and Vera in the local magazine. Frank contacted him right away and we were invited to their home. That was the beginning of our friendship. Frank immediately bought *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* and became a dedicated Oxfordian. Charlton was a wonderful mentor, but unfortunately only lived about two more years. We made several wonderful trips to the UK in search of data, often meeting with Derran Charlton while there. Frank's unforeseen illness prevented additional travel that we had planned to continue his research. I cannot tell you

how much he enjoyed his association with the SOS and SOF. It encompassed his sense of adventure, his love of literature and history and his sense of justice, believing that truth should prevail."

Frank contributed a number of articles to the *Newsletter* and *The Oxfordian*, beginning with "Shakespeare's Medical Knowledge: How Did He Acquire It" (*The Oxfordian* vol. 3, 2000).

In another article, "Leass for Making': Shakespeare Outed as a Liar?" (*Newsletter*, Spring 2007) he analyzed a cryptic handwritten annotation in a copy of the 1623 First Folio owned by Glasgow University. The annotation, appearing directly beneath the name "William Shakespeare" on the page with "The Names of the Principall Actors," appears to read "leass for making." Davis suggested that "leass" could be a variant spelling of "lease," one of the meanings of which is "untrue" or "untruth," and that the annotator may have been saying that the actor Shakspeare was not the playwright. He also wrote a chapter on Shakspeare's scrawled signatures in the 2013 book *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt? Exploring an Industry in Denial*.

Frank Davis is survived by his wife of forty-five years, Judith Hewett Davis, four children and seven grandchildren. A memorial service was held in August.



### In Memoriam: Jacquelyn L. Mason (1940-2021)

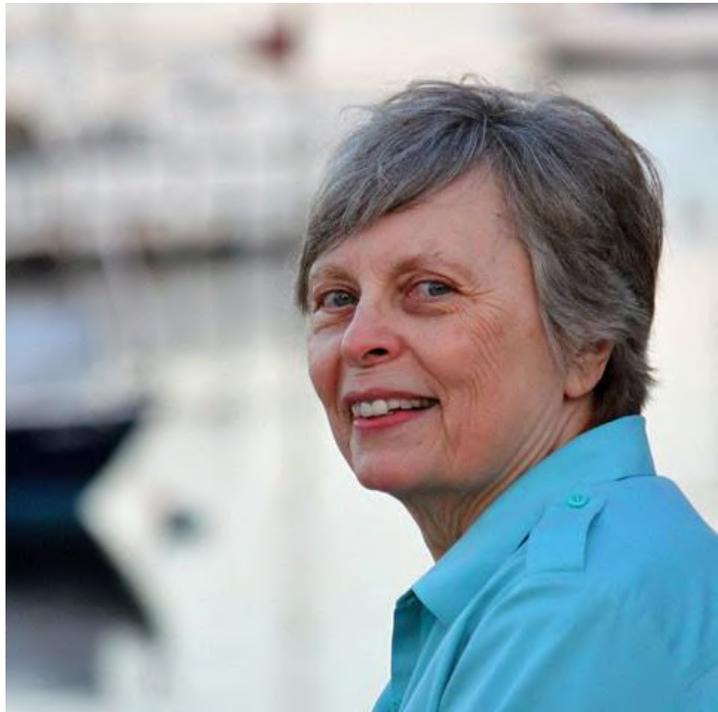
Longtime Oxfordian Jacquelyn “Jackie” Mason of Pleasanton, California, passed away on July 13, 2021, at the age of eighty. Born and raised in Flint, Michigan, she earned a BS degree from Madonna College (now Madonna University). She met her one true love, Robert Mason, in the church choir, and they were married on August 29, 1969. They raised their two children in Grand Blanc, Michigan, and moved to California in 1997 when the nest was empty after their daughter’s graduation from veterinary school. She worked in clinical laboratories as a medical technologist for over forty-five years and was a passionate scholar of Shakespeare, genealogy, and medicine.

Jackie’s daughter, Lisa Hoban, informs us that her mother loved to solve mysteries. She was presented with a complicated one when her son brought Charlton Ogburn’s book, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, home from school in 1985 to prepare for a debate in English class. She read the book and began what would turn into decades of research into the Shakespeare authorship question. She conferred with prominent authors in the field and spent hours poring over uncommon texts. She took full advantage of her proximity to the University of Michigan’s Graduate Library as she dug deeper into Edward de Vere, 17th earl of Oxford, and his peers in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. She turned her attention in turn to Gascoigne, Spenser, Sidney, and Gabriel Harvey, but in the end settled on Oxford. Her article, “Shall I Die? Shall I Fly? An Early Poem by Oxford?” was published in the inaugural issue of the *Spear-Shaker Review* in 1987.

Jackie enjoyed untangling timelines, analyzing word usage, and doing her best

to determine authorship. Her scholarly passion led her to travel to England in 2013 and to Italy in 2016 on Oxfordian-centered trips organized by the late Ann Zakelj (see “On the Trail of Edward de Vere: June 18-28, 2013,” *Shakespeare Matters*, Fall 2013, and “Shakespeare in Italy 2016: The Tour,” *Newsletter*, Summer 2016).

The *Newsletter* became a happy distraction as she was going to chemotherapy and doctor appointments. After nine months, Jackie lost her battle with pancreatic cancer. In addition to her daughter, she is survived by a son, Richard Mason, two sisters, three brothers, and two grandchildren. Her husband predeceased her.



## Books, Books, Books!

[Editor's note: When SOF President Bob Meyers said that he planned to recommend some books as part of his "Authorship 101" presentation at our recent online seminar (see page 1), that prompted me to solicit a few more **lists of recommended books**. Here are a dozen lists. As you can see, they vary widely in the number of titles listed and in the scope of what's recommended—some lists (like Bob Meyers's) are aimed mainly at persons who are new to the Shakespeare Authorship Question, while

others (like Roger Stritmatter's) are intended for those who already well versed in it.

To save space I have omitted publisher information. Most books can be found without much difficulty, and are for sale on Amazon.com and other online book sites; some are also available in electronic form. Even many older titles can be found at reasonable prices; some books published before 1923 are no longer protected by copyright, and new printings can be purchased.

Finally, don't forget about your local public or college library. If they don't have a specific title, they can often obtain it for you via interlibrary loan.]



### Bob Meyers (President, Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship)

- J. Thomas Looney, *"Shakespeare" Identified* (1920, Centenary ed. 2018)—the book that launched the Oxfordian movement.
- James Warren, *"Shakespeare" Revealed: The Collected Articles and Letters of J. Thomas Looney* (2019)—a collection of Looney's articles and letters on the Oxfordian theory.
- James Warren, *Shakespeare Revolutionized: The First Hundred Years of J. Thomas Looney's "Shakespeare" Identified* (2021) – a history of the first 100 years of the Oxfordian movement (see reviews in this issue).
- James Warren (ed.), *Shakespeare Investigated: Publications of the Shakespeare Fellowship 1920-1936* (2021)—a collection of hard-to-find newspaper and magazine articles by early Oxfordians.
- Mark Anderson, *"Shakespeare" By Another Name* (2005)—the first mass-market biography of Edward de Vere.
- The Oxfordian Shakespeare Series (Richard F. Whalen, gen. ed.) – texts of the plays with introductions and annotations from an Oxfordian perspective (the series includes editions of *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *Hamlet*, and *Twelfth Night*, with more expected).
- Roger Stritmatter & Lynne Kositsky, *On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare's The Tempest* (2013)—shows that this play's origins date well before 1609.
- Richard Paul Roe, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* (2011)—makes the case that the Bard (whoever he was) had traveled to Italy.
- John Shahan & Alexander Waugh (eds.), *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?: Exposing an Industry in Denial* (2013)—a chapter-by-chapter refutation of the arguments made in favor of the Stratford man by Edmondson & Wells in *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt*.
- Bryan H. Wildenthal, *Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts* (2019) —shows that most early references to the writer Shakespeare or his works suggest that the name was a pseudonym.
- Katherine Chiljan, *Shakespeare Suppressed* (2011 & 2016)—presents evidence that the great author's literary career began long before Shakespeare arrived on the scene.
- Bonner Miller Cutting, *Necessary Mischief: Exploring the Shakespeare Authorship Question* (2018)—a collection of several essays on key topics, including Oxford's 1000-pound annual grant and the last will and testament of Will Shakespeare.
- Hank Whittemore, *100 Reasons Shakespeare Was the Earl of Oxford* (2016)—a handy summary of the case for Oxford in 100 short chapters.
- Roger Stritmatter & Bryan H. Wildenthal, *The Poems of Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford . . . and the Shakespeare Question: volume 1* (2019) – the first of a planned five-volume series on Oxford's poetry, this one focuses on the poems attributed to Oxford by most orthodox scholars.



### William Boyle (librarian and editor, *A Poet's Rage*)

I selected the following books either because of their narrow focus on the politics of succession as being the core issue of the Oxfordian solution to the Shakespeare Authorship Question, or because they represent an interesting collection of essays on the broader issues of why the SAQ matters and the evidence supporting the Oxfordian theory. I've deliberately omitted many of the "core" books on the issue (Looney, Ward, Ogburns Sr. and Jr., Whalen, Anderson, etc.) since everyone is aware of them and most have read them. This list isn't really a Top 10 (or Top 12) list, but rather a group of books that have been particularly important to me:

- William Boyle (ed.), *A Poet's Rage* (2013)—selected essays from the past thirty-five years explaining and supporting the Prince Tudor theory for how and why Oxford's authorship was covered up.
- Hank Whittemore, *100 Reasons Shakespeare Was the Earl of Oxford* (2016)—short essays on the 100 best reasons to accept that Edward de Vere was, in fact, Shakespeare. An excellent introduction to the whole issue.
- Hank Whittemore, *The Monument* (2005)—a groundbreaking analysis in which the Essex Rebellion of 1601 is the historical context for the Sonnets and how that context transforms our understanding of them, and may well alone be the solution to resolving the authorship debate. Now out of print, but a new concise edition (under 500 pages) is due in 2022.
- Charles Beauclerk, *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom* (2010)—an interpretation of the entire Shakespeare Canon from the Prince Tudor point of view. An interesting and compelling read, chock full of insights.
- Barbara De Luna, *The Queen Declined* (1968)—an analysis of *Willobie His Avis* (1594) that is accepted by some mainstream sources (e.g., Harvard's *Riverside Shakespeare*, Eric Sams), but is generally overlooked. It identifies Avis as Queen Elizabeth and posits that the central subject of the poem is her various proposed marriage alliances over her lifetime, and along with them the issue of settling the succession. The publication of *Willobie* is overtly linked to *Rape of Lucrece*, published in the same year, and equates Avis with Lucrece.
- H.H. Holland, *Shakespeare through Oxford Glasses* (1923)—the first "Oxfordian" book after Looney, taking a look at the Shakespeare Canon from the new Oxfordian perspective. This is the book that the popular blogger "Rambler" ("Quake-speare Shorterly") has said sent him down the path to finding numerous topical allusions to Oxford as Shakespeare in Elizabethan

literature. As Holland himself states, "it is from a topical point of view only and not a literary one that the subject is now being studied." (Available online at HathiTrust Digital Library and soon to be available in print from Forever Press.)

- Roger Stritmatter, *The Marginalia Of Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible: Providential Discovery, Literary Reasoning, and Historical Consequence* (2001)—this dissertation on the relationship between the Shakespeare Canon and the underlined passages in Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible is a landmark study by the first person to receive a PhD for Oxfordian authorship studies.
- Katherine Chiljan, *Shakespeare Suppressed* (2011 & 2016)—an excellent survey of the abundant circumstantial evidence for Edward de Vere as Shakespeare (and Shakspeare as definitely not Shakespeare), accompanied with an emphasis on the political angles (Queen Elizabeth and the succession) that must have led to the severing of Oxford from his life's work.
- Bryan H. Wildenthal, *Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts* (2019)—shows that there were numerous contemporaneous doubts the authorship of the Shakespeare works, with a number of hints pointing toward Oxford. Many writers back in the day alluded to this problem of who wrote Shakespeare.
- Ramon Jiménez, *Shakespeare's Apprenticeship: Identifying the Real Playwright's Earliest Works* (2018)—examines early versions of plays that later appeared as by "Shakespeare," and argues that they were all Oxford's work from before the 1590s.
- Lily Campbell, *Shakespeare's Histories: Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy* (1947)—essays on the history plays and how they are in fact topical commentaries on Queen Elizabeth's policies.
- Kevin Gilvary (ed.), *Dating Shakespeare's Plays* (2010)—a definitive look at the best information on when the first versions of all the plays were written.



### Bonner Miller Cutting (author, *Necessary Mischief*)

I. Orthodox biography and literary perspective and Shakespeare-related documents:

- E.K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (2 vols., 1930)
- Stephen Greenblatt, *Will in the World* (2004)—a much celebrated attempt (but IMHO an unsuccessful one) to match the Stratford man's life to the works.
- B. Roland Lewis, *The Shakespeare Documents* (2 vols., 1942)
- S. Schoenbaum, *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life* (1975)

## II. What English teachers don't tell you about Shakespeare and his works:

- Kevin Gilvary (ed.), *Dating Shakespeare's Plays: A Critical Review of the Evidence* (2010)
- Diana Price, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography* (2001 & 2012)
- Roger Stritmatter & Lynne Kositsky, *On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare's The Tempest* (2013)

## III. The Shakespeare Authorship Question:

- Mark Anderson, *"Shakespeare" By Another Name* (2005)
- Ramon Jiménez, *Shakespeare's Apprenticeship: Identifying the Real Playwright's Earliest Works* (2018)
- J. Thomas Looney, *"Shakespeare" Identified* (1920; Centenary ed., 2018)
- John Michell, *Who Wrote Shakespeare?* (1996)
- Charlton Ogburn (Jr.), *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (1984 & 1992)
- John Shahan & Alexander Waugh (eds.), *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?: Exposing an Industry in Denial* (2013)
- Joseph Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare: Solving the Greatest Literary Mystery of All Time* (1997)
- Bernard M. Ward, *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford (1550–1604) from Contemporary Documents* (1928)
- Richard F. Whalen, *Shakespeare: Who Was He? The Oxford Challenge to the Bard of Avon* (1994)
- Bryan H. Wildenthal, *Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts* (2019)

## IV. Elizabethan Historical Perspective (these are very insightful books that people interested in the SAQ really need to read, especially Lawrence Stone's book):

- Joel Hurstfield, *The Queens Ward's: Wardship and Marriage Under Elizabeth I* (1958)
- Charles Nicholl, *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe* (1994)
- David Riggs, *Ben Jonson: A Life* (1989)
- Richard Paul Roe, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* (2011)
- David Starkey, *Elizabeth: The Struggle for the Throne* (2007)
- Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (abridged edition, 1967)

## V. Just For Fun:

- Bill Bryson, *Shakespeare: The World as Stage* (2009) —it has a lot of useful information, even though Bryson

tears into authorship doubters at the end; ironically, he revealed the problems with the Stratfordian case earlier in the book.



## Cheryl Eagan-Donovan (filmmaker, *Nothing Is Truer Than Truth*)

- J. Thomas Looney, *"Shakespeare" Identified* (1920, Centenary edition 2018) – this new edition with Jim Warren's extensive notes is absolutely essential.
- Mark Anderson, *"Shakespeare" By Another Name: The Life of Edward De Vere, Earl of Oxford, The Man Who Was Shakespeare* (2005)—the definitive biography of Oxford, tracing the parallels between his life and the works of Shakespeare in an accessible style with extensive notes and sources.
- Joseph Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare* (1997)—this book is key to understanding the bisexuality of the author, the Sonnets, and the poems of Edward de Vere, as they pertain to the authorship.
- Bonner Miller Cutting, *Necessary Mischief: Exploring the Shakespeare Authorship Question* (2018)—required reading for all Oxfordians.
- Roger Stritmatter & Bryan H. Wildenthal, *The Poems of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford . . . and the Shakespeare Question: Volume I* (2019)—this collection of Edward de Vere's extant poetry includes extensive notes, scholarly analysis, and critical commentary.
- Bryan H. Wildenthal, *Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts* (2019)—a comprehensive and entertaining introduction to doubts expressed about "Shakespeare" during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- Richard Paul Roe, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* (2011)—a wonderful survey of the locations of Shakespeare's plays and Edward de Vere's travels in Italy.
- Roger Stritmatter, *The Marginalia Of Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible: Providential Discovery, Literary Reasoning, and Historical Consequence* (2001)—this is the most important work of scholarship documenting the argument for Edward de Vere as the author of the canon.
- Katherine Chiljan (ed.), *Letters and Poems of Edward, Earl of Oxford* (1998)—an important source for Oxford's letters and poems.
- Kevin Gilvary (ed.), *Dating Shakespeare's Plays: A Critical Review of the Evidence* (2011)—essential for understanding what we know and how we know it about the dates of composition of each of the plays. I use it in all of my English and literature courses.

- Alan Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary* (2003)—before Mark Anderson’s book, this was the definitive biography of Edward de Vere, which, despite its many errors, remains important as a source for understanding how Oxford was (and is) discredited and dismissed by academia.
- Noemi Magri, *Such Fruits Out of Italy* (2014)—essential reading on the relationship between Oxford’s travels in Italy and the Shakespeare plays.
- Steven W. May, *The Elizabethan Courtier Poets: The Poems and Their Contexts* (1991)—a critical guide to the world of Elizabethan poets and Oxford’s place in it by an important non-Oxfordian scholar.
- James Warren, *An Index to Oxfordian Publications: Including Oxfordian Books and Selected Articles from Non-Oxfordian Publications* (4<sup>th</sup> ed., 2017)—another essential resource for all scholars.
- Richard Malim (ed.), *Great Oxford: Essays on the Life and Work of Edward de Vere* (2004)—an excellent collection.



**Kevin Gilvary** (author, *The Fictional Lives of Shakespeare*; editor, *Dating Shakespeare’s Plays*)

#### I. The most helpful:

- J. Thomas Looney, “*Shakespeare*” *Identified* (1920; Centenary edition, 2018)—absolutely essential reading, now available with notes and commentary by James Warren.
- Mark Anderson, “*Shakespeare*” *by Another Name* (2005)—a detailed and well documented biography of Oxford as Shakespeare.
- Nina Green, [www.oxford-shakespeare.com](http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com)—it’s not a book, but this website is an important collection of documents regarding Oxford.

#### II. The next most helpful:

- Alan Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary: The Life of Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford* (2003)—aside from the silly editorialising, this volume contains many (but not all) transcriptions of documents relevant to Oxford’s life.
- Eva Turner Clark, *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare’s Plays* (3<sup>rd</sup> revised edition, 1974; Ruth Loyd Miller, ed.)—makes a serious case for Oxford as writer of the plays from about 1576.
- John Michell, *Who Wrote Shakespeare?* (1996)—a splendid review of the problem and of the main candidates for authorship.
- John Shahan & Alexander Waugh (eds.), *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?: Exposing an Industry in Denial*

(2013)—a very detailed dismantling of the claims asserted in favour of Shakspeare’s candidacy.

- Noemi Magri, *Such Fruits out of Italy: The Italian Renaissance in Shakespeare’s Plays and Poems* (2014; Gary Goldstein, ed.)—deals with a range of Italian connections between Oxford and the works.
- E.K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (2 vols., 1930)—by far the most comprehensive and reliable guide to Shakespeare among traditional studies.
- Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (2003)—without dealing with authorship, Erne makes a compelling case that the plays, as they were revised for the First Folio, were intended to be studied, not performed. Definitely Oxfordian by inclination.

#### III. Also helpful:

- William Farina, *De Vere as Shakespeare: An Oxfordian Reading of the Canon* (2006)—a very helpful review of each play from the point of view of Oxfordian authorship.
- Ruth Lloyd Miller (ed.), *Oxfordian Vistas* (1975)—a wide range of essays on many aspects of Oxford as Shakespeare.
- Daphne Pearson, *Edward de Vere: The Crisis and Consequences of Wardship* (2005)—neutral as to authorship, but makes a detailed case for the financial ruin consequent to his wardship.
- Diana Price, *Shakespeare’s Unorthodox Biography* (2001 & 2012)—establishes the insurmountable problems with the mainstream view of authorship.
- Bryan H. Wildenthal, *Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts* (2019)—a detailed account of those contemporaries who expressed doubt on the traditional ascription.
- Roger Stritmatter, *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere’s Geneva Bible: Providential Discovery, Literary Reasoning, and Historical Consequence* (2001) – a detailed examination of the marginalia of a 1560 Bible that had belonged to Oxford, revealing an astonishing number of links to the works of Shakespeare.
- Roger Stritmatter & Bryan H. Wildenthal, *The Poems of Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford . . . and the Shakespeare Question: volume 1* (2019) – detailed criticism of Oxford’s known poetry and its links with Shakespeare.
- Ramon Jiménez, *Shakespeare’s Apprenticeship: Identifying the Real Playwright’s Earliest Works* (2018)—details several early plays that are clearly the early work of Oxford as Shakespeare.
- Katherine Chiljan, *Shakespeare Suppressed* (2011 & 2016)—a perceptive account of how authorship doubts

have been ignored by mainstream scholars.

- Richard Malim (ed.), *Great Oxford* (2004)—a collection of essays on the life and work of Edward de Vere (all previously published in the *De Vere Society Newsletter*).



### Gary Goldstein (Editor, *The Oxfordian*)

Here's my Top Ten list:

- Mark Anderson, "*Shakespeare*" by *Another Name* (2005)—the best of three literary biographies of Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. Extensively researched and up to date, this book is also fully annotated. The other two biographies are flawed—B.M. Ward's 1928 book is substantially outdated in its biographical information, and Alan Nelson's *Monstrous Adversary* (2003) is undermined by its consistent editorial bias against Oxford on every level.
- Joseph Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare* (1997)—the most concise and elegant book on the Oxfordian case, especially valuable for its detailed appendices presenting the linguistic parallels between the poetry and literary prefaces of Oxford and those of Shakespeare's works.
- Warren Hope & Kim Holston, *The Shakespeare Controversy: An Analysis of the Authorship Theories* (2d ed. 2009)—Hope (an Oxfordian scholar with a PhD in English Literature) and Holston survey the evidence for each of the major claimants to the authorship, from Bacon and Marlowe to Rutland and Oxford. It includes an extensive and heavily annotated bibliography.
- Charlton Ogburn (Jr.), *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (1984 & 1992)—this *magnum opus* analyzes the evidence against William Shakspere of Stratford and for Edward de Vere as Shakespeare. It also traces the bias against the Oxfordian hypothesis by academics over time. Most important, it examines the Elizabethan Court and its major courtiers, and their relevance to the Shakespeare authorship controversy.
- Eva Turner Clark, *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays* (1931; 3<sup>rd</sup> revised edition, 1974, Ruth Loyd Miller, ed.)—it documents the private and public allusions in the canon to individuals, public events and political affairs and connects them to characters and plots in every Shakespeare play. As a result, we gain insight into the author's original intent for writing the plays.
- Richard Paul Roe, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* (2011)—this seminal book demonstrates that Oxford's sixteen-month trip to France and Italy in 1575-76

forms the basis for all the topical allusions in ten of the Shakespeare plays based in those countries.

- Noemi Magri, *Such Fruits out of Italy: The Italian Renaissance in Shakespeare's Plays and Poems* (2014, Gary Goldstein, ed.)—a collection of research papers over a year fifteen-period by a scholar fluent in Italian, Latin and English on Shakespeare's relationship with Italy: its language, geography and history. Magri demonstrates conclusively that the Bard lived in Italy long enough to absorb the full measure of the Italian Renaissance, and clearly was fluent in Italian and Latin. The detailed notes and extensive bibliography (encompassing American, British, German and Italian scholarship) should be a boon to future researchers.
- Peter R. Moore, *The Lame Storyteller, Poor and Despised* (2009, Gary Goldstein, ed.)—a collection of more than two dozen papers, notes and reviews based upon a generation of research by a professional military officer with degrees in engineering and economics. The second half of the book presents new evidence in support of the hypothesis that Edward de Vere was the true author of the Shakespeare canon, including a brilliant refutation of the stylometric analysis undertaken by Claremont McKenna College.
- Gary Goldstein, *Reflections on the True Shakespeare* (2016)—includes an epistemological analysis of Shakespeare scholarship and examines Shakespeare's knowledge of Dante, Hebrew and the Essex dialect, along with Oxford's acknowledged poetry and its repetitions and allusions in the plays. A key monograph addresses whether Queen Elizabeth used the stage for propaganda purposes. Other articles trace the public use of the stage by both the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Earls of Oxford and how James Joyce referred to the Oxfordian case in both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*.



### Stephanie Hopkins Hughes (founder, *The Oxfordian*)

General history of the stage:

- E.K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (4 vols., 1923)

History and geography of London:

- John Stow, *A Survey of London: Written in the Year 1598* (1994 ed.)

Tudor history:

- Geoffrey Elton has written numerous books on this era, including *England under the Tudors* (1955; 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 1991)
- John Guy, *Tudor England* (2000)
- Rosemary O'Day, *The Routledge Companion to the Tudor Age* (2010)

- Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (abridged edition, 1967)
- Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (1983)
- Lawrence Stone, *Family and Fortune: Studies in Aristocratic Finance in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1973)

Oxford's first teacher:

- Mary Dewar, *Sir Thomas Smith: A Tudor Intellectual in Office* (1964)

The Earl of Oxford:

- J. Thomas Looney, "*Shakespeare*" *Identified* (1920; Centenary edition 2018)
- James Warren, *Shakespeare Revolutionized* (2021)
- Charlton Ogburn (Jr.), *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (1984 & 1992)
- Mark Anderson, "*Shakespeare*" *by Another Name: The Life of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, the Man Who was Shakespeare* (2005)
- Alan Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary* (2003)

Shakespeare and his works:

- Caroline Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us* (1958)
- Albert Feuillerat, *The Composition of Shakespeare's Plays: Authorship, Chronology* (1953)
- Harold Bloom, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (1999)
- Ramon Jiménez, *Shakespeare's Apprenticeship: Identifying the Real Playwright's Earliest Works* (2018)
- Geoffrey Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (8 vols., 1961)

The public stage:

- W.W. Greg (ed.), *Henslowe's Diary* (2010)
- Irwin Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse: Its History and Its Design* (1964)
- Charles Nicholl, *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe* (1994)
- William Ingram, *The Business of Playing: The Beginnings of the Adult Professional Theater in Elizabethan London* (1992)

The acting companies:

- Scott McMillin & Sally-Beth MacLean, *The Queen's Men and Their Plays* (1998)
- Harold Hillebrand, *Child Actors: A Chapter in Elizabethan Stage History* (1964)

- Charles William Wallace, *The Evolution of the English Drama up to Shakespeare: With a History of the First Blackfriars Theatre* (1912)

The Cecils:

- David Cecil, *The Cecils of Hatfield House: A Portrait of an English Ruling Family* (1975)
- Conyers Read's two-volume biography of William Cecil, originally published separately as *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth* (1955) and *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth* (1960)
- Martin A.S. Hume, *The Great Lord Burghley: A Study in Elizabethan Statecraft* (2016)



**Ramon Jiménez** (author, *Shakespeare's Apprenticeship: Identifying the Real Playwright's Earliest Works*)

I made two lists.

I. For those who just want the gist of the argument and the basic facts about the author and the imposter:

- J. Thomas Looney, "*Shakespeare*" *Identified* (1920; Centenary ed. 2018)—for the sheer drama of a compelling detective story, nothing beats this unique and authoritative exposure of a centuries-old literary hoax. Pursuing his hunch that something was wrong with the orthodox view, Looney scoured the backwaters of Elizabethan letters, and produced a methodical and objective study that is the bedrock of our research and investigation of the Shakespeare authorship question.
- Charlton Ogburn (Jr.), *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (1984 & 1992)—a massively influential book that revived a dormant movement and brought thousands of new authorship skeptics to the Oxfordian camp.
- Mark Anderson, "*Shakespeare*" *by Another Name* (2005)—this breezy but well-documented biography of Oxford converted even more readers, pushing the authorship issue a little further onto the public stage.
- Diana Price, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography* (2001 & 2012)—a careful and well-written examination of the life and achievements of the Stratfordian village candidate. Although she avoids suggesting an alternative author, her extensive analysis of the prefatory material in the First Folio concludes that it is "littered with hints that the poet was a man of rank."

On the infrequent occasions that I am asked by an interested friend to recommend a book on the authorship question, I mention either or both of the following books:

- Joseph Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare* (1997)—beginning with his opening lines (“After four centuries, Shakespeare remains the most haunting of authors. He seems to know us better than we know him”), Sobran weaves an absorbing story in an easy prose style, punctuated with wit, that is difficult to put down.
- Richard F. Whalen, *Shakespeare, Who Was He?: The Oxford Challenge to the Bard of Avon* (1994)—I think that this short and concise introduction to the authorship question is the first book a newcomer should open.

II. For those who want to add to the body of knowledge supporting the claim that Edward de Vere was Shakespeare:

- E.K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (2 vols., 1930)—there is no better place to start. Aside from the fact that they’re about the wrong guy, these two volumes are the most objective and complete collection of historical facts about the life and times of William Shaksper of Stratford-upon-Avon. Chambers’s range and accuracy are extraordinary, and his judgment is rarely mistaken.
- Oscar James Campbell & Edward Quinn (eds.), *The Reader's Encyclopedia of Shakespeare* (1966)—this 1,000-page compendium is the first place to look for anything in the Shakespeare universe from Aaron to Zuccarelli. Sources, synopses, commentary, productions, criticism and bibliographies for every Shakespeare play and poem are especially useful.
- Francis Griffin Stokes, *A Dictionary of the Characters and Proper Names in the Works of Shakespeare* (2008)—if there’s a better reference work for every character and proper name in the canon, I haven’t found it. If you want to know who appeared in which play(s), in what acts and which scenes, and what they said and did, this is the book for you.
- Geoffrey Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (8 vols., 1961)—the *magnum opus* of one of England’s most prolific and consummate scholars of the Shakespeare canon. Long quotations from Italian novels and English chronicles, and several entire plays, make this 4,000-page work essential to any research into Shakespeare’s sources.
- Henrietta Collins Bartlett, *Mr. William Shakespeare, Original and Early Editions of his Quartos and Folios, his Source Books and those Containing Contemporary Notices* (1922)—a listing of all the editions, genuine and spurious, and all the adaptations, of Shakespeare’s works, as well as nearly 200 sources, in a single volume with an impeccable index of authors, titles, printers and publishers. For each edition she supplies the exact wording of the title page, including the date, the publisher, the printer, the number of signatures and leaves, and the number of extant copies. In twenty-five

years of consulting this book, originally published by Yale University, I have found only a single error. It is a veritable monument to meticulous scholarship.



**Roger Stritmatter** (author, *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere’s Geneva Bible*; general editor, SOF’s Brief Chronicles Book Series)

In putting together this list, I’ve omitted “Oxfordian” themed books and focused on ones that explore topics that pertain more generally to early modern literary culture or perspectives on Shakespeare that would be useful to Oxfordians:

- Anon., *The Art of Poesie by George Puttenham: A Critical Edition* (Frank Whigham & Wayne A. Rebhorn, eds.) (2007)
- Leonard Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism* (1986)
- Patricia Bizzell, Bruce Herzberg & Robin Reames, *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2020)
- David Crystal & Ben Crystal, *Shakespeare’s Words: A Glossary & Language Companion* (2002)
- Alastair Fowler, *Triumphal Forms: Structural patterns in Elizabethan Poetry* (1970).
- Sue Curry Jansen, *Censorship: The Knot that Binds Power and Knowledge* (1988)
- Leah Marcus, *Puzzling Shakespeare: Local Reading and Its Discontents* (1988)
- Arthur M Melzer, *Philosophy Between the Lines: The Lost History of Esoteric Writing* (2014).
- John Milton, *Areopagitica: A Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing* (delivered as a speech to Parliament in 1644, it’s available as a standalone title and in compilations of his works such as *Areopagitica and Other Writings* [2016])
- Scott L. Newstok (ed.), *Kenneth Burke on Shakespeare* (2007)
- Annabel Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Reading and Writing in Early Modern England* (1991 2<sup>nd</sup> edition with new introduction)



**James Warren** (author and editor of numerous Oxfordian books)

I. Of overarching importance:

- J. Thomas Looney, *“Shakespeare” Identified* (1920; Centenary edition 2018)—the 2018 edition (which I edited) has modern typesetting and citations for over 200 passages that Looney quoted from other works.

- Charlton Ogburn (Jr.), *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (1984 & 1992)—the book that resurrected the Oxfordian movement from near death in 1984; nearly forty years later it's still the most essential Oxfordian book.
- Hank Whittemore, *The Monument* (2005)—shows that *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (1609) was a deliberately designed masterwork, telling the story of important real-life events.
- James Warren, *Shakespeare Revolutionized* (2021)—describes the effect that Looney's book and the Oxfordian idea have had on thinking about Shakespearean authorship over the past century. It details the story of the first quarter-century of the Oxfordian movement (1920-1945) and academia's response to it, and does the same for the current wave of the movement (1985 to the present).

II. From the first twenty-five years of the Oxfordian movement (in chronological order):

- Sir George Greenwood, *The Shakespeare Problem Restated* (1908)—published before Looney's book, this essential precursor established clearly in the public's mind a third alternative for authorship of "Shakespeare's" works, one freed from Stratfordian and Baconian beliefs.
- James Warren (ed.), "*Shakespeare*" *Revealed: The collected shorter pieces and published letters of J. Thomas Looney, 1920-1941* (2019)—more than forty of the fifty-three pieces in the book had not previously been reprinted. They show that Looney did not abandon Oxfordian work after "*Shakespeare*" *Identified*, but continued his research for two decades and wrote dozens of shorter pieces to present his latest findings and to respond to misstatements about the Oxfordian claim.
- Capt. Bernard M. Ward, *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford* (1928)—though it makes no reference to de Vere as Shakespeare, this essential book provides a wealth of information about his life uncovered from original documents, and gives readers a vivid sense of the literary life of the era.
- Eva Turner Clark, *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays* (1931; revised 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 1974, Ruth Loyd Miller, ed.)—Clark identifies allusions to contemporary events and people found in Shakespeare's plays, and matched titles and descriptions of plays with records of the Court Revels, resulting in a new, earlier, chronology for them.
- Gerald H. Rendall, *Shakespeare Sonnets and Edward de Vere* (1930)—although Sigmund Freud had been persuaded by Looney that de Vere wrote "Shakespeare's" works, it wasn't until reading this

book that he went public with his new belief. (My modern edition of this book, combined with Rendall's other book on the sonnets, *Personal Clues in Shakespeare's Poems and Sonnets* (1934), will be published early in 2022.)

- Percy Allen, *The Life Story of Edward de Vere as "Shakespeare"* (1932)—perhaps Allen's most important book, *Life Story* builds on his *Case for Edward de Vere as Shakespeare* (1930) and *The Oxford-Shakespeare Case Corroborated* (1931). (I am now preparing modern editions of the complete Shakespeare writings of Percy Allen, in six volumes; volume 1 will be released early in 2022.)

III. From the current wave of the Oxfordian movement, 1984 to the present (in chronological order):

- William P. Fowler, *Shakespeare Revealed in Oxford's Letters* (1986)
- Richard F. Whalen, *Shakespeare: Who Was He? The Oxford Challenge to the Bard of Avon* (1994)
- Joseph Sobran, *Alias Shakespeare: Solving the Greatest Literary Mystery of All Time* (1997)
- Roger Stritmatter, *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible: Providential Discovery, Literary Reasoning, and Historical Consequence* (2001)
- Diana Price, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography: New Evidence of an Authorship Problem* (2001 & 2011)
- Mark Anderson, "*Shakespeare*" *by Another Name: The Life of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, the Man Who was Shakespeare* (2005)
- Warren Hope & Kim Holston, *The Shakespeare Controversy: An Analysis of the Authorship Theories* (2nd ed., 2009)
- Charles Beauclerk, *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom: The True History of Shakespeare and Elizabeth* (2010)
- Peter W. Dickson, *Bardgate: Shakespeare and the Royalists Who Stole the Bard* (2011)
- Katherine Chiljan, *Shakespeare Suppressed: The Uncensored Truth about Shakespeare and His Works* (2011 & 2016)
- Kevin Gilvary (ed.), *Dating Shakespeare's Plays: A Critical Review of the Evidence* (2011)
- Richard Paul Roe, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy: Retracing the Bard's Unknown Travels* (2011)
- William Boyle (ed.), *A Poet's Rage: Understanding Shakespeare Through Authorship Studies* (2013)
- John Shahan & Alexander Waugh (eds.), *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt? Exposing an Industry in Denial* (2013)
- Hank Whittemore, *100 Reasons Shakespeare Was the Earl of Oxford* (2016)

- Bonner Miller Cutting, *Necessary Mischief: Exploring the Shakespeare Authorship Question* (2018)
- Ramon Jiménez, *Shakespeare's Apprenticeship: Identifying the Real Playwright's Earliest Works* (2018)
- Bryan H. Wildenthal, *Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts* (2019)

#### IV. Other important works:

- Paul H. Altrocchi (ed.), *Building the Case* (2009 & 2014)—a ten-volume anthology of essential Oxfordian materials
- “Report My Cause Aright”: *The Shakespeare Oxford Society Fiftieth Anniversary Anthology* (2007).
- Richard Malim (ed.), *Great Oxford: Essays on the Life and Work of Edward de Vere* (2004)
- Oxfordian editions of Shakespeare's plays (Richard F. Whalen, gen. ed.), including *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Twelfth Night*



#### **Hank Whittemore (author, *The Monument and 100 Reasons Shakespeare Was the Earl of Oxford*)**

- James Warren, *Shakespeare Revolutionized* (2021)—reviews the first century of the Oxfordian movement, chock full of original research and documents, along with the author's commentary.
- J. Thomas Looney, “*Shakespeare*” *Identified* (1920, Centenary ed. 2018)—a British schoolteacher produces one of the great true detective stories of all time; here is the process of investigation, the joy of discovery, launching the Oxfordian movement.
- Hank Whittemore, *The Monument* (2005)—offers a dramatically new historical context for the *Sonnets* of 1609, focusing on the central story, written by Oxford as father of the Queen's natural son, the Earl of Southampton, between the latter's imprisonment for the Essex Rebellion in 1601 and the end of the Tudor dynasty in 1603.
- Hank Whittemore, *100 Reasons Shakespeare was the Earl of Oxford* (2016)—it views Oxford as Shakespeare with snapshots of his life, while building his authorship with accumulating clarity.
- Paul Hemenway Altrocchi, *Malice Aforethought: The Killing of a Unique Genius* (2010)—a series of carefully researched essays forming a portrait of Oxford as the genius who was deliberately erased from credit for his works printed under the Shakespeare pen name.
- Bernard M. Ward, *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford* (1928)—the documentary record alone paints a portrait of the true author and speaks for itself; each new piece of evidence is akin to a dot in a connect-the-dots picture of Edward de Vere.
- Eva Turner Clark, *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays* (1931; revised 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 1974, Ruth Loyd Miller, ed.)—it presents the paradigm-shifting time frame for the author's life and work, thereby opening a window on their contemporary contexts.
- Dorothy Ogburn & Charlton Ogburn, *This Star of England* (1952)—a flawed but epic narrative, driven by superb writing and a powerful grasp of the author, his extraordinary life and times, and the steady growth of his work toward its final, supreme majesty.
- Peter Rush, *Hidden in Plain Sight* (2015)—a thorough examination of my 2005 book, *The Monument*, with original insights and clarifications.
- Charlton Ogburn (Jr.), *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (1984)—with an introduction by historian David McCullough, it launched the volcanic Oxfordian revival by taking apart the Stratfordian case and replacing it with that of Edward de Vere.
- William P. Fowler, *Shakespeare Revealed in Oxford's Letters* (1986)—the former president of the Shakespeare Club of Boston presents overwhelming evidence of Oxford's authorship by comparing ideas, attitudes, and phrases in Oxford's letters with those found in Shakespeare's texts.
- Charles Beauclerk, *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom* (2010)—it's controversial, but it's the best-written Oxfordian book of all, with uncanny insights and intelligence; it presents Queen Elizabeth as the natural mother of Edward de Vere and the consequences for England as well as for English literature and drama.
- Mark Anderson, “*Shakespeare*” *by Another Name* (2005)—a major attempt at literary biography, covering Oxford's life in relation to the Shakespearean works; it's another breakthrough as it was issued by a major publisher (Gotham Books) with widespread attention and readership.
- Alan Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary* (2003)—for all its cheap sniping at Oxford's character, based on a biased view of the facts, here is a valuable unfolding of his life through documents and transcriptions.
- Katherine Chiljan, *Shakespeare Suppressed* (2011 & 2016)—filled with new research and insights, offering arguments for Southampton as son of Oxford and Elizabeth, notably in terms of that story's impact on events leading to the Shakespeare First Folio in 1623.
- Richard Paul Roe, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* (2011)—Roe's personal travels in Italy, with copies of ten of Shakespeare's plays, leads him to conclude that he is following the great author's footsteps.



**Bryan H. Wildenthal** (author, *Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts*)

I. My Top Ten list:

- J. Thomas Looney, *“Shakespeare” Identified* (1920, Centenary edition, 2018)—it’s not only first on my list (chronological by publication), it really should be read first, too! You can skip his final chapter on *The Tempest* and instead read Stritmatter & Kositsky (cited below).
- Charlton Ogburn, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality* (1984; 2d ed. 1992)—It’s 800+ pages, so you may want to read instead (at least initially) these two much shorter books: Richard F. Whalen, *Shakespeare: Who Was He?* (1994) and Hank Whittemore, *100 Reasons Shakespeare Was the Earl of Oxford* (2016). If you do eventually have time, the “full Ogburn” is well worth diving into.
- Diana Price, *Shakespeare’s Unorthodox Biography: New Evidence of an Authorship Problem* (2001; rev. ed. 2012)—I recommend reading this book second (after Looney). Absolutely essential.
- Mark Anderson, *“Shakespeare” by Another Name: The Life of Edward de Vere, the Man Who Was Shakespeare* (2005)—this biography of Oxford includes a good summary of Professor Roger Stritmatter’s findings on connections between Oxford’s markings in his personal Geneva Bible and Shakespearean biblical references.
- Katherine Chiljan, *Shakespeare Suppressed: The Uncensored Truth About Shakespeare and His Works* (2011, rev. ed. 2016)
- Richard Paul Roe, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* (2011)—though some of his findings don’t hold up, Roe powerfully demonstrates that “Shakespeare” personally visited Italy and knew it intimately. The Stratford man did not and could not have.
- Robin Fox, *Shakespeare’s Education: Schools, Lawsuits, Theater and the Tudor Miracle* (2012)
- John Shahan & Alexander Waugh (eds.), *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt? Exposing an Industry in Denial* (2013)
- Roger Stritmatter & Lynne Kositsky, *On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare’s The Tempest* (2013)—spoiler alert: It wasn’t first written after 1604.
- Donald Ostrowski, *Who Wrote That? Authorship Controversies from Moses to Sholokhov* (2020)—Ostrowski’s rigorously impartial scholarly treatment reminds us that “mainstream” scholars are perfectly fine with authorship doubts and controversies,

pseudonyms, and understand the importance of any author’s true identity and biography ... except in the case of “Shakespeare.” Why? Because of myth and emotion.

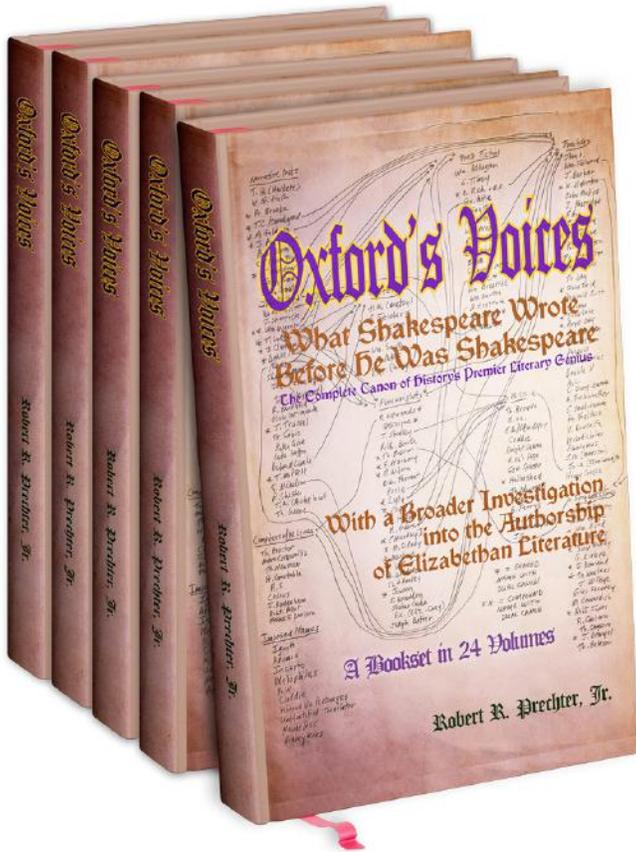
- II. If you have time to dive deeper into the scholarly weeds:
- Peter R. Moore, *The Lame Storyteller, Poor and Despised: Studies in Shakespeare* (ed. Gary Goldstein, 2009)
- Bonner Miller Cutting, *Necessary Mischief: Exploring the Shakespeare Authorship Question* (2018)
- Ramon Jiménez, *Shakespeare’s Apprenticeship: Identifying the Real Playwright’s Earliest Works* (2018)
- Bryan H. Wildenthal, *Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts* (2019)

**MOST FREQUENTLY  
RECOMMENDED**

(each appearing on five or more lists above)

**Have you read them all?**

- ★ Mark Anderson, *“Shakespeare” By Another Name* (ten lists)
- ★ J. Thomas Looney, *“Shakespeare” Identified* (nine)
- ★ Charlton Ogburn, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (seven)
- ★ Richard Roe, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* (seven)
- ★ Katherine Chiljan, *Shakespeare Suppressed* (six)
- ★ Ramon Jiménez, *Shakespeare’s Apprenticeship* (six)
- ★ Bryan H. Wildenthal, *Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts* (six)
- ★ Diana Price, *Shakespeare’s Unorthodox Biography* (five)
- ★ Richard F. Whalen, *Shakespeare: Who Was He?* (five)



A New Online Bookset:

## **OXFORD'S VOICES**

### ***What Shakespeare Wrote Before He Was Shakespeare***

by Robert Prechter, Jr.

I have finally finished a twenty-four-year research project. The result is an online bookset titled *Oxford's Voices*. Its subtitle is *The Complete Canon of History's Premier Literary Genius—With a Broader Investigation into the Authorship of Elizabethan Literature*.

I started this venture when I was 48 years old. I am now 72. At the outset, I thought it would take me about a year or two to figure out what books Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford (1550-1604), wrote. I vastly underestimated the intricacy of the matter. Doing justice to the subject required reading and assimilating massive amounts of material.

Oxford's acknowledged poems are mostly from his teen years, whereas his plays and poems issued under the name Shakespeare are strikingly mature. As others had surmised, it seemed likely that there must be other works by him, to fill the gap.

To find out if such was the case, I set out to investigate every play, poem, prose story and literary translation from the Elizabethan era—from 1557 through 1604, and in some cases beyond. In all, I accessed 2,945

Elizabethan and Jacobean publications and 2,500 scholarly books, papers and articles. I read every word of many of them (some multiple times), whereas others required only skimming. Orthodox sources—at times unwittingly—provided a massive amount of useful information. Books, papers and articles by Oxfordians are quoted throughout.

As it turns out, Oxford wrote many uncredited books, plays, treatises, poems and songs. Most of the people to whom these publications were attributed never came anywhere near them.

I call the names under which he wrote Oxford's Voices. Because evidence suggests that the name “**Shakespeare**” debuted as a pseudonym and only subsequently became attached to a real person, I expected to find that most of Oxford's Voices would turn out to be pseudonyms. But I soon realized that Oxford borrowed nearly all his names from real, local people. Such cover names are called *allonyms*. The employment of allonyms is one reason why Oxford was so successful in keeping his authorship hidden.

The bookset:

- Uncovers contradictions, inconsistencies, incongruities, absurdities and voids in conventional biographies of Elizabethan writers and within the era's accepted literary canons.
- Uncovers biographical, genealogical and textual connections between various works or authors' names and Oxford.
- Identifies text possessing literary qualities conforming to the known writings of the Earl of Oxford, his established Voice (William Shakespeare), and ultimately to works by the newly discovered Voices as well.
- Contrasts biographical facts and literary proclivities of independent writers with those of the Voices and their works.
- Concludes with lists of Oxford's Voices and their works, lists of the era's independent writers and their literary works, and a list of 113 works that, in my judgment, others have erroneously assigned to Oxford.

The book does not rely upon what many Oxfordians consider to be controversial constructs, such as bastard-son theories, hidden ciphers, faked deaths, sexual-orientation inferences and the interpretation of fiction as contemporary allegory. There is no psychologizing in this book. Nowhere will you find passages conjecturing about how Oxford must have acted because of how he must have felt. My aim was to be objective throughout.

I am aware that about twenty years ago a pair of authors generated a list of Oxford's proposed writings based on textual “fingerprints.” Reviewers expressed

skepticism, for good reason. A “fingerprint” is not good enough. To identify a hidden author, one must identify full prints from both hands and must omit fingerprints that fail to match. As they say, one lie makes a liar. Similarly, one incompatible fact negates the case for a particular Voice and establishes the existence of an independent writer, sometimes only for a piece or part of a piece, but often for an entire canon.

Induction is a complex business. It does not take one from a premise to facts but from facts to a proposition, which when established can become a premise by which one can deduce additional facts. Details lead to context, and context leads to the discovery of more details. Induction allows deduction, and they must support each other mutually. That is the approach I have taken in this book.

### **An Online Brightbook™**

*Oxford's Voices* is rendered in a new online format we call Brightbook™. The text is not cluttered with source citations, footnotes or endnotes, so reading flows freely. Every source is instantly available with a single click on the accompanying asterisk (\*). Every term is searchable, providing a complete, error-free index. After any search, a few clicks on the Back button will bring you back to where you left off reading. Searching on a carat (^) takes you from one chapter or section to the next.

### **Contents**

The book comprises twenty-four volumes, ordered within ten sections:

#### **Preparation**

#### **Prologue and Opening Argument Earl of Oxford**

#### **Early Voices (1560-1579)**

#### **Prose Writers (1574-1604)**

##### **Early Euphuists**

**Wits: John Lyly**

**Wits: Robert Greene**

**Wits: Thomas Lodge**

**Wits: George Peele**

**Wits: Thomas Nashe**

**Pamphleteers**

#### **Playwrights (1580-1604)**

##### **Miscellaneous Playwrights**

**Two Independent Playwrights to Whom  
Scholars Have Credited Plays by Oxford**

**Three Independent Playwrights to Whose  
Canons Oxford Contributed**

**Senecan Closet Dramatists**

#### **Poets (1580-1604)**

**Miscellaneous Poets and Storytellers**

### **Narrative Poets**

#### **Sonneteers**

#### **Songwriters**

#### **Compilers**

### **Shakespeare**

#### **Those Who Knew**

#### **Independent Writers (1547-1635)**

#### **Summation and Epilogue**

### **Hot Answers to Cool Questions**

The subtitle of the book mentions “a broader investigation into the authorship of Elizabethan literature.” This project revealed answers to numerous questions that have dogged researchers of Elizabethan writing. Once the proper context is established, all kinds of seeming conundrums become parts of a sensible picture. Here are some questions to which I believe this book provides satisfactory answers:

1. How many allonyms and pseudonyms provide cover for works written by the Earl of Oxford?
2. To members of what family did Oxford's Voices dedicate the most books?
3. How many poems and lyrics in *The Passionate Pilgrime* (1599) did Oxford write?
4. How many times did Oxford write literary dedications to himself?
5. When and where did Oxford first employ the initials “W.S.” in print, implying that he had adopted the pseudonym, William Shakespeare?
6. When did Oxford tap Will Shaksper of Stratford to provide a body for the name William Shakespeare?
7. Did any of Oxford's Voices ever praise Shakespeare?
8. How many people hinted that they knew Oxford had one or more Voices?
9. What project may have triggered Elizabeth's decision in 1586 to pay Oxford 1000 pounds a year?
10. Was Oxford of low character? A plotter of murders? A philanderer? A pederast? A monstrous adversary? A secret Catholic? A mocker of the Bible?
11. What fellow poet did Oxford admire most?
12. What is the single most extensive “Oxmyth”?
13. Did Shakespeare ever take up Henry Chettle's plea to pen an epitaph for Queen Elizabeth?
14. What four other Elizabethan writers penned material under at least two pseudonyms?
15. What respected name attached to poetry is a cover for two consecutive writers, and who were they?

16. Did Robert Greene ever publish his promised *Blacke Booke*? If so, where is it?
17. Who composed George Peele's "only extant letter"? And who delivered it to Lord Burghley's doorstep?
18. To whom are Samuel Daniel's *Delia* sonnets addressed? Why did Daniel apologize for and "correct" them? Where did he get the name Delia?
19. Where did Robert Chester get the name Emaricdulfe?
20. Who wrote Richard Edwards's *Palamon & Arcyte*?
21. How many plays did Thomas Kyd write?
22. Is anything under Christopher Marlowe's name not at all by him?
23. Is anything in Ben Jonson's accepted canon not by him?
24. Did Ben Jonson make the 1602 revisions to *The Spanish Tragedie*?
25. Did Oxford write the glosses for Edmund Spenser's *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579) under the initials "E.K."?
26. What parts of Thomas Watson's *Hekatompathia* (1582) did the Earl of Oxford write?
27. Who wrote *Greenes Groats-worth of Witte* (1592): Robert Greene, Henry Chettle, Thomas Nashe, Chettle and Greene, Chettle and Nashe, Greene and Nashe, all three of them, the Earl of Oxford, or someone else entirely?
28. How did William Rowley and William Shakespeare's names come to be placed on the title page of *The Birth of Merlin*, published in 1662?
29. How much of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* did Shakespeare and John Fletcher each write?
30. On how many plays did Shakespeare collaborate with each of the following people: Michael Drayton, Thomas Middleton, George Chapman, Thomas Kyd, George Wilkins, John Fletcher, William Rowley, Christopher Marlowe, George Peele, William Stanley and Thomas Nashe?
31. Did Oxford write the Langham Letter?
32. Who wrote *Leicester's Commonwealth*?
33. Who wrote the Parnassus Plays?
34. Who wrote the body of *Willobie His Avis*? Who wrote the preface and brought the book to press? Who got upset about it and responded in print?
35. Was Richard Barnfield gay?
36. Was Walter Raleigh atheistic? Was Christopher Marlowe atheistic?
37. What was Oxford's opinion of witchcraft? What did he think of astrology and astrologers? Did he believe it was possible to conjure up spirits?
38. Did Oxford dress in an effeminate manner?
39. Did Barnabe Rich know the Earl of Oxford? If so, what did he, as revealed in his own words, think of him?
40. What literary name should be credited with initiating euphuism?
41. What else does W.C.'s marginal note in *Polimanteia* indicate that he knew?
42. To which person among four who qualify as "Lady Anne Dacre" did Henrie Wotton dedicate *A Courtlie controversie of Cupids Cautels* in 1578?
43. Did Oxford ever write pornography? If so, where?
44. Did Oxford ever write of homosexual attraction? If so, where? And what was his motive?
45. How many people did Gabriel Harvey battle in the pamphlet war of 1589-1597?
46. Why is Gabriel Harvey's writing so cryptic? What was he on about?
47. Among John Lyly, Robert Greene, Thomas Nashe, Gabriel Harvey and the Earl of Oxford, who is the most sympathetic victim of abuse?
48. What was Thomas Nashe's occupation?
49. How many of the nine documentary records of Thomas Nashe's activities are genuine?
50. Did Thomas Nashe spend time in the Fleet? Did he spend time in Yarmouth? Did he spend time at George Carey's house?
51. About whom was Nashe griping in his preface to Robert Greene's *Menaphon* (1589)? What work prompted him to complain of one who would "bodge up a blanke verse with ifs and ands"?
52. In 1589, Nashe wrote, "a tale of Jhon a Brainfords will, and the unluckie furmentie, wilbe as soon interteined into their libraries, as the best poeme that ever Tasso eternisht." Who is "Jhon a Brainford"? Why Tasso?
53. When authorities commanded Thomas Nashe and Gabriel Harvey to stop writing, who was silenced?
54. How many of these names are improperly spelled: Walter Raleigh, Thomas Blenerhasset, George Whetstone, George Turberville, Emilia Bassano?
55. Which among the following women writers did not write the most celebrated item attributed to her:
  - Isabella Whitney—*A Sweet Nosgay* (1573)
  - Margaret Tyler—*The Mirrour of princely Deeds and Knighthood* (1578)
  - Mary Sidney—*Tragedie of Antonie* (1592)
  - Emilia Bassano—*Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* (1611)
  - Elizabeth Tanfield Cary—*The Tragedie of Mariam* (1613)?

If you already have opinions on these matters, I am confident that a surprising number of the book's answers will differ from yours. When you log into the book, you will find this list again, augmented with brief answers, each of which is supported in detail within the volume. Just search on "Hot Answers."

### Accessing the Book

This project is a labor of love, designed to inform and delight enthusiasts. The publisher harbors no illusion that a volume on such a specialized subject will generate meaningful income. There will be no tours to promote it. Word-of-mouth recommendations will probably be the only path to new readers. If you can help, I would be grateful.

The publisher hopes to cover the cost of maintaining the website, so there is a moderate cost to access the book. Any Oxfordian who is strapped for money can access the bookset at no charge. Just let the publisher know that you plan a review for posting or publishing somewhere useful. All permissions will be at the publisher's discretion. You may review any chapter (or the whole book). To access the volume, go to [www.oxfordvoices.com](http://www.oxfordvoices.com). Address content matters to

info@oxfordvoices.com. Address any personal messages to bob@oxfordvoices.com.

Deep thanks to all my Oxfordian friends. I do hope this effort delights you.

Here are the titles I think are the most fun and for which reviews seem most warranted:

- |                                     |                         |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. William Adlington                | 12. Thomas Lodge        |
| 2. E.C. (Elizabeth Cary)            | 13. Christopher Marlowe |
| 3. Samuel Daniel                    | 14. Thomas Nashe        |
| 4. John Doleta                      | 15. Robert Parry        |
| 5. Richard Edwards                  | 16. Thomas Proctor      |
| 6. George Gascoigne                 | 17. Mary Sidney         |
| 7. Arthur Golding                   | 18. Phillip Stubbes     |
| 8. Robert Greene                    | 19. John Trussel        |
| 9. Henry Howard +<br>Margaret Tyler | 20. William Warner      |
| 10. Thomas Kyd                      | 21. Thomas Watson       |
| 11. James Lea                       | 22. Henry Willobie      |

## Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship Annual Meeting Report

by Bonner Miller Cutting, Acting Secretary

The annual general meeting of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship was convened on Saturday, October 2, 2021, at 10:00 AM (Pacific). Approximately sixty-two members joined via Zoom.

Opening with his President's Letter, President John Hamill noted the SOF's accomplishments of the past year. Membership has increased to just under 500, a high point for the organization. Both the 2020 Fall Symposium and 2021 Spring Symposium were conducted virtually with online technology and reached large viewing audiences.

Hamill reported the success of the SOF outreach projects. The 2021 Video Contest Committee, chaired by Board of Trustees member Julie Bianchi, again received a robust number of entries. The podcast series, "Don't Quill the Messenger," is developing a following since it was launched in 2019. Its host, Steven Sabel, has worked with some forty guests and has made sixty-five episodes. He reports 61,222 downloads to date from all over the world.

Richard Foulke presented the Treasurer's Report, commenting that the SOF is in a good position to end the fiscal year, and is hoping for a strong response to the Fundraising campaign chaired by Joan Leon. He noted that the SOF is funded primarily by donations and

membership dues. He provided a breakdown of the expenses for 2021.

Joan Leon, outgoing chair of the Fundraising and Membership Committee, welcomed Ben August and Heidi Jansch, the new co-chairs. Ben thanked Joan for her ten years of outstanding service and success in establishing a robust fundraising program.

Communications Committee chair Robert Meyers gave an expansive report on many topics. Plans for the SOF to have a presence at the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) conference have been postponed until that organization has its next in-person conference (the SOF was present at its 2019 conference). Roger Stritmatter has recently published *The Poems of Edward de Vere* and is putting the finishing touches on a book aimed at educators, *The Shakespeare Authorship Sourcebook*, which features Lucinda Foulke's artwork. Gary Goldstein, editor of *The Oxfordian*, notes that the newest volume, *The Oxfordian 23*, is the largest edition to date and is selling well on Amazon.

Kathryn Sharpe, chair of the Data Preservation Committee, reported that the committee is working to develop a multifaceted outreach to gather and preserve Oxfordian materials. Among the projects are a special issue of the *Journal of the History of Knowledge*, an oral

history project to interview Oxfordian researchers, a new, regular column in the *Newsletter*, and making contact with families of deceased Oxfordian researchers to ensure the preservation of their valuable books and papers. The search continues for a suitable repository for Oxfordian materials, and ways to help William Boyle maintain his SOAR and NESOL projects.

Theresa Lauricella, chair of the Education/Outreach Committee, announced that Cheryl Eagan-Donovan's authorship paper has been accepted for the NCTE annual conference.

John Hamill, chair of the Research Grant Program, reported that grants in this cycle have been awarded to Cheryl Eagan-Donovan and Roger Stritmatter. Two previous grant recipients, Eddi Jolly and Rima Greenhill, have completed their research projects and sent their reports.

Don Rubin reported that the details of the upcoming 2021 Fall Symposium (see page 1) have been worked out, and that registration is looking good. He noted how pleased the committee has been with the numbers of viewers of the last virtual symposiums. The current plan is to have an in-person conference in Ashland, Oregon, in the fall of 2022.

Linda Bullard, chair of the newly formed First Folio Committee, invited ideas and comments for the development of an outreach project.

Julie Bianchi, chair of the Video Contest Committee, noted that the 1623 First Folio will be the theme of next year's contest. Hopefully, this will provide the SOF with a stockpile of videos about the First Folio that can be used during the following year's events.

Bonner Miller Cutting, chair of the Nominations Committee, reported that the committee did not receive any petitions for nominations from the membership. On behalf of the committee she presented the three nominees for three-year terms on the Board of Trustees: Don Rubin, Tom Woosnam and Dorothea Dickerman. Pursuant to the bylaws they were deemed elected to office. Chairperson Cutting then presented current SOF trustee Robert Meyers as the nominee for a one-year term of office as President. Pursuant to the bylaws he was deemed elected to office.

Cheryl Eagan-Donovan, chair of the Oxfordian of the Year Committee (and herself a past recipient of that award), gave the committee's report. The winner was announced on October 9<sup>th</sup> at the conclusion of the 2021 Fall Symposium (see page 4).

## Shakspeare versus His Contemporaries: Comparative Biography

by Alex McNeil

How does what we know of Shakspeare measure up against what is known of his contemporaries? In her book, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography*, Diana Price constructed literary "paper trails" for Shakespeare and twenty-four of his literary contemporaries. She listed ten categories of evidence that could corroborate their existence as a writer (e.g., evidence of being paid to write, commendatory verses written to a fellow writer, existence of manuscripts or letters). The median "score" was 6; i.e., half of the group had six or more points of corroboration (Ben Jonson scored a perfect 10). No one scored lower than 3 except for "Shakespeare," who trailed the field with—wait for it—zero. Considering that Shakespeare's literary career was longer than almost all of the others, and considering that more effort has been spent by scholars trying to find any scrap of evidence about the Stratford man, this gap is appallingly significant.

Price's study can be expanded. The book *Who's Who in Shakespeare's England* contains capsule biographies of more than 700 persons of the era. In it the authors list 88 men (plus Shakespeare, of course) in the categories of "Dramatists," "Poets and Anthologists" and "Satirists." The capsule bios of these 88 persons reveal that there is affirmative evidence of education for 66 of them: 55 are listed as having attended college and/or studied law, one "probably" attended college, one claimed to have attended college, eight others attended school, served as tutors or were tutored, and one was the son of a college professor.

Of the remaining 22 men for whom no education is listed, there is additional evidence from their biographies that they were literate (e.g., manuscripts of theirs are known to have existed, they held a government or ecclesiastical position). In other words, for an Elizabethan literary figure, we should *expect* to find independent evidence of literacy. Thus, even without any additional research, we may confidently place Shakspeare within the small minority of literary persons for whom there is no record of education or literacy. The other members of that minority tend toward the obscure; writers such as William Basse, Robert Chester, Bartholomew Griffin, Antony Scoloker, and Robert Wilson are hardly household names. In terms of quantity of literary output and stature, Shakspeare truly stands alone among his contemporaries for the absence of evidence that he received an education or was even literate.

## Two Book Reviews of *Shakespeare Revolutionized*:

### A Revolution in Progress and Process: James Warren's *Shakespeare Revolutionized*

Reviewed by Thomas Goff

James A. Warren's *Shakespeare Revolutionized* is an impressive new book about the theory that Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, wrote the bulk of the poems and plays published under the pen name "William Shakespeare." Warren recounts how a lone scholar, the British schoolmaster J. Thomas Looney, dissatisfied with the standard Stratfordian story about the upward-striving villager, looked for the real author in an original way. Looney worked almost like a criminal profiler, building from the evidence in the works themselves a picture of the real man's likely social sphere and education. Working methodically from a set of characteristics he deduced that the author must have had, Looney found the right candidate in the almost forgotten figure of Edward de Vere. Looney's 1920 book, "*Shakespeare Identified*," the work that resulted, made a splash, as it deserved to, but it was a rather brief one; the book was soon smothered by hostility or silence from traditional Shakespearean academics, professionally wedded to their mythical Stratford Will.

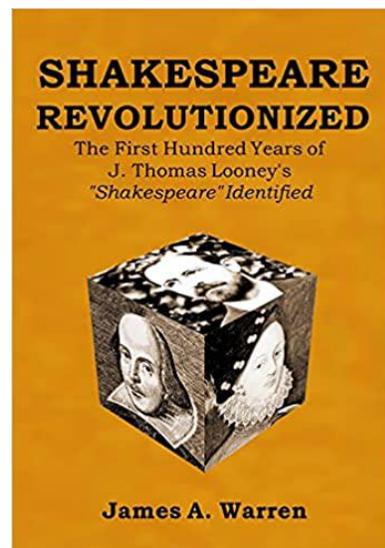
Clearly, a lone scholar was not going to bring down such institutions as the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, let alone the whole Stratfordian castle. What Warren gives us in *Shakespeare Revolutionized* is the gripping, little-known story of how the Oxfordian theory was taken up by a skilled organizer, England's Colonel Bernard R. Ward, who gathered a brave handful of scholars and advocates to bring Looney's discovery back into in the limelight and keep it there. Searching tirelessly through archives and other collections of early Oxfordian material, much of it long neglected, Warren informs us just how fully the early Oxfordians fleshed out Looney's initial case for Oxford. Such powerful scholar-advocates as Captain Bernard M. Ward (Colonel Ward's son), Gerald H. Rendall, Katharine E. Eggar, and Percy and Ernest Allen are brought vividly to life, in extracts from their own writings, correspondence, and talks. Warren refers to Percy Allen as "Looney's Bulldog," just as Thomas Huxley was called "Darwin's Bulldog" in championing evolutionary theory.

Alongside these early British Oxfordians came significant American investigators, such as Eva Turner Clark, Charles Wisner Barrell, Louis P. Bénézet, Dorothy Ogburn and Charlton Ogburn, Sr., among others. Major literary celebrities, such as Gelett Burgess, added their

promotional heft. Their efforts and those of their British counterparts helped substantiate Looney's theory: in developing his case for Oxford as the real Shakespeare, Looney had concentrated on the "who" and "what" question—the writer and the plays themselves—while the newcomers added research into the important "how" and "why" questions: Why did the writer conceal his name? How did his own efforts, and/or those of others, manage keep his identity hidden for generations? What sensitive issues or perceived offenses in the works would have incensed the persons at the very top of the State? Were those matters the "why"?

As to Mr. Warren himself, let's compare his effort to that of a famous biographer, James Boswell. The great biographer of Samuel Johnson remarked of his work that he was often obliged to run across town (London) simply to confirm a key date. (And Johnson himself maintained that a man must turn over whole libraries to write one book.) But labors like these pale in comparison to Warren's. Few scholars can keep intently focused on the research topic they are investigating and at the same time absorb the masses of new material they uncover as byproducts of the initial search.

Warren's findings are so ably presented that they amount to a rediscovery of how strong the Oxfordian case always was. *Shakespeare Revolutionized* is a scholar's meditation on how intellectual revolutions may be advanced, frustrated, then brought to prevail, given the right methodology, skilled promotion, and the persistence to argue the case to a finish. This is an essential book for students of Shakespeare and of intellectual movements in general.



## A Revolution in Progress and Process: James Warren's *Shakespeare Revolutionized*

Reviewed by Michael St. Clair

When *Newsletter* editor Alex McNeil handed me a copy of James A. Warren's *Shakespeare Revolutionized: The First Hundred Years of J. Thomas Looney's "Shakespeare" Identified* to review, I groaned. Oh boy, here's a 700-plus-page doorstop of a book. Quickly, however, I was drawn in and rapidly realized what a valuable book this is. Warren's exhaustive research into every aspect of the Oxford-Shakespeare history amply rewards readers. Veteran Oxfordians who are conversant with the topography of Oxfordian scholarship and data will nevertheless find many treasures and new insights. Newbies to authorship issues might, however, find the book overwhelming in its scope and detail, even as it covers all the principal scholars and major arguments.

Warren has accomplished Olympian feats of scholarly research, traveling down pathways, alleys and trails I had little knowledge of. He has organized and probed a century of the writings of supporters and followers of Looney as well as the ragged, inadequate responses of Stratfordians.

*Shakespeare Revolutionized* is divided into three sections. The first covers the first decades following the publication of J. Thomas Looney's *"Shakespeare" Identified* in 1920, along with the contemporary reviews of that book and Looney's responses to them. Warren documents the rise of the Oxford movement in Great Britain and then in North America. He gives summaries of the major contributions from early Oxfordian researchers such as Percy Allen, Gerald Rendall, Col. Bernard R. Ward, Capt. B.M. Ward (the Colonel's son), Eva Turner Clark and others. Warren's discussions of these early scholarly efforts also include the responses—or lacks thereto—from traditionalists.

The second section recounts the Oxfordian movement today and the continued influence of *"Shakespeare" Identified*, chronicling the lull in the movement after World War II, followed by the rise of the "second wave" that began in the mid-1980s, spurred by the publication of Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* and the attention it received in the mainstream media. Warren provides generous doses of quotations from Stratfordians. Warren then surgically dissects the inadequacy of such responses and reflects on why they are so inadequate.

Part three, the shortest section, concerns the prospects for the Oxfordian idea. Warren clearly has given much thought to how to overcome institutional resistance to the Oxfordian scholarship and arguments. He offers practical ways of addressing the obstacles that block acceptance of Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford,

as author and what steps Oxfordians can take to overcome denial and resistance.

Most satisfying are Warren's clear, organized and precise summaries of key Oxfordian positions and arguments. For instance, Warren deals with the resistance that many people have to overcome as they grapple with the evidence of Oxford's authorship of the plays. In thirty crisp pages (111-141) Warren sets out the dozen "mental revolutions" that one must undergo in order to accept the data and some of the subsidiary beliefs that follow from the data. The old view is that a "young man from the provinces, speaking a dialect of English difficult to understand outside his native Warwickshire and with no known education nor any known connection to ... Queen Elizabeth's court, transformed himself ... through sheer genius ... into the greatest poet and dramatist in English history" (114). Whereas the new, Oxfordian view asserts that "the highest-ranking earl in Queen Elizabeth's court and one of the richest men in England bankrupted himself to finance his literary and theatrical activities and to sponsor so many other writers that he almost singlehandedly sparked the English Literary Renaissance" (114).

Or another old, traditionalist view: "Shakespeare's plays were written between 1592 and 1611, the latest date to which scholars attribute his retirement and return to Stratford" (115). Whereas the new, Oxfordian view asserts: "Orthodox scholars had dated the plays to fit neatly into the known facts of the life of William Shakspeare. Using dates based on other external and internal factors, the plays were seen to have been written and revised from the mid-1570s until 1604, the year of Edward de Vere's death. Revisions after his death were made to some plays by other hands" (115).

Warren makes excellent use of text boxes wherein he succinctly summarizes complex data and arguments. For example, Oxfordian scholars have identified hundreds of allusions in the plays to topical events in the life of Edward de Vere. In one text box (320) Warren compares the works of the Shakespeare plays and links between William Shakspeare and Edward de Vere: none to Shakspeare and multitudinous ties between Edward de Vere and Shakespearean sources, topical allusions, the author's life and the author's personality. Equally damning is another text box (6), which quotes from the traditional biography of William Shakespeare by Sir Sidney Lee in the 1910 edition of the *Dictionary of National Biography*; the paucity of verifiable facts about William Shakspeare required Lee to use repeated qualifiers: "Shakespeare, William ... dramatist and poet...undoubtedly...no doubt...may be assumed to have... he may have been...doubtless...suggested that he was...seems to have been...doubtless...is generally accepted as...probably...perhaps...cannot be reasonably contested...is possible that... may have been...there is little doubt..." and so on for another twenty-five lines;

this is the edition of the DNB that Looney had before him as he worked on *“Shakespeare” Identified* (see “From the Archives,” *Newsletter*, Spring 2021, p. 20).

Why does it matter who wrote the plays? It matters tremendously. Warren concisely sets forth reasons: “to restor[e] the reputation of the man who has given so much pleasure and enjoyment . . . over the last 400 years”; “to understand[] the wider role he played in the English Renaissance”; “to understand[] how and why Shakespeare’s works were written,” “to better understand[] Shakespeare’s plays by laying bare the personal nature of them”; and to understand “just how topical they were” (634-635).

Much of this is familiar to Oxfordians, but to see quotations of Oxfordian positions side-by-side with key corresponding Stratfordian positions is illuminating, to say the least, and provides a vivid contrast between solid literary scholarship and the “intellectual depravity” (312) exhibited by the formal academic world in its failure to address the Oxfordian thesis.

Perhaps the most original contribution of Warren’s outstanding book, aside from his history and summaries of Oxfordian scholarship, is Warren’s raising and grappling with the question: why do traditional academics and Stratfordians ignore, or ridicule and dismiss, the arguments and data supporting the theory that the Earl of Oxford penned the works ascribed to Shakspeare of Stratford?

Warren narrates the early strong signs of opposition to Looney’s work. He recognizes that early pushback to Looney and later Oxfordian scholars came from the scholar who had strong Stratfordian interests and thus “to ask him to admit the possibility of an entirely new point of view is to ask him to re-value his stock in trade . . .” (163). As is often the case in other fields of knowledge, it is, and has been, very difficult to get recognition and acceptance of a new paradigm.

One special delight in Warren’s discussion of traditional Stratfordian opposition is that he highlights quite a few Stratfordian writings that actually work as better arguments *for* the Oxfordian thesis even though they were offered to buttress the traditional case for Shakspeare. By pairing quotes from Oxfordians side-by-side with generous quotes from traditional scholars Warren effectively underscores the wackiness of the latter. One wonders how thoughtful lovers—and supposed scholars—of the plays and poems could all too frequently be so disdainfully silent or dismissive of ten decades of data and arguments.

I confess that I have witnessed, in a recent parallel context, the shoddy treatment by experts, that is, established “scholars,” of a young colleague of mine who advanced an innovative new way of looking at the writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne. Apparently such nervous gatekeeping is not uncommon among some senior “scholars” who are fearful of having their long-

held pet theories questioned or overturned. Even before the publication of *“Shakespeare” Identified* in 1920, Warren asks, why did academics not address the authorship question—which had been raised more than sixty years earlier—and subject it to the same scholarly examination as other literary matters? Warren suggests that “the belief by academics in Shakspeare’s authorship was so strong that any challenge to it had to be wrong and therefore not worth examining . . . [Further,] the Departments of Literature . . . had interests and reputations . . . to be protected . . . Leading scholars, then, had nothing to gain and much to lose if Departments of Literature were to examine the Shakespeare authorship question and the Oxfordian claim in the same manner in which other literary questions were examined” (313-315). Warren adds that Shakespeare scholars, perhaps, “were aware of the Oxfordian claim and, not seeing a quick and easy way to refute it, turned away from it . . . better to just ignore it, suppress awareness of it, and hope it goes away” (353).

Occasionally Warren’s discussion of some of the more recherche issues and controversies of the past 100 years might have been more succinct, but I found many of his summaries highly illuminating. For example, his discussion of the pros and cons of the “dynastic succession” theory was clear and useful, as was his detailing of Charles Barrell’s remarkable 1940 article in *Scientific American* which presented his findings that, when subjected to X-rays and infrared rays, the so-called Ashbourne portrait and two other paintings that purported to be images of “William Shakespeare” were actually portraits of Edward de Vere (427-430). On numerous issues, Warren’s book serves as a valuable reference that organizes and sharpens so much of the data that Oxfordian scholars have assembled over the past one hundred years.

I can confidently place *Shakespeare Revolutionized* on a pedestal as a major contribution to Oxfordian studies. The content, the summaries, the critical reasoning, the suggestions for the future, the extensive bibliography are all highly rewarding. This encyclopedic work is valuable for containing in one place a detailed history of the past 100 years of Looney-inspired scholarship and the controversies it has engendered, some of which remain unresolved. In addition, rich appendices contain information about editions of *“Shakespeare” Identified*, and various officers, events and publications of the original Shakespeare Fellowship, the organization founded in 1922 by Looney, Colonel Ward and others to promote an honest, objective inquiry into the authorship question.

My only significant criticism is the inadequacy of the index. Several times I tried to find an item in the book by consulting the index, and each time the it failed me. Lesser-known names are adequately listed with page numbers. But key names, however, are followed by

dense blocks of page numbers which should have been broken into useable subcategories. For instance, the entry for “Looney, J. Thomas” is followed by an unbroken block of 352 page numbers, “Queen Elizabeth” by a block of 116 page numbers, “Oxfordian claim, idea, theory, thesis” by a block of 294 page numbers. Such an outstanding work deserves a much better index.

[Michael St. Clair is a professor emeritus of Psychology at Emmanuel College in Boston. The author of several books himself, he has reviewed a number of books for the *Newsletter*.]

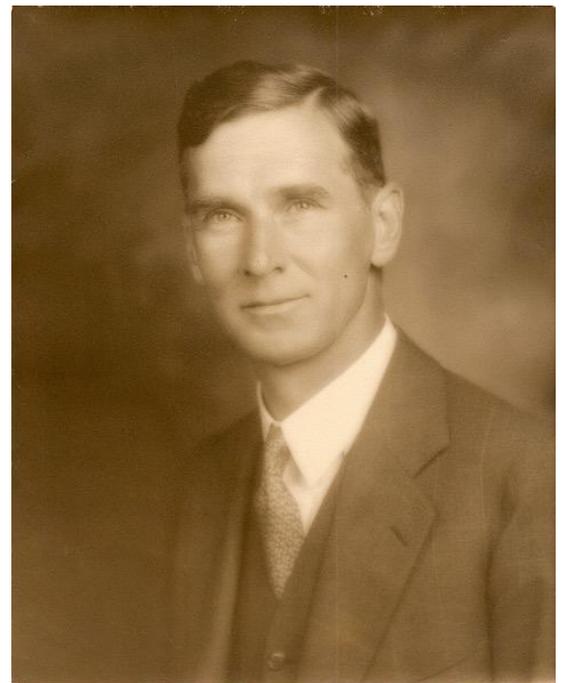


## Tales from the Archives: The Drayton Collection

by Renee Euchner, Terry Deer, Kathryn Sharpe and Bill Boyle

The Data Preservation Committee (DPC) recently received the research papers and books of an early American Oxfordian, Charles de Vere Drayton (1882-1960). Drayton is a Vere family descendent, a “let’s have lunch after the meeting” friend of Charlton Ogburn, Jr., and an original member of The Eved Foundation, Inc. Thanks to Drayton’s granddaughter, New York writer and editor Alison Rea, the Drayton collection has found a welcome home with the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship.

Alison told us that her mother, Elizabeth Drayton Taylor, was also an Oxfordian. “I’ve been raised to just take it as a matter of fact that it’s Oxford,” she says. When Elizabeth died in 2019, Alison found our contact information on the Web and emailed us to see if we were interested in her family’s library. Of course we were! Alison said, “I am absolutely thrilled that these papers are useful to you and available to others. They so easily could have been thrown out.”



Charles de Vere Drayton (1882-1960)

### De Vere and Drayton Family Histories

What’s the connection between the de Veres and the Draytons? Albericus (Aubrey) de Vere, of the Battle of Hastings fame (1066 AD), was awarded undeveloped land known as manor Drayton near what is now Northamptonshire. His grandson, Aubrey de Vere III, was created the 1st Earl of Oxford in 1137.<sup>1</sup> In the late 1100s, descendent Sir Walter de Vere changed his surname to “de Drayton.” The core of Drayton House, now one of the grandest of the old English country houses, was built by Sir Simon de Drayton in 1300.<sup>2</sup>

In 1675, Thomas Drayton Sr. left England for Barbados, the land of opportunities.<sup>3</sup> Son Thomas Drayton Jr. immigrated to the new colony of Carolina, where he owned several plantations and eventually built Magnolia Gardens in Charleston. Thomas’s son John Drayton<sup>4</sup> built Drayton Hall, also in Charleston, circa 1738.<sup>5</sup> Seven generations of Draytons occupied the plantation prior to 1973, when it became part of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.<sup>5</sup>

### The Drayton Papers

The Drayton papers include several typed manuscripts, evidently dating from the 1950s, about the authorship question. Drayton was an enthusiastic Oxfordian and an avid reader of the early Oxfordian “giants” James Warren resurrects in his recent book on the history of the Oxfordian movement, *Shakespeare Revolutionized*. Two memoranda appear to be rough drafts of talks or articles. The longer one (56 pages), is titled “The Mystery of ‘Shakespeare’.” Drayton took the scenic route through the argument for Oxford, quoting at length from “*Shakespeare Identified*” by J. Thomas Looney and skewering Bacon and the Stratfordian “rustic” along the way. Of being a doubter he says, “We must deal with probabilities. The reasoning human mind cannot complacently accept the impossible. No one who earnestly desires to know the truth will impugn the good faith of those who prefer the probable to the impossible in a search for truth.”

The shorter piece, "A Challenge," contains Drayton's musings about the era's "extraordinary trio": Queen Elizabeth I, William Cecil and "the great poet, who interpreted and glorified the age." In discussing the ways in which a man "born into an illiterate family, in a filthy town" was remade into the author of Shakespeare's works, Drayton had nothing good to say about Cecil or Shakspeare. He was kinder to the "generations of earnest scholars" betrayed into swallowing the myth. The "challenge" of the title lies in the closing lines, in which Drayton confidently foretold a sea change in academia: "But once the clear winds of reason are allowed to penetrate the sanctuaries, the scholars themselves will be invigorated and will plunge with enthusiasm into an examination of the riches which the truth has brought to light.... The scholars will at last come into their own. They can work in the light of reality and inspiration." Sadly, seventy years later, we are still waiting for scholars to awaken to the winds of change. Perhaps they have hypothermia?

Thanks to Bryan H. Wildenthal, who is scanning the Drayton papers, we find tantalizing hints of Drayton's efforts to promote Oxford's authorship, without knowing with certainty how the paper bullets he aimed took effect. One of his documents records a March 1956 "report" from the Folger Shakespeare Library, which was their dismissive and patronizing response to a question on the authorship controversy. To that single page of condescension, Drayton appended three pages of closely reasoned rebuttal.

Where the Folger report called doubters "naïve ... snobs [who are] ignorant of life ... in the Elizabethan period," Drayton pointed out, it wasn't the "anti-Shakespeareans" who were ignorant. The Folger took issue with the Oxfordian assertion that the man from Stratford was unlettered and incapable of writing plays displaying deep learning and intimate knowledge of the court, saying, "the facts are that ... he had a very good education acquired in the Stratford grammar school, one of the best of the day, that the plays show no evidence of profound book learning, and that the knowledge of kings and courts evident in the plays is no greater than any intelligent young man-about-town could have picked up at second hand." In response, Drayton quoted facts now familiar to any Oxfordian, and concluded with a crushing, "one can hardly argue so preposterous a point with an adversary who displays such ignorance of the works." We can only speculate on whether Drayton forwarded his refutation to the Folger and what the likely reaction was.

### The Drayton Books

The New England Shakespeare Oxford Library (NESOL) in Somerville, Massachusetts, now owns thirty Drayton research books, a few considered rare. (See below for a list of Bill Boyle's favorites.) Reviewing the books, Boyle said, "The rare dust cover on Holland's 1923 *Shakespeare through Oxford Glasses*, with its ads for other authorship books on the back cover and its significant and enthusiastic comments under some of the titles, proves that there was active interest in the Oxfordian movement in the years directly following the 1920 publication of "*Shakespeare Identified*." See related images on the following page.

### Favorite Charles de Vere Drayton Books Now Housed at The New England Shakespeare Oxford Library (NESOL)

- *Shakespeare through Oxford Glasses* by Capt. H.H. Holland (1923)
- *Our Elusive Willy* by Ida Sedgwick Proper, first edition (1953) [imagine William of Stratford as a changeling bastard!]
- *Sonnets of Shakespeare and Southampton* by Walter Thomson (1938)
- "The Shakespeare Canon of Statutory Construction" by Justice John Paul Stevens, *Pennsylvania Law Review* 140:4 (April 1992)
- *Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford* by William Kittle (1935, inscribed by the author, "With my compliments," and dated February 1, 1936)
- "The Poems of Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford and of Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex" by Steven W. May, in *Studies in Philology* 87:5 (early Winter 1980)
- *A Few Notes on Shakespeare* by Rev. Alexander Dyce (1853)
- *Strictures of Mr. Collier's New Edition of Shakespeare* by Rev. Alexander Dyce (1858)

## Sources:

1. "The English Vere's [sic]," [www.houseofvere.com](http://www.houseofvere.com).
2. Kimbolton Local History Society, "Event: Visit to Drayton House," <https://e-voice.org.uk/klhs/calendar/item/42435229>.
3. Orsolits, Barbara Spence, "The Draytons Of Drayton Hall: Land, Kinship Ties And The British Atlantic World," PhD history dissertation, Georgia State University (Fall, December 16, 2019).
4. [https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1085&context=history\\_diss](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1085&context=history_diss).
5. Personal email communication with Alison Rea, granddaughter of Charles de Vere Drayton, October 24, 2021.
6. "The Most Important Charleston Plantation Tour and Visit in Charleston is Drayton Hall," <https://www.draytonhall.org/the-most-important-charleston-plantation-tour-and-visit-in-charleston-is-drayton-hall/>.



## History of The Ereved Foundation

(“Ereved” is “de Vere” spelled backwards)

The Ereved Foundation, Inc., the precursor to today’s SOF, was founded on January 18, 1957, by Charlton Ogburn Jr.; Francis T. Carmody, the first president; and William Mason Smith.<sup>1</sup> Carmody may have been the mover and shaker behind Ereved. His interest goes back to 1920, when he read J. Thomas Looney’s *“Shakespeare” Identified*.<sup>2</sup> Carmody was hooked, but it took years to convince his father-in-law and former governor of New York, Nathan Miller, that Oxford was the man. Miller finally became a confirmed Oxfordian during a trip to Stratford-upon-Avon in 1949. Miller published his own book on the Oxfordian theory, which Carmody distributed to several people in 1953, eventually leading to the founding of Ereved.

The Oxfordians received their first brief and noncontentious coverage in *The New Yorker* on April 4, 1959.<sup>3</sup> The article caught the eye of Professor John McCabe, acting chairman of the Department of Dramatic Art at New York University, especially after TV talk show host Jack Paar announced that Shakespeare as the author did not make sense. Sparks flew two months later in *The New Yorker* issue of June 20, 1959.<sup>4</sup>

The Ereved Foundation became the nonprofit Shakespeare Oxford Society on

May 19, 1959. As Tom Regnier jokingly said in his 2017 SOF Chicago conference lecture, “They figured there was no point in hiding [the name of Oxford] any more.”<sup>5</sup>

### Endnotes:

1. SOF website (September 5, 2013), “Plan of Unification of Shakespeare Fellowship and Shakespeare Oxford Society,” <https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/unification-notice/>.
2. SOF website (July 29, 2019), “SOF Receives New Yorker Magazine Coverage,” <https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/sof-receives-new-yorker-magazine-coverage>.
3. McCarten, John, “Carmody’s Torch,” *The New Yorker*, “The Talk of the Town,” April 4, 1959, p. 29.
4. McCabe, John, “Straightforward Stratfordian,” *The New Yorker*, “The Talk of the Town,” June 20, 1959, pp. 23-24.
5. SOF Conference (2017), Tom Regnier, “60th Anniversary of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxkKO3Qu6yM>.

(SOF Fall Conference, continued from p. 1)

the problems with the traditional attribution, and closed by noting that no one has written a rebuttal to it or a “counter-declaration.” He urged anyone who hasn’t already done so to read and sign the Declaration at the SAC’s website at: <https://doubtaboutwill.org>.

Meyers then concluded the session with a “crash course in resources” that are readily available to persons who want to learn more about the authorship question and/or the case for Edward de Vere as the true author. Meyers noted fourteen books (see p. 11); the SOF’s two periodicals (this quarterly *Newsletter* and the annual journal, *The Oxfordian*); the “Don’t Quill the Messenger” podcast series hosted by Steven Sabel; the SOF’s YouTube channel and Facebook page; the De Vere Society (<https://deveresociety.co.uk>), the British organization that also champions the case for Oxford as Shakespeare; the ShakesVere online discussion group; the feature film *Anonymous* (2011), directed by Roland Emmerich; Cheryl Eagan-Donovan’s documentary film, *Nothing Is Truer Than Truth* (available on Amazon Prime; it is also available in other regions under the title *Shakespeare: The Man Behind the Name*); and Robin Phillips’s documentary, *Behind the Name Shakespeare: Power, Lust, Scorn & Scandal*.

[Note: Keir Cutler’s video, “Why Was I Never Told This?” was scheduled to be shown, but due to technical problems it was not. It is available on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyVjR9FNo9w>) as well as on the SAC and SOF websites’ main pages.]

### First Saturday Session

[Link to Saturday, Session 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxSuxftkVYk>]

**Cheryl Eagan-Donovan**, director of the Oxfordian documentary *Nothing Is Truer Than Truth*, hosted the session. She reminded the audience that one of the primary goals of the SOF is to convince the academic community to accept the Shakespeare Authorship Question as a legitimate field of inquiry.

SOF Trustee **Ben August** was the first presenter. He spoke about how he acquired a copy of 1565 edition of Herodotus that belonged to Edward de Vere. The book was put up for auction in May 2019; according to the auction house, it was expected to sell for \$9,000-\$12,000 (as August explained, this edition of Herodotus is not rare, and copies have recently sold for less than \$1,000; the sole factor that enhanced the value of this book is that it was owned by Oxford). August described how he got carried away during the bidding process, making a winning bid of \$60,000; “I couldn’t stomach the idea of stodgy old men” buying the book and possibly hiding it. “When you think about this book as held by [the real] Shakespeare,” he added, “it sends you back in time. It

gives you a feeling of importance and depth.” August hopes that the book will increase in value once it is finally accepted that Oxford was Shakespeare. “The value of this book can become a bellwether of how we’re doing. It can lose value if we don’t build momentum. . . . If we do our job right, it can be worth a million dollars.”

**Earl Showerman** spoke next, providing a detailed overview of *Titus Andronicus*. This tragedy is Shakespeare’s bloodiest, featuring fifteen corpses, two severed heads, three severed hands and a severed tongue; it was also the first “Shakespeare” play to be published (in a 1594 quarto edition, with no author’s name). Showerman noted that many traditional critics have cited the wealth of classical allusions in the play, and have identified many Greek as well as Roman sources used by the playwright. Roman sources include Ovid (a copy of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* is used as a prop in the play), Seneca, Virgil, Horace, Terence, Livy and Justinus (whose history of *Trogus Pompeius* was translated by Arthur Golding; published in 1564, it was the first book dedicated to Oxford). Greek sources include Herodotus (Oxford is known to have owned a copy; see above paragraph), Herodian, Heliodorus’s *Aethiopica* (a 1569 translation of which was dedicated to Oxford), Sophocles’s *Ajax*, Euripedes’s *Hecuba* and Diodorus Siculus’s *Bibliotheca Historica*. Golding’s 1563 translation of Aretine’s *History of the Wars between the Imperials and the Goths for the Possession of Italy* is also a possible source. Golding, of course, was Oxford’s uncle by marriage.

In her talk, “A Newly Discovered Portrait of Oxford’s Sister, Lady Mary Vere,” **Katherine Chiljan**, author of *Shakespeare Suppressed*, focused on a portrait now housed at Beane House of Art and Knowledge in Canterbury, England. It is identified as an image of Susan Bertie, Countess of Kent (b. 1553 or 1554). But Chiljan made a persuasive case that it has been misidentified, and is actually a picture of Mary Vere, the younger sister of Edward de Vere. Among her strongest arguments were that the image in the portrait does not resemble those of Susan Bertie’s parents, but does resemble Edward de Vere and his half-sister, Katherine Vere; and that the age of the sitter given in the painting’s inscription (fifteen in 1567) does not match Susan Bertie’s age, but could match Mary Vere’s, whose birth year is unknown. Chiljan explained how a misidentification could have been made, as Susan Bertie and Mary Vere were sisters-in-law; Mary Vere married Susan’s younger brother, Peregrine Bertie, probably in 1578. Susan Bertie married Reginald Grey in 1570, who was restored to the Earl of Kent in 1572; he died in 1573. She remarried in 1581, and lived until at least 1611. Furthermore, the portrait had long been in the possession of the Bertie family.

In “A Kingdom for a Mirth: Shakespeare’s Fatal Cleopatra and the Authorship Question,” Professor **Roger Stritmatter** discussed the depth and complexity of Shakespeare’s *Anthony and Cleopatra*. He noted its fascinating mixture of light tones and puns (the dialogue between Cleopatra and the merchant who brings the basket containing the asp is especially, and unexpectedly, light) amidst deep themes such as transmutation (frequent allusion to the classical four elements of earth, air, fire and water, all of which are in flux) and transmigration of human and animal spirits. The play contains (deliberate) anachronisms (Cleopatra plays billiards and predicts that a child actor will later “boy” her greatness, a reference to the custom of boys or young men playing women’s parts onstage in Shakespeare’s time). The word “fortune” and its variants are used forty-four times. Interestingly, the word “worm” (referring to the asp) is used nine times, all in one scene. As noted by Richard Whalen (“‘The Queen’s Worm’ in *Antony and Cleopatra*: Does Another of Shakespeare/Oxford’s Word Games Clarify an Enigmatic scene?” *Newsletter*, Summer 1998), the French word for “worm” is *ver*, so that the playwright can be seen to be punning on his name. [An expanded version of this presentation, coauthored by Stritmatter and Shelly Maycock, is due to be published as a paper in the journal *Critical Survey*.]

After a showing of last year’s winning Video Contest entry, the presentations continued. Dr. **Elisabeth Waugaman** spoke on “French Academics and Shakespeare.” She noted the pioneering work done by the French academic Abel Lefranc (1863-1952), who published his two-volume study, *Sous le masque de William Shakespeare: William Stanley, Vie Comte de Derby*, in 1918, two years before J. Thomas Looney’s “Shakespeare” Identified. Lefranc advocated the case for William Stanley, 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Derby, as the author of the Shakespeare canon, with possible assistance from Oxford, his father-in-law. Based on the work of Lefranc and Georges Lambin’s *Voyages de Shakespeare en France et en Italie* (1962), Waugaman explained how three particular plays depict events in France and featured characters who were clearly based on historical French individuals: *All’s Well That Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure* and *Love’s Labor’s Lost*. She showed that only a court insider would have known about many of the people and events depicted. Waugaman stated her belief that pursuing a group theory of authorship “can open doors for Oxfordians,” and expressed her hope that Oxfordians “can reawaken” interest in Shakespeare in France by demonstrating the importance of French allusions in Shakespeare’s oeuvre.

The session concluded with an intriguing talk by **James Warren**, “The Greatest Deception in Literary History? A Contrarian’s View of 1623.” Warren related that, as he was preparing his two most recent books on the history of the Oxfordian movement, *Shakespeare*

*Revolutionized* and *Shakespeare Investigated*, he came to realize that three of the traditional pillars of evidence relied on by traditional scholars to make their case for Shakspeare of Stratford—the prefatory material in the First Folio, the Droeshout engraving in the Folio and the Stratford tomb and monument—were deliberately designed to both “conceal and reveal” the true author. In other words, if the planners had wanted to create a strong case for Shakspeare as the author, they could easily have done so—e.g., they could have included biographical details in the prefatory pages or on the monument, or they could have put Shakspeare’s coat of arms or other identifying insignia on the engraving. But they did not. Warren also offered a comparison of the eyes and the head shape in the Droeshout engraving and the Ashbourne portrait of Oxford, suggesting that they depict the same person. The Ashbourne portrait remained in the possession of Oxford’s descendants until 1910.

### Second Saturday Session

[Link to Saturday, Session 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qf6xt58SVGs>]

The third and final session was hosted by SOF trustee **Don Rubin**, Professor Emeritus of Theatre at York University in Toronto. The first speaker was Professor **Michael Delahoyde**, on “Epiphanies Whilst Editing an Oxfordian Edition of *Twelfth Night*” (Delahoyde’s edition of the play is now available in the series of Oxfordian editions of the plays; see p. 5). Delahoyde mused about the play’s title, which has nothing to do with the plot. That *Twelfth Night* is the end of the holiday season may suggest the theme of excess—the end of revelry—just as every character in the play, and even the practical joking, goes too far. Citing orthodox scholar Kristian Smidt, he observed that the play text shows definite signs of revision; was it originally produced as a shorter work for court performance? That possibility is tantalizingly suggested by the reference in a 1732 catalog of manuscripts to “A pleasant conceit of Vere Earl of Oxford, discontented at the Rising of a mean Gentleman in the English Court, circa [1580]” (see the three articles on this topic in the Summer 2021 *Newsletter*); no traditional scholar seems to have recognized this as a source or early version of *Twelfth Night*. Delahoyde summarized earlier Oxfordians’ identifications of the main characters: Olivia as Queen Elizabeth; Orsino as Oxford; Andrew Aguecheek as Philip Sidney; Malvolio as Christopher Hatton; and Toby Belch as Peregrine Bertie (Oxford’s brother-in-law). Delahoyde noted the esoteric significance in the pagination of the First Folio text of the play (what should be page 265 is numbered 273, but the sequence resumes correctly with 266 on the following page). He speculated about whether the mysterious initials “M.O.A.I” that confound Malvolio

are meant to be read backward (“If this fall into thy hand, revolve,” the letter instructs), revealing “I.A.O.M.,” with possible Rosicrucian significance. Does the play allude to the existence of a real royal heir, with Cesario (“little king”) acting as a go-between, with the Viola/violets floral implication urging Elizabeth to “forget-me-not,” and Twelfth Night itself referring to the acknowledgment of the new “King”? Coming into a growing awareness of Oxford’s involvement in esoteric knowledge, the throwaway phrase “it’s all one” struck Delahoyde as both profoundly human and spiritual.

In the next presentation, “Oxford Translated Boccaccio’s *Decameron*,” Dr. **Richard Waugaman** made a strong case that the 1620 English translation of this fourteenth-century classic was actually made by Edward de Vere during the 1580s. (Waugaman had presented this idea in April 2021 at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America; see Spring 2021 *Newsletter*). Among the key factors supporting the case are: (1) the 1620 translation was anonymous, and it was unusual at the time not to identify a translator (although some scholars believe that it was John Florio, Florio took credit for his other translations); (2) some unknown version of the *Decameron* was entered in the Stationers’ Register years earlier, in 1587, when Oxford was active; (3) the translation was published by Isaac Jaggard, who would publish the Shakespeare First Folio in 1623; (4) it was dedicated to the Earl of Montgomery, Philip Herbert, who was Oxford’s son-in-law and a co-dedicattee of the First Folio. Additionally, the translator’s euphuistic style shows marked resemblances to Shakespeare’s, with its abundant use of hendiadys, and interest in law, drama, ceremony and rank. Waugaman also offered evidence that Anthony Munday, who had worked closely with Oxford in the 1580s, may have collaborated with Oxford on the translation and may have composed its dedication.

After a brief interlude during which the second and third place winning entries in this year’s video contest were shown (see page 5), **Michael Dudley**, an academic librarian at the University of Winnipeg, spoke on “Stratfordian Epistemology and the Ethics of Belief.” He began with this proposition: that the Stratfordian position that Will Shakspeare of Stratford is the true author is a “belief system.” Relying on the work of scholars from the field of belief ethics, Dudley then argued that Stratfordian beliefs and assertions regarding their core proposition — that Shakspeare was Shakespeare — are unethical because, despite the fact that they are professionally obligated to form a belief about authorship, they ignore any duty to inquire further when contrary evidence to their core proposition is offered. They are convinced of its certainty, and have formulated various sub-beliefs to support it. These include a reflexive belief in their own authority and expertise, thus leading to the further belief that questioning the core proposition is immoral, and that doubters may (and should) be marginalized. Ironically,

Shakespeare himself was concerned with the ethics of belief. Dudley contrasted Hamlet, who doesn’t merely accept the word of the ghost that he was murdered but instead devises a way to test it, with Othello, who does not inquire further when presented with alarming information, which leads to disastrous results. In his conclusion, Dudley found the position of the Shakespeare academic establishment, which applies “fideistic” (faith-based) values to empirical inquiry, to be “profoundly unethical and blameworthy.” (Dudley’s article on this topic is expected to be published in volume 24 of *The Oxfordian* in the fall of 2022.)

Next was a seventy-minute panel discussion on “Thomas North and Edward de Vere,” hosted by SOF president **Bob Meyers**. The panelists were investigative reporter **Michael Blanding**, author of *North By Shakespeare: A Rogue Scholar’s Quest for the Truth* (reviewed in the Spring 2021 *Newsletter*), **Dennis McCarthy** (the “Rogue Scholar” of Blanding’s book) and former SOF Vice President **Bryan H. Wildenthal**, author of *Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts* (reviewed in the Winter 2020 *Newsletter*). McCarthy is convinced that Sir Thomas North (1535-c. 1604) wrote the original versions of most of the Shakespeare plays (all now lost) and that Shakspeare of Stratford obtained them and revised them for the public stage. North’s translation of Plutarch’s *Parallel Lives* has long been known as a major source for Shakespeare’s Roman plays. McCarthy maintains, however, that the extent of “borrowing” by Shakespeare from all of North’s known works, including his notebook (unpublished at the time), is unparalleled in English literature, and that they permeate the entire canon. Shakespeare had a “peculiar kind of obsession” with North, according to McCarthy. Blanding stated that he came to the authorship question about six years ago, after McCarthy had approached him, and that he has studied it. “I’ve come to the conclusion that Dennis’s ideas are exciting and unique . . . . The extent of what he’s uncovered needs to be examined.” Wildenthal emphasized the common ground that exists: that they agree that the real Shakespeare (whoever he was) came from an aristocratic background; that he had traveled to Italy; and that his literary career began well before Will Shakspeare’s writing career is conjectured to have started.

McCarthy argued that Shakspeare was known as a playbroker, that North was in financial difficulty and sold his plays to him, and that North’s life is reflected in the works. He believes that *Greene’s Groatsworth of Wit* (1592), with its famous allusion to “Shake-scene,” is about North, and that contemporary writers alluded to him; for example, he argues that Puntarvolo, a character in Ben Jonson’s *Every Man Out of His Humour* (“a vain-glorious knight”) is a caricature of North, not of Oxford. Wildenthal challenged McCarthy and Blanding repeatedly about North’s lack of public reputation as a playwright or poet, and urged that more attention and

study should be devoted to the impressive verbal parallels with obscure and often unpublished writings of Edward de Vere, including early juvenile poems and private letters; he cited a compelling parallel between a line in the poem designated “E.O. #9” on the SOF website (“Trickling Tears”) and a structurally and thematically near-identical line in *The Rape of Lucrece*. Blanding reminded everyone of the culture of anonymity that was so persuasive at the time, especially pertaining to plays written in the 1560s to 1580s, and that playwriting was “an organic process” in which dramatists were constantly borrowing, revising and adapting each other’s works. He conceded that the absence of a contemporary record explicitly stating that North wrote

plays is probably the weakest aspect of the case. Wildenthal remarked that McCarthy has shown “at a minimum” that Sir Thomas North “was a far more important influence on Shakespeare” than was previously known or appreciated.

The session concluded with three announcements: the winner of the 2021 SOF Video Contest (see page 5), the recipient of the second Tom Regnier Veritas Award (see page 4), and the 2021 Oxfordian of the Year (see page 4).



### In this issue:

SOF Fall Conference	1
President’s Column	2
Letters	3
What’s the News?	4
In Memoriam: Frank Davis	9
In Memoriam: Jacquelyn L. Mason	10
Personal lists of recommended books:	
Bob Meyers	11
William Boyle	12
Bonner Miller Cutting	12
Cheryl Eagan-Donovan	13
Kevin Gilvary	14
Gary Goldstein	15
Stephanie Hopkins Hughes	15
Ramon Jiménez	16
Roger Stritmatter	17
James Warren	17
Hank Whitemore	19
Bryan H. Wildenthal	20
MOST FREQUENTLY RECOMMENDED	20
Oxford’s Voices: (What Shakespeare Wrote Before He Was Shakespeare)	21
Annual Meeting Report	24
Reviews of <i>Shakespeare Revolutionized</i>	26
The Drayton Collection	29



## 2022 Membership and Donation Form (please X your membership choice)

\_\_\_ **Online Membership: \$44.** Includes online access to all of our newsletters and journals, discounts on conference registration, and all other rights of membership, including the right to vote for members of the Board of Trustees.

\_\_\_ **Online Family Membership: \$59.** Includes members' rights as listed above for two persons living in the same household.

**Newsletter Membership:** Includes all the online rights listed above, plus four *printed* issues of the quarterly *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* mailed to your home. \_\_\_ (U.S.) \$79 \_\_\_ (Canada) \$84 \_\_\_ (other countries) \$94

**Family Newsletter Membership:** Includes all members' rights listed above for two persons living in the same household, plus four *printed* issues mailed to your home. \_\_\_ (U.S.) \$94 \_\_\_ (Canada) \$99 \_\_\_ (other countries) \$109

**Student Online Access: FREE**

**Student Newsletter Membership:** \_\_\_ \$35 (U.S. or Canada) \_\_\_ \$45 (other countries)

(Students: From your school email account, please send photo of your student ID to membership@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org.)

**Introductory Gift Memberships:** If you have renewed for 2022, you may give introductory one-year gift memberships that include the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* (four issues printed and mailed) to friends and family who have never been members of the SOF or its predecessor organizations. Please send us the names, addresses, and emails (if available) of the persons you would like to receive the newsletter. (You may use the back of this sheet or enclose additional sheets.)

\_\_\_ \$35 (U.S./Canada) \_\_\_ \$45 (other countries) (amount based on recipient's residence)

**Would you like to make an additional donation?** Your generosity covers a major portion of the costs to operate the Fellowship and publish our materials. In the past, members' donations have sustained our organization. Your donations help support new projects, such as research grants and outreach, which only exist through the generous help of our members and friends.

**Donation amount \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Payment \$** \_\_\_\_\_  Check enclosed \*  Visa  MasterCard  Amex

(\* For Canadian members who pay by check, please pay in U.S. funds.)

**Card Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Exp. Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **CVV (Security Code on back of card)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature (if using credit card)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member Name(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

**JOIN OR RENEW TODAY!**

By mail: Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship, P.O. Box 66083, Auburndale, MA 02466-0083

Online: shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org (Click on "Join Us" on the Menu Bar.)