



# Shakespeare Matters

*"The Voice  
of the  
Shakespeare  
Fellowship"*

## Oxford's Heraldry Explained

By Robert Sean Brazil

Each fair instalment, coat, and sev'ral crest,  
With loyal blazon, evermore be blest!

*Merry Wives of Windsor* 5. 5

This article concerns heraldic representations used by Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, during his own lifetime, and coats-of-arms of his Vere ancestors. More specifically, I will critique and correct Barbara Burris' article in *Shakespeare Matters*, "Oxford's New Coat of Arms in 1586" (Summer 2003). I will show that her main assertions and interpretation of evidence were faulty, and her conclusions must surely be questioned. Although I demystify the false "royal" aura and parentage that she evoked for Oxford, the actual facts of the case reveal a story that is far richer, with many cross-connections to Shakespearean studies.

The central focus of the former article was one particular version of Edward de Vere's coat-of-arms, as it appeared on a woodcut frontispiece featured in several books dedicated to him in the 1580s and 1590s.<sup>1</sup> Of the many assertions made by Burris about this woodcut, let us note the following:

1. "The altered Oxford arms are proof that from 1586 (the year he began receiving his 1,000 pounds pension from the Queen) through 1599 de Vere publicly proclaimed he was using a different heraldry from the ancient Oxford clan..."<sup>2</sup> and "...in 1586

*(Continued on page 15)*



*Concordia University Executive Vice President Gary Withers announces plans for the Shakespeare Authorship Studies Center (photo by William Boyle).*

## Concordia Proposes Shakespeare Authorship Studies Center

By Howard Schumann

Citing the importance of truth to civilization, Gary Withers J.D., Executive Vice-President of Concordia University announced plans for a new Shakespeare Authorship Studies Center at the 10th Annual Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference held April 20-23 at Concordia in Portland, Oregon. The Center is to be located on the third floor of a proposed \$12 million, 70,000 sq. ft. library building, scheduled to start construction by the end of 2007. Dr. Withers declared that the new building would "change the face of the campus" and the Studies Center, which will include a seminar room, a boardroom and two offices, will demonstrate to students that we are dedicated to pursuing the truth on the essential questions. "If we have missed *one* truth," he said, "we are devaluing *the* truth."

The presence of Concordia President Charles Schlimpert, Ph.D., Professor Johnnie Driessner, Ed.D, Director of the Concordia University Foundation, and Dean Charles Kunert, of the College of Theology, underscored the support provided by the University. In the Conference's opening remarks, Prof. Driessner said that the new Research Center will guarantee the following: Authorship studies will have a physical and academic home, there will be continuity and perpetual leadership on the subject, financial support for research and scholarship will be provided, and mechanisms will be created (including a scholarly journal) for the dissemination of the best scholarly research in the area.

William Leahy, Ph.D., Senior Lecturer and Head of the English Department at Brunel University in Uxbridge, also brought news of major developments in authorship studies

*(Continued on page 26)*

# Letters

March 5, 2006

Dear Editors:

If there is an ongoing controversy surrounding Oxford and Elizabeth, can one faithfully compose a biography of him which ignores it?

On page 1 of his book, Mark Anderson suggests that Oxford was born on April 12, 1550, to John De Vere and Margery. Evidence is not offered, nor is there any acknowledgment that this is disputed. It is customary in biographies to discuss the origins and personalities of the parents of the subject, but Anderson gives nothing on this score. We are left to wonder if this child resembled his putative progenitors and how.

On page 3 we are told that John abandoned a mistress and “left a woman to whom he was engaged, on the day before their wedding.” This oddity is neither discussed nor explained.

Margery seems to have been alienated *ab initio*. “Countess Margery’s two known references to her son, both found in letters written to the Secretary of State Sir William Cecil, appeared at a time when the young lord Edward had been moved out of the house. These missives give only passing mention of her child and do not request any information about his life or well being.”

Oxford is thought to have had “an indifferent mother and a distant, feudal lord of a father.” Isn’t this all a tad strange? On page 4 we learn that his sister brought a lawsuit in which she accused Edward of being a bastard. Of course, Elizabeth was widely regarded as the bastard offspring of Anne Boleyn, and it is difficult to forget the account of Anne Boleyn herself as Henry VIII’s daughter. Is it really self evident that Edward’s sister was mistaken in her claim?

Early on, our hero is packed off to live with his tutor. *Pourquoi?* Didn’t tutors live on the estates of the family or visit their pupils for lessons? What circumstances would lead the student to board with the teacher?

On page 11, we find that in 1559 Elizabeth, being pursued for marriage, appointed Thomas Smith, Earl John and Dudley (her lover) to personally greet her suitor, the

Duke of Finland, and Lord Edward most likely accompanied them on the errand. One can scarcely imagine a more chilling reception committee. Is it any wonder that match with the Duke of Finland was scuttled?

On page 12 we discover that in 1561 Elizabeth’s progress took her to Hedingham. Why? Had she any special interest in the clever lad of the castle?

Page 13 informs us that Elizabeth was entertained by plays by John Bale. Who was he? Mr. Anderson does not disclose that Bale was Princess Elizabeth’s own mentor. It was he who assisted her in her translation at age 11 of the incest-laden treatise “Glass of the Sinful Soul,” by Marguerite of Navarre. Two years later came Elizabeth’s bizarre affair with her uncle/stepfather, Thomas Seymour.

On page 15 we are informed that Elizabeth appointed Cecil Master of the Court of Wards. His first charge in that capacity is ... Edward de Vere. Is it possible that this was done not only to enrich Burghley but also to bring son and mother closer? You may think not, but is the subject worth a passing glance?

Page 16 lets us know that among the puzzling deaths in this era (Prince Arthur, Amy Robsart, et al.) is that of Earl John in 1562, who has just enough time to scribble

his will before rushing off to meet his Maker. Curiouser and curiouser, he was neither elderly nor in poor health. Margery never writes to or visits her “son,” ironic when one considers, for example, the poignant and impassioned mother/son bond linking Aumerle and the Duchess of York in *Richard II*.

We then observe that Dudley (Leicester) inherits much of Earl John’s landed property. Hmm... Dudley, of course, was a well-known student of poisons, like the Queen in *Cymbeline*. A month after John’s sudden demise Elizabeth orders Edward to reside at Cecil House. Am I alone in recollecting Hamlet when confronted with this scenario?

The filial relations of Oxford and Elizabeth fairly ooze from the pores of Anderson’s text. Had he set out to prove de Vere was her royal changeling he could hardly have done a better job. Yet the question itself is sedulously avoided. It is respectfully submitted that no matter which side one favors intellectual honesty would require recognition of the issue.

Sincerely,  
David P. Gontar

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The purpose of the Shakespeare Fellowship is to promote public awareness and acceptance of the authorship of the Shakespeare Canon by Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604), and further to encourage a high level of scholarly research and publication into all aspects of Shakespeare studies, and also into the history and culture of the Elizabethan era.

The Society was founded and incorporated in 2001 in the State of Massachusetts and is chartered under the membership corporation laws of that state. It is a recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit (Fed ID 04-3578550).

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*Shakespeare Matters* welcomes articles, essays, commentary, book reviews, letters and news items. Contributions should be reasonably concise and, when appropriate, validated by peer review. The views expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the Fellowship as a literary and educational organization.

Mark Anderson replies:

Although I do briefly introduce the “Prince Tudor” problem in *“Shakespeare” By Another Name* (469) and refer the reader to books by Elisabeth Sears, Hank Whittemore, William Plumer Fowler and the Ogburns senior, I did not feel a fuller discussion was worth delving into in a book that already had too much to cover with just the basic life story of de Vere as Shake-speare.

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methodology to merit choosing any one of several possible speculative “PT” scenarios.

Mr. Gontar’s innuendo, one suspects, does not quite pass muster.

## *From the Editor*

### Fear and Loathing on the Oxford Trail: A Cameo at the SAA, a Zero in the *New York Review of Books*

**I**magine this. Your plush seat in the Millennium Room of the Loews Hotel is so comfortable you can barely keep your eyes open. You feel almost like you’re back in that Lit. class on Proust, the one in which you got a “D”: *À la recherche du temps perdu* comes flooding back in every sleepy glory.

Five hundred academicians, all lined up in polite bourgeois rows, fifty foot ceilings, much glass, a massive podium, a buzz of what seems to be intellectualism, the clinking of water glasses, many erudite and complicated ideas, zooming about the room like so many paper airplanes freighted with their cargoes of paradigm shifts and seeds of future Ph.Ds. Wild horses couldn’t tear you away. Besides, it used to be a bank.

Yes, you’re at the 2006 Plenary Session of the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America. Are you doing your knitting? Grading papers? Whatever else floats your boat, I can tell that you are *concentrating*, devoting your unqualified attention to the panelists (knitting helps the concentration *and* the circulation, after all). One thing is certain: this is the last place in the world anyone will mention the Earl of Oxford, right? After all, this is the *Plenary Session* of the Shakespeare Association of America, for crying out loud – not one of those tiny little Sunday afternoon seminars -- to which, after decades of research, you were finally admitted to discuss your Shakespeare paper with the other proles and adjuncts of the academic world and five people (plus the panelists! – a whopping total of fifteen) attended. Not here. All – well, most of them, anyway – the best and the brightest Shakespeare-oticians in the world are in this room, and

the last thing they want to hear about is the Earl of Oxford, right? *Marlowe, Derby, Bacon* — even that new fellow *Neville*, but Oxford? No way. Impossible. You can take a deep breath, relax and enjoy yourself without any fear of being ambushed by the crazies.

But wait. Your reverie is abruptly terminated by a screech of feedback from the microphone. It’s the passing of the guard. A new panelist, hailing from the University of California at Vineland – the center of biotech enlightenment in the heart of the California wine hills – takes the microphone to discourse on the theme “Breach That Scholar Before He Defects: Gender, Class, and Educational Discipline in the Authorship Controversy” ...and before you know it, Oxford is upstaging the bard; the whole room bursts into peals of laughter over the hijinks of the little “monstrous adversary” who *matriculated from... Oxford... at the age of six... revealing the class corruption of the early modern educational system... he should have been spanked even harder...* And here you thought you were going to get away from the crazies who say that Oxford was Shakespeare. But here he is, graduating even earlier than you thought, and still making people laugh after all these years. The Original Merry Prankster.

Managing a populist heresy is hard work. The places where Oxford doesn’t pop up are sometimes as revealing as those in which he does. A May 11 *New York Times Book Review* essay by Anne Barton surveys the landscape of recent Shakespearean biographies but inadvertently reveals the ingrained prejudice of contemporary scholars by entirely omitting mention of Mark Anderson’s *“Shakespeare” By Another*

*(Continued on page 4)*

*(Fear and Loathing, cont.)*

*Name* (Gotham 2005), while commenting at length on the “unremitting efforts by the anti-Stratfordians to demonstrate that an impartial scrutiny of the career of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, or some other aristocrat— Sir Henry Neville and Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, have joined the usual list of suspects within recent months—reveals him or her to be the true but craftily hidden author of plays and poems.” Included in the review are James Shapiro’s *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599* (HarperCollins); *Secret Shakespeare: Studies in Theatre, Religion and Resistance* by Richard Wilson (Manchester University) and *Shadowplay: The Hidden Beliefs and Coded Politics of William Shakespeare* by Clare Asquith (Public Affairs), which both focus on the bard’s alleged Catholic recusancy; *Shakespeare: The Biography* by Peter Ackroyd (Doubleday) and *That Man Shakespeare: Icon of Modern Culture* by David Ellis (Helm Information) round out the list of new offerings surveyed in the piece.

Despite the surgical excision of Anderson’s book as a work likely to arouse unauthorized questions in the minds of *NYTR* readers, Barton supplies a revealing snapshot of the current state of orthodox thinking about the Bard. She effectively exposes the contradictions and implausibilities of the secret Catholic theories, and is refreshingly candid about the perils of orthodox bardography: “Shakespeare’s biographers have a way of justifying their endeavors by informing readers that more, in fact, is known about his life than about that of any other literary figure in the period, with the exception of Ben Jonson. What they don’t like to add is that our knowledge of Jonson’s year-by-year existence is not only enormous compared with the totality of what can be gleaned (mostly from scattered and laconic legal or church records) about Shakespeare’s *but of a strikingly different provenance and kind*. We have many of the private letters Jonson wrote, a detailed record of his conversation, and an impressive body of self-revelatory poetry and prose. We know exactly who Jonson’s friends were, where he traveled and with whom he stayed, when and why he suffered prison sentences, and when his private

library...was destroyed by fire” (italics supplied).

Such *desiderata* are the stuff of which biography is made, but bardographers take refuge in the belief of John Updike that “biographies are really just novels with indexes.” The candid Barton admits that the epigram has a special significance for students of the Bard: “That seems especially true with lives of Shakespeare.” But this sobering assessment does not restrain the reviewer from singling out Shapiro’s *Year in the Life* as a book “that genuinely illuminates the plays and the man that wrote them.”

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**Is this parody?  
Or is Dr. Barton ... using  
the word “illuminate” in  
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scholarship?**

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How does it do this, when so many others have failed? “Shapiro is particularly fine in his detailed account of how the timbers of the Shoreditch theatre were salvaged and stored (not, as often claimed, ferried at once across the Thames) and just what kind of carpentry and weather conditions were required for reusing them for the Globe.” Is this parody? Or is Dr. Barton (who has, one must add, herself *genuinely* revealed the literary texture of many plays in her classic introductory essays in the Riverside edition – but then she was not also trying to write a biography!) using the word “illuminate” in some special sense known only to the *cognoscenti* of Shakespearean scholarship? Perhaps another example will supply the missing revelation. Shapiro also “makes the [1599 Essex] campaign in Ireland vividly (and horrifyingly) present to the reader, as it must have been to

Shakespeare and his contemporaries, and for the first time (to my knowledge) provides a detailed account of exactly what Shakespeare would have seen in the various rooms at Whitehall he had to walk through whenever he and his company of players performed at court.”

Come again? A detailed account of what Shakespeare *would have seen* in the rooms at Whitehall? That sounds just a little too close to “how much wood could a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood” to inspire public confidence that all is well in the land of *Stratfordiana*. Just how does the itinerary of what Shakespeare *might have seen* in Whitehall, had he taken a tour, “illuminate the plays and the man who wrote them?” One searches Barton’s review in vain for an answer. Failing one, it is tempting to suspect that Barton’s plea for the excellence of Shapiro’s book is based more on wishful thinking, and the need to discover at least one swan among the ugly ducklings in her lineup, than a realistic assessment of the merits and problems of Shapiro’s narrative.

The hero of Barton’s review is not Shapiro, but the late Samuel Schoenbaum, the author of *Shakespeare’s Lives* (1970, 1991), a “witty and exhaustive account of all the biographical attempts from the very beginning.” Barton wonders aloud what Schoenbaum, who died in 1996, “could have made of all the outpourings of the last decade.” A clue can be found in Schoenbaum’s supplementary note to the 1991 edition of *SL*, written in response to conversations with the late Charlton Ogburn Jr., author of the Oxfordian classic *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Man Behind the Myth*. “Perhaps we should despair,” wrote Schoenbaum in 1991, “of ever bridging the vertiginous expanse between the the sublimity of the [literary] subject and the mundane inconsequence of the documentary life” (568).

What? Yes, Virginia, that is an elephant you see standing in the living room of the Shakespeare establishment, snarfing Coca-Cola and eating chocolate chip cookies. How far Schoenbaum might have gone in eventually recognizing the folly of the orthodox tradition of bardography one cannot know. Probably not so far as Leslie

*(Continued on page 25)*

# From A Never Writer...News

## Gotham Plans August 2006 Paperback Release of De Vere Bio

"*Shakespeare*" *ByAnotherName*, Mark Anderson's blockbuster biography of the Earl of Oxford, continues to set landmarks for the Oxfordian cause. Gotham Books will release the biography in paperback August, 2006 with a new appendix highlighting *Tempest* research by Lynne Kositsky and Roger Stritmatter. Already hardback sales have gained a high profile for the book and thereby for the de Vere cause: Over five hundred copies have been placed in libraries worldwide, Anderson's email newsletter and fanzine has 700 subscribers, and the book has recently been optioned for a documentary film by Boston filmmaker Cheryl Eagan-Donovan. An audiobook of SBAN, released by Highbridge Audio and featuring the fabled "golden voice" of BBC actor Simon Prebble, is featured on the front cover of the Highbridge Fall 2005 catalog.

Meanwhile Anderson, the recipient along with Hank Whittemore of the 2006 Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference Award for excellence in scholarship in April, is busy with other marketing strategies to boost sales of his book and raise the profile of the Oxfordian cause.

Anderson's Shakespeare-on-ipod (<http://shakespearebyanothername.com/audio.html>) audio series, produced by Anderson and hosted and edited by Anderson and Penny Leveritt, takes the listener through an audio tour of selections from the book read by Shakespeare Fellowship members Stephen Eldredge, Timothy Holcomb and Christine Stevens and recorded by Chris Collingwood and Brad Thayer. The quotes are, well, quotable: "Shakespeare was one of the most autobiographical men who ever took pen to paper." The Shakespeare podcasts have been used already as an online "textbook" at blackboard.com for middle school teachers in Colorado. When first introduced, the podcasts were downloaded at a rate of 6000 per month and remain at the impressive figure of about 1000 per month.

At the April Conference, Anderson unveiled another creative educational initiative: a Google Earth tour of de Vere sites in England and of de Vere's continental tour. Watch for it soon at *Shakespeare-ByAnotherName.com*.

As of the current writing, Anderson's work is required reading in at least two University classrooms – James Norwood's University of Minnesota Shakespeare class as well as at Concordia University in Portland. Says Professor Norwood: "There is no other book in print that provides as persuasive an alternative to the orthodox biography of Shakespeare as Mark Anderson's." Another fan of Anderson's book is *New York Times* bestselling author Michael Prescott who, in a November 6, 2005, internet blog, describes the cumulative effect of Anderson's work: "Brick by brick, over the course of 380 pages, not to mention 30 pages of appendices and 145 pages of endnotes, Anderson builds an overwhelming circumstantial case for the Oxfordian position. As he admits, there is no smoking gun, no single piece of evidence that provides absolute proof—but the sum total of the evidence he submits ought to be dispositive to any open-minded reader."



## London's Brunel University Sponsors MA in Authorship Studies

A proposed new MA program at London's Brunel University will examine the history of the Shakespearean authorship question, awarding a Master of Arts degree in Authorship Studies to students who successfully complete modules on research methodology, study of the Shakespeare industry, Shakespeare and collaboration, and the Shakespeare Authorship question. Brunel students may expect involvement with "in-depth, independent research which will prepare many for the predicted progress...to a PhD programme" while preparing others for positions in the "culture industry." The new program is the brainchild of Brunel Shakespeare Professor William Leahy, who announced at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference in Portland, Oregon, that he has secured the support of Brunel administrators and hopes to gain final approval and funding for the program shortly.

Leahy, an established Renaissance scholar, has published articles on Elizabethan processions and progresses, as well as on Shakespeare's history plays. He is a section editor of the John Nichols Project, and is currently writing a book on the reception of Elizabethan progresses by the common population. His article, "Propaganda or a Record of Events? Richard Mulcaster's *The Passage Of Our Most Drad Sovereigne Lady Quene Elyzabeth Through The Citie Of London Westminster The Daye Before Her Coronacion*" appeared in *Early Modern Literary Studies*, a leading contemporary journal published at Sheffield Hallam University.

The standard Brunel study will include "the historical construction of Shakespeare as a cultural icon and 'sacred cow'....a consideration of the known facts of

(News cont. from p. 5)

Shakespeare's life, the production of the First Folio, the deification process beginning in the eighteenth century, the 'capturing' of Shakespeare by/for academia and the centrality of Shakespeare to modern academic practice....[and] the physical manifestations of this process as it exists in Stratford, as a tourist curiosity and as an institution unwilling to give up its self-proclaimed ownership of Shakespeare." The program, to be staffed by Dr. Leahy and existing Brunel Shakespeare scholars, is expected to be the first of its kind in the world. Students will make regular use of resources, many of an "excellent standard" according to Dr. Leahy's prospectus, available on the internet. The program will also work in collaboration with the Globe theatre's Shakespeare Authorship Trust and other organizations to expose students to alternative theories of authorship. Congratulations, Dr. Leahy, and Brunel University, for this bold vision!

## Oxford in *The Torch*

The Fall 2005 issue of *The Torch*, the official magazine of seventy-five Torch Clubs in the United States, contains a detailed and generally accurate introduction to the authorship question by Donald F. Nelson (Ph.D.), concluding that "research into the life of Edward de Vere has been actively pursued during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, resulting in an enlarged body of knowledge supporting Looney's conclusion [identifying Oxford as the true 'Shakespeare']" (13). The article is based on a lecture first presented to the Worcester Torch Club, Nov. 13, 2003, but publication makes Nelson's remarks accessible to the 2400 *Torch* subscribers. The article is particularly effective in exposing the hollowness of orthodox pretensions about *Green's Groatsworth of Wit*: "Greene is saying only that, as a playwright, he knows that this unsophisticated young actor from the provinces cannot be the playwright he is attempting to portray in his deal with Oxford. This is no Stratfordian cornerstone, just another small building block of the Oxfordian case!" (16).

## Boston Film Producer to Shoot Oxford Documentary

**Controversy Films** producer Cheryl Eagan-Donovan has signed a May 6 book option deal with Mark Anderson for the right to develop his biography "*Shakespeare*" *By Another Name* for a new documentary feature, *Nothing is Truer Than Truth*. Based on the De Vere family motto, *Vero Nihil Verius*, the film seeks to illuminate truth through the life and words of Edward de Vere.

Published by Gotham Books, an imprint of Penguin, in August 2005, Anderson's book has received critical acclaim and generated quite a bit of controversy. It takes the position that Oxford is the author and details the myriad parallels between De Vere's life and the Shakespeare canon. Anderson spent twelve years researching the subject and writing the book Sir Derek Jacoby has called "one of the very best whodunits you will ever read." The paperback edition of the book will be released in August 2006.

Producer Cheryl Eagan-Donovan studied Shakespeare as a literature major at Goddard College, then discovered De Vere when taking a history course at Harvard University. She pitched the idea for a documentary to ITVS, the funding branch of PBS, and in May travelled to Castle Hedingham in Essex, ancestral home of the Seventeenth Earl, to attend the Annual De Vere Society Meeting.

While in England, Ms. Eagan-Donovan attended a performance of *Coriolanus* at the Globe, then traveled to the town of Castle Hedingham where she filmed a tour with Hedingham local historian (and Oxfordian!) Charles Bird. Mr. Bird has been instrumental in putting together a fabulous exhibition at the castle, complete with a life-sized model of the Seventeenth Earl. The DVS meeting at Hedingham featured a fabulous luncheon at the castle house, hosted by the current owner Jason Lindsay.

IFP New York sponsors the film. Founded in 1979, the Independent Feature Project helped bring recent indie doc hits like *Mad Hot Ballroom* to audiences around the world. Tax deductible donations to support *Nothing is Truer Than Truth* may be sent to IFP at 104 West 29<sup>th</sup> Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY, 10001.

The **Controversy Films** production team includes *All Kindsa Girls* co-producer and VH1 editor Steve Maing, series editor for ESPN's *Stories From Red Sox Nation*, Chi-Ho Lee, associate producer of *Not a Photograph: The Mission of Burma Story*, John Suvannavejh, and *Wide Awake* director of photography Ian Vollmer.

Controversy Films' first feature, *All Kindsa Girls*, the indie doc about the Real Kids, has its Canadian premiere at the North By Northeast Music & Film Festival in Toronto, on June 9<sup>th</sup>, immediately followed by its European debut at the Filmstock International Film Festival in London on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

For more information contact Cheryl Eagan-Donovan at [eagandonovan@comcast.net](mailto:eagandonovan@comcast.net) or [www.controversyfilms.com](http://www.controversyfilms.com).



# “Oxford’s Outsiders”

By Ren Draya

**From the Lecture delivered at  
The Shakespeare Fellowship-  
Shakespeare Oxford Society  
Conference  
Ashland, Oregon,  
October 1, 2005**

**O**utsider, fifth wheel, alien, odd-man-out, stranger, the other. By whatever name, the outsider stands apart, is somehow different from his or her society—or is perceived as different. The outsider, as a dramatic device, is connected to both theme and characterization.

Who is an outsider? Is the label appropriate because the person feels like an outsider? And, do others see this person as an outsider, as someone who deviates from the norms of a community? Outsiders can be so marked because of their nationality, their attitudes, their religion, their gender, their physical appearance, and sometimes by something undefinable. Consider Malvolio (*Twelfth Night*), Shylock (*The Merchant of Venice*), Othello, Enobarbus (*Antony and Cleopatra*), Kent (*King Lear*), Caliban (*The Tempest*), Jaques (*As You Like It*), Aaron (*Titus Andronicus*)—well, the list has just begun. Malvolio is definitely an outsider: The name identifies him as a person of bad will in a world of comedy and illusion. Malvolio is starchy, uptight, humorless; he is the Puritan in a play full of invention and mischief. His

outsider attitude is matched by his appearance: initially, overly somber; then, ridiculously garish. When he allows himself to be gulled into wearing cross garters and yellow stockings, he looks *very* different from everyone else. In a moment of comic epiphany he realizes how foolish he has been, threatens revenge “on the whole pack of you,” and stalks off in high dudgeon. That phrase—“whole pack of you”—confirms what we know: It’s Malvolio vs. the whole pack. An outsider, then, is a man or woman pitted against a “whole pack,” against the larger society.

Shylock is an obvious outsider because he is a Jew in the Christian city-state of

Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions,/ senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with/ the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the/ same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer,/ as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed?  
(3.1.55-61)

The profound, logical “rightness” of the answers to these questions forces us to examine our treatment of those we perceive as outsiders. Not so the Venetians in the play. Shylock’s silly servant labels his master “the very devil incarnation” (2.2.27), a designation echoed by virtually all the Christians in the play. By refusing to practice the Christian virtue of mercy, Shylock is punished: He must deny his religion. In humiliation and despair, Shylock loses his outsider status.

Beyond the obvious example of Shylock, *The Merchant of Venice* contains additional outsiders: Two of Portia’s suitors—both of whom she firmly rejects—come from nations outside of Venice. Personality can also mark an outsider: Antonio, the merchant, laments, “In sooth, I know not why I am so sad” (1.1.1)—he is a melancholic person in a group of sanguine and sociable men. Antonio may well, also, be homosexual, a designation which marks him as an outsider in a play that ends with three heterosexual unions. Nerissa has Gratiano, Jessica has Lorenzo, Portia has bought the dashing Bassanio. But our final image of Antonio is of a man alone. At the close of the play, even if he accepts Portia’s invitation to enter her house, he will not have a mate.

In several plays, an outsider is marked by skin color. The black prince of Morocco (Portia’s suitor, mentioned above), Othello, and the villainous Aaron (in *Titus Andronicus*) are black men. Portia reassures her haughty suitor that she will not judge him on the basis of his dark skin, but on stage, the actress may raise her eyebrows and indicate that this Venetian heiress is not likely to align herself with a black man. In contrast, let us note Tamora (in *Titus*) and her response to a black Moor. She is the Queen of the Goths—presumably blonde, Germanic looking—and she has no trouble jumping into bed with the lusty and

(Continued on page 8)

**Who is an outsider? Is the label appropriate because the person feels like an outsider? And, do others see this person as an outsider, as someone who deviates from the norms of a community?**

Venice. He wears clothes that set him apart from the Venetians, he practices customs they consider alien, he shuns certain foods, and for all these reasons—and, primarily, because he is a Jew—he is treated as a cur. When Shylock points out the hypocrisy of Antonio seeking to borrow money from a person the merchant and his confederates call “dog,” Antonio acknowledges:

I am as like to call thee so again,  
To spet on thee again, to spurn thee too. .

(1.3.127-128)

As an outsider, Shylock is both villain and victim. He fiercely, proudly acknowledges and practices his “otherness,” yet reminds us of his deep need to be accepted:

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(Oxford's Outsiders, cont.)

ambitious Aaron. She is, also, a villain. As for Othello, it is in this great tragedy we find the ugliest words about a black person. When Iago informs Brabantio of his daughter's elopement with Othello, wanting to "poison his delight," Iago crudely shouts to the senator, "an old black ram is tugging your white ewe" (1.1.88). Iago also refers to Othello as "the devil" (90) and "a Barbary horse" (110). Iago takes glee in calling attention to the outsider's physical features. But the very fact of Othello's differences from the young men of Venice underlies Desdemona's love. And, significantly, Othello's outsider status has not prevented the Venetian Senate from respecting him and commissioning him to

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**In *Titus Andronicus*, we admire Aaron's devotion to his infant son, we appreciate his lyrical power. Yes, we are repulsed by Aaron—he kills his infant's nurse, he has Titus' hand chopped off, etc.—but we thrill at the beauty of his words.**

---

lead an important military expedition to Cyprus.

Just as we can label several characters from *The Merchant of Venice* outsiders, in *Othello* all the major characters are in some way set apart. Iago derides Cassio for being from Florence and for being a "bookish theoretic" in contrast to Iago's own practical military experience. Yes, these labels stem from Iago's jealousy, but nonetheless they alert the audience to someone who is different. We watch Cassio, wonder at his control when he agrees to take drink, witness his disintegration. Then there's Desdemona. From her first entrance

we see Desdemona as an outsider. Initially, she is the woman in a roomful of men (the Duke, senators, her father, her husband) at a time when Venetian women were powerless. On Cyprus, Desdemona is the general's wife, a woman alone, out of place, in a military posting with only her servant as buffer and companion. Finally, Iago: Because of his amorality, he is an outsider, a status that only the audience realizes until the play's end. Iago stands apart because no one else in this drama dissembles. "I am not what I am," he truthfully confides to Roderigo, a phrase echoed in an Oxford poem from *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* (1576):

I am not as I seem to be  
Nor when I smile, I am not glad . . .  
(Chiljan 167)

Interestingly, the theme of outsider runs through a number of Oxford's poems. For example, the image of a person who feels alone, friendless, is starkly given in Sonnet 29:

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,  
I all alone beweep my outcast state,  
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
And look upon myself and curse my fate . . .  
(1-4)

And, from a poem identified as "Verses made by the Earle of Oxforde" we find a strikingly similar image:

Sitting alone upon my thought in melancholy mood,  
In sight of sea, and at my back an ancient hoary wood . . .  
(Chiljan 183)

Let's indulge in a bit of psychological musing about outsiders. Being an outsider doesn't necessarily mean being spat upon. All of us, at some time or another, may feel like an outsider. I'm the one without a date; oh, no, everyone else is wearing dark colors! Good grief, why did I choose *this* tie? Oh dear, they've been to Cancun, and all I managed was a weekend in Cincinnati. "I am sooo out of it!" And, surely, we've all looked around the holiday table and wondered, how did I wind up in this family??? Whether in sports, business, or

romance, at some point we feel "oh my goodness, it's me against the world." Accordingly, we often root for the underdog—the basic outsider, someone who is considered weak, is not expected to win or to achieve. We may even identify with the outsider. In *Titus Andronicus*, we admire Aaron's devotion to his infant son, we appreciate his lyrical power. Yes, we are repulsed by Aaron—he kills his infant's nurse, he has Titus' hand chopped off, etc.—but we thrill at the beauty of his words:

As when the golden sun salutes the morn  
And, having gilt the ocean with his beams,  
Gallops the zodiac in his glistering coach  
And overlooks the highest-peering hills,  
So Tamora...  
(1.1.504-508)

In the violent, swirling tragedy of *Titus Andronicus*, Oxford employs the device of outsider again and again: Aaron is the black man, foreign in origin and in religion; Lavinia is isolated by her inability to communicate; Titus is the Roman who slays his own son for not placing loyalty to the Empire above loyalty to one's family; Tamora is the foreign prisoner. Ultimately, we react to this bloody spectacle with horror, hoping that we are outside Titus' world of revenge and sorrows.

Of course, an outsider may be something other than human. In *The Tempest*, Caliban is the product of a human male and an evil female spirit, definitely a character outside human, social norms: Caliban's hideous appearance and his violent actions make him alien to us. But, as with Aaron, Oxford allows Caliban his bursts of lyricism:

The isle is full of noises,/ Sounds, and sweet  
airs, that give delight and hurt not./  
Sometimes a thousand twangling  
instruments/ Will hum about mine ears, and  
sometimes voices/ That, if I then had waked  
after long sleep,/ Will make me sleep again,  
and then, in dreaming,/ The clouds  
methought would open and show riches/  
Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked/  
I cried to dream again.  
(3.2.138-145)

Most of us, at some time, have been that lonely child who feels soothed by dreams and imagination. Most of us, at



some time, have felt unloved. Most of us worry that we may be part beast. Thus, despite his loutish behavior and ugly features, Caliban elicits our sympathy; he has been lonely, unloved, an outsider on an island—an island taken from his mother.

Caliban's case is extreme, but some sort of physical flaw can denote an outsider. For example, although the historical Richard III was neither hunchback nor deformed, Oxford's characterization portrays Richard as malevolent murderer and provides him with strong physical handicaps to symbolize his evil nature. In the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's stunning 2005 production, James Newcomb is just such a Richard; his physical deformities parallel his moral deformities.

Similarly, the outsider designation may involve psychological or emotional exaggerations. Melancholy Jacques, in *As You Like It*, spends his time mooning about, well aware of his poses, deliberately wallowing in the ways he is outside the idealized society of the exiled duke and his men.

In another comedy, *The Taming of the Shrew*, Bianca is pliable and meek, just what a young Renaissance woman should be. Kate, because she is fiery and unhappy and mean, has made herself an outsider in that she refuses to fit the acceptable pattern of being a woman—instead of being an obedient daughter, a kind sister, a compliant wife, she is willful, aggressive, passionate. One source of our laughter is Kate's nonconformance to society's "rules" for woman. The point about woman as "the other" is complex. The American literary critic, Leslie Fiedler, includes an entire chapter on woman in his book entitled *The Stranger in Shakespeare*, making the point that the writer has a definite problem with woman or, "more exactly . . . with women" (43). Fiedler finds that "in his first plays, members of that sex are likely to be portrayed as utter strangers: creatures so totally alien to men as threaten destruction rather than offer the hope of salvation . . ." (43). Fiedler cites a number of examples. About Joan of Arc, the Countess of Auvergne, and Margaret (*Henry VI, Part I*), "mythologically speaking, they are one, being all 'black,' all French, and all bent on betraying the male champion of England"

(47). Richard III himself is called an "enemy to women" throughout the play, despising them when they capitulate to his charm ("Relenting fool, and shallow, and changing woman") and crying for drums and trumpets to drown them out when they rail at him ("Let not the Heavens hear these telltale women . . .").

This notion of woman as outsider gives us a fascinating avenue to explore! We'd include, of course, the prima outsider: Cleopatra.

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an outsider on an  
island—an island taken  
from his mother.**

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- ◆ She is a powerful woman in a world dominated by powerful men;
- ◆ She is dark-skinned;
- ◆ She is Egyptian, mercurial, emotional, herself a monument.

When Enobarbus tells of her appearance on the barge—"like a burnished throne, Burnt on the water" (2, 2, 201-202)—we imagine a woman who indeed "beggar all description," someone utterly different from and more exotic than any woman we have ever known.

For now, enough. This introduction is intended to pique your interest in outsiders as a rich dramatic device embracing both characterization and theme. And, we must ask, does the fact that so much of the canon

includes work with a strong outsider add to our case for Oxford as author? James Newcomb believes Edward de Vere (like Richard III) to be an outsider, someone on the margin of his society:

1. Consider links to Oxford's own life; the death of his father; Oxford's status as outsider in the Cecil household, as ward and as wayward son-in-law/brother-in-law; consider Oxford's suspicions of Anne's infidelity and his attitude toward women.

2. Consider images of the outsider in verses signed by Edward de Vere, images which have their corollaries in the sonnets of Shakespeare.

3. Consider corollaries which may exist between this theme and the notes and underlinings in de Vere's Geneva Bible and in his letters.

I invite further lines of investigation as we verify the true identity of the author.

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# Bermoothes: An Intriguing Enigma

By Paul Hemenway Altrocchi

Shakespeare authorship research may involve lofty themes such as “Who wrote the Sonnets?” or minor details like controversy over the meaning of a single word. Even apparent trivialities, however, may render unanticipated service to the de Vere cause. This paper analyzes the significance of the intriguing word “Bermoothes” and whether that word should be considered an enigma.

The first literary appearance of “Bermoothes,” familiar to all Oxfordians, is in the opening act of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*:

Safely in harbor  
Is the King’s ship, in the deep nook where once  
Thou called’st me up at midnight to fetch dew  
From the still-vexed Bermoothes . . .  
(1.2. 227)

“Bermoothes” appears for the second time in English literature in Webster’s play, *The Duchess of Malfi*, published in 1623:

I would sooner swim to the Bermoothes on  
Two politicians’ rotten bladders, tied  
Together with an intelligencer’s heart-string,  
Than depend on so changeable a prince’s  
favour. (3.2.302)

John Webster’s use of “Bermoothes” clearly refers to swimming to the Bermudas, i.e., the Bermuda Islands, and thus establishes linguistic equivalence of the two terms “Bermudas” and its Castilian Spanish pronunciation, “Bermoothes.” English professors have editorially expressed this parity by changing Shakespeare’s *Tempest* word in their textbooks:

Thou called’st me up at midnight to fetch dew  
From the still-vexed Bermudas . . .  
(1)

## Richard Roe’s hypothesis

Richard Roe’s 1989 interpretation of *The Tempest*’s “Bermoothes” passage (2) initiated a controversy which has persisted among Oxfordians. He proposed that:

1. “Bermoothes” was Shakespeare’s original word for a section of Westminster known as the Bermudas, a place of relative refuge for criminals, debtors, vagrants and prostitutes.

2. “Dew” meant home-brewed liquor such as whiskey.

3. “Still” referred to the alcohol distillation process in stills.

4. “Vexed” referred to an area plagued or afflicted with many stills.

The two-line Bermoothes passage, therefore, meaningless to the play’s plot, merely states that Prospero, the displaced rightful Duke of Milan, shipwrecked on an uninhabited island between Tunis and Naples, probably the Aeolian island of Vulcano (3), had become thirsty for booze. He asks his spirit-servant Ariel, who could become invisible and transport himself anywhere in the world, to go from the ship to the Westminster district of Bermoothes to fetch dew, i.e., whiskey, where plenty was available from its many private stills.

## A vociferous rebuttal

There is a small group of well informed Oxfordians who debate topics of authorship interest on the internet listserve, Phaeton, which means “setting the world on fire”(4). With Elasmobranchian elan, they hone their great white dentition and vent their cyberspace opinions that the Roe hypothesis is “dangerously wrong,” “ludi-

crous,” “an absurd interpretation,” a “thoroughly disproved Oxmyth,” “a theory derived from ignorance,” and a “complete fantasy from start to finish” (4). Phaetonite reasoning is this:

1. Bermudas as a district in Westminster could not have existed in de Vere’s lifetime because, except for *The Tempest*, it is not mentioned in literature until *Bartholomew Faire* in 1614. Nor does Stow mention the existence of Bermoothes in his 1603 Survey of London (5). Phaetonites believe that a town, or section thereof, cannot exist until it is either referred to by name in literature or recorded in an official document.

2. Since Bermoothes, they believe, “did not exist until 1614,” and since de Vere died in 1604, this means that de Vere could not possibly have written *The Tempest*. Therefore Roe’s theory shoots Oxfordians in their collective foot, giving powerful authorship evidence to Stratfordians.

3. The Phaeton group, therefore, feel strongly that Bermoothes refers only to the Bermuda Islands.

4. Dew, they say, did not mean liquor until the 1840s. In the Bermoothes passage, dew can only mean morning moisture on plants. Prospero, who could don his magic coat and become a magician, is clearly bidding Ariel to fly to the Bermuda Islands to fetch dew for an unspecified magic ceremony.

5. Phaetonites say liquor stills did not exist in London in de Vere’s lifetime, nor is there evidence that Londoners consumed distilled liquor. They believe distillation came to London much later and therefore the word “still” could only mean “always” or “continually.” Since “vexed” means disturbed by motion, the cyberspace group believes that “still-vexed” refers to the Bermuda Islands’ reputation as being “always

stormy.”

6. Since Ben Jonson mentions drinking ale in *Bartholomew Faire*, and doesn't mention whiskey, this proves that Bermoothians only drank ale.

This paper will examine the evidence in the debate between the Richard Roe theory and those who wish to set the world on fire.

### Summary of the history of alcohol

Since the Phaeton group contends that 16th century Londoners were unaware of alcohol distillation, a brief history of alcohol becomes relevant. Cultivation of grapes for making wine is documented in Armenia by 6000 BC. Making 20 kinds of beer is documented in Sumerian clay tablets by 4000 BC, letting wheat germinate in water, forming a mash which ferments into alcohol (6).

By 800 BC, China and India were distilling beer and rice wine into a purer alcoholic drink, applying heat to fermented mash. The process utilizes the lower boiling point of alcohol to separate it from water by vaporizing the alcohol and then recondensing it in a water-cooled tube or coil. The Romans used this method for making alcohol and gave us the word “distill” (It. *distillare*), to trickle down in drops (7).

The Moors introduced distillation into Spain by the 8th century. During the early Middle Ages in Europe, distillation was used to produce perfume oils from flowers, aromatics from herbs, and later, in France, to make brandy and cognac by distilling wine. The word *stillen*, derived from *distillen*, was used in Middle English in the 1200s as a verb meaning distillation (7).

### Distillation of alcohol in Great Britain

Alcohol distillation has been known in Britain for 1600 years, e.g.:

1. Distillation of mead, a honey wine, was introduced into Britain by the Romans during their 400-year occupation ending in the 5th century (6).

2. When the English under Henry II (1154-1189) invaded Ireland, they discovered *uisge beatha*, a powerful distilled

alcohol from beer which the Irish learned from monks in the 600s (8). The soldiers brought the technique back to England, naming the product whiskey from the Gaelic word *uisge*.

3. After hundreds of years of private production, the first commercial distillation of Scotch whiskey was described in Scotland in 1494, made from malted barley heated over a peat fire (6).

4. Chaucer (1340-1400) uses “stillatorie” to describe an apparatus which distilled alcohol, as did a medical book in middle English in 1450 (9).

5. In 1573, Englishman T. Tusser in *Five Hundred Pointes of Good Husbandrie*

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## The Moors introduced distillation into Spain by the 8th century. During the early Middle Ages in Europe, distillation was used to produce perfume oils from flowers, aromatics from herbs...

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(1573) states: “The knowledge of stilling is one prettie feat” (10). Tusser was not referring to the making of perfume.

6. In 1596 Edmund Spenser used the term “still” in *The Fairie Queene* to describe the distilling of alcohol (10).

7. Shakespeare used the word “distill” several times, e.g.:

What potions have I drunk of Siren tears,  
Distilled from limbeckes foul as hell within.  
(Sonnet 119)

By “limbeck” is meant an alcohol distillation apparatus (11).

### Analysis of the word “dew”

The word “dew” derives from the Greek “tau” via Anglo-Saxon “dauw” and middle English “deaw” and “deu,” meaning moisture which condenses on the surface of cool bodies especially at night. Shakespeare uses “dew” in this sense many times, e.g., in *The Taming of the Shrew*:

I'll say she looks as clear  
As morning roses newly wash'd with dew.  
(2.1.174)

In Europe's Middle Ages, witches were said to rush to a grassy dew location and catch in a vial a single drop which had fallen from the horn of a crescent moon, to use for their magic. This is the Stratfordian and Phaetonic interpretation of the word “dew” as used in *The Tempest*.

When did “dew” become a word which refers to liquor? In England's middle ages, “dew-drink” and “dew-cup” referred to an early morning allowance of ale given to harvest workers (12, 13). This evolved into “dew-bit” for workers' first morning meal, including ale. In the 1500s, “Bacchus' dew” meant wine, beer or distilled alcohol, e.g., Thomas Sackville in *Mirror for Magistrates*, 1563: “Sowst in Bacchus dewe” (14, 15). Sackville (1536-1608) was a friend and, apparently, drinking companion of Edward de Vere.

De Vere coined 5000 new English words himself and his University Wits coined hundreds more, their linguistic inventiveness changing a language in one generation to a degree never seen before or since. Since the modifying noun “dew” had been applied for more than 300 years to alcoholic beverages, surely de Vere had no difficulty using “dew” alone to mean distilled alcohol and it is postulated that he did exactly that in *The Tempest*.

### A brief history of the Bermuda Islands

In 1503, the Spaniard Juan de Bermudez discovered the islands later named after him. When Fernandez de Oviedo sailed past in 1515, they were already known as the Bermudas. In 1532, Bermudez himself was shipwrecked there, staying only briefly. He nicknamed them “Devil Islands” after

the wailing seabird cries of the petrel, often invisible in storms (16).

By the mid-1500s the English called them the Bermudas or Bermoodies. Sir George Somers had his famous shipwreck there in 1609. Stratfordians contend that Will Shaksper based *The Tempest's* shipwreck description on Strachey's 1625 account, even though they say the play was written in 1611, 14 years before Strachey's publication.

The 150 Bermuda islands, including seven larger islands surrounded by dangerous shoals, had a reputation for terrible weather, including constant storms. This was the only information available until 1610 when Sylvester Jourdan published a pamphlet titled *A Discovery of the Bermudas*. He described the Somers group staying nine months, discovering the wonderful climate, "the air so temperate and the country so abundantly fruitful . . ." (4, 16), thus calling into doubt prior misconceptions about Bermuda's weather.

#### Criminal districts near London

A key question in our Bermoothian analysis is this: When did "Bermudas" arise as a term to describe a Westminster district characterized by tenements, narrow crooked alleyways, taverns, cutpurses, pickpockets, thieves, confidence-cheats, panderers, vagrants, and brothels?

The period from 1550 to 1600 was a time of social change in England, with people moving from country to city, unable to get work in either place. London's population increased from 60,000 to over 200,000 and became a microcosm of small conglomerates, difficult for authorities to control (17). Thus developed four criminal enclave areas, not official sanctuaries but *de facto* unpoliced refuges: (1) Southwark, including Bankside; (2) Southfriars in Southeast London; (3) Spitalfields-Whitechapel, outside Northeast London's wall; and (4) Newgate-Cripplegate, outside London's north wall (18).

In his book *The Canting Crew*, John McMullan points out that the tenements, public lodging houses, and alehouses were interconnected by narrow passageways which encouraged easy escape and foiled pursuers (19). Such communities devel-

oped protective codes, passwords and a special dialect known as "canting," using new "cant words" such as "bousing ken" for alehouse, "budge" for sneak thief, and "nip" for cutpurse. This underworld lingo encouraged social cohesion and allowed easy identification of non-group persons such as police or government spies (20, 21). Elizabethan laws made it illegal to use cant words in official documents or courts of law. This explains why a cant term like "Bermudas" does not appear in official records, and why Stow's *Survey of London* did not mention the Bermudas in editions of 1598, 1599, or 1603 (5).

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**A key question in our Bermoothian analysis is this: When did "Bermudas" arise as a term to describe a Westminster district characterized by tenements, narrow crooked alleyways, taverns, cutpurses, pickpockets, thieves, confidence-cheats, panderers, vagrants, and brothels?**

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Although the wealthy Strand thoroughfare seems an unlikely area for criminal refuges, in fact throughout the Elizabethan Era the area between the Strand and Holborn became a fifth criminal district (18). Even William Cecil complained that less than a half mile from his Strand home there was a network of slum lodging houses, and almost every fourth house was an alehouse harboring destitute and common scalds, "i.e., vagrants and idlers" (19). Cecil died in 1598; he was describing the Bermudas.

#### The Bermudas in Westminster

The Bermudas, a criminal area in the London suburb of Westminster, existed at least by the 1560s. It had narrow lanes reminiscent of the constricted passages between coral reefs in the Bermuda Islands. Sometimes it was called "the Streights," an early form of Straits, i.e. narrow marine waterways.

The Bermudas was located adjacent to the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, on the western fringe of Covent Garden with the Strand on the south, Shandois Street on the north, Half-Moon Street on the east (towards London), and St. Martins Lane on the west (22, 23, 24, 25).

David Riggs, Ben Jonson's biographer and former Chair of the Department of English at Stanford, points out that Jonson lived on Hartshorn Lane near Charing Cross and began grammar school at the age of 6 in 1578. Riggs describes Jonson's walk to school:

The walk from Hartshorn Lane to the parish school (at St. Martin's Church) at which he began his education ran through the lower part of St. Martin's Lane, where he traversed the "Bermudas," a maze of alleyways that had been turned into the urban equivalent of the Bermuda straits the pimps, whores, gamesters and "roaring boys" who accosted unwary passers-by.

(26)

At about age eight Jonson transferred to Westminster School in the Abbey and no longer had to traverse the Bermudas. But as Riggs says :

If his time at Westminster provided him with a formal education, his familiarity with the street life of the "Bermudas" put him in touch with the criminal types who would people his greatest comedies. At the height of his career, Jonson would characterize "the Streights" or "the Bermudas" as a place of education "where the quarreling lesson is read . . ."

(27)

Jonson first mentions Bermudas in



**Figure One: The Thames River in Westminster. Note the Bermudas (hatched) on the Strand between The Mews and Cecil House.**

1614, in *Bartholomew Faire*:

**Justice Overdo:** Looke into any Angle  
of the towne, (the/Streights, or the Ber-  
mudas) where the quarreling lesson/is  
read, and how do they entertaine the  
time, but with bottle- ale, and tabacco?  
(2.6.72)

Alehouses served ale, not distilled alcohol, and were an essential ingredient of social life and criminal planning for Bermudas inhabitants. Home stills produced hard liquor like whiskey, as documented since the 1200s in England. Edward de Vere lived at Cecil house on the Strand beginning at age 12, in 1562, less than half a mile from the Bermudas.

Jonson mentions the Bermudas three more times, each time referring to the district in Westminster, not the Bermuda islands:

1. In his Epigram to the Earl of Dorset, circa 1611:

Town pirates here at land,/Have their  
Bermudas and their/ Streights i' the

Strand.

2. In *The Devil is an Ass*, 1616:

**Meer-craft:** Engine, when did you see/  
My cousin Everhill? Keeps he still in  
your quarter/In the Bermudas?

**Engine:** Yes, sir, he was writing/ This  
morning very hard.  
(2.1.142)

3. Also in *The Devil is an Ass* :

**Fitz:** Your man will take my bond?

**Meer-craft:** That he will, sure,/ But these  
same citizens, they are such sharks!/  
There's an old debt of forty, I gave my  
word/ For one is run away to the Bermu-  
das. . . (3.3.149)

The blight of Westminster's Bermudas district, later also nicknamed the Caribbe Islands or Cribbee Islands, was permanently torn down by the English government in 1829 and ceased its existence (28).

## Discussion

Roe believes Prospero comes up on his wrecked ship's deck at midnight thirsty for hard liquor and asks Ariel to fly 1500 miles from the Aeolian Island of Vulcano to the Westminster district of Bermoothes-Bermudas to fetch liquor from its private stills. The Phaeton internet group believes Prospero sends Ariel 2500 miles to fetch dew from plants in the always stormy Bermuda Islands so he can perform a magic ritual.

Evidence in favor of Roe's hypothesis may now be summarized:

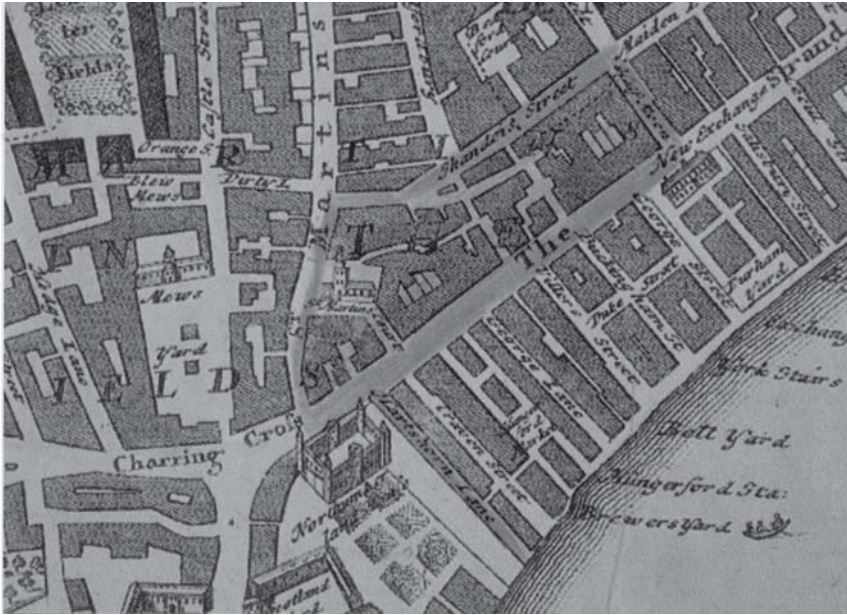
1. The criminal district of Bermudas existed by the 1560s. In 1578, when de Vere was 28, six year-old Ben Jonson walked through the Bermudas every weekday for two years on his way to St. Martins' school. This explains Jonson's familiarity with Bermudas, which he mentions in three plays, always referring to the Westminster district, not to the Bermuda Islands.

2. Evidence shows that the British have been distilling liquor privately since the Roman occupation in the first four centuries of the Christian era, enhanced in the 1100s when English invaders learned from the Irish how to make whiskey.

3. The Castilian dialect of central Spain, including the *th* sound of a *d* between two vowels, became the official language for Spain in the 13th century (29). De Vere coined "Bermoothes," the Castilian pronunciation of "Bermudas," to refer to the small, cant-speaking, criminal district in Westminster.

4. After a 300-year history of the word "dew" being associated with ale, it is suggested that Edward de Vere, in *The Tempest*, coined the solo word "dew," meaning distilled alcohol. "Dew" may be the key word in interpreting the phrase, "fetch dew from the still-vexed Bermoothes." Dictionaries define dew as being formed particularly at night by water condensation from the atmosphere upon cool bodies such as grass and other plants which freely radiate heat. That dew is formed primarily in calm weather under an unclouded sky (30) is crucial to the interpretation of the *The*

(Continued on page 14)



**Figure Two: The Bermudas' borders were Shandois St., Half Moon St., The Strand, and St. Martins Lane. Note Hartshorn Lane, where Ben Jonson lived, below St. Martin's Court extending from The Strand to the Thames River.**

*Tempest's* Bermoothes passage.

The Bermuda Islands, from their discovery in 1503 until Jourdan's correct description in 1610, had the erroneous reputation as a place of constant storms, thunder, lightning, gusting winds and rain — the only information available to Edward de Vere, who died in 1604. No one who understands the impact of climate on dew formation would choose a continually stormy region from which to fetch plant dew.

Shakespeare made virtually no mistakes in his extensive use of terms of law, music, flora, fauna, navigation, weather, astronomy, etc. Isn't it unlikely that he would make a fundamental mistake in such a common phenomenon of nature — how dew is formed, namely in calm weather under a clear sky, especially when he correctly uses that meaning of dew several times in his plays, including elsewhere in *The Tempest*? Yet this is exactly what the Phaeton group contends — that Prospero sent Ariel 2500 miles to fetch plant-dew from the *always stormy* Bermuda Islands (4).

Stratfordians maintain that Will Shaksper wrote *The Tempest* in 1611 since

they say its first presentation was before King James in that year. The Stratford man would surely have read Sylvester Jourdan's 1610 account of Bermuda's beautiful weather and therefore would not have called Bermuda "still-vexed," i.e., always stormy.

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**Perhaps all Oxfordians,  
as well as Stratfordians,  
should take a fresh look  
at Roe's appealing, logi-  
cally-coherent interpreta-  
tion...**

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If *The Tempest* was written in 1583-1584, as Eva Turner Clark believed (31), when the Bermuda Islands were thought to have continually tempestuous weather, de Vere would have been inexplicably wrong in suggesting those islands for Ariel to

collect dew from plants. On this basis alone, the fiery Phaeton group's interpretation falters and fails.

Richard Roe believes Shakespeare used the word "Bermoothes" to refer to Westminster's criminal area called the Bermudas. This theory creates no ambiguities in the two lines containing the word "Bermoothes," allows de Vere to have written *The Tempest* much earlier, and renders moot the illogical, self-serving Stratfordian shipwreck arguments that it was written after Oxford died.

Perhaps all Oxfordians, as well as Stratfordians, should take a fresh look at Roe's appealing, logically-coherent interpretation of the intriguing, and perhaps no longer enigmatic, lines of Ariel in *The Tempest*:

Thou call'dst me up at midnight to fetch dew  
From the still-vexed Bermoothes.  
(1.2.228)

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<sup>19</sup>McMullan, Ibid., 62.

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<sup>21</sup>McMullan, Ibid., 96

<sup>22</sup>Wright, Thomas. *Dictionary of Obsolete and Provincial English*, vol. 1, Henry G. Bohn, Convent Garden, London, 1967, 200.

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*(Heraldry, continued from p. 1)*

when *The English Secretary* ... was published, the Oxford arms ... appear to be drastically changed."<sup>3</sup>

2. "These were the ancient family arms that had remained unchanged for 16 generations."<sup>4</sup>

3. The bird seen in the crest position is emerging from a "double crown," and that this bird is shown in flames and is really a Phoenix.<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately, all three of these assertions are incorrect. The woodcut arms actually date from 1580. The Vere arms changed repeatedly over many generations, and the details of Oxford's 1580 arms have numerous documented precedents. There is abundant proof that Edward inherited these arms directly from his father, the 16th Earl of Oxford. Edward's crest features an eagle emerging from a crest coronet. This eagle appears on prior examples of Vere arms. The eagle is an authentic crest and heraldic symbol for de Vere. This final fact, as well as contradicting Ms. Burris' claims, has intriguing implications for the Shakespeare authorship debate.

Let us take these propositions one at a time. The conjecture that Oxford invented and presented "new" arms for 1586's *English Secretary* (allegedly revealing that was not really a de Vere) is simply wrong. Edward de Vere did not make a radical change to his family arms "between 1574 and 1586," or at any time. In fact, as mentioned, these woodcut arms actually first appeared six years earlier, gracing the inside pages of the 1580 publication, *Zelauto*, by Anthony Munday, dedicated to Edward de Vere.

One of the very first English novels, *Zelauto* is an acknowledged plot source for Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. Part III of *Zelauto* has specific parallels to *Merchant*. The *Zelauto* character Truculento is a frugal and meticulous usurer who, like Shylock, even resists wasting money on food. In *Zelauto*, the sought-after rich daughter is named Cornelia, while the hero, Zelauto, is the "good-guy" suitor (like Bassanio) and Truculento is one of the many suitors who fail in the

contest for Cornelia's hand. *Merchant's* gruesome bond story is analogous to the *Zelauto* plot, which also culminates in a trial scene.

Were these woodcut arms commissioned especially to appear as a frontispiece to the pages of *Zelauto*? Perhaps. *Zelauto* is densely illustrated with more than two dozen large, dramatic woodcuts. It was an expensive publication and was never reprinted. But it would be a mistake to assume that the story illustration woodcuts were created for the book. In fact, they weren't! The modern editor of *Zelauto*, Jack Stillinger, showed that the woodcuts originally appeared in Stephen Bateman's *The Travayled Pilgrim* (1569). The woodcuts belonged to stationer Henrie Denham who sold them (with *The Pilgrim*) to John Charlewood, the printer of *Zelauto*.<sup>6</sup>

### Basic Heraldic Terms and Concepts

A brief survey of heraldic terminology will furnish the reader with the vocabulary required to understand the history of the Vere arms. The basic design representing a single armigerous family name, seen on armor, standards, and seals is called a **coat**. Each individual unit of heraldic imagery seen in a coat (such as a green lion, or a silver star, etc.) is called a **charge**. The background color of a coat, present behind any charge, is the **field** of that coat. The **escutcheon** or **shield** contains at least one, but often many coats of honor. Heralds would often transcribe specimens of coat armor in a special visual shorthand called "**tricking**." To **blazon** is not to draw but to describe a shield, in precise heraldic language, using only words. Through the science of blazon, infinitely complex visual material is described in such a precise way that one can accurately reproduce full color arms with dozens of complex coats, based on the words of the blazon alone.

The earliest known examples of the Vere coat can be seen on the seals and tombs of the third and fourth Earls of Oxford. It is also possible, even probable, that the design was first used by one of the four successive Alberic de Veres, the progenitors of the line in England. However, only legends serve to fill the gap left by the incomplete historical record.

*Oxford's Heraldry, cont. from p. 1*

Because the tombs of the early Veres are lost, armorial evidence that might once have been visible is now missing. In legend, one of the early Alberics was at the siege of Antioch in the First Crusade in 1098, and earned the star in a battlefield miracle. Unfortunately, there is no direct evidence for this other than stories written down some 300 years too late to be considered reliable.

The simplest version we have of Vere arms is the shield of one coat, which shows

family and those coats become part of the his family arms. Thus, when Robert de Vere, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Oxford, married Isabel Bolbec in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Bolbec coat was the first coat eligible to be added to the Vere armory. On the shield of 21, Bolbec is the second coat. When Robert de Vere, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl, married Alice de Sanford, another heraldic coat was added. On the shield of 21, Sanford is the third coat. When John, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl, married Maud Badlesmere, several of her coats of honor were added (Badlesmere, #4, and Fitz-Barnard, #5). In those early centuries it was not customary

Robert, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Oxford. This earl, who lived at the time of King John, was one of the leaders of the Barons' revolt, also called "The Insurrection." He was present at the signing of Magna Carta at Runnymede. The next example is of Robert's son Hugh de Vere, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl. His seal shows the Vere standard on his battle armor and on the armoring of his horse. Next is the privy seal of John, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl. We can see that the custom of displaying supporters and crest with a shield was not yet in use.

In any complex achievement of arms (a shield with many coats), each coat usually



Figure One: Title Page, Woodcut Oxford Arms, and Dedication on Anthony Munday's *Zelauto* (1580).

a shield quartered red and gold. The precise blazon for the "Vere Standard" is: "Quarterly, gules and or, a mollet argent in the first quarter" (*Or* is the Latin word for gold, and the mollet is a five-pointed star). We may wonder how the Vere family acquired so many additional coats, culminating in a total of 21 by the time of John the 16<sup>th</sup> Earl. When a man of an armigerous-family marries a noblewoman who is an heiress-in-chief (lacking brothers) of her family name, with inherited property and unique heraldic honors in her dowry (due to the death of all eligible males in her line), those heraldic honors become attached to the husband's

to display complex achievements featuring every possible coat, so the arms extant from the early Earls of Oxford appear less complex than they might have been, by later custom.

Figure Two clearly illustrates the evolution of the Vere arms. This is only a small, representative sample. We see that the Vere arms changed continuously over the centuries with new marriages, alliances, and honors, presenting new design parameters, evolving with the science and art of British heraldry itself to become more complex and stylized. In the illustration we see first a modern rendering of the Vere standard coat. Next is the earliest example of this standard, from the tomb of

represents a family name. The first coat (the one in the top left corner) is almost always the male family surname — the name of the line's progenitor. Subsequent additions represent the wealth of grandmothers, family honors that came, not through conquest or purchase, but through marriage to heiresses. There is only one exception to this rule, the rare case of the **honorific title**.

The next item in our illustration provides a perfect example of this variation: The 9<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, Robert de Vere, was a favorite of King Richard II, who granted him the title of Duke of Ireland in 1386, with an augmentation to his arms with a new heraldic coat of honor: on a field



azure, three gold crowns.<sup>7</sup> Robert’s dukedom didn’t last long, and he never set foot in Ireland. In the arms displayed by the 9th Earl, the Duke of Ireland’s coat appears in the first and fourth quadrants and the Vere standard in the second and fourth. If the Vere family had continued to be “Dukes of Ireland,” their arms might have changed for all time. But that’s not what happened. After Richard II was deposed, Robert’s honors, earldom, and dukedom were taken away. He fled the country and died (as legend has it) in a close encounter with a wild boar. So the “three crowns” coat (originally the arms of St. Edmund the martyr, patron saint of East Anglia) appeared uniquely in the 9<sup>th</sup> Earl’s arms and was never used again by any Vere. But the coat has appeared, ever since, as the arms of Oxford University.

Another example of the slippery nature of “permanence” in the Vere arms can be seen in the next image. When the 12<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford married Elizabeth Howard, the Howard-family coat briefly entered Vere heraldry, then exited, never to return. The twelfth Earl’s son, John, bore Vere-Howard arms honoring both famous lines of his family (See figure 2:6). But the 13<sup>th</sup> Earl also had many other variations of arms due to his two marriages, first to Margaret Neville, then to Elizabeth Scrope. There were no children from these marriages, however, so the Earldom went to John, the son of the 13<sup>th</sup> Earl’s brother, George Vere. This John became the 14<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. He married Ann Howard. But they also had no children, and consequently that line of descent also dead-ended, at which point, another cousin, John, became the 15<sup>th</sup> Earl. Thus the unique coats displayed on the arms of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Earls were not picked up by any subsequent Earls of the lineage. A series of coats were dropped, including coats for Howard, Plaiz, Sutton, Walton, Montfichet, Monthermer, Fytton, and Ufford. Without the genealogical “rights” to these family arms, the new coats could not remain attached to the Vere shield. Although an authentic part of Vere heraldic history, they were not borne by the later earls.

Figure Two (7) portrays the unique seal of John, 13<sup>th</sup> Earl. The shield shows Vere/Howard. But here, for the first time, we see

*(Continued on page 18)*

De Vere coat  
[Quarterly, gules and or,  
with a molet argent in the first]



Tomb of Robert de Vere  
3rd Earl of Oxford



Hugh de Vere 4th Earl of Oxford  
Seal of 1623



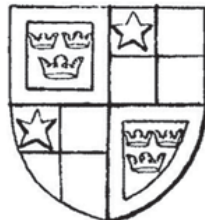
(#3)

Privy Seal of  
John de Vere 7th Earl of Oxford



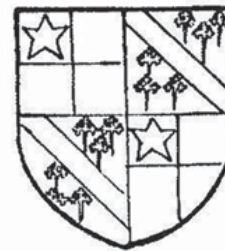
(#4)

Arms of Robert de Vere 9th Earl of Oxford  
as Duke of Ireland



(#5)

Arms of John de Vere 13th Earl of Oxford  
quartered with Howard coat



(#6)

Seal of John de Vere 13th Earl of Oxford



(#7)

Arms of John de Vere 15th Earl of Oxford  
as shown on his tomb.



(#8)

Figure Two: Vere Family Coats, Seals, and Arms, 3rd-15th Earl of Oxford.

two caleygreyhound supporters and the blue boar as crest. The final illustration shows the arms of John, 15th Earl of Oxford, on his tomb (2:8). The supporters are an eagle-with-angel's-face and a caleygreyhound, and the crest is the blue boar. The 15th earl was a Knight of the order of the Garter, so the belt of the Order encircles the shield. The shield is a marriage combination coat. On the left are eight Vere family coats and on the right the arms of Trussell. Note that the Trussell standard, featuring a saltire—a geometric figure that looks like a diamond with an X through it—seen at bottom right, is the final coat that entered the Vere arms. It appears as coat #21 on the full achievement of Edward de Vere.

Clearly the assertion that the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl broke with tradition and altered his family's "unchanging arms" is contradicted by several centuries of surviving evidence. Indeed, it is obvious from these examples that the Vere arms changed, evolved, and appeared differently in every decade in every century. The Vere arms developed from a simple design (a star on a two-color flag) in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, to variations—with many additions to the Vere "coat-closet" due to marriages and inherited honors. This in turn evolved through the centuries—with family coats and coats of honor coming and going along with changing alliances and the extinction of lines. Several peaks of complexity appear long before 1580: The first was with the 13<sup>th</sup> Earl, and the second was the full shield of 21 coats used by the 16<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup> Earls. Although there were some interesting marriages after the 15<sup>th</sup> Earl married Elizabeth Trussell, none of the new countesses were exclusive heirs to their family arms and thus the Vere coats were "complete" by about 1540. Despite this relative fixity of form, changes to the supporters—though limited by strict heraldic rules—continued even after that at the pleasure of individual earls.

### Oxford's 1580 Woodcut Arms-of-21

Figure Three shows the 1580 woodcut of Edward de Vere's full achievement of arms, as reproduced from *Zelauto*. Working from the bottom to the top, we

first encounter the motto *Vero Nihil Verius* displayed on scrollwork beneath the shield. The custom of adding a Latin family motto directly to the coat-of-arms was very new in England; two of the earliest examples, from the 1570s, are seen in the printed arms of newly created Lord Burghley -- *Cor Unum Via Una* -- as it appeared in John Bossewell's *Workes of Armorie* 1572, and on an earlier version of Oxford's woodcut arms that appears first in George Baker's book *Oleum Magistrale* (1574), an alchemical/medical book

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dedicated to the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl. Earlier Earls of Oxford did use mottoes of various sorts, but there is no evidence that they ever used the phrase *Vero Nihil Verius*. Like Roger Stritmatter<sup>20</sup>, I conclude that the motto was invented by Edward de Vere sometime shortly before 1574, when it first appeared in print in Baker's book.

Guarding the escutcheon are the eagle-angel at reader's left (heraldic right or **dexter**) and the blue boar (heraldic **sinister**) at the reader's right. Although the colors are not conveyed in a woodcut, abundant

painted examples and literary references prove the Vere boar was always blue. The eagle-angel, is often described, inaccurately, as a "harpy."

The shield contains 21 coats. The first coat is Vere and the last (lower right) is Trussell. This identifies the bearer as a direct descendant of the 15<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford: he was the only Vere who ever married a Trussell, and he married just the right one (sole heiress to her family fortune and heraldic honors), so the Trussell coat came into the Vere portfolio through that marriage. In the previous illustration we saw that the 15<sup>th</sup> Earl displayed Trussell on his tomb in the context of a marriage shield. The first persons entitled to display Trussell as the 21<sup>st</sup> coat were John de Vere, 16<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, and his three brothers. The 16<sup>th</sup> Earl's marriages, to a Neville and a Golding, did not bring in any new coats, as their families were thriving with males. So Edward de Vere's arms—at least the 21 coats—are identical to his father's.

Situated directly above the escutcheon portion is an **Earl's Coronet**, a standard item for any earl's arms. The next area is called the **Helm**, here occupied with a peer's **helmet**, with visor down, properly displayed. Emerging from behind the helmet is the **Mantling**, which represents the cloth cape that was actually attached behind helmets of war and tournament. Next, we are into the **Crest** area. Neatly on top of the helmet are a small arc—a striped interwoven ribbon that serves as padding—called the **Torse**. When crest animals or charges are displayed separately from a coat of arms, they are usually shown resting atop such a two-tone torse. The torse saves the helmet from getting scratched by the crest above. In Edward's arms, atop the torse is displayed a **Crest Coronet**, which is another standard heraldic item (but was reserved for peers in the 16<sup>th</sup> century), adding another layer of dignity to an earl's crest.

### The Crest Coronet

The two coronets seen on Edward's arms do not constitute a "double crown," as Burris asserts, nor was this use of two coronets a feature unique to Edward's arms, as she also claims. The display of arms of

Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, from the same year, 1580, shows exactly the same sequence of **earl's coronet, helmet, crest coronet, and crest**. Figure Four illustrates the crest atop the arms of Oxford's cousin, Philip Howard, compared with Oxford's. Philip's crest animal is a griffin, but in both cases the family's crest animal emerges from a crest coronet.

### Precedents for Edward's arms in the *St. Albans Manuscript*

We are fortunate to have a document that displays the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Earl's arms on the same page. The "St. Albans" genealogy of de Vere is a unique manuscript roll that was formerly in the possession of the modern Dukes of St. Albans. A portion of the roll is displayed on the endpapers of Ruth Miller's two volume *Shakespeare Identified-Oxfordian Vistas*, 1975. If you have that set, open up either volume to see this manuscript portion in full (though faded) color. This section shows one portion of a multi-generational Vere genealogy. Unfortunately, Miller repeated the same fragment four times (front and back in both volumes) and did not show the rest of the document.

I have been able to study a copy of the entire manuscript, an item about which there is not yet a single detailed scholarly account.<sup>8</sup> The St. Albans manuscript contains an example of the arms of the 16<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. The 21-coat shield is supported by two caleygrey-hounds and crested with a blue boar. The 16<sup>th</sup> Earl was the first Vere to bear these exact 21 coats, as well as two abbreviated versions (16 and 8 coats) that also conclude with Trussell, but show lesser numbers of the adjunct extinct-families' coats. However—and this very important point is often overlooked—Earl John's three brothers (Aubrey, Geoffrey and Robert) were also entitled to bear the same arms and the same coats. The other Vere brothers might have shown minor variations in their crests and supporters, an extra bristle here, an extra talon there—as such living-generation tweaks to supporters and crest were permissible. But adding coats, on a whim, was an absolute impossibility. Although we have no examples of arms of the brothers to prove this, it can be proven indirectly.



- \* Eagle Crest
- \* Mantling
- \* Crest Coronet
- \* Torse
- \* The Helm displaying Earl's Helmet
- \* Earl's Coronet
- \* Escutcheon or Shield displaying 21 coats from Vere (top left) to Trussell (bottom right)
- \* Supporters Eagle/Angel and Blue Boar
- \* Motto

Figure Three: Vere Arms-of-21 with eagle crest.

Geoffrey's son was Horatio Vere and we have a painting of him with arms of the same 21 coats! Edward de Vere's first cousin, Horatio de Vere, also a grandson on the 15<sup>th</sup> Earl, was entitled to these same 21 coats and displayed them.

### First certain example of Edward de Vere's 21-coat display

The 21 coats are also seen on the marriage shield honoring Edward's marriage to Anne Cecil, in December 1571, as shown on the St. Albans roll, featuring a coat-of-arms with a shield of many coats (split down the middle) topped with an Earl's coronet but sporting no crest nor supporters. This represents the arms of Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, as married to Anne Cecil, daughter of newly made Lord Burghley. This species of heraldic escutcheon is called a marriage shield. Technically, it is "Vere impaled

with Cecil." Marriage impalings can be either simple or complex. In the simple versions, only two coats are shown, the male's main family coat on the left and his bride's on the right. (Eleven examples of simple marriage impalings can be seen at the far right of the St. Albans MS as seen in the Miller endpapers.)

In the Vere-Cecil marriage shield seen here, all 21 Vere coats are compressed into the left hand side, while six Cecil-family coats are more comfortably displayed at right. The Vere coats are smaller only because 21 items have to fill the same amount of space as is allotted to the six coats on the right. Edward had inherited 21 family coats (many for the 16<sup>th</sup> century) because his family had been collecting coats over 17 generations. On the other hand, Cecil's arms were so new the paint was still wet. Cecil coats only appear in Vere arms on these special marriage shields (of both Edward, and his son, Henry, who

(Continued on page 20)



Edward de Vere 1580



Earl of Arundel 1580

**Figure Four: Crest and the Crest-Coronet of the Earl of Oxford compared to the Earl of Arundel.**

married a Cecil, too).<sup>8</sup> This roll was sold to Queen Elizabeth II in the 1970s. It is now with the Queen's private collection, and is not listed in any of the catalogues available to researchers.

We know with certainty that this marriage shield displays Edward and Anne because their names are written in the circles at the left of the escutcheon. Just to the left of the shield's top row is Edward's circle. It says: "Edward Veer Earle of Oxenford Viscount Bulbeck Baron Sanford, Lord Badlesmere and Great Chamberlaine of England." Below this is a circle for Anne Cecil: "Anne Countess of Oxenford daughter of Wm Sissell Knight Lord Burghley High Treasurer of England Knight of the Garter." It is nice to have the clear identification.

The wording brings out an anomaly that highlights the problem of precisely dating this portion of the St. Albans MS. William Cecil was "created" and acceded to the title of Lord Burghley on February 25, 1571. But the date of his election to the Garter was on April 27, 1572, and he was not "installed" as KG until June 18, 1572.

As Lord Burghley was not a Knight of the Garter before June 18, 1572, the caption for Anne had to be written after that date.

Also, we see the first example of the newly-created Cecil arms in 1572. John Bossewell's 1572 *Workes of Armourie* sports the first public image of Cecil arms. They show him already as a Knight of the Garter. We can confirm this, because Burghley became Lord Treasurer on July 15, 1572, according to his diary entry, the sole record of the date. Conyers Read makes a rare admission that there is something funny going on because there is no mention in the Acts of the Privy Council of Burghley's rise to the most powerful post of Lord Treasurer. All of a sudden he was just there. Who was keeping records? Conveniently, Burghley's friend Thomas Smith had become Principal Secretary on June 24, 1572. So this pushes the earliest "honest" date for the Anne caption to sometime after July 15, 1572.

Either the whole roll was made after July 1572, or a pre-existing roll was revised then. We must conclude that at least the Vere-Cecil marriage portion of the MS dates from a time after Burghley was made KG and Treasurer.<sup>9</sup>

#### Precedents for the Vere Eagle Crest

In the same section of the St. Albans MS we can also see that at least one version of Vere arms used an eagle crest prior to Edward's woodcut version of 1580. In this example we also see that the supporters (the creatures on the sides of the shield) are allowed to change from generation to generation. In this abbreviated version, with 16 coats displayed, there is an eagle crest and one Caleygreyhound and one eagle-angel as supporters. This shield of 16 coats is not from an earlier generation, just a short-hand achievement with the more obscure coats left off. The final coat is Trussell. Given the context, this representation can only be that of either the 16<sup>th</sup> or the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl. Edward de Vere, however, is not known to have used anything but a boar and eagle-angel as supporters. He never seemed to use the caleygreyhound. While the 13<sup>th</sup> Earl left to his descendants a treasure of chattels with caleygreyhound ornamentation, the chattels list of "stuff" inherited by Edward de Vere (which does include a tapestry with a hunting scene and greyhounds) makes no mention of caleygreyhound devices.

If we accept that this roll may have been constructed in part to flatter young Edward de Vere at the time of his marriage through a display of his ancestry, then it is possible that the two large displays of arms were suggestions of acceptable arms for young Oxford to use.

Let's refocus on the two questions that are central to this discussion:

1.) What is the bird shown in the crest of the woodcut arms (1580) displayed by Earl Edward? Is it an eagle, a falcon, or something more exotic, as Burris claims, like a phoenix?

2.) Where did the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl get this bird? Did he make it up? Is there a precedent?

The St. Albans MS helps answer both questions. Yes, there was indeed a fine-feathered precedent, a bird that under magnification looks very much like an heraldic eagle but does not resemble a phoenix (figure Five). There are no flames or nest.

If the eagle-crested arms-of-16 (bottom of St. Albans) represent the 16<sup>th</sup> Earl, then we can answer one question efficiently. Edward got the bird crest from his father. If the eagle-crested arms-of-16 are really the arms of the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl — as provided to him by the heralds, circa 1572 — then we have to shift the question to: Where did the heralds get the Vere bird? Either way, Edward did not “make up” the eagle crest. He either got it directly from his father, or the heralds had a precedent to suggest an eagle as an alternate Vere crest. There are two ways to approach the problem of precedent, logical and empirical. There are definite reasons — from heraldic logic and convention — that allow the eagle crest for the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. But unimpeachable sources also identify the eagle as a standalone symbol favored by previous Vere Earls of Oxford. On just this one small section of the St. Albans MS we have all the precedents for Edward's later arms, as detailed and preserved by authentic heralds but not by woodcut artisans.

We have seen that Oxford's ancestors made continuous variations to their arms over the centuries, though always within the rules of heraldry. Successive Vere earls also enjoyed the right to adopt variations in their use of supporters and crests. Prior to Edward the most frequently seen

supporter was the calegreyhound, and the most frequent crest was the blue boar. We have seen, in the St Albans MS, another display of a Vere achievement of arms that sports an eagle crest. Oxford's use of the eagle crest in his 1580 woodcut was definitely not new, but a revival of an earlier use.

Burris was therefore not only mistaken about the date of the woodcut arms (she

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said 1586)<sup>10</sup> but was also unaware of the prior use of an eagle crest on Vere arms.

This led to her speculation that the bird was invented or introduced by the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl — and further, that it was really a phoenix, not an eagle. According to Burris, Edward was allegedly declaring, through this “innovation,” that he was really the son of the two “Phoenix” parents, Admiral Seymour and Queen Elizabeth. Not knowing what a crest coronet looks like, nor how it functions, Burris asserted that the upper coronet was a *unique* artistic rendering designed to look like flames and, further, misidentified the bird as a phoenix. Her supposition hinged on her misidentification of the crest coronet as a crown with flames.<sup>11</sup>

Figure Four shows that those are not flames, they are the “leaves” of the crest coronet; nor does the flowing mantling cloth represent flames. No flames, no phoenix. Since the bird is not a phoenix, the secret bloodline “evidence” evaporates. The St. Albans eagle crest also is also flameless.<sup>12</sup>

The bird seen on the Vere arms, in both examples, strongly resembles an heraldic eagle, as drawn in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Abundant visual evidence could be used to illustrate that the eagle is the most likely identity of the bird shown in our two relevant examples of Vere arms. But “looking like” is not proof. Fortunately, there is, in addition to visual classification, both documentary evidence of Vere eagles, and an heraldic explanation of why the eagle is an allowable crest.

Visually, the bird depicted in Figure Three appears to be one of the raptors, a hunting bird. In heraldry there are really only two in this category, hawks/falcons and eagles.<sup>13</sup>

Recall that the 1590s “Shakespeare arms” sport a falcon crest... a falcon holding a spear. As the lion is king of beasts, the eagle is the king of the birds. But although heraldic eagles in some other European countries were accordingly reserved for royalty, in England aristocrats were allowed to sport them. So it is not surprising that the Vere Earls of Oxford made use of an eagle as a symbol or a crest.

Based on the evidence so far, the eagle crest can be linked to the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> Earls of Oxford. Further evidence traces the crest further back in the line. John de Vere, 13<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, left a detailed will, dated April 10, 1509, and penned by the Earl himself. He died in 1513. The inventory is by Thomas Mercer, assistant to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and is dated May 20, 1513. The will makes definite reference to the heraldic eagle: “Item ... **myne Egle of gold** displayed and garnished.” In the inventory is found a more detailed description of “myne eagle of gold...”: “Item: A Splayed Egle of gold with an angell face with six diamonds and six pearls with four rubies valued at 30 pounds.”<sup>14</sup>

(Continued on page 22)

Many other inventoried items are decorated with the eagle or the eagle with an angel's face. An example from the will cites "my cup of gold with splayde eagles." In the inventory, the same item is described: "A cup of gold with a cover pounsed with eagles with angel's faces and molets with a balas in the top." (Balas is probably "balance" or "ballast.") Even some ewery objects have this decoration: "Itm: a bason of sylver all playn the swags gilt and an eagle wt an angells face in the bottom."<sup>15</sup>

So the so-called Vere "harpy" supporter, not visually depicted in heraldry until the arms of John the 15<sup>th</sup> Earl, is nonetheless transparently described in the will of the 13<sup>th</sup> Earl as plain as can be: "an eagle with an angel face." It is not a harpy. This is confirmed by the principles of heraldry. In heraldry there is often a direct symbolic association between supporter creatures and the creature or charge used on the crest. Therefore, by standard rules of heraldry, on arms with an eagle-angel as supporter, an eagle crest is an appropriate complement. In the arms seen on the St. Albans roll, the lower display, with the eagle crest, has an eagle-angel supporter, with a calegreyhound on the other side.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Earl apparently chose the eagle for his heraldic crest because it is the symbol of Saint John the Evangelist. There are several mentions of St. John-decorated items in his will and inventory. In Christian iconography, the Four Evangelists were related to four creatures: Mark=(winged) Lion; Luke=(winged) Bull; Matthew=man or winged-man (angel); John=(winged) Eagle. Since an eagle already has wings, the St. John eagle sometimes was shown with a human or angelic face. Thus the Vere symbol used by the 13<sup>th</sup> Earl can be seen as a symbol of John the Evangelist. Extant accounts from contemporary documents never used the word "harpy" in describing his heraldic devices. This attribution was given only in retrospect and the "explanation" offered<sup>16</sup> is that the 13th Earl was a mariner and the harpy is a mariner's symbol. It appears that the misunderstanding may have already been current in Shakespeare's, lifetime, for we find the following intriguing passage in *Pericles*:

CLEON. Thou art like the harpy,  
Which, to betray, dost, with thine  
angel's face,/Seize with thine eagle's  
talons. (4.3.54-56)

"Shakespeare" apparently knew the real pedigrees and called the harpy a counterfeit of the eagle/angel. And consider this passage, from *I Henry VI*, which associates the Eagle with the star of Venus.

CHARLES.

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**De Vere's Eagle crest  
allows us to reinterpret  
Spenser's famous (but  
cryptic) Shakespearean  
allusion to "Aetion" as a  
reference to the Earl of  
Oxford, and not to the  
Stratford man, Drayton  
or the Earl of Derby.**

---

Was Mahomet inspired with a dove?  
Thou with an eagle art inspired then.  
Helen, the mother of great Constantine,  
Nor yet Saint Philip's daughters were  
like thee.  
Bright star of Venus, fall'n down on the  
earth,  
How may I reverently worship thee  
enough?  
(1.2.143-48)

Once the eagle had been introduced into the heraldry of the Vere Earls of Oxford by (apparently) the 13<sup>th</sup> Earl, it continued to be used by his direct descendents. John de Vere, 15<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, displayed an eagle on his tomb in a very commanding position (Figure Six). Above John and Countess Oxford (Elizabeth Trussell), you can clearly see a gleaming bird. I have searched every source for a definitive identification of this bird. Frederic Chancellor's *The Ancient Sepulchral*

*Monuments of Essex* (1890) contains such a description:

In the remaining compartment of the design are the kneeling figures of the Earl and his countess, under a canopy formed of curtains hanging from a domestic ornament and drawn aside by two small angels. Immediately under this dome is an eagle, with wings displayed and a glory round the head; being the evangelistic symbol for St. John.<sup>17</sup>

Next, the 16th Earl also put the eagle on his crest (St Albans MS), and so it was that eventually Edward, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl, sported a full achievement of arms with an eagle crest in his woodcut arms of 1580. This is called a chain of custody or provenance, and it indisputably controverts Burris' assertion that Earl Edward's crest is a Phoenix invented by him within his own lifetime.

### Conclusion

The prominence of the eagle crest in the heraldic iconography of the Earls of Oxford is not merely an exercise in antiquarian speculation. Nor is its significance limited to disproving unwarranted speculations about heraldic phoenixes. Most significantly, it allows us to reinterpret Spenser's famous (but cryptic) Shakespearean allusion to "Aetion" as a reference to the Earl of Oxford, and not to the Stratford man, Drayton or the Earl of Derby.

Edmund Spenser's poem *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* (1594) contains a passage alluding to contemporary writers and poets, and some are very easy to identify. The publication was dedicated to Sir Walter Raleigh, so it was easy for virtually all scholars to interpret Spenser's, "shepherd of the Ocean" as Raleigh; "Astrofell" is clearly Philip Sidney, etc. Spenser judges Astrofell the best, but places "Aetion" as an equal or near-equal:

And here, though last not least is Aetion,  
A gentler shepherd may nowhere be found:  
Whose Muse, full of high thoughts  
invention,



Figure Five: Comparison of Vere Eagle shield from *Zelauto* with close-up of 1571 St. Albans shield showing Eagle crest.

Doth, like himselfe, heroically sound.  
(444-448)

There are no known contemporary interpretations or commentaries regarding Spenser's remark. It was left to the great Edmund Malone, in the second volume of his study of Shakespeare<sup>18</sup> to first suggest that Aetion was a reference to William Shakespeare, a name that had just burst upon the poetry scene in 1593 and 1594 with *Venus & Adonis* and *Rape of Lucrece*. Malone's reasoning was that Aetion had to be a top poet—and one whose name had a "heroical sound." To Malone, "Shake-Spear" was the heroic name, both by virtue of the implied military spear shaking, and perhaps, by implication, Athene/Minerva, the heroic Spear-Shaker. Over the subsequent centuries, Malone's identification of Aetion=Shakespeare was endorsed and repeated by J. M. Robertson, Sidney Lee, and W. J. Rolfe.

In modern editions of Spenser, the editors usually gloss that Aetion is Drayton, with no further discussion.<sup>19</sup> C. C. Stopes insisted that Aetion was Thomas Edwards. Then at the turn of the last century, Abel Le Franc postulated that W. Stanley, 6th Earl of Derby, was Aetion, and the Derby movement made a great deal about this, making it one of their central "proofs." It was based on the Stanley/Derby arms having a family crest that shows an eagle bent over, snatching a baby. It is not a

heroic eagle. Still, by the 1990s this speculation had hardened into a solid myth. J. Michell boldly claimed in 1996 that "No other noble family had an eagle crest. It was the unique badge of the Stanleys..."<sup>20</sup> Michell was incorrect; the Derbyites are searching in the wrong aerie.

"Aetion" is Greek for eagle. The eagle was associated with the highest level of power, Zeus/Jupiter. Spenser implies that Aetion's muse is located on high, and his "high thoughts invention" has a heroic sound. Pallas Athene was born of Zeus's brain (a "high thought's invention"). The de Vere, Earl of Oxford, eagle is always found in the highest position, at the crest. We might interpret Spenser's "heroic" epithet also as a nod to the many "Fighting Veres" who were *bona fide* heroes of England, many times over, and companions to Kings. Yet the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford was not a warrior in the trenches, but a warrior of wit, the gentlest shepherd, by happenstance the most noble (by blood) of the noble writers. Malone and his followers, blissfully unaware of the authorship problems to come, felt no danger in connecting Aetion to Shakespeare, the author of the two epic poems. Establishing the facts about the eagle crest of the de Veres is the first step in reclaiming Aetion's reputation.

Perhaps Spenser also means something specific here by the word "Muse." Under the usual meaning, Spenser is saying that

the poet Aetion's Muse (a deity or other divine source of inspiration) has a special name—a name that like his own, sounds heroic. This line of reasoning suggests that the poet Shakespeare is Aetion and his Muse is Athene (or possibly her father Zeus)—with an aggressive and warlike name. The subtler interpretation is that the highly-placed poet Aetion has created an amusement, his conceit, born of his own brain as a "high thought's invention." This amusing invention (the name and *persona* of Shake-speare) has a heroic sound, just like his own name, de Vere.

There are dozens of allusive and direct references to heraldry throughout the Shakespeare canon. *Merry Wives* begins with a detailed discussion of heraldry, and concludes with a blessing of the heraldic displays of the "installed" members of the Order of the Garter at Windsor. No less than four of Oxford's ancestors were Knights of the Garter the 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Earls); all four have permanent heraldic displays at Windsor Chapel.

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### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The following books displayed Oxford's arms-of-21 woodcut: *Zelauto*, Munday, 1580; *The English Secretary*, Daye, 1586; *Palmerin d'Oliva, Part 1*, Munday, 1588; *The English Secretary* (Revised), Daye, 1599.

<sup>2</sup> Burris, B., "Oxford's new coat of arms in 1586. If heraldry is a statement about ancestry, what is de Vere saying?" *Shakespeare Matters* (Summer 2003).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, column two.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, column two.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 21, columns 2-3; 22, columns 1-3.

<sup>6</sup> Stillinger, Jack, ed., Munday, Anthony, *Zelauto: The fontaine of fame*, 1580, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1963.

<sup>7</sup> Fox-Davies, A.C., *A Complete Guide to Heraldry*, 1969, London: Wilson, 462. Also Cockayne, G.E., *The Complete*

(Continued on page 24)



Figure six: Engraved Tomb of John, 15th Earl of Oxford, and his wife Elizabeth Trussell, showing heraldic eagle emblem.

*Peerage*, Volume X, London, The St. Catherine Press, 1945:

On 12 Oct. 1385 the King granted to the Earl of Oxford, on whom he intended shortly to confer the title of Marquess of Dublin, the reversion of certain estates held for life by James de Audley, to hold without rent until he had conquered Ireland and could hold it peacefully [Cal. Patent Rolls, 1385-89, p. 115; cf. pp 112-113] and on 1 Dec. 1385 in full parliament he created Vere Marquess of Dublin for life, granting him the territory and lordship of Ireland [Rolls of Parl. vol iii pp 209-210] with quasi-regal powers.

On 23 Mar. 1385/6 the ransom of John of Blois, 30,000 marks, was assigned to Vere, in order to provide him with 500 men-at-arms and 1,000 archers for 2 years and on 13 Oct. 1386, the grant of the Marquessate being revoked, he was created Duke of Ireland for life, and was given Ireland with its adjacent islands and all other appurtenances on his liege homage only (228-229).

<sup>7a</sup>Stritmatter, Roger, *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible: Providential Discovery, Literary Reasoning, and Historical Consequence*. Feb. 2001 PhD Dissertation. University of Massachusetts at Amherst (3rd Printing, June 2003), 197. Stritmatter suggests that the motto was derived from Martial 7.76: "Dic verum mihi, Marc....nil est quot magis audiam libenter....vero verius ergo quid sit audi: verum, Gallice, non libenter audis"/"Tell me the truth, you always say to me, Marcus: there is nothing that I would prefer to hear, Very well, I shall tell you what is truer than truth: that truth, Gallicus, that you do not wish to hear."

<sup>8</sup> Here is the caption given by Ruth Miller: "By permission of his Grace, the Duke of St. Albans from a MS in his possession prepared for the wedding of the Earl of Oxford." The roll was sold to Queen Elizabeth II in the 1970s. It is now with the Queen's private collection, and is not listed in any of the catalogues available to researchers.

<sup>9</sup> See Read, Conyers, *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth*, 1960, New York: Knopf, p. 82 and note, p. 553.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>11</sup>Scott-Giles, C.W. and Brooke-Little, J.P., editors/revisors of *Boutell's Heraldry*, London and NY, Frederick Warnes & Co. 1950: "The crest-coronet was originally an alternative to the torse, and they were seldom borne together, but instances of both in the same crest do occur in ancient and modern heraldry, and if the blazon specifies that the coronet is on a torse, both should be shown....Early examples take various floral and foliated forms. The modern [crest coronet] has four strawberry leaves, three being visible in the flat" (155-155).

Oxford's 1580 crest shows the crest coronet atop a torse in a foliated form. The Earl of Arundel's 1580 crest has a crest coronet that is closer to the modern version. We must take into account the fact that Arundel's arms were pennoned and painted, allowing detail, while the Oxford crest is the result of a crude woodcut — quite literally carved into a wood block.

<sup>12</sup> What does a real heraldic Phoenix look like? See the images at <http://www.elizabethanauthors.com/research/ornithology1.html>

Every *bona fide* example of a phoenix in heraldry shows a bird fully engulfed in flames. Abundant obvious flames are the signifier. I have also shown the phoenix from Paladin's 16th century book of emblems. There, the phoenix is fully a flambe': "Well drawn, an eagle displayed as well as being a pleasing composition, conveys an impression of the terrifying aspect of the great bird ... The word 'displayed' is the exclusive property of birds of prey, but the position itself may be adopted by other birds—the gentle dove included—who are then said to be disclosed. The term 'an eagle with wings displayed' ... refers to an altogether different pose. Thus blazoned he is not descending—not even on the wing—but perched and lifting his wings in anticipation of flight; an attitude which, even assumed by other birds, is described as rising or rizant."



<sup>13</sup> Ibid., *Boutells Heraldry*: “Birds in many kinds are found in heraldry, some being usually represented in stylized form while others are depicted according to nature” (74-76). Cf Franklyn, Julian, *Shield and Crest, An Account of the Art and Science of Heraldry*, London, Macgibbon & Kee, 1967: “The EAGLE, sometimes called erne, holds the predominant position among birds in heraldry that the lion has among beasts...” “In arms it is normally displayed...” “Displayed: when the body is affronde with the head turned (usually to the dexter) and wings and legs spread out on each side, the wing tips upwards, and displayed, wings inverted, when in the same position with the tips of the wings downwards” (112).

What does a real Heraldic Eagle look like? See image at:

<http://www.elizabethanauthors.com/research/ornithology2.html>

Here we see the wide variety of eagles seen in modern heraldry. Each display has a specific name and a rigorous compositional template. Please note that these are modern renderings, and modern heraldic artisans have done a better job at portraying the almost flat-headed eagle that conveys the essence of the bird better than the 16th century naturalists and heralds could manage. We see that the two versions we have of Vere eagle crests show “Eagle rising, wings displayed and inverted” and “Eagle rising, wings elevated and displayed.”

<sup>14</sup> St. John Hope, Sir William, “The last testament and inventory of John de Veer, thirteenth Earl of Oxford,” *Archaeologia* 1915, second series, vol. 16, pp 275-347: “Myn eagle of golde displayed and garnished” (310); “Item: a splayde Egle of gold with an angell face” (326).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 333.

<sup>16</sup> Dennys, Rodney, *The Heraldic Imagination*. New York, Clarkson N. Potter, 1975: “One of the most illustrious of all English families, that of de Vere, Earls of Oxford, were using during the Wars of the Roses, if not earlier, a creature which is usually blazoned as a Harpy, but which they themselves evidently did not appear

to regard as such” (125-128). Regarding the 13th Earl, Dennys writes, “In his will (proved P.C.C. 20 May 1513) he bequeathed a jewel to Our Lady of Walsingham, which is described in the inventory as ‘a splayed Egle of gold wt an angell face wt vj dymoundes and xj perles wt iiij rubies valued at pounds 30. It may, however, have been intended for a Siren (often then equated with the Harpy), which is related to the Mermaid, thus alluding to his naval career.” This is speculation on Dennys’ part. In a bizarre omission, Dennys completely forgets to mention that Harpies are featured in a very early mariner’s story, the tale of Jason and the Argonauts. In a famous misadventure, Phineas is tormented by Harpies (Greek for “snatchers”) who steal his food. In *The Tempest* (3.3.53-84), Ariel appears as an Argonaut-style harpy, snatching food from the mariners.

<sup>17</sup> Chancellor, Frederic, *The Ancient Sepulchral Monuments of Essex*, London, Chelmsford, 1890, p. 10. Edward de Vere’s grandfather’s expensive tomb, made of Touchstone, with white image etched in black stone, shows John de Vere and Elizabeth Trussell under a canopy held by angels and under the blessing of a glowing eagle.

<sup>18</sup> (1821. 226 ff.) Full reference needed.

<sup>19</sup> Jones, H.S.V., *A Spenser Handbook*, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1930 (325).

<sup>20</sup> Michell, John, *Who Wrote Shakespeare*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1996 (192-195).

(*Fear and Loathing concluded from p. 5*)

acknowledged apostates to the Icon-on-Stratford. But that he was starting to have his doubts about the official story seems difficult to deny.

Barton, however, is still determined to save the icon that tempted Schoenbaum to the brink of despair, and Shapiro is the new savior of the cult. The impression that she has singled out Shapiro’s biography for reasons that cannot survive close inspection is confirmed when the reader turns to her remarks on David Ellis’ post-Stratfordian critique of the Shakespeare

biographical genre, *That Man Shakespeare: Icon of Modern Culture*. Barton identifies six basic strategies of bardography, analyzed in Ellis’ book, that serve to save orthodox biographers from contemplating Schoenbaum’s vertiginous abyss: 1) “the argument from absence”; 2) the use of “weasel words” to supply presence not given in the historical record (“perhaps,” “could have,” “probably,” etc.); 3) using the plays to reveal the life; 4) using the sonnets to reveal the life; 5) “shifting the burden onto historical circumstances that apparently elucidate the nature of private existence”; 6) and “the argument from proximity, or joining the dots.”

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**All historians and competent biographers must engage in a process of “connecting the dots,” since historical documents themselves rarely contain a narrative but only, at best, the seeds of one.**

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Readers may differ on their assessment of the utility of these various strategies: A growing sector of the American and English intelligentsia, for example, believes that in the case of Shakespeare the “argument from absence” – not to mention the internal contradictions of a Shakespearean industry in denial – establishes a *prima facie* case for the anti-Stratfordian position; some persons (usually not Shakespearean professionals) even suppose that the plays and sonnets actually *do* reveal a life; and all historians and competent biographers must engage in a process of “connecting the dots,” since historical documents themselves rarely contain a narrative but only, at best, the seeds of one.

Barton acknowledges that all the biographies in her review, “with the exception of Shapiro’s,” make ample use of Ellis’ expedients. Something is terribly wrong here. Barton has praised Shapiro’s

insight into the man and his work by summarizing a passage that retails the epic fate of the timbers of the Shoreditch theatre, including juicy bits like “just what kind of carpentry and weather conditions were required in reusing them for the Globe.” How can anyone, even a professional Shakespearean, miss the irony? Not only does the example fail to substantiate the rhetorical sobriety of Shapiro’s biography; it actually illustrates a classic instance of Ellis’ fifth principle, the substitution of historical circumstances that supposedly “elucidate the nature of private existence” but in reality are nothing more than form of academic hocus-pocus.

One wonders if Samuel Schoenbaum, who did not suffer fools gladly, would be impressed by the progress of his discipline. But take heart: Every member of the SAA now knows that the Earl of Oxford graduated from Oxford University at...six years of age. The paradigm may not be shifting, but it sure is creaking.

*The above article is, of course, a work of fiction. We kid you not. Would we lie to you? -Ed*

*(Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference, continued from page. 1)*

from England. Leahy spoke on “The Shakespeare Authorship Question – A Suitable Subject for Academia?” In this context, Dr. Leahy announced a new program for his English Department leading to a Master’s Degree in Authorship Studies. The program, “Shakespearean Authorship and Shakespeare in Collaboration,” the first of its kind in the world, will focus on meta-studies in the authorship question itself as well as the social and political processes at work in the controversy. The first major administrative hurdle in approving the course has been cleared and the program is scheduled to start in September 2007.

As a preface to the new program, Dr. Leahy, a staunch Stratfordian up to only a year ago but now an avowed skeptic of the Stratford mythos, is preparing a year three course module: “Shakespeare: the Return of the Author,” starting in September 2006.

The program will develop the observation made by Leahy in his Concordia lecture that, with the publication of Greenblatt’s *Will in the World*, mainstream Shakespearean scholarship has turned the corner away from anti-author, deconstructionist theory, back into traditional biographical modes of research and analysis. Dr. Leahy also announced that a funding bid has been submitted to the Arts and Humanities Research Council of the UK that, if successful, will provide £30,000 over two years. The funds were requested in order to set up seminars and discussions with interested parties, culminating in a major international conference, the publication of an edited

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collection of articles, and the launch of a journal dealing specifically with the authorship question. In his talk, Dr. Leahy claimed that the authorship question is a suitable subject for academia, indeed, it is an idea whose time has come.

According to Dr. Leahy, the authorship question gives rise to a conflict in which two sides are clearly demarcated. On one side are non-academics who believe that the authorship question is a legitimate issue for debate. On the other is the academic establishment that regards it as illegitimate. Dr. Leahy discussed the fact that so many academics are resistant to the authorship question and do not take the subject seriously because of the vested

interest they have in Stratfordian orthodoxy. “Only the official players can play,” he asserted. The issue, according to Dr. Leahy, is not methodology but a question of economic and institutional power.

The conference keynote speaker, Professor Rima Greenhill, Ph.D., Coordinator of the Russian Language Program at Stanford University, spoke about English-Russian relations in the period 1500-1603 and its relevance to the authorship question. She noted that *Love’s Labours Lost* has baffled analysts because of its linguistic complexity, topical allusions, and hidden historical references. The play, according to Dr. Greenhill, was an in-house satire designed for Elizabeth’s court, and its real-life historical events could have been understood only by those close to the seat of power. She cited many instances of the play’s intimate connections to events in Russian-English relations, specifically with the reign of Ivan Grozny (Ivan the Terrible), the first Russian Tsar.

According to Dr. Greenhill, the Russians fascinated Shakespeare, as they did Elizabethans in general, and this fascination is reflected in the play’s treatment of Ivan. Sometimes he is mocked, in other instances treated with deference. For instance, Dr. Greenhill pointed out that Ivan, who had granted a treaty allowing English merchants to trade with Russia without the imposition of duties and taxes, sent a messenger to England to request the hand of Queen Elizabeth I in marriage, a proposal that was greeted with much consternation by the Queen. To keep Ivan’s interest piqued and save face, Elizabeth sent Robert Jacobs, doctor of Lady Mary Hastings, to Moscow to propose a marriage between Ivan and Hastings.

Dr. Greenhill observed that the author had to be well versed in English-Russian relations and must have had access to unpublished accounts and intimate diplomatic details. Top-secret information contained in the play, concerning instructions not to speak about the marriage proposal, would have been known only to a select few and, according to Dr. Greenhill, would not have been available to the man from Stratford. The

play in fact draws upon obscure details of the travels of Jerome Horsey, an envoy of the English court, including his carrying Ivan's letter to the Queen, and Ivan's mercury treatment, accounts not published in Shakespeare's lifetime. Indeed many details were not revealed even in the eventual publication and must have come to the author directly from Jerome Horsey himself.

The play was performed at a critical point in the history of English-Russian relations and is rich in allusions that point to events of the years 1582-1584, the time of Ivan's courting Lady Mary Hastings through his ambassador Grigorij Andreevich Pisemsky. Dr. Greenhill cited references in the play which have a historical context. In Act 3 Costard, Moth, and Armado talk about "a fat l'envoy - ay, thats a fat goose. ....broken in a shin....the goose that you bought...And he ended the market" (3.1.104). This linguistic riddle relates to a story that Ivan punished one of his secretaries for hiding stolen money in a goose. The execution took place in a market, where one of Ivan's executioners cut off the secretary's legs at the shin, then his arms above the elbows and, finally, chopped off his head, to make it resemble the procedure of dressing a goose.

In another reference, Moth says to Armado in the same scene, "A message well sympathized - a horse to be ambassador for an ass" (3.1.51). According to Dr. Greenhill, the words refer to Horsey, who carried messages to Ivan the Terrible -- and the ass refers to Ivan! Armado, normally thought of as symbolizing King Phillip II of Spain, is, according to Dr. Greenhill, a representation of Ivan, an object of mockery who like his historical exemplar is long-winded, verbose, and secretive. Costard, the court jester, represents Ivan's son whom he had killed. The long word "honorificabilitudinitatibus" (5.1.41), thought to be a code for Sir Francis Bacon, was in fact poking fun at Ivan, a man who fancied long titles.

Other highlights of the four-day proceedings included two debates. One featured a supporter of Sir Henry Neville as Shakespeare and an Oxford supporter discussing the source material for *The*

*Tempest*, and the other provided a forum to discuss four different points of view about the purpose of *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. The first debate pitted Professor William Rubinstein, Ph.D., Professor of History at the University of Wales - Aberystwyth, and author Lynne Kositsky, M.A., of Toronto, Canada on the subject of the authority of the Strachey letter in dating *The Tempest*. Dr. Rubinstein defended the traditional dating and sourcing while Ms. Kositsky challenged the conventional view. Each debater spoke for one half-hour, then posed questions to the other for forty-five minutes and the debate concluded with fifteen-

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minute closing statements and audience questions from the audience.

Dr. Rubinstein, in his opening remarks, stated his belief in the conventional dating and asserted that the dating of the plays is not based upon events in Shakespeare's life but on internal datable references from the plays including topical allusions and colloquialisms. The chronology has "integrity, arrived at by independent means," and Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, "does not fit as a piece of the puzzle." Rubinstein contended that *The Tempest* is the tip of an iceberg and the dates of many late plays of Shakespeare refer to events that occurred after 1604, the year of Oxford's death, citing specific examples from *Macbeth*, *Coriolanus*, *King Lear*, *Measure for Measure*, and his last play, *Cardenio*, which, according to Dr.

Rubinstein, derives from *Don Quixote*, written in 1612.

Turning at last to the Strachey letter as a source for *The Tempest*, Dr. Rubinstein declared that Strachey was Secretary of the London Virginia Company and was responsible for reporting on the events surrounding the wreck of the *Sea Venture* in Bermuda in 1609. Although the Strachey Letter was not published until 1625, Rubinstein asserted that it was circulated to Sir Henry Neville, whom he believes to be the true author of the Shakespeare canon. Rubinstein cited the website of David Kathman as providing "irrefutable" evidence of this proposition, including basic details and verbal parallels to *The Tempest*. He said that the appearance of such terminology as "hoodwinked men," "bear up," and "boske" in both Strachey and Shakespeare cannot be coincidences.

Ms. Kositsky, an award-winning author and poet and former President of the Shakespeare Fellowship, gave a convincing rebuttal to the orthodox view that the 1609 Bermuda shipwreck literature (*A Discovery of the Bermudas* [1610], by Sylvester Jourdain, *True Declaration of the Colonie of Virginia* [1610], and William Strachey's *A True Repertory of the Wracke and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates upon and from the Islands of the Bermudas* [1625]) were the sources used in *The Tempest*. Ms. Kositsky began by declaring that "there is no evidence for anything [Dr. Rubinstein] has said." She stated that the authorities used by Rubinstein (Malone, Furness, and Gayley) do not even agree with each other on many critical points.

According to Ms. Kositsky, in order to accept Dr. Rubinstein's theory one must believe the following:

- ◆ Strachey wrote *True Repertory* in or before 1610;
- ◆ The Strachey letter went back to the Virginia Company in the summer of 1610, and Shakespeare obtained it fourteen years before it was published;
- ◆ No other sources exist for ideas and imagery Shakespeare supposedly derived from Strachey.

(Continued on page 28)

Ms. Kositsky declared that there is no evidence that the “letter” ever went to the Virginia Company, or was in fact even written in the fall of 1610. She pointed out that Strachey’s *True Repertory*, the only Bermuda pamphlet now believed by anyone to have significantly influenced *The Tempest*, was put into its only extant form too late to have been used as the play’s source, most likely after the play had been produced in 1611, and contained numerous elements plagiarized from earlier works. Indeed there was a “culture of plagiarism” in early modern travel narratives and that Mr. Strachey was himself a “major plagiarist” who borrowed extensively from earlier travel accounts. Kositsky pointed out that Strachey said he threw overboard trunks and chests to lighten the load and that it is hard to believe that he would have retained enough paper to compose a letter of 24,000 words.

Kositsky said that the true sources used by Shakespeare in describing the shipwreck in *The Tempest* were Erasmus’ *Naufragium* (1523), Greek romances, plays of the Commedia del Arte, Montaigne, Virgil, Ovid, Eden’s *The Decades of the New Worlde*, and Peter Martyr. According to the speaker, Strachey plagiarized from both Erasmus and Eden and displayed a chart showing parallels between Strachey, Erasmus, and Eden. Common elements from these sources, she declared, render superfluous Shakespeare’s supposed reliance on Strachey and suggest that, if there is any legitimate relationship between the two texts, it was Strachey who copied from *The Tempest* rather than the other way around.

In the one-on-one portion of the debate, Dr. Rubinstein countered by saying that it was Strachey’s job to send back a letter. He was Secretary of the Company and must have given an account, but that it was so negative that it had to be suppressed until 1625. Ms. Kositsky responded that the official report of the wreck by De la Warre was signed by Strachey and constituted his discharge of his duty in the matter, and that there is no evidence that anything else went back from him. She also pointed out the possibility that *The Tempest* was renamed from an earlier play called *The Spanish Maze*, which was performed

Shrovetide, appears with no identified author on a 1604-05 Revels Court Calendar and does not exist --at least under that title -- today. In rebuttal Dr. Rubinstein claimed that no Shakespeare work was ever written for a religious celebration, a comment indicating a lack of knowledge of 16<sup>th</sup> century theatrical culture. He reiterated that *The Tempest* definitely drew material

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from sources after 1604, saying that the wreck of the *Sea Venture* was highly publicized and the allusions to that wreck were “clear” in *The Tempest* without, however, specifying what he meant by that term.

The second debate considered the vexing problem of the significance of Shakespeare’s *Sonnets*. The official topic was “The Sonnets: Personal or Political Works?” but the discussion concentrated on the Prince Tudor theory, Hank Whittemore’s book, *The Monument*, the structure of the Sonnets, and whether or

not the work was a statement of bastardy or bisexuality. The “antagonists” for the debate were: Roger Stritmatter, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of English at Coppin State University, Baltimore, Maryland, and the only scholar in the United States to be granted a Ph.D. for research conducted on the 17th Earl of Oxford as Shakespeare, and John Hamill of San Francisco, a former Project Manager of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. They debated and discussed with author Hank Whittemore of Upper Nyack, New York, and William Boyle of Boston, Massachusetts, past Editor of *Shakespeare Matters* (2001-2005).

The opening speaker, Bill Boyle, declared his support for the theory put forth in Whittemore’s book, that the Sonnets form a highly structured pattern related to the following ideas: The Essex Rebellion, Southampton’s support for Essex, his confinement to the Tower, the commutation of his execution, and his relationship with the author of the Sonnets. Mr. Boyle pointed to the examples of Sonnets 29, 35, 120, 107, and 87 that reflect these events.

Dr. Stritmatter countered by asserting that the Sonnets are indeed “monumental,” but that Whittemore’s reconstruction of the monument is vague and structurally flawed. Stritmatter cited Alistair Fowler, whose *Triumphal Forms* (1970) initiated the idea of a monumental form in the Sonnets. In structural analysis, he suggested, form precedes content, and Fowler’s analysis follows that principle. The key Sonnet in Fowler’s structure is 136, which states that “among a number one is counted none.” Fowler suggested that the wording be taken literally and the sonnet be excluded, leaving 153 instead of 154. Fowler then showed that 153 corresponds to a Pythagorean triangular number, which can be structured in a triangular arrangement in which the first seventeen sonnets form a unit, and the “irregular” sonnets fall in a row on the left side of the triangle. He disputed the specific historical premise of Hank Whittemore’s structural grouping of Sonnets 1-20, 27-126, 127-152, and 153-54 and questioned the reasoning behind the premise of *The Monument* that some groupings reflect one sonnet per day, others one sonnet per

month, and still others one per year. When asked what he thought the Sonnets were about, Stritmatter stated that Fowler's structural reading does not come from any predetermined idea of content or context, and that it is a "terrible mistake" to proclaim that the puzzle of the Sonnets has been solved.

In his opening statement Whittemore, countered Dr. Stritmatter by saying that his was a unified theory, a comprehensive and coherent explanation of the language, structure, context and story of the 154 numbered verses that "explains everything" about the Sonnets. Whittemore suggested that the Sonnets are a personal record that reflects history in a single story. According to Whittemore, within the "monument" is a chronicle leading to the death of Queen Elizabeth I on March 24, 1603, and England's inevitable date with royal succession. This sequence contains exactly one hundred sonnets (27-126) positioned at the center, covering the final two years of Elizabeth's reign and ending with her funeral on April 28, 1603.

The final speaker was John Hamill of San Francisco who asserted that the Sonnets reflect the author's sexuality and are not a highly structured historical record of events surrounding the confinement of the Earl of Southampton. He said that the Sonnets are about love and intimate feelings addressed to both men and women. He noted that Gabriel Harvey referred to Oxford as a "minion" before 1580 and cited the continuing opposition to theater presentations by the Puritans because of the sexual content in such plays as *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*. He noted that *Venus and Adonis* shows that Adonis, not Venus, is the center of attention and that *The Rape of Lucrece* is about a man raping his friend's wife, pointing to the line in Sonnet 121, "I am that I am," as evidence of unconventional sexuality.

Charles de Vere Beauclerk, President of the de Vere Society and direct descendant of Edward de Vere, spoke about *The Tempest* as Shakespeare's "mystery play." His lecture explored why *The Tempest* might have been placed first in the Folio of Shakespeare's Collected Works (1623), suggesting that "the play is the unifying principle of the entire canon." In other

words, it is there to initiate the reader into the principal themes and philosophy of Shakespeare's plays, with Prospero -- a clear personification of the author -- as guide. According to Beauclerk, Shakespeare was the literary champion of the occult Neoplatonists, and Prospero is a magus transformed from a warrior prince to a seer. Reflecting the Earl of Oxford,

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Prospero is the philosopher king, the royal author banished from court life, the eternal artist exile from society who, "tongue-tied by authority," creates a second, artistic kingdom to challenge the status quo.

Much emphasis is placed upon the strangeness and improbability of Prospero's story and, by implication, the likely incredulity of future generations. According to Beauclerk, "in revealing himself to his astonished colleagues and in

his vow to drown his Book, Prospero brings his deepest soul-fantasy -- that of restoration -- center stage; while through the union of Ferdinand and Miranda, which proves to be his chief care, the magus instills his Book with the spirit of royalty and achieves that *coniunctio oppositorum* (marriage of opposites) that leads to self-realization." Beauclerk, stated that *The Tempest* leads its audience "through a maze towards the center of the island where they will find both the true author and their own soul-life." Allowing us to realize a greater sense of wholeness, it is in Beauclerk's phrase, "the holy book of modern Western culture."

Conference Director Dr. Daniel Wright, Ph.D., Professor of English at Concordia University, spoke on the subject of "King John's Bastard Prince." Dr. Wright suggested that the plays of Shakespeare are not about the historical record but are making a case for what ought to have been, what should or should not be. *King John*, according to Dr. Wright, is not a faithful rendering of a particular monarch but a commentary on monarchy itself. Wright asserted that a central theme of the play and all of Shakespeare's plays is that of legitimacy and the right of succession. In *King John* Shakespeare invents a royal bastard who becomes the fictional hero of the play. Shakespeare's work is not simply a poetic exercise and the plays are "not disinterested objective plays, but serve as mirrors that reflect Elizabethan policy." Shakespeare, according to Dr. Wright, was an "informed commentator on the political scene and his work is about "the rulers who sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind."

Dr. William Rubinstein, Ph.D. and Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, made the case for Sir Henry Neville as the true author of the Shakespeare canon. Neville, according to Dr. Rubinstein, is the most "plausible candidate" because his life fits so well with the trajectory of the orthodox chronology of Shakespeare's works. Discovered as Shakespeare by former university lecturer Brenda James through a (still secret) code in the *Sonnets* dedication, Neville was a wealthy and distant relative of Shakespeare's, born two years before the Bard in 1562 and dying

*(Continued on page 30)*

one year earlier in 1615. As an ambitious politician and courtier, he was an extremely well educated linguist who traveled widely throughout Europe.

Though he had wealth, learning and opportunity, as a descendant of the rival Plantagenet dynasty the politician could not be seen to be an author. As a result, Dr. Rubinstein claims, he must at some point have asked his kinsman William Shakespeare to act as his frontman, and a successful secret double act was born.

Dr. Rubinstein declared that Neville had a relationship with Southampton unlike the man from Stratford. Neville was arrested and confined to the Tower for his part in the Essex Rebellion. Imprisoned with Southampton, he paid a fine of £5,000 and was later released by King James at the same time as Southampton. Neville's imprisonment, Dr. Rubinstein claims, was the catalyst for the dramatic and unexplained switch in emphasis in Shakespeare's work from comedy and politics to tragedy. Discovered in the Tower also were Neville's note, containing material that later, according to Dr. Rubinstein, turned up in the Shakespeare play *Henry VIII*.

Neville became a director of the first London-Virginia Company and was in a position to gain access to the Strachey letter describing the Bermuda shipwreck, the letter Rubinstein believes was a source for Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Dr. Rubinstein also claimed that Ben Jonson, responsible for the First Folio, was a close friend and admirer of Neville but had no relationship with Oxford. In fact, at the time of the First Folio, Jonson was secretly employed by Gresham College, a college founded by Neville's great uncle. When asked why Neville's name was never mentioned as a playwright or poet, Dr. Rubinstein remarked that Neville produced no writings under his own name. Interestingly, Neville's name does appear on the top of the page of the Northumberland Manuscript, a document discovered in the 1860's that contained a list of titles of some of Bacon's well-known works and of two Shakespeare plays.

Stylometrics came into play in a paper by Richard Whalen, author of Shakespeare: *Who Was He? The Oxford*

*Challenge to the Bard of Avon* and John Shahan, MS of Glendale, California. Their paper was on the subject "Stylometrics Fail to Eliminate Oxford as Shakespeare." Whalen and Shahan pointed out that the conclusion of Ward Elliott, that the odds were strong that Oxford did not write Shakespeare was based on an invalid comparison of Oxford's early lyric poems and songs with the mature plays of Shakespeare.

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To lighten the proceedings, actor Michael Dunn of Pacific Palisades, California, assumed the persona of Charles Dickens and reenacted his acclaimed melodrama "Dethroning a Deity." Mr. Dunn quoted Dickens' remark that the life of Shakespeare was a great mystery, saying "I tremble everyday that something will turn up."

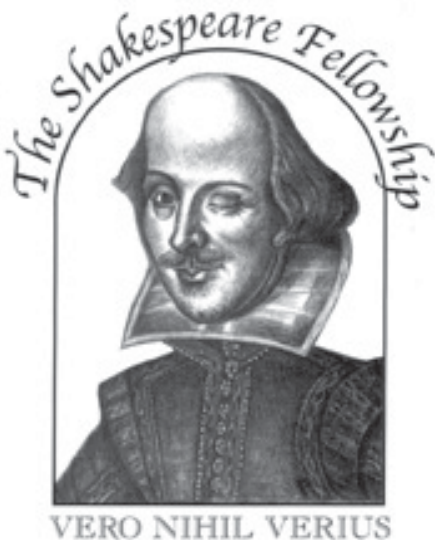
"Is our Shakespeare," he asked, "a secular deity like Bacon or a Christ-like figure like the Stratford man who comes complete with his own dogma, miraculous stories, a *tabularasa* in which anyone can write, or could he possibly a traitor, defaulter, insubordinate, arrogant rebuffer of the Queen, murderer, plagiarist,

deadbeat and low-life dullard like Edward de Vere?"

Among the other presentations, Ren Draya, Ph.D. of Blackburn College in Carlinville, Illinois (see article, pp. 7-9, this issue), examined the role of female voices in Shakespeare in her paper "*Antony and Cleopatra* - The Women's Voices." Dr. Draya said Cleopatra is "larger than life" and cannot be explained, but can only be felt. She is a woman who stands for power but at the end gains lyricism and achieves nobility. Also reporting on "Edward de Vere's *Antony and Cleopatra*" was Prof. Michael Delahoyde, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of English at Washington State University in Pullman, Washington. Dr. Delahoyde asserted that Cleopatra is modelled on Queen Elizabeth I, a "drama queen" who used her feminine wiles to gain political advantage; he suggested that the man from Stratford would have been beheaded for this portrait if he were the true author. Suggesting that we are not in Egypt but at the Tudor Court, Dr. Delahoyde commented that Cleopatra's trusted servant Charmian is presented not as a slave but as an aristocratic gentlewoman who resembles Oxford's lover Anne Vavasour.

Marilyn Loveless, Artistic Director of Theater Studies at Walla Walla College, Walla Walla, Washington, spoke on the subject of female literary criticism of Shakespeare and the possibility of a female author of the Shakespeare canon. Ms. Loveless made specific reference to her Ph.D. dissertation posing the question, what if it was discovered that Anne Hathaway actually wrote the works attributed to her husband? According to Ms. Loveless, "Shakespeare had no heroes, only heroines" and remarked that "the feminine element in Shakespeare assures the immortality of his genius."

With high energy, Sandra Schruijer, Ph.D. Professor of Organization Sciences at the University of Utrecht and Professor of Organizational Psychology at the University of Tilburg in The Netherlands, presented a fascinating psychological perspective of the role of debaters' identities in the Shakespeare authorship debate. Dr. Schruijer suggested that debaters' identities are:



*Winking Bard designed for the Shakespeare Fellowship by Katherine Berney.*

- ◆ Authorship (eager to prove they are right and achieve validation)
- ◆ National (supporting their national hero)
- ◆ Academic (specialists and tourists)
- ◆ Heretics (those that challenge authority)

In another talk that was both entertaining and informative, author and journalist Mark Anderson spoke about

“getting the message out,” stating that Oxfordians must “come to terms with the communication revolution.” Anderson pointed out that the authorship question is no longer just a literary or historical problem but has become a communications problem: teachers, parents, and students must be engaged on a new level. He mentioned several new ways that can “get the case out,” including podcasts, websites such as Wikipedia, iTunes, and other innovative distribution strategies. Anderson demonstrated a fascinating interactive tour of the life of the Earl of Oxford using Google to mark landmarks of importance in de Vere’s life.

Charles Berney, retired Research Associate in Chemical Engineering at MIT and past President of the Shakespeare Fellowship, spoke on the subject of “*Billy Budd* and the Monument.” Dr. Berney picked up ideas previously developed in a 2000 paper delivered at the Stratford, Ontario, SOS conference representing the joint work of Roger Stritmatter, Mark Anderson, and Elliott Stone. He suggested several parallels between the characters in Melville’s novel (Captain Edward Vere, Billy Budd, and others) and real life personages associated with Oxford and posed the question, “Was Melville aware of the parallels or was it simply a coincidence?”

In the final presentation of the Conference, Edith Friedler, J.D., Professor of Law at Loyola Law School, Loyola University, Los Angeles, California, spoke on a comparative perspective of the penalty clause in Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*. Prof. Friedler distinguished between the common law (accepted practices and procedures we inherited from England) and the civil law (codified law that comes from Roman law through the Napoleonic Code). She stated that the author of *The Merchant of Venice* must have been well versed in the civil law and understood its many dimensions and ramifications.

At the Conference Banquet, awards were presented for Excellence in Scholarship to Mark Anderson, author of *Shakespeare By Another Name* (Gotham Press), and Hank Whittemore, author of the controversial book on Shakespeare’s Sonnets, *The Monument*. The award for Excellence in Achievement in the Arts was presented to James Newcomb, actor and director in over 50 Shakespearean plays in 13 seasons with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and passionately articulate proponent of the case for Oxford’s authorship.

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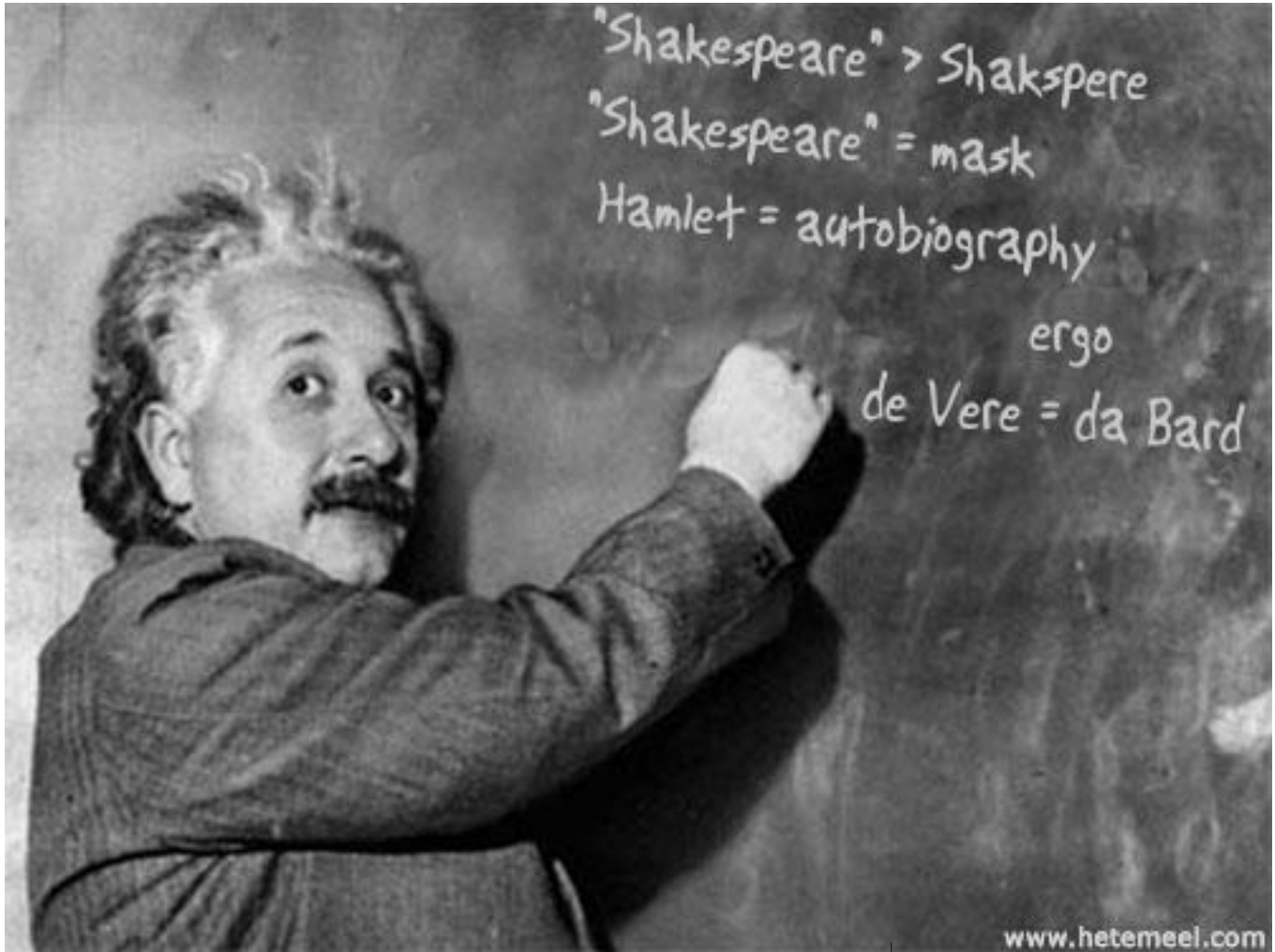
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