What's in a Name?

Hugh Trevor-Roper

From *Réalités* (English Edition), November 1962

We reprint this essay by historian Hugh Trevor-Roper for its perspective on a topic that has generated very little scholarly effort in 400 years—determining Shakespeare's philosophy and character from the contents of the canon. His methodology, in fact, is that of J.T. Looney, the man who proposed the Earl of Oxford as the man behind the name William Shakespeare. Looney analyzed the plays and poetry of Shakespeare for consistency in theme, plot and characterization and found that the author evinced the following general characteristics:

> Shakespeare was a matured man of recognized genius, eccentric and unconventional in behavior with an intense sensibility, an enthusiast of drama, a lyric poet of recognized talent who also possessed a superior education classical in foundation, and was the habitual associate of educated people.

Looney further proposed that Shakespeare's particular characteristics included having feudal connections as a member of the higher aristocracy, to be a supporter of the Lancastrian faction, an enthusiast for Italy, a follower of sport (including falconry), a lover of music, loose and improvident in money matters, doubtful and somewhat conflicting in his attitudes to women, and of probable Catholic leanings,

but touched with skepticism.

Trevor-Roper used a variant of this methodology to uncover Shakespeare's personality and philosophy. Examining the works from the inside, he looked,

> first, to the range and limitations of Shakespeare's conscious knowledge and thought; secondly, to the underlying assumptions which are taken for granted by all his characters; thirdly, to the world from which he draws his customary images. The first of these methods may show us something about Shakespeare's mind; the second about his philosophy; the third about his tastes.

What Trevor-Roper found was the sensibility and philosophical outlook of an aristocrat pervaded with nostalgia for the past and gloom about the future, precisely because Shakespeare's arrival coincided with the end of the Renaissance. Indeed, lacking that historical perspective, literary scholars have frequently mistaken Shakespeare's "exuberance" as the result of his being Nature's (ignorant) Child—instead of percieving the underlying cause of that exuberance *to be his widespread learning*. The entire skein of Shakespeare's mind—personal, political and philsophical—is laid out in Trevor-Roper's examination, which readers will enjoy discovering on their own. — Editors

Of all the immortal geniuses of literature, none is personally so elusive as William Shakespeare. It is exasperating, and almost incredible, that he should be so. After all, he lived in the full daylight of the English Renaissance, in the well-documented reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I. He wrote thirty-five plays and 150 highly personal sonnets. He was connected with some of the best-known public figures in the most conspicuous court in English history. Since his death, and particularly in the last century, he has been subjected to the greatest battery of organized research that has ever been directed upon a single person. And yet the greatest of all Englishmen, after this tremendous inquisition, still remains so close a mystery that even his identity can still be doubted.

For what is the man revealed by all this systematic research? The external records show that William Shakespeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon, the son of a local tradesman whose business declined and who was fined for keeping an unauthorized dungheap. The son evidently left Stratford for London, became an actor and then a playhouse-manager, and being careful of money, was able to retire early. He died, reasonably prosperous, at Stratford, leaving his second-best bed to his wife.

During his lifetime nobody claimed to know him. Not a single tribute was paid to him at his death.

As far as the records go, he was uneducated, had no literary friends, possessed at his death no books, and could not write. It is true, six of his signatures have been found, all spelt differently; but they are so ill-formed that some graphologists suppose the hand to have been guided. Except for these signatures, no syllable of writing by Shakespeare has been identified. Seven years after his death, when his works were collected and published, and other poets for the first time claimed to have known him, a portrait of him was printed. The unskilful artist has presented the blank face of a country oaf.

Such is the best the historians can do. Clearly it is not enough. It may be the shell: it is not the man. To find the man we must look elsewhere, not at the historical fragments but at the authentic deposit of his mind: at his copious, undisputed works. Surely, we say, we shall find him there. But what in fact do we find? In the end, the mystery is only deepened. A supreme dramatist, Shakespeare is always creating other characters, but never reveals his own. His characters express their own thoughts, not his, and in the end, only they, not he, assume reality.

Where the historians have failed, the literary detectives have set to work. They have combed his works for personal revelations, snatches of autobiography, hints of character. Unfortunately they only end by quarrelling among themselves. Some of them father upon Shakespeare their own beliefs. Roman Catholics have made him a Roman Catholic, Protestants a Protestant, democrats a democrat, patriots a patriot. He has been made the prophet of the British Empire, the upholder of Victorian morality, and one distinguished modern scholar has defined his character as "Christ-like." When I think of Shakespeare's irrepressible ribaldry, his elaborate obscenity, his religious indifference and his questionable amours, I admit that I find this last parallel somewhat strained.

Nevertheless, any man who has written as much as Shakespeare must have revealed his personality in his writings. The problem is to know where to seek it. I believe we can discover something provided we are not too ambitious. We must not expect Shakespeare to declare himself openly. If he reveals himself, it will be indirectly, not in the positive opinions which his characters express, but in the background against which, and the words in which they express them. We must therefore look, first, to the range and limitations of Shakespeare's conscious knowledge and thought; secondly, to the underlying assumptions which are taken for granted by all his characters; thirdly, to the world from which he draws his customary images. The first of these methods may show us something about Shakespeare's mind; the second about his philosophy; the third about his tastes. In addition, from such of Shakespeare's writings as may seem autobiographical, we may learn something of his life.

First, Shakespeare's mind. In the past, Shakespeare has often been seen as "fancy's child," an untutored natural genius, without learning, art or sophistication. This view, based on the informality of his style and the early popularity of his rustic comedies, began to be held soon after his death. Ben Jonson and Milton both held it. Thereafter, as taste became ever more "classical" and "correct," it became stronger. To

the 18th century, Shakespeare was a "primitive": a genius indeed, but a savage genius; even, to Voltaire in a moment of bad temper, "le sauvage ivre."

Today we cannot see him thus. Freed, by the Romantic Movement, from the classical dogmas of the 17th and 18th centuries, and enabled, by modern scholarship, to appreciate intellectual systems other than our own, we now realize that the century of the Renaissance, whose exuberance seems in retrospect so haphazard, in fact had its own rules, and that Shakespeare knew those rules. No scholar today would see Shakespeare as a mere "child of nature." On the contrary, we realize that he was highly educated, even erudite.

It is true, he does not parade his learning. He wears no heavy carapace of classical or Biblical or philosophical scholarship, like Donne or Milton. But he is clearly familiar, in an easy, assured manner, with the wide learning of his time and had the general intellectual formation of a cultivated man of the Renaissance. He was at home in the Aristotelian cosmology of his time. He had learned the new Platonic philosophy. He was familiar with foreign countries, foreign affairs, foreign languages. He might give Bohemia a seacoast — but it had one. His Danish names in *Hamlet*, his French names in *Love's Labour's Lost*, show familiarity with current politics. His knowledge of Italy was extraordinary. An English scholar who lived in Venice has found his visual topographical exactitude in *The Merchant of Venice* incredible in one who had never been there.

And as in substance; so also in form. Shakespeare was a great student of style, a great experimenter and inventor of words, though so many of his inventions have been accepted into our language that we easily forget their novelty. His early works were deeply influenced by the elaborate, artificial "euphuism" made fashionable by John Lyly: a style of writing which he first marvellously exploited, then transcended.

Exuberant, experimental, sophisticated . . . these indeed are the qualities of the Renaissance. But when we speak of the European Renaissance of the 16th century we must distinguish its phases. There is its beginning, the period of Machiavelli and Erasmus and Thomas More, and there is its end, the period of Tasso and Cervantes and Montaigne; and Shakespeare very definitely belonged to its end. This is particularly obvious when we move from the range of his mind to its limitations, from his speculations to his assumptions. For the assumptions of the later Renaissance differ markedly, in at least one respect, from those of the earlier Renaissance. This limitation is to be observed in the field of politics and social ideas.

The early humanists had been rebels. They had uttered social and political protests. Erasmus, though the friend of kings, Machiavelli, though the author of *The Prince*, had been essentially republicans. More had written, in *Utopia*, a radical tract. But at the end of the 16th century all this was changed. Even the greatest, most imaginative writers took the courtly, aristocratic society around them for granted. Shakespeare could see and feel the sufferings of the poor. He could make great tragedies out of the insensitivity or unworthiness of kings. But of social or political protest there is, in his works, no trace.

Whatever his own social circumstances, in his outlook Shakespeare was an unquestioning aristocrat. To him the established order is a mystical harmony, kings

rule by divine right, and any challenge to that harmony, that right, is unforgivable. It was its usurpation of the throne which, in the historical plays, was the hereditary tragedy of the house of Lancaster. On the other hand, popular leaders — whether Roman tribunes or English rebels — are to him merely vulgar demagogues. The people, indeed, are quite unfit for public affairs. Kings may make war for trifles, nations may be sacrificed to chivalric honour, but the duty of the people is to admire and obey.

Above a certain social level, Shakespeare sees a kind of consecrated douceur de vivre, a charmed, delicate, sophisticated world whose recreation is true comedy, whose disturbance is tragedy. Below that level there are of course servants who may be dignified by their loyalty to noble masters. But the independent sub- noble world, the world of artisans and craftsmen, if it exists for Shakespeare, exists only as his butt.

Shakespeare's social conformity is reflected also in religion. In the 16th century religion was the business of the state. It was also the business of every man. It dominated public and private life. And yet even here the most famous of Englishmen contrives to remain mysterious. We do not know Shakespeare's religion. His father, as late as 1600, was a Roman Catholic: Shakespeare himself conformed to the Established Church.

That in itself does not mean much. From the plays we can deduce nothing. That profound, questioning, universal spirit, which could be so philosophical, so metaphysical, so Platonic, never utters a syllable which suggests a personal religion. Beneath his conformity, he may have been a Catholic (but an anti-papal English Catholic); he may have been a Protestant (but certainly not a puritan); he may have been a sceptic. Most probably he was a sceptic. In his comedies he loves this life only; in his tragedies there is no hint of another. All we can say certainly is that, though profoundly concerned with the predicament of man, he never questioned the religion of state. The religion of protest, like the politics of protest, left him cold.

A cultured, sophisticated aristocrat, fascinated alike by the comedy and tragedy of human life, but unquestioning in his social and religious conservatism — such is the outward character revealed by Shakespeare's works. But behind that outward character there is another, more intimate character: a character which has been revealed most skilfully and effectively, I think, by the study of his imagery. For although Shakespeare's characters express their own views, not his, the language they use, and the metaphors they choose, are his, not theirs.

First, we may discover something of Shakespeare's tastes. Shakespeare, it is well known, had a remarkable familiarity with the law. His plays are very largely about court life, even if the court is occasionally transplanted to Arcadian settings. And they were performed in London. But in spite of all this he was, essentially, a countryman and a landsman. His love and understanding of the country are extraordinary; far deeper than that of any other poet, even in England. His knowledge of hunting and hawking (though not of fishing) is that of an expert. His love and observation of wild animals, and especially wild birds, is intimate and minute. He has a great eye for the weather and its nuances, for the seasons and their

changes. All the moods of the country exhilarate him. He loved wild flowers and was clearly a devoted gardener: only Francis Bacon (a passionate gardener) compares with him here. Indeed Shakespeare sees mankind almost as part of nature: sometimes basking in a delightful, smiling Nature; sometimes caught up in a fierce, cruel, inexorable, insatiable Nature.

So much is obvious. But if we look further, we soon find something else. In his contact with nature, as with all else, Shakespeare shows — and this indeed seems his most personal characteristic — an extreme, exaggerated sensitivity. In a rough, cruel age of strong tastes and uninhibited pleasures, Shakespeare had, together with his bounding vitality, a delicacy of perception which gave him strange, heightened pleasure — but also pain.

Positively, he delighted in freshness, the freshness of nature, and he hated interference with that freshness. Intensely musical, familiar with all instruments, he loved silence too, which to him was a kind of harmony, and he was acutely pained by jarring sounds or harsh voices. He was keenly aware of smells, especially bad smells — the smell of the unwashed multitude particularly revolted him; but he disliked the strong perfumes with which his contemporaries disguised those smells. He had a delicate sense of touch, hating sticky surfaces. He disliked paint, as he disliked all disguising films. He had a horror of greasy food. Above all things, he delighted in the subtleties of natural movement.

Now this intense delicacy of perception, combined with his zest for natural life, gives Shakespeare's early works their marvellous freshness, their glancing, sparkling luminosity. But the same sensitivity had also its obverse side. Shakespeare, we often feel, had a skin too few: whatever he saw he felt, and he felt it far more intensely than most of his contemporaries. This too we can see in his love of nature.

For all his intimate love of hunting, Shakespeare hardly ever shows personal delight in it. On the contrary, his sympathies are always with "the poor hunted deer," the trapped bird, the over-driven horse, the baited bear. Again and again he enters, intensely and personally, into the suffering which others take for granted. Perhaps the most remarkable instance is of the snail. To most men the snail typifies slowness, and Shakespeare liked darting movement. The snail is also sticky, and Shakespeare hated stickiness. And to gardeners, like him, it is a pest. But to Shakespeare all these obvious disadvantages are transcended by one sympathetic quality. The snail, to him, is the type of sensitivity. Whenever he mentions it, it is to describe its "tender horns," so "soft and sensible," shrinking back in anguish from painful contact with the rough world. Shakespeare, it is clear, loved snails: they epitomized what Keats called his own "snailhorn perception of beauty."

How did this sensitive creature, this delicate, aristocratic character, so acutely aware of the pleasures and pains, the comedy and tragedy of life, himself survive the rough-and-tumble of the Elizabethan age? The answer is, I think, that he did not survive it intact. At a certain point in his life his heightened sensitivity turned from awareness of the marvelous outward beauty of the world to perception of its remorseless and, in the end, meaningless cruelty.

To some men, such a change might well be reflected in religious conversion. But Shakespeare was really a non-religious man. Being unable to take refuge in an abstract God, he found himself face to face with the brute tragedy of human life. So the exquisite poet of Arcadia became the greatest tragic poet of the modern world. For although even the dates of Shakespeare's plays, like everything about him, are uncertain, their order seems clear enough, and shows us the moment of change. Up to a certain date Shakespeare wrote mainly comedies; or if he wrote tragedies, they were tragedies like *Richard II* or *Julius Caesar* in which the spectacular death of the hero does not involve the audience in any general tragic philosophy. After that date he wrote his great tragedies — *Hamlet, Othello, Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra* — and even his comedies are not exempt from the same basically tragic conception of life. In his last plays, whatever their form, Shakespeare unmistakably sees the world as a grim, impersonal machinery of blind fate and brute time in which all the fragile beauty of life and potential nobility of man are ground down to triviality and dusty nothing.

Is it possible to document this change in Shakespeare's personal life? A great dramatist transmutes all his own experience, and we can never be more than half-sure of any allusion. Nevertheless one work of Shakespeare at least is largely personal. In the Sonnets, Shakespeare already presages something of the change. There we see the exalted, refined, passionate, "platonic" love which he could feel for an evidently aristocratic young man; but there also the painful, mortifying sensations which the physical aspect of love always and increasingly aroused in him. The decisive point in the change, however, seems to be marked by that great but terrible play, *Troilus and Cressida*: a play in which all Shakespeare's marvellous power of language seems to be devoted to the expression of one emotion: disgust with human life, its grossness, its falsity, its futility.

Moreover, about the same time, Shakespeare wrote another play which, it is now widely agreed, is largely autobiographical: that most bewildering, most fascinating of all his plays, *Hamlet*. Hamlet, the over-sensitive man, whose chameleon sympathy with all around him, whose capacity to enter into all men's doubts and fears, enabled him to mount brilliant plays but disabled him from imposing his personality on events or leaving any personal trace in history — this is Shakespeare himself: Hamlet to whom "this goodly frame, the earth" was "a sterile promontory," and the sky "this majestical roof, fretted with golden fire," no other than "a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours"; to whom society itself was "rotten" and the life of thinking man purposeless and vain.

From that time on, in tragedy and comedy alike, Shakespeare constantly expresses this sense of helplessness and disgust. The old fastidiousness, which had enabled him to detect ever fresh subtleties of beauty, harmony and delight, is now expressed again and again in the imagery of nausea: the foul stench of human wickedness, the leprous touch of a diseased world, the greasy taste of false emotions, the jangled chords of a fractured society. Love itself, whose infiniteness and purity had inspired *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Sonnets*, has now become a gross, physical act, like "the engendering of toads": in his later plays Shakespeare seems sometimes

obsessed, hysterical about the act of sex: bawdiness has turned to loathing. The whole world, to him, has now lost order and meaning:

"As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods," says King Lear, "they kill us for their sport." Even language, the realm of Shakespeare's sovereignty, has become a means of corruption: "You taught me language," (says Caliban) and my profit on't is, I know how to curse." So Shakespeare moved into his great tragic period. His character, in those Jacobean days, had received a new dimension. Great tragedy does not spring from a gay heart. Shakespeare's scepticism had turned to hatred of a world from which God had fled; his love of life — the message of his early play Love's Labour's Lost — had turned to disillusion with life. His delight in nature even, had been subordinated to tragedy.

The serenity of Macbeth's castle emphasizes the treachery it is to encompass; the imaginary, evanescent clouds described by Antony are a presage of his own dissolution; the tide-washed beach is the place of Timon's grave. And yet, of course, the change is not total. In the interstices of tragedy the old spirit, the old gift of fantasy, the old exquisite sense of beauty breaks through, as strong as ever, to achieve fresh miracles of lyric power. In *The Tempest,* perhaps his last play, Shakespeare showed that he could still produce a comedy as fresh and idyllic as of old — but a comedy, if we listen closely, with a heavy, tragic undertone.

For in Shakespeare's last period the English Renaissance came to its end. Already the age of effortless, aristocratic gaiety had passed. The baroque era of introspection and doubt had begun. Shakespeare (whoever he was) lived long enough into that era to bring together, in a marvellous marriage, two opposite qualities: the wonderful, iridescent freshness of Elizabethan England, and the growing disillusion of the early 17th century.

He was lucky — or rather, we are lucky — in his generation. Had he lived a little earlier perhaps we should never have had the great tragedies of his maturity. Had he lived a little later, we might have lost the marvellous freshness of his youth. We had Shakespeare, said Lord Keynes in a famous boutade, when we could afford him. Certainly we had him at the only time when he was possible. A few years after his death the political and social structure which he took for granted crumbled in ruin. For twenty years the London playhouses were closed. Tragedies and comedies were forbidden. Rebellion, which he hated, God, whom he ignored, and the puritans, whom he detested, were not long in claiming their revenge.

Shakespeare's Impossible Doublet:
Droeshout's Engraving Anatomized

John M. Rollett

Abstract

The engraving of Shakespeare by Martin Droeshout on the title page of the 1623 First Folio has often been criticized for various oddities. In 1911 a professional tailor asserted that the right-hand side of the poet's doublet was "obviously" the left-hand side of the back of the garment. In this paper I describe evidence which confirms this assessment, demonstrating that Shakespeare is pictured wearing an impossible garment. By printing a caricature of the man from Stratford-upon-Avon, it would seem that the publishers were indicating that he was not the author of the works that bear his name.

The Exhibition *Searching for Shakespeare,*[1] held at the National Portrait Gallery, London, in 2006, included several pictures supposed at one time or another to be portraits of our great poet and playwright. Only one may have any claim to authenticity — that engraved by Martin Droeshout for the title page of the First Folio (Figure 1), the collection of plays published in 1623. Because the dedication and the address "To the great Variety of Readers" are each signed by John Hemmings and Henry Condell, two of Shakespeare's theatrical colleagues, and because Ben Jonson's prefatory poem tells us "It was for gentle Shakespeare cut," the engraving appears to have the *imprimatur* of Shakespeare's friends and fellows. The picture is not very attractive, and various defects have been pointed out from time to time – the head is too large, the stiff white collar or wired band seems odd, left and right of the doublet don't quite match up. But nonetheless, the illustration is generally regarded as serving a valuable purpose in giving posterity some idea of what the playwright looked like.

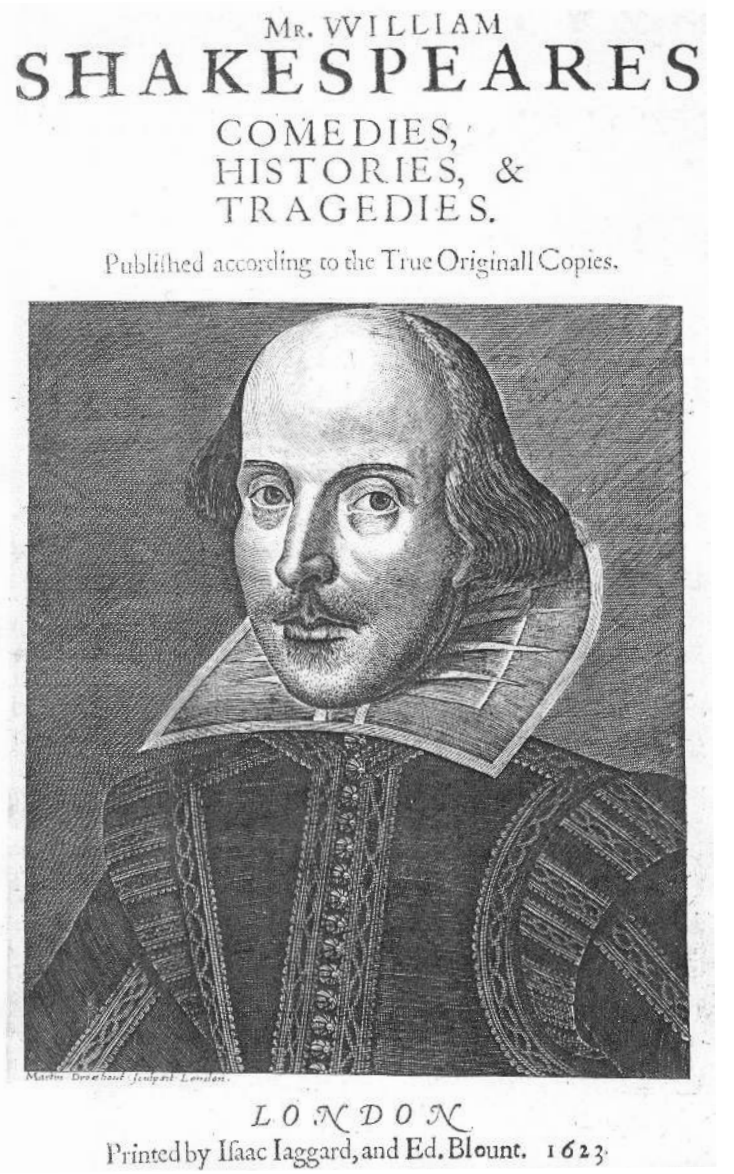


Figure 1. Title page of the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays, 1623.

The portrait's deficiencies are frequently ascribed to the incompetence of the engraver, usually assumed to be the Martin Droeshout the younger, born in 1601, and aged twenty-one or twenty-two in 1623. It is unlikely that he would have seen Shakespeare (who died in 1616), and it is often supposed that the engraving of the face was based on a portrait from the life, now lost.

The doublet may have been copied from the same portrait, or may have been added by the engraver, perhaps working from a real garment. Although Mary Edmond proposed in 1991 that the engraver was probably the young man's uncle, of the same name and aged around fifty-five,[2] this view is no longer tenable, following the publication by June Schlueter of fresh archival evidence which strongly supports the attribution to the younger Droeshout.[3] Notwithstanding the deficiencies of the engraving, it was evidently found acceptable by the publishers, since they approved it on the title-page of the First Folio.

Many commentators have drawn attention to the portrait's defects, most finding fault with the details of the face and hair, which will not concern us here. Several also point out errors in the costume, for example Sidney Lee refers to "patent defects of perspective"[4] in the dress, while M. H. Spielmann says that the shoulder-wings are "grotesquely large and vilely drawn."[5] The nature of the most elusive peculiarity was brought to light in 1911 by an anonymous tailor writing in *The Gentleman's Tailor*, under the title "A Problem for the Trade." After remarking that "it is passing strange that something like three centuries should have been allowed to pass before the tailor's handiwork should have been appealed to," he concludes that the doublet "is so strangely illustrated that the right-hand side of the forepart is *obviously* the left-hand side of the backpart; and so gives a harlequin appearance to the figure, which it is not unnatural to assume was intentional, and done with express object and purpose" (emphasis added).[6] Since what is obvious to a professional tailor may not be obvious to a layman, in the next section I shall analyze the doublet to see whether there is evidence to support this assessment.

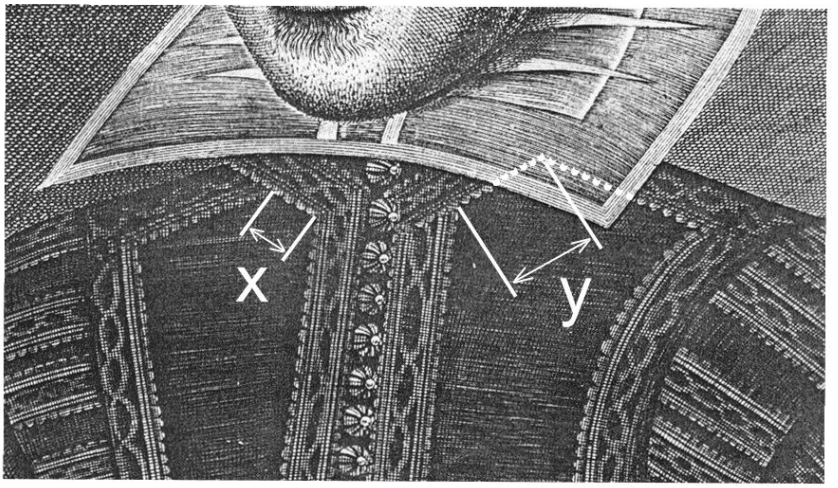


Figure 2. The right-hand front panel is smaller than the left-hand front panel.

Droeshout's Doublet

The doublet in the engraving displays a number of peculiarities. To begin with, the right shoulder-wing (onlooker's left, Figure 1) is smaller than the left shoulder-wing; instead they should be (roughly) the same size, or at least balance pictorially. In addition, the right-hand front panel of the doublet is clearly smaller than the left-hand front panel, as is confirmed by the different lengths of the embroidery edges labelled "x" and "y" (Figure 2). To my knowledge, this is the first time this oddity has been pointed out.

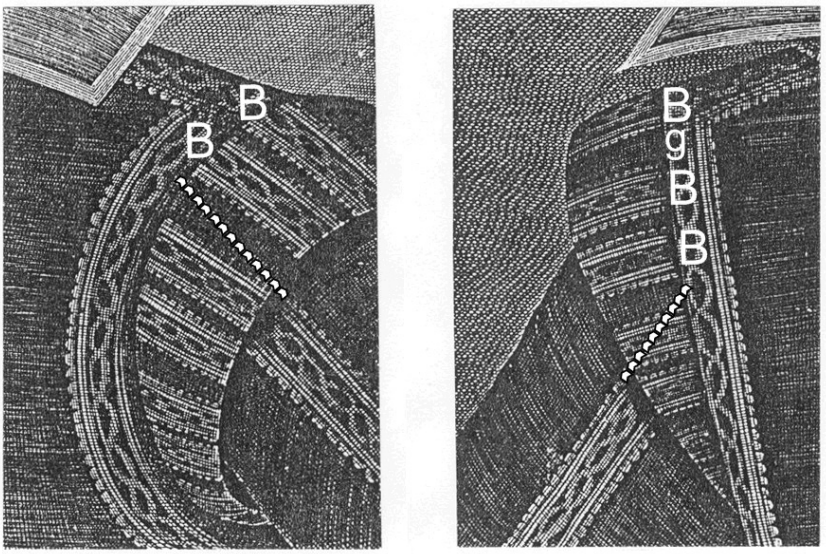


Figure 3. The embroidery on the right sleeve (right) is placed around twice as far down from the top of the shoulder-wing as that on the left sleeve (left).

More significantly, the embroidery on the right sleeve does not correspond to that on the left sleeve (Figure 3). On the left sleeve, the upper edge of the embroidery (when extended) meets the inside edge of the shoulder-wing (where it is joined to the doublet), a distance of just over two bands of embroidery (labeled "B") down from the top of the shoulder-wing. On the right sleeve, the upper edge of the embroidery meets the inside edge of the shoulder-wing a distance of rather over three bands, plus a wide gap (labeled "g," roughly the same width as a band), down from the top of the wing. Instead of corresponding (at least approximately) with that on the left sleeve, the embroidery on the right sleeve is located around a distance of two bandwidths lower than that on the left sleeve, or nearly twice as far away from the top of the shoulder-wing. This too has not been noted before, as far as I know.

Most significantly, the embroidery on the right shoulder-wing *does not match* that on the left shoulder-wing. From the top of the left wing (Figure 4), moving down, there are two bands of embroidery close together, a wide gap, and then another pair of bands, and so on. On the right wing, starting at the corresponding place, there is only *one* band of embroidery, then a wide gap, then a pair of bands, and so on. Symbolically, the pattern of embroidery on the left wing, starting from the top, can be represented by "BBgBBgBB," etc. and that on the right wing by "BgBBgBBg," etc. These two patterns would match on a normal garment, but here they do not: clearly *this is not a normal garment*. This new piece of evidence, described here for the first time, is crucial to the analysis of the image.

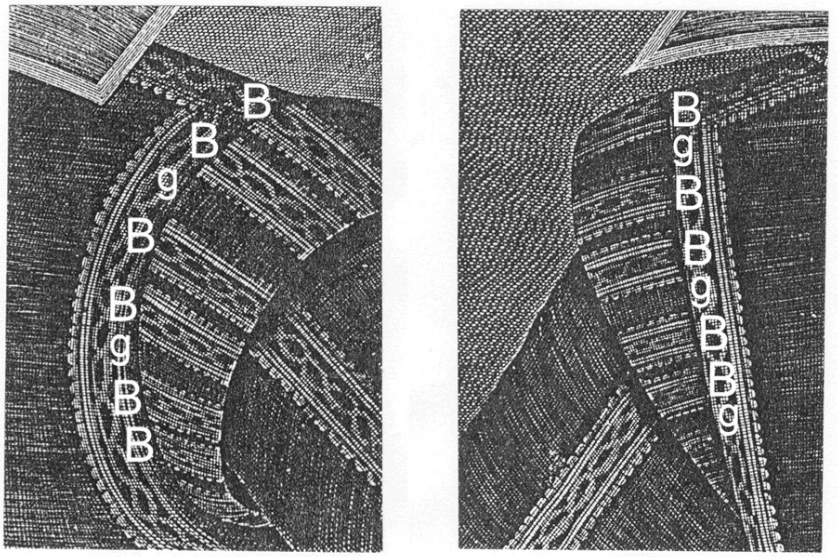


Figure 4. The embroidery on the right shoulder-wing does not match that on the left shoulder-wing.

These four points confirm the verdict of the tailor of 1911; the garment consists of the left front joined to the left back of a real doublet – a sartorial anomaly. The right-hand half of the front of the doublet (Figures 3 or 4) is clearly not the mirror image of the left-hand half (even after taking perspective into account); and the embroidery on the right sleeve indicates that this is in fact the *back* of the left sleeve, where it would be correctly placed. The smaller size of the front right-hand panel (shown by seam *x* being around half the length of seam *y*, Figure 2) would be appropriate for the left-hand panel of the back of the doublet; the (non-matching) embroidery on the (smaller) right shoulder-wing would be what one would expect to see on the back of the left shoulder-wing, the "BBg" pattern being repeated regularly around it (Figure 5). It is now clear that no tailor-made doublet ever had such a counterchanged or "harlequin appearance." We are left wondering how this might have come about.

Figure 5. A mock-up of the left shoulder-wing (left) from the front, (center) from the side and (right) from the back. Compare with Figure 3 or 4.

It has been frequently asserted that the engraver was incompetent and that the publishers, principally Isaac Jaggard and Edward Blount, were prepared to accept an imperfect image of the author and his doublet, despite the fact that such a costly undertaking (one of the most expensive to date by an English publisher) would surely demand a flawless frontispiece. Although incompetence in perspective drawing might possibly account for the first three points above, it cannot account for the last, the embroidery mismatch on the shoulder-wings. No tailor, dressmaker, painter or sculptor – or engraver – could ever commit such a gross error, unless it were expressly required by a patron or employer.

Thus, for whatever reason, the so-called "deficiencies" were apparently intentional, just as the tailor of 1911 supposed, and accepted as such by Jaggard and his colleagues (who would likely have approved initial sketches and might well have kept an eye on work in progress). If they didn't like what the engraver first produced, they had only to withhold payment until he produced something more acceptable. Moreover, a young man undertaking an important commission early in his career is going to make absolutely certain that the finished product is exactly what his patrons require. Anxious to gain a reputation and a living, he would strive to avoid errors at all costs, knowing that his work would be subject to severe scrutiny on account of his youth. That the engraver signed with his full name suggests he was fully satisfied with his achievement.

Nevertheless, the engraving was not found to be entirely satisfactory, since changes were made as printing proceeded. According to Peter Blayney, in the first stage (of which only a few examples survive), there was "so little shading on the ruff that Shakespeare's head appears to be floating in mid air."Shading was therefore added, and later small changes were made to the hair and eyes when the plate was modified a second time. Blayney adds, "It is unlikely that anyone but Droeshout would have considered those alterations necessary."[7] But despite such close attention

to detail by the artist on going to press, none of the other peculiarities in the engraving were altered in any way. (Errors in draftsmanship could have been removed by use of the burnisher, at least in the early stages.)

The mismatch between the patterns of embroidery on the shoulder-wings can only have been achieved deliberately; to put it another way, even a child of ten would know that the bands of embroidery on the two shoulder-wings should be mirror images of each other. An artist or engraver, having completed one shoulder-wing, would *automatically* make sure the second wing matched the first, unless instructed otherwise. Together with the other peculiarities, this specific feature shows beyond doubt that the engraved doublet was carefully designed to consist of the left half of the front and the left half of the back of a real garment. It would appear that the artist had a real doublet in front of him; having depicted the front left half with the central fastenings and embroidery, he turned it round and drew the back left half. Why the engraver should have distorted reality in such a way as to produce a sartorial absurdity remains open to speculation, especially as other engravings signed with his name or monogram are executed with more than average competence.[8]

This departure from reality raises the question of whether anyone else has ever been portrayed in a similarly counterchanged or "harlequin" type of costume; and, if so, for what purpose? Alternatively, if there is no history of similar iconography, what would persons buying a copy of the First Folio in 1623 make of the engraving, assuming they spotted its peculiarities, which must have been far more readily apparent to them than to us? Leaving these questions aside, it comes as no surprise to find that the oddities of the portrait seem to have aroused a certain amount of skepticism when it was later used as the basis of another frontispiece. John Benson's 1640 edition of Shakespeare's *Poems* employs a reversed and simplified version of the engraving made by William Marshall (Figure 6).[9] The anomalous right-hand side of the doublet is covered by a cloak, and beneath the portrait are eight lines of verse, the first two of which read:

> This Shadowe is renowned Shakespear's? Soule of th'age
> The applause? delight? the wonder of the Stage.

The use of question marks rather than exclamation marks might appear to suggest that doubts about the engraving had already surfaced.

Figure 6. William Marshall's engraving of Shakespeare for the frontispiece of John Benson's edition of *Shakespeare's Poems*, London: 1640.

The Uncomely Frontispiece

To examine the strangeness of the doublet from a wider perspective, I shall quote from observations made by Leah S. Marcus, in *Puzzling Shakespeare: Local Reading and Its Discontents*.[10] In the first chapter of her book, Marcus makes some trenchant observations about the title page of the First Folio under the heading "The Art of the Uncomely Frontispiece." Compared with other folio volumes of the period she finds the Folio title page peculiar, to say the least. To begin with, she reports that the Droeshout portrait has been "the object of much vilification. It has, we hear, a depressing 'pudding face' and a skull of 'horrible hydrocephalous development'" (2). Readers, she says, "have delighted in pulling apart Droeshout's engraving. Shakespeare, it is complained, has lopsided hair and a doublet with two left armholes, a displaced nose, eyes that don't match, a head much too big for the body" (20). Compared with other portraits on title pages of the period it is "extremely large." It is "stark and unadorned" – it has "no frame, no ornamental borders" (even though such "embellishments" are found elsewhere inside the volume), and it is devoid of the allegorical figures and emblems which customarily surround such portraits and are typical of the title pages of the age, including comparable volumes printed by William and Isaac Jaggard (2).

Marcus compares the First Folio title page with those of Samuel Daniel's *Civil Wars* (1609), Samuel Purchas's *Pilgrims* (1625), John Taylor's *Works* (1630), Raleigh's *History of the World* (1614), and Jonson's *Works* (1616). In these books the author's engraving is surrounded by elaborate symbolical devices, designed to characterize the author and his book (3). As a representative example, consider the engraving of Samuel Daniel (Figure 7); note the modest costume appropriate to a middle class writer and poet, set off by complex ornamental designs. By contrast, the First Folio title page "appears stripped down to essentials," differing from all the others by offering "no particularising details – only the raw directness of the image, as though to say that in this case, no artifice is necessary: this is the Man Himself" (18). Jonson's poem facing the portrait adds further to the puzzle. It begins:

> This Figure, that thou here seest put
> It was for gentle Shakespeare cut

and ends, "Reader looke / Not on his picture, but his Booke." Shakespeare, the verses tell us (according to Marcus), "is not to be found after all in the compelling image opposite" (8). It is a "Figure" cut "for" Shakespeare, and should be ignored (according to Jonson), in favor of the volume's contents.

Figure 7. Frontispiece of Samuel Daniel's *Civil Wars*, engraved by Thomas Cockson. London: Simon Waterson, 1609.

Commentary

Such details invoke a puzzling discrepancy on the title page of the First Folio between what one should expect, and what one finds. In place of a lifelike or at least credible portrait of the "Soul of the Age," the "Star of Poets," dressed appropriately, we are offered a picture of a man wearing a nonsensical costume – a garment consisting of the left front and left back of a real doublet.[11] What can this mean?

Figure 8. Detail of the portrait of Sir John Petre (1603).

If similar portraits or historical parallels exist which might supply an explanation, an exhaustive search has failed to produce a single example, and so we can only entertain a few conjectures. The idea that Martin Droeshout might have had a grudge against Shakespeare or the publishers of the First Folio, and set out to poke fun at him or them by producing an engraving full of faults (hoping no one would notice), can I think be discarded as implausible. Another possibility is that the two left sleeves symbolize the fact that Shakespeare was the servant of two masters, Queen Elizabeth and James I, badges of allegiance being worn on the left sleeve. But the man in the portrait, so far from wearing the clothing of a retainer or actor, is dressed in clothing appropriate to a landed gentleman such as Sir John Petre[12] (Figure 8). Shakespeare might have been given such clothing as a castoff to wear on the stage, but could hardly have worn it in ordinary life in view of the existing sumptuary laws. Another suggestion is that since left-handedness[13] is sometimes associated with covert dealings, the portrait may hint at some subterfuge connected with the publication, perhaps that his role was not what it appeared to be (that of author). A further possibility is that the depiction of the face was imaginary, and the anomalous doublet was thus intended to warn the onlooker that it was not to be regarded as a true portrait (that is, not to be taken at face value).[14]

In the absence of a clear interpretation, perhaps something can be learned from other aspects of the engraving. Among the many peculiarities to which Marcus draws attention is that the portrait of Shakespeare is "extremely large" (2). In fact, it is around four times larger in area (six and a half inches by seven and a quarter) than

the title page head-and-shoulders portrait of any other author of the period. Why is this? I would suggest that if the image had been of normal size (e.g. that of a playing card or postcard), the details, especially those of the embroidery, would have been so difficult to make out that the implication they were presumably designed to convey might never have been suspected. To ensure that the left-front left-back character would be noticed, the engraving had to be as large as possible; as a consequence no space was available for the conventional allegorical figures and emblems usually surrounding such an image.

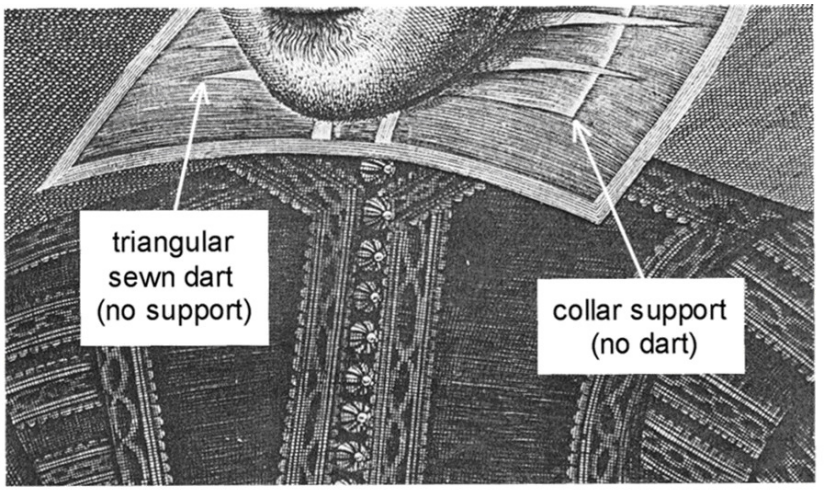


Figure 9. Showing the omission of the right-hand side of the collar support, and the lack of symmetry in the depiction of the triangular sewn darts in the wired band.

Further evidence of the engraving's duplicity is provided by the starched white collar or wired band under the head (Figure 1). Its support, known as an "underpropper" or "supportasse" (made, e.g., from lightweight material covered in silk) shows clearly through the linen on the left side of the collar (onlooker's right), but is not visible on the right side; both Sandy Nairne[15] and Tarnya Cooper[16] draw attention to this curious omission in the National Portrait Gallery's publication *Searching for Shakespeare*. It is also worth noting that the collar conceals part of the embroidery edge labelled "y" (Figure 2), in such a way that the exposed part is the same length as the edge labelled "x." The left and right seams in the neck area therefore appear to match each other, creating a kind of *trompe l'oeil* effect which tends to obscure the differing sizes of the front panels. In addition, the triangular sewn darts of the collar are almost comically unsymmetrical: left and right bear no kind of mirror relationship with each other, even allowing for perspective; Figure 9 draws attention to the chief mismatches.[17] It is no more a real collar than the doublet is a real doublet, and it is difficult to resist an impression that the person depicted is being gently and surreptitiously mocked. Although one or two peculiarities might be ascribed to carelessness, six or seven (some obvious at first glance) seem to point

towards a deliberate agenda of some kind.

Conclusion

The engraving by Martin Droeshout on the title page of the First Folio shows a man, identified by Ben Jonson and Leonard Digges[18] as William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, wearing an impossible garment which, it is reasonable to suppose, carries some symbolic implication. If no likeness of the poet had been available, the publishers could have commissioned an imaginary portrait properly costumed (as has sometimes been done, for example, with editions of Homer), or omitted one altogether; instead, they chose a course apparently intended to invite speculation.

If nothing else, this analysis of Shakespeare's doublet draws attention to an astonishing aberration at the heart of the First Folio. Whatever its interpretation, there can now be no doubt that the left-front/left-back anomaly is a fact. What is usually taken to be a poorly drawn portrait of the playwright turns out to be a skillfully executed depiction of a carefully designed enigma. Droeshout's engraving of Shakespeare has become, down the years, the most famous literary icon in the world, yet while ostensibly a portrait of our great poet, it hides beneath a more or less plausible surface a so far unresolved problem.

Perhaps light can be shed on this problem by examining other volumes of the period. Head-and-shoulder portraits of the following authors appear on title pages of their publications: John Florio, Walter Raleigh, Francis Bacon, Samuel Daniel, Michael Drayton, Ben Jonson, John Donne, John Weever, Samuel Purchas, John Taylor, John Milton; none show any peculiarities of costume and none are associated with questions of authorship. Only Shakespeare's dress is anomalous, and only Shakespeare's authorship is in doubt. Many people will be likely to conclude that by printing a caricature of the man from Stratford-upon-Avon, the publishers were indicating that he was not the author of the works that bear his name.

Endnotes

[1] *Searching for Shakespeare*, Exhibition curated by Dr.Tarnya Cooper, National Portrait Gallery, London, March to May, 2006.

[2] Edmond, Mary. "It was for gentle Shakespeare cut." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 42 (1991): 339-344; "Martin Droeshout." *The Dictionary of Art*. Oxford: OUP, 1996; "Martin Droeshout." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: OUP, 2006.

[3] Schlueter, June. "Martin Droeshout Redivivus: Reassessing the Folio Engraving of Shakespeare." *Shakespeare Survey* 60 (2007): 237-251.

[4] Lee, Sidney. *A Life of William Shakespeare* (third edition of revised version). London: John Murray, 1922: 529.

[5] Spielmann, M.H. *The Title Page of the First Folio of Shakespeare's Plays: a comparative study of the Droeshout portrait and the Stratford bust*. London: H. Milford, 1924: 32.

[6] Anon. "A Problem for the Trade." *The Gentleman's Tailor* 46 (1911): 93.

[7] Blayney, Peter W.M. *The First Folio of Shakespeare*. Washington, D.C.: Folger Library Publications, 1991: 18.

[8] Martin Droeshout had a successful career as an engraver both in England and Spain, and engraved portraits of many well-known and distinguished people including John Donne, the Duke of Buckingham, the Bishop of Durham, the Marquis of Hamilton and Lord Coventry. In 1631 he was commissioned to illustrate the second edition of Crooke's Mikrokosmographia (over 1000 pages long), testifying to an excellent reputation. The title page of this work is given here: http://www.bpi1700.org.uk/jsp/zoomify.jsp?image=157307 . Other examples of his work are included in June Schlueter's paper referenced above, and on the website of the National Portrait Gallery, http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person.php?LinkID= mp06906&role=art .

[9] Shakespeare, William. *Poems: written by Wil. Shake-speare*, Gent. London: John Benson, 1640.

[10] Marcus, Leah S. *Puzzling Shakespeare: Local Reading and Its Discontents*. Berkeley; London: U. of California Press, 1988: 1-30.

[11] With plain material and bold colours, this is the style of dress of jesters.

[12] Detail from the painting of Sir John Petre, 1603. At the time he was Lord Lieutenant of Essex, and was later created Baron Petre.

[13] It may be relevant to note that the primary meaning of the word "ambodexter" or "ambidexter" (having two right hands) in the 16th-17th centuries was "double-dealer" (OED), in particular someone taking money from both sides in a dispute. The corresponding word, ambisinister, was very rarely used, though by inference it might convey the same meaning, especially as left-handedness is

sometimes associated with underhand dealing. Characters named Ambodexter in dramas of the period were notably greedy for money.

[14] I am indebted to Phyllida McCormick for this suggestion.

[15] Nairne, Sandy. "Supportasse, 1600-1625." *Searching for Shakespeare*. London: National Portrait Gallery, 2006: 120.

[16] Cooper, Tarnya. "William Shakespeare, from the First Folio, c. 1623." *Searching for Shakespeare*. London: National Portrait Gallery, 2006: 48.

[17] In William Marshall's 1640 version of the engraving, Figure 5, the underpropper shows through on both sides of the collar, and the triangular darts on left and right are mirror images of each other. Through restoring symmetry, Marshall acknowledges – by correcting them – two of the more obvious peculiarities of the Droeshout original.

[18] In their poems prefaced to the first Folio, Ben Jonson addresses the poet as "Sweet Swan of Avon," and Leonard Digges refers to "Thy Stratford Monument."

Bibliography

Anon. "A Problem for the Trade." *The Gentleman's Tailor* vol. 46 (1911): 93.

Blayney, Peter W.M. *The First Folio of Shakespeare*. Washington, D.C.: Folger Library Publications, 1991: 18.

Chambers, E.K. *William Shakespeare, a Study of Facts and Problems*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930: i. 90; ii. 240.

Cooper, Tarnya. "William Shakespeare, from the First Folio, c. 1623." *Searching for Shakespeare*. London: National Portrait Gallery, 2006: 48.

Daniel, Samuel. *The Civil Wars between the Houses of Lancaster and York*. London: Simon Waterson, 1609.

Edmond, Mary. "It was for gentle Shakespeare cut." *Shakespeare Quarterly* vol. 42 (1991): 339-344.

_____. "Martin Droeshout." *The Dictionary of Art*. Oxford: OUP, 1996.

_____. "Martin Droeshout." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: OUP, 2006.

Friswell, J. Hain. *Life Portraits of William Shakspeare: a history of the various representations of the poet, with an examination into their authenticity*. London: S. Low, son, & Marston, 1864: 36-45.

Greenwood, Sir George. *The Stratford Bust and the Droeshout Engraving*. London: Cecil Palmer, 1925.

Hind, Arthur M. *Engraving in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Cambridge: at the University Press, 1952: Part II, 431-466.

Hinman, Charlton. *The Printing and Proof-reading of the First Folio of Shakespeare*. Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1963: vol. 1, 248-9.

Lee, Sidney. *A Life of William Shakespeare* (third edition of revised version). London: John Murray, 1922: 529.

Marcus, Leah S. *Puzzling Shakespeare: local reading and its discontents*. Berkeley; London: U. of California Press, 1988: 1-30.

Nairne, Sandy. "Supportasse, 1600-1625." *Searching for Shakespeare*. London: National Portrait Gallery, 2006: 120.

Nevinson, J.L. "Shakespeare's Dress in his Portraits." *Shakespeare Quarterly* vol. 18 (1967): 101-106.

Schlueter, June. "Martin Droeshout *Redivivus*: Reassessing the Folio Engraving of Shakespeare." *Shakespeare Survey* vol. 60 (2007): 237-251.

Shakespeare, William. *Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*. London: Isaac Jaggard and Ed. Blount, 1623.

Shakespeare, William, *Poems: written by Wil. Shake-speare, Gent*. London: John Benson, 1640.

Schoenbaum, S. *Shakespeare's Lives*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.

_____. *William Shakespeare, a Documentary Life*. Oxford: Clarendon Press with The Scolar Press, 1975.

_____. *William Shakespeare, Records and Images*. Oxford, The Scolar Press, 1981.

Schuckmann, Christiaan. "The Engraver of the *First Folio* Portrait of William Shakespeare." *Print Quarterly* vol. VIII (1991): 40-43.

Spielmann, M.H. *The Title Page of the First Folio of Shakespeare's Plays: a comparative study of the Droeshout portrait and the Stratford bust*. London: H. Milford, 1924: 32.

"Edwardus is My Propre Name":
Lily's Latin Grammar and the Identity of Shakespeare

Nina Green

William Lily's Latin *Grammar* was memorized by every Elizabethan schoolboy.[1]

Shakespeare's awareness of that fact is evident in the second scene of Act IV of *Titus Andronicus*. Titus sends a bundle of weapons to Demetrius and Chiron with a scroll on which are written two lines from the *Grammar*:

> **Dem.** What's here? a scroll, and written round about.
> Let's see.
> [Reads.] *Integer vitae, scelerisque purus,*
> *Non eget Mauri jaculis, nec arcu.*
> **Chi.** O, 'tis a verse in Horace, I know it well,
> I read it in the grammar long ago.
> **Aaron.** Ay, just – a verse in Horace, right, you have it.[1]

The reference to the *Grammar* here is perhaps the most egregious anachronism in Shakespeare. What could be more absurd than characters in a Roman play recollecting their childhood study of Lily's Latin *Grammar*? But surely Shakespeare did not just slip up here. Such an anachronism must have been deliberately inserted to attract the audience's attention to something. At least in part, Chiron and Aaron's words make it clear that that "something" is the manner in which allusions in a play can trigger the recollection of memorized passages in the *Grammar*.

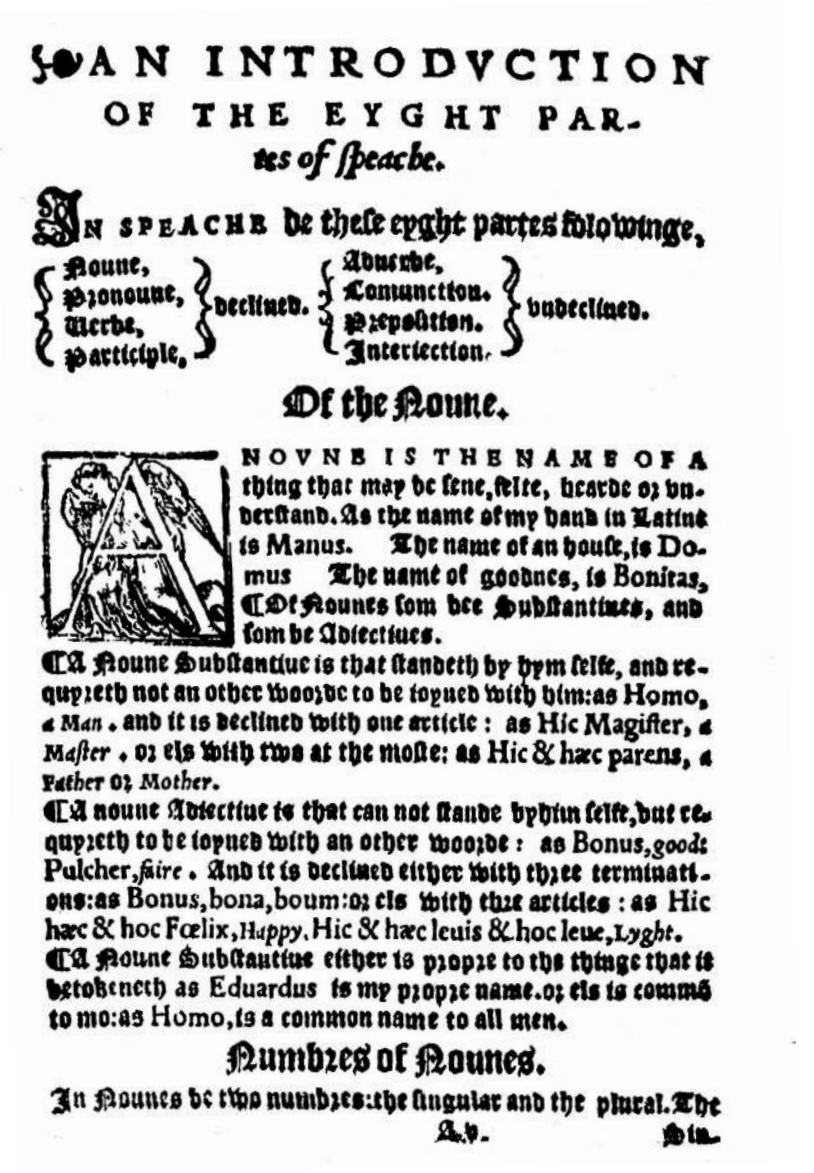
The first lesson in the *Grammar* is on nouns or names. And on the first page of this lesson is found a name – Edward – in Lily's phrase *Edwardus is my proper name*. It is a remarkable coincidence that scenes in two of Shakespeare's plays draw specific attention to this page in the *Grammar* containing the name Edward.

The first allusion is found in the first scene of Act II of *1 Henry IV*. Gadshill banters with the chamberlain at an inn in Rochester:

> **Gads.** We steal as in a castle, cocksure; we have the receipt of fern-seed, we walk invisible.
> **Cham.** Nay, by my faith, I think you are more beholding to the night than to fern-seed for your walking invisible.
> **Gads.** Give me thy hand. Thou shalt have a share in our purchase, as I am a true man.
> **Cham.** Nay, rather let me have it as you are a false thief.
> **Gads.** Go to, homo is a common name to all men. Bid the ostler bring my gelding out of the stable. Farewell, you muddy knave.

The words *Homo is a common name to all men* would have been instantly recognizable (Figure One) to any educated Elizabethan as part of the sentence in the *Grammar* which distinguishes between proper and common nouns:

> A noun substantive either is proper to the thing that it betokeneth, as *Edwardus is my proper name*, or else is common to more, as *Homo is a common name to all men*.



AN INTRODVCTION
OF THE EYGHT PAR-
tes of ſpeache.

IN SPEACHE be theſe eyght partes followinge,

Noune, Pronoune, Verbe, Participle, } declined.
Aduerbe, Comunction. Prepoſition. Interiection. } vndeclined.

Of the Noune.

NOVNE IS THE NAME OF A thing that may be ſene, felte, heard or vnderſtand. As the name of my hand in Latine is Manus. The name of an houſe, is Domus The name of goodnes, is Bonitas, Of Nounes ſom bee Subſtantiues, and ſom be Adiectiues.

A Noune Subſtantiue is that ſtandeth by hym ſelfe, and requyreth not an other woorde to be ioyned with him: as Homo, a Man. and it is declined with one article: as Hic Magiſter, a Maſter. or els with two at the moſte: as Hic & hæc parens, a Father or Mother.

A noune Adiectiue is that can not ſtande by hym ſelfe, but requyreth to be ioyned with an other woorde: as Bonus, good: Pulcher, faire. And it is declined either with three terminations: as Bonus, bona, bonum: or els with three articles: as Hic hæc & hoc Fœlix, Happy. Hic & hæc leuis & hoc leue, Lyght.

A Noune Subſtantiue either is propre to the thinge that it betokeneth as Eduardus is my propre name. or els is comm̃ to mo: as Homo, is a common name to all men.

Numbres of Nounes.

In Nounes be two numbres: the ſingular and the plural. The

A.v. Nu-

Figure One: Lily's discussion of nouns.[2]

Gadshill's words would thus have immediately reminded any educated member of an Elizabethan audience of the other part of the sentence -- *Edwardus is my proper name* (Figure Two).

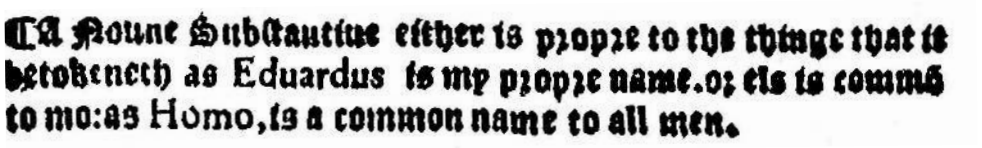

A Noune Substantiue either is proper to the thinge that is betokened as Eduardus is my proper name. or els is comme to me: as Homo, is a common name to all men.

Figure Two: "Eduardus is my propre name."

Gadshill's cryptic reference to walking invisible also assumes significance; as the true author of the Shakespeare plays, Oxford does "walk invisible." Similarly, the references to "stealing" and to "a true man" are significant in relation to Oxford's surname, Vere, and his motto *Vero Nihil Verius* (*Nothing truer than Vere*). There is a hint in these lines that the authorship of the plays has been stolen from a "true man," named Edward, who "walks invisible."

Were there only a single instance in which attention is directed to this line in Lily's Latin *Grammar*, it could be argued that the reference in *Henry IV, Part 1* is a mere coincidence. But the allusion to the words *Edwardus is my proper name* in *Henry IV, Part 1* does not stand alone. In the first scene of Act IV of *The Merry Wives Of Windsor*, the audience's attention is again directed at great length to the same page.

Anders has explicated in detail the relationship between this scene in *Merry Wives* and the first page of the lesson on nouns in the *Grammar*:

> Shakespeare's acquaintance with Lily's *Grammar*, commonly known as the *Accidence*, is satisfactorily proved by the catechetical scene in *The Merry Wives Of Windsor*. Sir Hugh Evans asks the boy, William, "some questions in his accidence." The answer to Evans' query, "How many numbers is in nouns?" will be found on the first page of the grammar proper:
>
> *In nouns be two numbers, the singular and the plural. The singular number speaketh of one, as lapis, a stone. The plural number speaketh of more than one, as lapides, stones.*
>
> Compare *Merry Wives*, ll. 32:
>
> **Evans.** What is *lapis*, William?
> **Will.** A stone.
> **Evans.** And what is "a stone," William?
> **Will.** A pebble.
> **Evans.** No, it is *lapis*. I pray you, remember in your prain.

Again, [consider] ll. 26-30:

Evans. What is "fair," William?
Will. *Pulcher*.
Quickly. Polecats! There are fairer things than polecats, sure.

These jests refer to the same page, where *bonus*, good; *pulcher*, fair, are given as instances of adjectives.

On p. 2 of Lily's *Grammar* we read:

Articles are borrowed of the pronoun, and be thus declined:

	Singulariter
Nominativo	*hic, haec, hoc*
Genitivo	*huius*
Dativo	*huic*
Accusativo	*hunc, hanc, hoc*
Vocativo	*caret*
Ablativo	*hoc, hac, hoc*

Pluraliter	
Nominativo	*hi, hae, haec*
Genitivo	*horum, harum, horum*
Dativo	*his*
Accusativo	*hos, has, hoec*
Vocativo	*caret*
Ablativo	*his*

Compare with this *The Merry Wives*, ll. 39ff.:

Evans. What is he, William, that does lend articles?
Will. Articles are borrowed of the pronoun, and be thus declined, *singulariter, nominativo, hic, haec, hoc*.
Evans. *Nominativo, hig, hag, hog*; pray you, mark; *genitivo, hujus*. Well, what is your accusative case?
Will. *Accusativo, hinc*.
Evans. I pray you, have your remembrance, child. *Accusativo, hung, hang, hog*.
Quickly. "Hang-hog" is Latin for bacon, I warrant you.
Evans. Leave your prabbles, 'oman. What is the focative case, William?
Will. O, — *vocativo, O*.
Evans. Remember, William: focative is *caret*.
Quickly. And that's a good root.

Evans. 'Oman, forbear.
Mrs. Page. Peace!
Evans. What is your genitive case plural, William?
Will. Genitive case?
Evans. Ay.
Will. *Genitivo, horum, harum, horum*.
Quickly. Vengeance of Jenny's case! fie on her! never name her, child, If she be a whore.
Evans. For shame, 'oman, etc.[3]

Anders demonstrates that Shakespeare took great pains in *Merry Wives* to direct attention to a specific page in the *Grammar* which all educated members of his audience knew by heart. Why did he bother to do this? The answer would seem to be that there is more to the scene than meets the eye.

Considering its lack of relationship to the rest of the play, the scene in *Merry Wives* seems pointless and irrelevant. That is not the case if it is being used to draw attention to a key paragraph on the first page on nouns in the *Grammar*, that is, the paragraph between *pulcher* and *lapis*, the two words which Parson Evans asks William to define, a paragraph in which is found the phrase *Edwardus is my proper name*. In that context, the contrast between the names Edward [de Vere] and William [Shaksper of Stratford] is surely significant, particularly when young William is depicted in *Merry Wives* as struggling to learn the most basic rudiments of Latin.

Was Edward de Vere the real Shakespeare? These three allusions to the *Grammar* in three different Shakespeare plays raise the issue in a way which cannot easily be dismissed, particularly in light of all the internal evidence in the Shakespeare plays which establishes that their author was someone with an entirely different education and life experience from William Shaksper of Stratford. These unusual allusions to the *Grammar*, and to the line *Edwardus is my proper name*, require that serious consideration be given to the proposition that the author of Shakespeare's plays was, indeed, someone named Edward, and that the references to the *Grammar* were inserted into the plays for the express purpose of using a page in Lily's Latin *Grammar* memorized by all educated Elizabethans as a device by which he could reveal his authorship of the Shakespeare plays.

Illuminating Eclipses:
Astronomy and Chronology in *King Lear*

Hanno Wember

Johann Gottfried Herder wrote his famous essay *Shakespeare* in 1772. He was (as Wieland, Lessing and, of course, Goethe and Schiller) one of the 18th century German writers "who first embraced Shakespeare and welcomed his genius as a dramatist."[1] In his 1980 introduction to Herder's essay, Konrad Nussbächer wrote: "Shakespeare is not, as it appeared in the 18th century, a natural genius growing up in the wild, but a highly cultured, artful Renaissance poet and practitioner of the stage."

Astronomy was one of the liberal arts and sciences a "highly cultured" man of Renaissance England was expected to know. This essay will review a few illuminating examples of Shakespeare's profound knowledge of astronomy, and will examine a new astronomical reference that could shed significant new light on Shakespearean chronology.

Shakespeare's Astronomy

In many regards Shakespeare had a better knowledge of the relationship between the moon and the tides[2] than his distinguished contemporary Galileo (1564 - 1642), who tried to explain the tides by the two motions of the earth, correlating to the day and the year.[3] This was an erroneous explanation for ebb and flow. But while Galileo refused to acknowledge any tidal influence of the moon, Bernardo knew better, referring to the moon as the

> moist star
> Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
> (*Hamlet*, I.1.135)[4]

To Prince Henry, likewise, the moon commands the tides:

> The fortune of us that are moon's men doth ebb and flow like the sea, being governed as the sea is by the moon.....Now in as low an ebb as the foot of the ladder, and by and by in as high a flow as the ridge of the gallows.
>
> *(1 Henry IV*, I.2.10)

As it does for Camillo:

> you may as well
> Forbid the sea for to obey the moon.
>
> *(Winter's Tale,* I.2.497)

Shakespeare was also aware of the major difficulty of describing the precise orbit of Mars — an unsolved astronomical problem in his day:

> Mars his true moving, even as in the heavens,
> So in the earth, to this day is not known.
>
> (*1 Henry, VI* I.2.3)

It was only in 1609 that Johannes Kepler (1571 – 1642) solved the problem on the basis of Tycho Brahe's (1546 – 1601) observational data (*Astronomia Nova, Physica Coelestris, tradita commentariis de Motibus Stellae Martis*). Kepler proved "Mars true moving in the heavens" to be an elliptical path.[5]

Although astronomy is far from being a major theme in his dramas, Shakespeare makes frequent references to it, often in a pictorial sense, occasionally in a casual way, but never incorrectly in astronomical terms, as this example illustrates:

> **Hel.** Monsieur Parolles, you were born under a charitable star.
> **Par.** Under Mars, I.
> **Hel.** I especially think under Mars.
> ....
> **Par.** When he was predominant.
> **Hel.** When he was *retrograde,* I think rather.
> **Par.** Why think you so?
> **Hel.** You go so much backward when you fight.
>
> *(Alls Well, I.1.109-117)*

This obvious reference to the *retrograde motion* of a planet is used correctly from the astronomical point of view. The retrograde motion of planets had been known ever since ancient times and was already well documented. It applies to *all* of the planets and is a visible phenomenon during the time of opposition (Mars, Jupiter and Saturn) or before and after the inferior conjunction (Mercury, Venus).

If one wished to assert that concrete references to astronomy were only used glibly with poetic licence and without a genuine background, it would be hard to justify. Shakespeare was familiar with the discussion on the current issues in science.

In *Troilus and Cressida* Ulysses deals with celestial order in his soliloquy:

> The heavens themselves, the planets, and this center,
> Observe degree, priority, and place,
> .....
> And therefore is the glorious planet Sol
> In noble eminence enthron'd and spher'd
> Amidst the other
> (I.3.88-94)

To call the sun a center seems to be heliocentric, but the term "planet Sol" is incompatible with the heliocentric-Copernican world view, in which the sun no longer can be regarded as a planet. On the other hand it is impossible to describe the sun as a "spher'd" center in the geocentric-Ptolemaic view Only the earth was the center in this system, the center for all planetary spheres, including the spheres

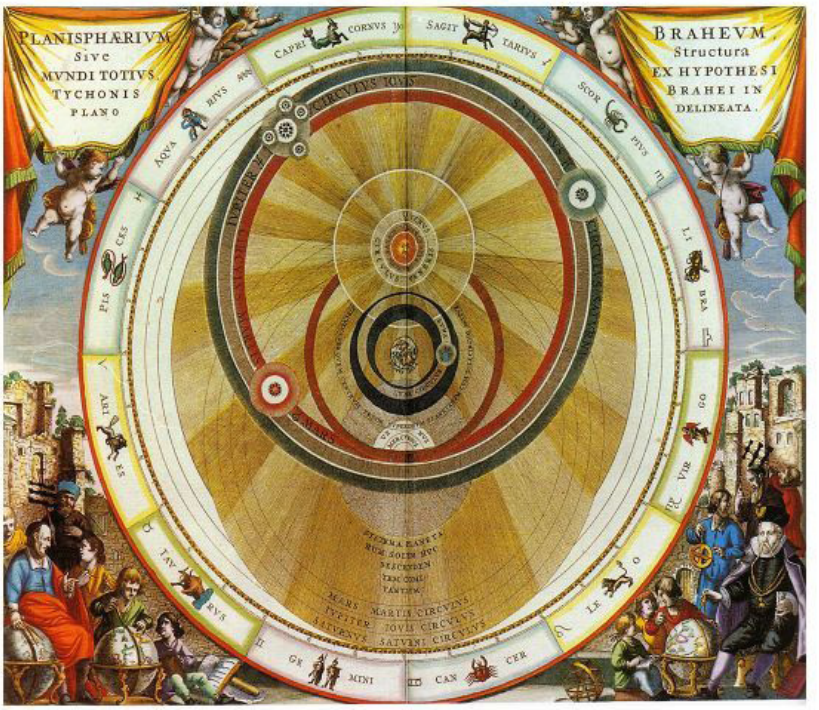


Figure 1: "This centre…the glorious planet Sol…enthroned and spher'd" *Mundi Totius Tychonius Braheum* - Tycho's Worldsystem, from Andreas Cellarus, Harmonia macrosoma, Amsterdam, 1661.

of the "planets" sun and moon as well, and there was no room for a center in the "heavens." The speech thus contradicts both systems.

Peter Moore discovered that we have here Tycho Brahe's world view, which was made public in 1588, and must have been known to the author of *Troilus and Cressida*.[6] Brahe sought to achieve a synthesis between the Ptolemaic and the Copernican world views: In his system the earth is the center for the orbit of the sun, but the planets are centered on the sun. By this the sun is both: planet and center (*Fig.1*).

The description in *Troilus and Cressida* is a unique one, which becomes more obvious when compared with Wallenstein's soliloquy in Schiller's trilogy (1798), where we have — as versified by Coleridge —

> The circles in the circles, that approach
> The central sun with ever-narrowing orbit.[7]

This obviously keeps to the modern heliocentric-Copernican view. The sun is the only center; spheres are replaced by circles and orbits.Schiller may have known the Ulysseus soliloquy, as the complete Wieland /Eschenburg translation had been in print since 1775, and while writing his historic plays he was deeply influenced by Shakespeare. It seems not to be mere coincidence, when both soliloquies pursue certain aspects of the heavenly hierarchy, but in Schiller's time there was no longer any basis to look at Brahe's system (if he was aware of its description at all).

The unique view in *Troilus and Cressida* becomes obvious when compared with the one given in Marlowe's *Tragicall History of D. Faustus* by Mephistophilis*:*

> Such are the heavens,
> Even from the moon unto the empirial orb,
> Mutually folded in each others spheres,
> And jointly move upon one axle-tree,
> Whose termine, is termed the world's wide pole…
> (II.2.37)

Here we find a strictly geocentric view almost reduced to a mere observable phenomenon, as it does not refer to a center but to the polar axis, which is close to what can simply be seen.[8] The critical literature contains numerous additional examples of Shakespeare's extensive and sophisticated knowledge of astronomy.[9]

Shakespeare's Eclipses

"Eclipse" occurs three times in a concrete or figurative astronomical sense in the Sonnets and six times in the dramas, including three instances in *King Lear.*

> **Glou.** These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us.
> (*Lear,* I.2.57)[10]

Peter Moore goes into the chronology of Shakespeare's dramas in detail and also deals with the issue of dating by drawing on political or other generally known events, in so far as there are indications or allusions to these in the dramas. He also mentions this citation in connection with a possible date of origin of *King Lear*, albeit without using it for the dating, and merely observes that "such (eclipses) happen almost every year."[11] This is evidently correct, but this does not clarify the issue. On closer observation, much more precise statements are possible, and this brief passage contains more regarding the question of dating[12] than might be expected at first glance. A solar *and* a lunar eclipse *may* occur with an interval of 14 days (but if so, both cannot be total).

A solar *and* a lunar eclipse *may* moreover occur with an interval of half a year, more precisely, with an interval of 177 ± 14 days.[13] These are the shortest time intervals possible, and longer time intervals are more typical.

In the absence of predictions, the occurrence of eclipses is unexpected and surprising in daily life, and without comprehensive astronomical knowledge, their occurrences do not reveal any regularity.

"These late eclipses…" would most probably be applicable to a pair of eclipses, one occuring shortly after the other. A time separation of half a year would seem to be less suitable and would appear plausible only if it were preceded by a long "eclipse-free" period.

The conspicuousness of an eclipse, and hence its entry into the general consciousness of a population, is very different for lunar and solar eclipses. A lunar eclipse will attract attention even with a small partial phase, since the familiar image of a round full moon fallen into the earth's shadow looks very unusual.

Solar eclipses often go unnoticed[14] because unless the eclipse is more than 90% of totality, it dims the sun's light no more substantially than does a cloudy day:

> Clouds and eclipses stain both moon and sun.
> (*Sonnet 35)*

For a given period, it is thus only a matter of investigating all eclipses to determine whether there are any cases of a sequence of a solar and a lunar eclipse within a time interval of 14 days. As shall be seen, the condition of this short time interval between two eclipses "in the sun *and* moon" greatly limits the possible relevant cases.

Since on a local scale, i.e. for a given area, solar eclipses are much rarer than lunar eclipses, the search should begin with them. And since only solar eclipses with a large phase (>90%) are of interest, the possibilities are rapidly limited even further, as will become clear.[14] Only one total solar eclipse was visible in England during the second half of the 16th and the start of the 17th centuries — on March 7, 1598. The line of totality ran through Cornwall in Southern England up to Scotland (Fig. 2).

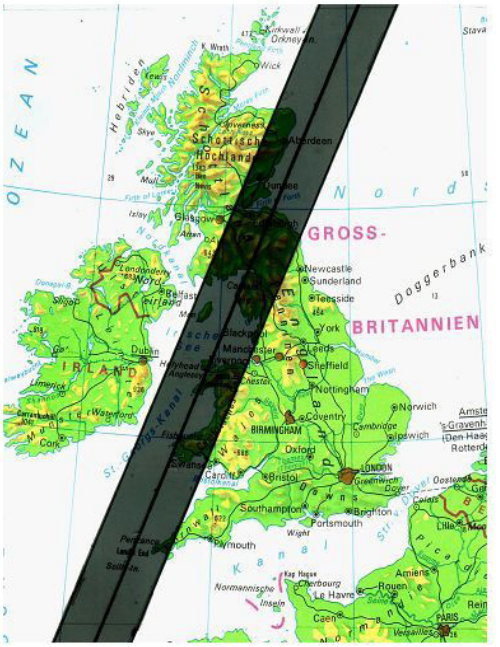


Figure 2: Solar Eclipse, March 7, 1598 zone of totality cuts through central England.

Before this, the only total solar eclipse in England was in 1440, and after it not until 1652. In the period in question, there were nevertheless two other eclipses with significant occulation phases[15] — on December 24, 1601, an annular solar eclipse with a central line in central England, and on October 12, 1605, a solar eclipse with a line of totality in Southern France/Pyrenees (Fig. 3).

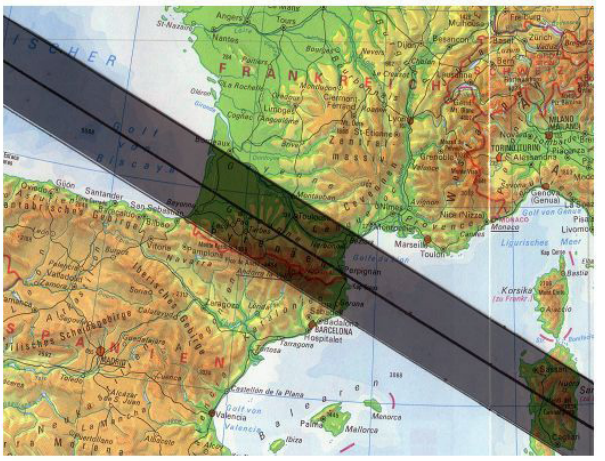


Figure 3: Solar Eclipse, Oct. 12, 1605, zone of totality cuts through southern France: a "Shakespearean eclipse?"

Critically, although the latter was total in France, it was was visible in England only as a partial eclipse. [16]

The London occultation phases of these three solar eclipses are shown in Figure 4:[17]

1598	93%
1601	80%
1605	85%

Figure 4

The eclipses of 1601 and 1605 significantly fail the criterion "occultation phase > 90%" and may therefore be excluded as not relevant. There is thus only one eclipse, namely that of 1598, which could correspond to the *Lear* references.[18]

With regards to the ">90%" criterion, it could nevertheless be maintained that it is an arbitrary one. For this reason, it may not be entirely persuasive. Concurrent to all three solar eclipses, moreover, lunar eclipses also appeared within an interval of 14 days (Fig. 5).

Solar Eclipse	**Lunar Eclipse** (Within a distance of 14 days)
7 March, 1598	21 February, (partial, 98%)
24 December, 1601	9 December, (partial, 88%)
12 October, 1605	27 September, (partial, 58%)

Figure 5: Correlative Solar and Lunar Eclipses visible in England, 1598-1605.

If we now use Gloucester's remark for a possible dating of the drama, we determine surprisingly that there are apparently three eclipses proposed for such a narrow period of time.[19] For Stratford, the eclipse of 1605 is regarded as the "Shakespeare eclipse," since it fits the orthodox dating scheme, which awards *King Lear* a composition date of 1605/06 and is incompatible with Edward de Vere's 1604 death. But is this attribution plausible? Only if the eclipse of 1598 is intentionally ignored, since it has far stronger arguments in its favor.

It is not only the much higher proportion of occultation, which would have made these particular eclipses an impressive event in London itself, that commends the 1598 events to our attention. The totality area ran throughout England. Within a short period of time, news could have spread to London that it had already become pitch black in the central zone. What could this portend? Corresponding reports for 1605 from the South of France, if any, would have been scanty and would hardly have had a major impact in the theatrical world, the more so because the event was familiar now, unlike in 1598 — when no one living in England could have remembered such a phenomenon.

But the context of the Gloucester quotation is also highly significant. For the development of the plot it is meaningless, but gives Edmund the cue for his subsequent soliloquy deriding the superstitions of astrology. The recently observed eclipses, which had terrified many, supplied the occasion for touching on a contemporary theme.

When Edmund ironically mentions the "dragon's tail"(I.2.58), this is no malapropism of a known constellation (*Draco* /dragon), but the correct astronomical expression for the descending node of the lunar orbit, *a decisive reference point for the occurrence of an eclipse*. The term is also found in Richard Eden's *Dedication* to Sir Wyllyam Wynter (1574).[20] Eden was a well-read author.[21] He had written one of the first books in English on America and translated Peter Martyr's reports on the voyages of Vespucci, Pigafetta, etc.[22]

The whole Edmund-soliloquy is a searing critique of astrology, which is made to look ridiculous, and this at a time when famous scientists such as Cardano[23] and Dee were still seeking to establish a scientific foundation for the field. Edmund puts different things together: A constellation — Ursa Major — and a reference point like a node. But a well informed listener will know that "Dragon's Tail" does not refer to a constellation.To put a "nativity under Ursa Major" is of course intentional nonsense, as the Great Bear is not a part of the zodiac, but it is appropriate when used ironically by Edmund.

In the subsequent dialogue with Edgar, the eclipse theme is reinforced, making it clear that Edmund alludes to actual events external to the play:

> these eclipses do portend these divisions
> (I.2.61)

and

> I read the other day, what should follow these eclipses
> (I.2.62)

No one will contradict Konrad Nussbächer when he describes Shakespeare as a practitioner of the stage. Even if his "high Renaissance culture" perhaps did not provide him with an advanced knowledge of astronomy, as a good practitioner of the stage, there was one thing that he would never do: bore his audience by claiming something was topical when it no longer was. After a solar eclipse occurred close to a lunar eclipse for the third time in seven years, these would have lost their terror and on the last occasion could no longer have been a topical theme. Had the author perhaps slept through the much more impressive 1598 event? This would be like a stand-up comedian in 2007 making contemporary, topical jokes about Helmut Kohl, Ronald Reagan, or Margaret Thatcher, which would at best raise a tired smile and at worst strike a wrong note.

The solar eclipses of 1601 and 1605 were merely attenuated repetitions of the apocalyptic events of 1598. This was also true for the adjacent lunar eclipses. In 1598, it was almost total (as mentioned above, totality is impossible because of celestial mechanics), in 1605 it passed off with a significantly more minor phase. In other

words, an attempt to summon up the horror experienced by Gloucester seeing "late eclipses in the sun and moon" suggests 1598 and not 1605 as Gloucester's cultural reference point.

The dating of *King Lear* to circa 1598 does not fit the orthodox scheme. The eclipse nevertheless sheds a clarifying light, if a paradoxical formulation regarding the question of dating is permitted. Moore can make datings for 10 dramas: for *Hamlet* c. 1594 and for *Macbeth*, 1600-01.[24] In the relative dating of the dramas, which is less controversial, *King Lear* is usually placed shortly before *Macbeth,* but significantly later than *Hamlet*. The dating to 1598 is in perfect agreement with this. This confirms what Peter Moore has extensively argued: The Shakespearean chronology has been consistently dated too late by at least seven years.[25]

Endnotes

[1] L. Dunton-Downer, A. Riding, *Essential Shakespeare Handbook*, London 2004, 468.

[2] A. F. Falconer, *Shakespeare and the Sea*, London 1964, 73.

[3] *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo*, *Giornata quarta, Florence 1632 / Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems, The Fourth Day.* Galileo's knowledge of the tides came primarily from his observation of the Mediterranean, whose small size makes its tides less clearly synchronized with the lunar motions than are those of the Atlantic, which scientists and English mariners seem to have calculated earlier and with greater precision. But here Galileo is not dealing with the tides of the Adriatic Sea, but rather with tides as a global phenomenon. Shakespeare on the other hand is well aware of the absence of tides in the range of the Mediterranean: "Like to the Pontic sea/ Whose icy current and compulsive course/Ne're feels retiring ebb" (*Othello*, III.3.508-510).

[4] All Shakespeare citations are from *The Oxford Shakespeare*, ed. W.J. Craig (Oxford UP, 1914)

[5] This particular play wasn't published until the 1623 Folio. Presumably the author, if still living after 1609, could have revised or amended these words with the new science in mind.

[6] Peter Moore, "Shakespeare's Astronomy," *Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter* 24: 3 (Summer 1988), reprinted in *The Lame Storyteller, Poor and Despised* (Hamburg, Germany: Verlage Uwe Laugwitz, 2009), 244. Isaac Asimov, astronomer and authority in astrophysics, took this as an indication of the Bard's geocentric sympathies (William Farina, *de Vere as Shakespeare*, Jefferson, N.C. 2006, 63). Peter Moore's view is more convincing. Edward de Vere and Tycho de Brahe could have met, since they stayed in Venice at the same time in 1575 (P. Moore, "Shakespeare's Astronomy," reprint in: *The Lame Storyteller,* 245).

[7] Friedrich Schiller, *Die Piccolomini*, II.6.982.

[8] This statement is the consequence of keeping methodically to a strict distinction between a "visible phenomenon" and theories or scientific models.

[9] Falconer, 93-96.

[10] The Quarto edition: *The History of King Lear* has an identical text here.

[11] Peter Moore, "The Abyss of Time: The Chronology of Shakespeare's Plays," *Elizabethan Review* (Autumn 1997), reprinted in *The Lame Storyteller,* 176.

[12] A reference to a single eclipse as the famous "The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured" (*Sonnet 107*) without any further clue can never give a basis for any kind of dating. It can at most strengthen other profound arguments. This is

different if more than one eclipse comes into question.

[13] The time space is 6 synodic months (a synodic month = 29.53059 days). 6 x 29.53059 = 177.18354 days.

[14] Accidental pinholes in the environment can project the sun's disc, and foliage might serve the same purpose. These methods have been known since ancient times. They are useful for people with some knowledge in practical astronomy; but are far from affecting the masses. The classical reference manual on eclipses is *Oppolzer's Canon der Finstenisse* (1887). Today, however, useful software is available, which simplifies the search (*Redshift* 7, 2009 or Antonius Schrode, AstroBase, *Canon of Eclipses*, Version 1.0).

[15] The magnitude of the eclipse in digits or percentage of the moon's /sun's diameter, "occultation phase" ranges from zero to the "maximum phase" which can have any number up to 1.00 (100%). G. D Roth, *Astronomy Handbook*, Cambridge, MA. 1975, 294.

[16] Louis P. Benezet referred to theses eclipses as a possible dating of *King Lear* in *American Shakespeare Fellowship Newsletter*, 4: 4 (June 1943), reprint in *Building the Case for Edward de Vere*, 2: 352, 2009. The eclipses in *King Lear* have recently been discussed in David H. Levy, "Shakespeare's Eclipses Return," *Sky & Telescope,* 106, 6. They are more recently mentioned by Richard F. Whalen, "A Dozen Plays Written after Oxford Died? Not Proven!" *The Oxfordian,* 10 (October 2007), 77, and by Howard Schumann, *Shakespeare Matters (*Winter 2009), 6.

[17] *Canon of Eclipses*, and *Redshift* 7.

[18] Other solar eclipses in England which reached a significant portion of occultation in London only occurred in 1547 and 1621, both of which were annular. The dates nevertheless exclude the possibility of associating them with the Gloucester quotation.

[19] A comparative study for Germany (for a similar time span of circa 50 years, at almost the same latitude but in a different century, for an area with circa twice the size of England), shows not a single pair of eclipses which match the Gloucester citation.

[20] Cf. Richard H. Allen, *Star Names, Their Lore and Meaning*. New York: 1963 (1st edition 1899), 208.

[21] Stritmatter & Kositsky's research on *The Tempest* demonstrates that Eden was the author of a primary source text for another play. So Eden would already have been familiar to Shakespeare. Stritmatter, Roger and Lynne Kositsky, "'O Brave New World': *The Tempest* and Peter Martyr's *De Orbe Novo*," *Critical Survey*, Vol. 21, Number 2, Summer 2009, *Questioning Shakespeare,* 7 et seq.
- "Dating *The Tempes*t: A Note on the Undocumented Influence of Erasmus' 'Naufragium' and Richard Eden's 1555 Decades of the New World," *The Shakespeare Fellowship* website, http://www.ShakespeareFellowship.org, 2005, 2007.

[22] Richard H. Allen, *Star Names, Their Lore and Meaning*, New York 1963, 12.

[23] Anthony Grafton, *Cardano's Cosmos –The Worlds and Works of a Renaissance-*

Astrologer. Harvard University Press 1999.

[24] Peter Moore, "The Abyss of Time," *Elizabethan Review* (Autumn 1997), reprinted in *The Lame Storyteller,* 185-187.

[25] Peter Moore, "Recent Developments in the Case for Oxford," *Ever Reader* (October 1996), reprinted in *The Lame Storyteller,* 331.

Hundreth Sundrie Flowres Revisited:
Was Oxford Really Involved?

Robert R. Prechter

Abstract

Some have advocated the idea that the Earl of Oxford participated in the composition and publication of *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, published anonymously in 1573 and issued in somewhat different form in 1575 as *The Posies of George Gascoigne*. The case rests on thirteen claims: that aspects of the publication indicate a coverup of authorship and motive; that aspects of it indicate more than one author; that Gascoigne lied in taking full credit for the first edition; that a prose story within the publication contains scandalous material about then-living persons; that an acrostic in one of the poems has a solution in "Edward de Vere"; that a series of inferences about the motto attending that poem indicates Oxford's involvement in the larger project; that Oxford and Gascoigne separately described their mutual experience of having been caught in the rain on a highway; that Christopher Hatton is connected to the volume through the motto *Si fortunatus infoelix*; that aspects of the prose story connect it to Hatton; that Oxford and Hatton were enemies; that Hatton secretly sabotaged Oxford's interests and was sympathetic to his enemies; that Oxford lampooned Hatton as Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* and as Speed in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*; and that stylistic evidence indicates Oxford's authorship of the prose story and some of the poems in the book. All of these claims are challenged.

Over the decades, a number of Oxfordians have attributed *A Hundredth Sundrie Flowres* to the Earl of Oxford. In the process, they have deprived an author of his rightful title to a pioneering book of English fiction. The analysis presented here is intended to correct this misconception.

A Hundreth sundrie Flowres bounde up in one small Poesie, an anonymous collection of plays, verse and a story, was published in 1573. Two years later, it came out again in an annotated, expanded and slightly altered collection titled *The Posies of George Gascoigne Esquire, Corrected, perfected, and augmented by the Authour. 1575*. For several reasons the publications invite scrutiny. Among them are:

1) The title page of *Flowres* names no author, and the text indicates and implies multiple authors, but two years later, in *Posies*, George Gascoigne takes full credit for all of the material.
2) *Flowres* came to press while Gascoigne was in Holland.
3) *Flowres* contains a shadowy "Epistle" by "H.W." and a "letter" to him from "G.T." These initialed persons claim to have brought the prose story "A discourse of the adventures passed by Master F.J." to print—via another unnamed person, "A.B."—despite G.T.'s entreaties to keep it private.
4) The publication was entered twice into the Stationers Register, at different times, by different publishers.
5) The publication is missing thirty-six pages of text, skipping from page 164 to page 201.
6) In the 1573 edition, the printer in his opening address tells readers that F.J., the hero of the prose story, is one "whome the reader may name Freeman Jones," an everyman type of pseudonym. His lady is named Mistress Elinor. The story is altered somewhat in the 1575 edition and re-named "The plesant Fable of Ferdinando Jeronmi [called Jeronimi in the text] and Leonora Valasco." The initial vagueness suggests hanky-panky, and the name changes in the second edition to real-sounding but referentless characters seem designed to further misdirect the reader from any real-life models for Master F.J. and his lady.
7) In the second edition, the story purports to be a translation of "the fable as it is

written in Italian by Bartello,"[1] a writer who does not exist. If Gascoigne meant author Matteo Bandello, he gives no hint of the literary source, and—as far as I can discern—no scholar has proposed one, suggesting that the citation is a diversion.

8) The printer's epistle is written in such a way as to indicate that the original plan for the book did not include the two plays printed before the F.J. story, suggesting that they were added later.

9) About a year after *Flowres* was published, Oxford left England without royal permission and spent July 1574 in Europe.

10) Copies of *Posies* were "confiscated for reasons that remain obscure. On 13 August 1576, 'by appointment of the Q.M. Commissioners,' Richard Smith, the bookseller, returned 'half a hundred of Gascoignes poesies' to the Stationers' Hall…."[2] This action could indicate an official recall, perhaps implying that some of the poems and/or the F.J. story contained offensive or unauthorized material.

On this fertile background, a number of prominent scholars, beginning with B.M. Ward, have built a scenario of the Earl of Oxford's involvement in *Flowres*, implicating him in substantial authorship of the volume, in its compilation, and in its publication. They propose that courtier Christopher Hatton is either — versions vary— the author or the subject of a certain group, or groups, of poems and the prose story. Oxford, supposedly motivated by his dislike of Hatton, set out to embarrass him. This behavior fits such character traits as impetuosity, which, it is argued, Oxford possessed. Latter-day theorists support their case by making connections to Oxford on stylistic grounds. I will refer to these charges and their variations as the Flowres-Oxford theory.

In three published studies, Ward "argues that the 1573 edition…was both compiled and published by Lord Oxford without Gascoigne's knowledge or permission…."[3] According to Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn Sr., "in 1573, under the title of *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres,* Oxford had published an anthology of poems—his own, Christopher Hatton's, *ostensibly* (though this seems to have been a fluke: they were rather by Oxford and *aimed* at Hatton), and some by Gascoigne—while Hatton and Gascoigne were absent on the Continent" [italics in the original]. They go further in referring to the collection as "Oxford's *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*."[4]

Charlton Ogburn Jr. reprised the case over the course of four pages, asserting that Oxford "foisted"[5] the *F.J.* story on Gascoigne. V. Anderson believes that Oxford inserted "sixteen of his own poems"[6] into "his" publication; M. Anderson reports, "de Vere has long been suspected of writing, or at least contributing to…*A Hundred Sundry Flowers*…."[7] This venerable tradition not only lacks credible evidence but also ignores numerous insurmountable contradictions which obviate the conclusion that Oxford was involved in the project.

We must begin by acknowledging that the author of *Flowres* engaged in obfuscation. But in all cases it is less conspiratorial than it seems. The initials attending the letters prefacing the *F.J.* story are probably covers for the real writer, but no one demonstrates any nefarious effect. Switching the associated name from

Freeman Jones to Ferdinando Jeronimi seems devious, but, as we will see, there is no evidence to challenge the notion that it was done for the reason Gascoigne gives in his 1575 preface: to make it clear to overly suspicious readers that the story is in fact fictional. In the second edition, Gascoigne's introduction of "Bartello" as the source of the F.J. story seems to qualify as a serious red herring. But he mentions Bartello again in his extension of "Dan Bartholomew of Bath," a poem left unfinished in the 1573 edition, and in "The Fruite of Fetters"; both poems introduce his persona, the Green Knight. For the discerning mind, Gascoigne cleverly retracts the whole pretense:

> In this roundabout fashion, quite characteristic of Gascoigne…he lets the reader know that Bartello and Bartholomew are the same as the green knight; and the green knight, as we know from *The fruite of Fetters*, in which Bartello is again given as authority, is Gascoigne himself.[8]

Thus, we are left, in the end, with no cover-up at all. In interpreting Gascoigne's preface to *Posies* as a mock repentance, F. Hughes chalks up these games to "Gascoigne the ironist."[9] Such playful items constitute no real evidence of serious misdirection, nor of deliberate concealment. But whether one holds that the dissembling in both editions is lighthearted (as the balance of evidence indicates) or serious, it is, by itself, entirely irrelevant to the question of whether Oxford is responsible for any of it.

Dual Registration and Missing Pages

Ward thought it suspicious that the book was entered into the Stationers Register twice—once by publisher Henry Binneman within the period of November 17 to December 31, 1572, and once by publisher Richard Smith in the same period in 1573—and that the book is apparently missing 36 pages. He concluded that two distinct books were later bound together. The first portion he dismissed as self-evidently Gascoigne's, but the second he reserved for Oxford. Ward's assignment has two serious problems: (1) None of the surmised partial editions survives, nor is there any known contemporaneous reference to them; and (2) in the Stationers Register, "both publications are assigned to George Gascoigne."[10]

It is not incumbent upon us to explain why these minor anomalies attend the book, but a simple explanation does exist. Taking a lead from Ambrose,[11] we may surmise that the dual publishers—who are identified in the two parts of the 1573 edition of the book—account for the pagination break, as well as the dual register entries. The full year separating their registrations suggests that the first publisher's work was for some reason interrupted, and Gascoigne's agent—whoever he was—simply assigned the second half to the other publisher, and somewhere in the process the pages were misassigned. Gascoigne, who was in Holland on Her Majesty's service, was unavailable to correct the error.

Is Gascoigne Being Truthful When in *Posies* He Claims Full Authorship of *Flowres*?

Scholars agree that the additional material in the second edition belongs entirely to Gascoigne. Indeed, the detailed commentary in the three epistles prefacing *The Posies of George Gascoigne* is entirely consistent with Gascoigne's life. Gascoigne names a friend at Gray's Inn, speaks of his trip to Holland, mentions a few specific friends and addresses a number of poems to specifically named ladies. He also details the circumstances attending his masques' performances, clearly indicating firsthand knowledge.

In the prefacing material, written "To the reverend Divines," "To al yong Gentlemen" and "To the Readers generally," Gascoigne fails to disavow a jot of *Flowres*, apologizes convincingly for certain aspects of the youthful compositions in the first edition of his works—almost every word of which he maintains in the second—explains his feelings about the matter, and describes his earlier motivations and ensuing actions. Scholars disagree over whether Gascoigne's apology is heartfelt or mock-serious, but they have not questioned that he wrote it.

Advocates of the Flowres-Oxford theory charge that Gascoigne is lying, or that Oxford wrote the preface under Gascoigne's name, but there is no contemporaneous record of suspicion that Gascoigne was not the author. On the contrary, no fewer than eighteen prefatory verses by Gascoigne's friends and admirers in the second edition support his claim to authorship of the first edition. Most of them are signed with initials; it seems likely that "T.Ch." is Thomas Churchyard and "G.W." is George Whetstone, who later wrote Gascoigne's epitaph. Both men had ties to Oxford, and if all the other poems were alike enough to assign to one or two writers, we might wonder about subterfuge; but their styles are different enough that they seem to be written by multiple authors. It is unlikely that all of these poets would be fooled or would feel compelled to confirm Gascoigne's authorship of something he had not written. It seems far more likely that Gascoigne was simply calling upon his friends to dress up the volume of his lifetime literary effort, now finally issued in his name.

In the prefacing epistles to *Posies*, Gascoigne uses language that directly counters any suspicion that someone brought *Flowres* to press without his knowledge or permission. There is no basis upon which to question Gascoigne's honesty on this point, and, notably, *there is no indication that he was even answering a charge to the contrary*. He lists five reasons why his works accrue to his credit and concludes, "These considerations (right reverend) did first move me to consent that these Poemes shoulde passe in print."[12] He adds a comment about the time "when I fyrst [permitted] the publication" and wonders "whether I were worse occupied in first devising, or at last in publishing these toies & pamphlets." He explains his primary reason for having them published while he was in the Low Countries: "I thought good to notifie unto the worlde *before my returne*, that I coulde as well persuade with Penne, as pearce with launce or weapon."[13] This statement is fully in accord with Gascoigne's later motto: *Tam Marti quam Mercurio*—"as much for Mars as for

Mercury"—the noble ideal of arms and letters. (Mars is the god of war, and Mercury is the messenger of the gods and therefore, as Ben Jonson put it, "the president of language.")[14] He continues, "as these considerations did specially move me *at first to consent to the imprinting of these posies*, so nowe I have yet a further consideration which moveth mee most earnestly to sue for *this second edition or publishing of the same*."[15]

Gascoigne explains the composition of the prose story *F.J.* as an exercise designed that "men might see my Methode and maner of writing."[16] If he had *not* written *F.J.* he would have disavowed it or—if he feared retribution from a powerful nobleman—at least would have dissembled the issue, not explained his intentions in having written it. Nor does Gascoigne excuse himself from the authorship of any of the poems, but only from any perceived malicious intent: "so might it seeme that I were woorthie of greate reprehension, if I shoulde bee the Aucthour of evill *willfully*, or a provoker of vyces *wittingly*."[17] He even expresses some pride that "the first Copie of my Posies hath beene verie much i[n]quired for by the yonger sort."[18]

The form of Gascoigne's preface in *Posies* is itself clear evidence that the project was entirely his. The seeming fidelity of Gascoigne's reasons, admissions, apologies, excuses and expressions of pride supports his full authorship of *Flowres*.

A Scandalous Story?

One of the important assertions of those who doubt Gascoigne's sole authorship of part or all of the two volumes is that the original *F.J.* story scandalized real people and therefore required a coverup. First we will see whether such a scenario, true or not, would support Oxford's involvement, and then we will see if it is true.

Ironically, if the claim of scandalous material were true, it would point towards Gascoigne's authorship, not Oxford's. An aspect of Gascoigne's biography precisely fits the charge that *F.J.* is about real people: In 1572 he was "elected to Parliament, [but] his creditors kept him from sitting"[19] by charging him "not only with insolvency, but with manslaughter, atheism, and with being '*a common rhymer and a deviser of slanderous pasquils against divers persones of great calling.*'"[20] In other words, Gascoigne's enemies had already tagged him, *prior to 1573*, with having written clandestinely about high-ranking people. Therefore, an exceptional reason is required to shift scandalous writing onto Oxford's shoulders when (1) Gascoigne's name is on record as being connected to such activity, and (2) Oxford's is not. (This is true despite some Oxfordians' attempts, which I find to be erroneous, to link him with such publications as *Willobie His Avisa* or the anti-Leicester pamphlets or to writing satires of Hatton from Shakespeare's plays, as discussed below.) The charge levelled against *F.J.*, then, fits Gascoigne better than Oxford.

Alternatively, if the claim of scandalous material is false, it also works against the Flowres-Oxford theory. We will now investigate whether either of the reasons supporting suspicions about *F.J.*'s supposedly scandalous nature is valid: that that the *F.J.* story was sanitized for the second edition and the original book was banned.

If either Gascoigne or Oxford had embarrassed certain people with the original text, the deletions made for the second edition might tell us who they are. But we have yet to read an analysis indicating that Gascoigne's revisions, the meat of the supposed gossip, reveal the identity of anyone. If they do, it is certainly not Christopher Hatton. Ward, in the appendix to his book on *Flowres*, detailed every change between the two versions of the story and yet cited not a single excised phrase that relates directly to Hatton or anybody else.[21] Studying the alterations will assure anyone that nothing of substance was deleted. Even the seemingly suspicious change of location from northern England to Italy, paralleling the "Bartello" claim, contributes nothing to the story and is not elaborated in any way. The supposedly offending poems contain no significant alterations, either. These voids indicate that no sensitive material was excised.

Many scholars have assumed that *Flowres* was banned, but the evidence is inconclusive if not contradictory. According to Pigman, "Since it is often stated as fact that *73* was censored, one must emphasize that *there is no record of this* and that the records of the Stationers Company from July 1571 to July 1576 are missing."[22] The fact that Gascoigne reissued the poems and prose story intact implies that the 1573 edition had *not* been banned. The only basis for believing that the first edition was banned is that authorities recalled copies of the *second* edition in 1576. But even this belief is conjecture. The recorded event of 1576 is that a bookseller, on orders from the Queen's commissioners, "returned" 50 copies of *Posies* to the Stationers' Hall. The commissioners' motivation for obtaining this round number of returns from a single seller is unexplained; perhaps the merchant was indebted or a tax delinquent.

To conclude, we lack any solid reasons to doubt Gascoigne's statements in the preface to *Posies* that some readers—obviously none powerful enough to ban his first book—had come to the *false* conclusion that the story "was written to the scandalizing of some worthie personages"[23] and that among twenty such claimants he got twenty interpretations of "whom they woulde seeme therby to know." He swears "by the hope of my salvation" that no living person was the model for the story. A person may *suspect* that he is lying, but if Gascoigne did something other than he says, it is incumbent upon doubters to so demonstrate.

We have thus constructed two challenges to the conspiracy theory: (1) If Gascoigne is lying and *F.J.* is indeed scandalous, then Gascoigne, who was accused the year before by creditors of exactly such behavior, is an ideal candidate for authorship in the first place. (2) If Gascoigne is telling the truth (which better fits the evidence), then *F.J.* is not scandalous, and a portion of Flowres-Oxford theory becomes moot.

Multiple Authors?

Another reason for suspicion about the authenticity of Gascoigne's authorship of *Flowres* is that certain language in the 1573 edition indicates or implies that the poems are by multiple authors. G.T., in his letter prefacing the *F.J.* story, refers to "all the authors" whose works make up the book. It may be worth mentioning that much

of the language implying additional authors is less than definitive. At the end of the *F.J.* story, G.T. introduces the next section as containing "sundry verses written by sundry gentlemen…presented out of sundry gardens [of] the authors…." A perusal, however, shows that this portion of *Flowres* is a loosely connected narrative primarily about various men writing poems to various women and friends, who reply in turn; in other words it chronicles "The devises of sundry Gentlemen," exactly as the title says, fitting a fictional frame just as well as one based in reality. When in the midst of this section the editor finally introduces Gascoigne's name, he does not say that Gascoigne is merely the next poet; he says: "I will now deliver unto you *so many more* of Master Gascoignes Poems as have come into my hands, who hath never beene dayntie of his doings, and therfore I conceal not his name…."[24] This statement may be taken to mean that all the poems preceding it are Gascoigne's, too.

Doubt as to the meaning of this comment suggests sloppiness in establishing a pretense of multiple authors, whereas no such imprecise statement accompanies Gascoigne's explanations of 1575. Regardless, we will proceed under the universally accepted assumption that the editor's intent—whether or not it was truthful or carried out competently—was to indicate multiple authors, and see where that premise takes us. Poems in this section, many of which are grouped accordingly, appear over eight different Latin mottos or "posies": *Si fortunatus infoelix*; *Spreta tamen vivunt*; *Ferenda Natura*; *Meritum petere, grave*; *Ever or Never*; *Haud ictus sapio*; *Attamen ad solitum* and *Sic tuli*. All the poems appearing above the final four of these mottos are attributed in the text to Gascoigne. The first four are claimed for anonymous others: G.T. says that "Master F.J." is responsible for the first series; the introduction attending the second series says, "Now to begin with another man"; the third is labeled "A straunge passion of another Author"; and the fourth follows the entreaty to "hearken unto the works of another writer."

Ward takes these notes at face value and says, "It is obvious from these notes that the several authors can be distinguished by the Latin 'posy' or motto which serves as a signature at the end of each one."[25] Right away we have at least a minor problem: If each motto were meant to indicate a different writer, why are four of them openly charged to Gascoigne? Contrary to Ward, the differing mottos *per se* mean nothing; *only the editorial notes* suggest four other authors.

In deciding which edition of Gascoigne's book contains the misdirection, it is crucial to point out that no Elizabethan poetry survives to link any of the four supposedly independent mottos to any other poet. Surely if the text indicating that different men wrote the poems were accurate, some researcher would have found at least one of these mottos in other poets' works.[26] Until some evidence to the contrary surfaces, the exclusive appearance of these mottos in Gascoigne's publications seems to confirm the authorship of the man who, we must remember, cheerfully claimed them two years later as his own.

Negative evidence against others theories of authorship is not, however, all we have. There is also positive evidence of Gascoigne's authorship of poems within the first, third and fourth series, as well as a contradictory designation within the second series:

- The first series, signed *Si fortunatus infoelix*, directly follows G.T.'s presentation of "sundry verses written by sundry gentlemen." But its main character—discussed at length in the introduction to "I Cast myne eye" as "being stoong with hot affection," etc.—is named "G.G.", indicating George Gascoigne. (We will examine this series in more detail below.)
- The second series, signed *Spreta tamen vivunt*, includes a poem by "An absent Dame," thus contradicting the claim that the entire series is by "another man." It will not do simply to assert that the independent poet wrote this verse as well, because the whole case against a single author depends upon the attending notes' literal accuracy.
- The third series, signed *Ferenda Natura*, begins with the poem, "Amid my Bale I bath in blisse." Several pages later, within one of the series explicitly labeled as Gascoigne's, a poem titled "Gascoignes Recantation" reads, "once I soong, *I Bathe in Blisse*, amide my wearie *Bale*:/ And many a frantlike verse, then from my penne did passe" (italics original). As Pigman[27] observed, Gascoigne hereby claims outright the earlier poem as his own. Later, in "Dan Bartholomew," Gascoigne writes, "If ever man yet found the *bathe* of perfect *blisse*," again using the phrase. The words *Ferenda* and *Natura* also show up yet again—likewise in italics—as representing the object of the poet's affections in Gascoigne's *The Grief of Joye* (1576), in which he speaks of "*Ferenda* she who eke *Natura* hight," also connecting that motto directly to him, not "another Author."
- In the fourth series, signed *Meritum petere, grave*, the seventh poem plays on the alphabet and concludes, "Take dooble *G.* for thy most loving letter," showing that the poem, and by implication the whole series, is both by and about Gascoigne, not, as the prefacing statement would have it, "another writer." The same motto appears on the title page, thereby connecting the whole project to Gascoigne. (We examine this series further below as well.)

Therefore we may reject claims of authorial independence for every one of the four groups of poems. We can even assign three of them positively to Gascoigne; ironically, they happen to be precisely the ones that various Oxfordians have attributed to Oxford.

One of the four signatures that the book attaches to Gascoigne, *Haud ictus sapio*, appears again in his long narrative poem on "Dan Bartholomew," which soon sports another motto, *Fato non fortuna*; and the extension of that same poem in *Posies* introduces yet another motto: *Tam Marti quam Mercurio*, stretching the motto count to ten. The overlap and continuation of mottos in later works further demonstrate that the author is simply using a device.

In *Flowres*, moreover, G.T. first says that all the poets verbally explained their motivations to him, and then he claims he has no idea who wrote the poems. As Pigman said, "If he spoke with them, he ought to know who they are."[28] G.T. also claims that the collection was simply "presented" to him, whereas earlier "he takes

credit for the labour of assembling it."[29] Thus, the multiple authors theme in *Flowres* is self-contradictory, whereas the single author theme of *Posies* is not.

In summary, the book's original identification of Gascoigne as the author of four of the eight original series; the Gascoigne-specific content in three of the other series; the inconsistency of assignment in the single remaining series (not to mention its indistinguishibility from the others on the basis of style); Gascoigne's continual use of mottos in subsequent material; the attachment of these mottos solely to Gascoigne; and the self-contradictory claims about the supposedly independent authors, together prove that Gascoigne is behind all of the poems supposedly written by "sundrie Gentlemen" and confirm Gascoigne's later claim to all the poetry in *Flowres*, which in turn is supported by the appearance of all but three of the poems ("When worthy Bradamant" and "When stedfast friendship" from the *Si fortunatus infoelix* series and "If any floure" from the *Haud ictus sapio* series) in what he calls his "second edition." In sum, in the 1575 edition, Gascoigne simply "drops the pretense of multiple authorship."[30]

Consider finally that Flowres-Oxford theory requires that a *hidden, anonymous,* editor of *Flowres* in 1573 was being *truthful* about the existence of multiple authors, while the *clearly identified* Gascoigne in 1575 was *lying* about being the sole author. Consistent with normal sensibilities and Gascoigne's own admission, the internal evidence indicates that these conclusions are backwards.

Advocates of the Flowres-Oxford theory also seem undeterred by the fact that the entire *Flowres* enterprise is sloppy. Is such sloppiness found in any other literature attributable to Oxford? Oxfordians have done a heroic job of demonstrating that Shakespeare's references to law, medicine and astronomy reveal a deep and subtle understanding and that his references to geography and the peerage are flawless. But advocates of the Flowres-Oxford theory propose that he also issued a slapdash book full of careless inconsistencies.

The third prefacing epistle in *Posies*, moreover, explains why Gascoigne initially connected some of these poems to other men. He writes,

> I thought good to advertise thee, that the most part of them were written *for other men*. And out of all doubt, if ever I wrote lyne for my selfe in causes of love, I have written tenne *for other men in layes of lust*…. For when I did compile any thing *at the request of other men, if I had subscribed the same with mine owne usuall mot or devise, it might have bewrayed the same to have beene of my doing*. And I was ever curious in that behalfe, as one that was lothe to bewray the follies *of other men*.

Thus, Gascoigne confirms the deduction of Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn Sr. that these poems "were all written by" one man, but they have the wrong man: He is not "Oxford himself,"[31] but Gascoigne.

Gascoigne's eventual claim to full authorship of the poems and the *F.J.* story, which were initially credited to unnamed persons, is also compatible with the fact that Gascoigne consistently credited independent writers *by name* for their work.

Some parts of the play *Jocasta* (performed at Gray's Inn in 1566), which is included in *Flowres*, are clearly marked as by two separate co-authors. And two years later, in *The Princely Pleasures at Kenelworth Castle* (1575), Gascoigne notes quite precisely the portions of the entertainment that were contributed by others, *whom he names*, just as he does in *Jocasta* and as he does *not* do for the poems and story in *Flowres* that are supposedly by others. In *Posies*, the vague claims for unidentified second-party authorship are deleted, undoubtedly (we may now safely say) because they were false.

Gascoigne's successors, moreover, continued to claim the entire book for him. A later collection, *The Whole Works of George Gascoigne* (1587), published a decade after the poet's death, attributes to him all the works that appear in *Posies*.

So Gascoigne seems innocent of participating in a literary cover-up. And, as we are about to see, so does Oxford.

The Oxford Non-Connection

When all is said and done, Ward's only evidence that Oxford is connected to *Flowres* is his assertion in the introduction to *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1926) that one of its poems, "L'Escu d'amour," contains an acrostic of "Edward De Vere." I am not the first to reach this conclusion. Bowers in 1937 wrote, "The cipher is, indeed, the very keystone of his theories, since it is the one tangible matter which can be produced of Oxford's connection with the volume."[32] For this reason we need to investigate the claim carefully.

We should begin by noting that Ward's evidence would have no value even if Oxford's name were embedded in the poem. Rather than assert thereby that Oxford wrote it, one could just as well suggest that Gascoigne wrote this poem for Oxford, in accordance with his admitted practice.

Ward's case is so inadequate that no alternative explanations are required. Despite having supported some conclusions[33] about secretly embedded names, I myself fail to find any "acrostic" or other device in the aforementioned poem.

"L'Escu d'amour"—the Shield of Love—was the motto of the Scudamore family, Sir John Scudamore being twenty-nine years old at the time. There seems no reason to doubt that Gascoigne wrote this poem about or for Scudamore, not Oxford. A contradicting acrostic would have to be clearly rendered in order to challenge the idea that the poem relates to Scudamore.

To introduce his argument, Ward shows a poem by Anthony Munday from 1579 that contains an acrostic in which the first letter of each line denotes "EDWARD DE VERE." In 1606, Nathaniel Baxter addressed a poem to Susan Vere that contains the Vere family motto in the same type of acrostic. Failing to find Oxford's name in the poem in any conventional or natural way, Ward derives it using the following procedure:

(1) Select the starting letters of each word.
(2) Start on a prominent letter in the first line.
(3) Scan the first line forward, the second line backward, and so

on to the end.
(4) Select the letters that fit into a name.
(5) End on a letter in the last line.
(6) Begin again with the same letter that ended the first progression.
(7) Scan the last line backward, the next-to-last line forward, and so on to the beginning.
(8) Find the same progression of letters as you found in the downward direction.
(9) End on the same letter with which you started.

The final step, as Bowers deduced, "is tailor-made for Edward de Vere,"[34] since it allows only names that start and end on the same letter, and the only qualifying letters in the first line that also appear in the last line are *E* and *L*. Despite jerry-rigging these rules, Ward takes yet further liberties:

(1) He chooses *a* prominent letter in the first line rather than *the* most prominent letter, which is the starting capital *L*.
(2) He allows lines to contain one or two solution letters, or no solution letters.
(3) He treats the letter *U* in the word *Untied* as his required *V*, in line with Elizabethan printers' common practice but contrary to the letter's usage.
(4) He finds the capital letters E, D and U, for Edward De Vere, placed in the downward direction, but capital letters are randomly placed in the upward direction, a combination counterindicative of an intentional cipher.
(5) He finds a capital D for *de*, but the middle part of Oxford's name was in fact almost always written in lower case.

Any poem of such substantial length—giving us a whopping 304 letters with which to work—would render, by similarly ad hoc guidelines, countless names. As Bowers rightly noted, "the curious rules remove any significance to such performance with a string of letters."[35]

Even so, Ward's specific claim can be tested. In doing so, one is perfectly justified in finding other names to fit the cipher, since Ward did no less in finding a cipher to fit the name. Ambrose tackled the task and asserted, "one finds in the same poem—using the same 'key' suggested by Mr. Ward—the names of George Gascoigne, Elisabeth Gascoigne, Thomas Churchyard, and even the present writer's own name [Genevieve Ambrose]."[36] Yet despite her assertion, Ambrose in fact failed to test Ward's key, because her names do not show up in both directions, much less do they start and end, as Ward requires, on the same "prominent" letter. In Ambrose's solutions, the capital letters do not occur in the right places, either.

Nevertheless, I found no trouble in using Ward's *precise* instructions—not even with any adjustments that would have been acceptable under his approach—to come

up with a solution. I combined two of Ambrose's names in order to start and end on an *E* and added a middle name for good measure to come with the name "Elisabeth Cissy Ambrose." As with Ward's "Edward De Vere," this solution turns up in both the downward and upward directions when reading the lines alternatively forward and backward and then vice versa, respectively; it has the capital letters—E, C and A—in exactly the right places in the downward direction; and the entire name begins and ends not merely on the same lines but also on precisely the same letters with which Ward's progression begins and ends: the E in *L'Escu* and the *e* in *elles*. It doesn't even require substituting a *V* for a *U*.[37]

This solution, moreover, contains twenty-one letters compared to a mere twelve in Edward De Vere. Statistically, each additional letter increases the improbability of a solution exponentially. Perhaps we should search Elizabethan archives for this possible object of Gascoigne's affection. Doubtless one could also find names that begin and end more sensibly with the opening *L* of the poem and the *L* of *lend* in the final line, but one of my goals was to show that Ward's specific starting and ending points do not render a unique solution. To state the matter clearly: There is no special anagram and no case whatsoever that Oxford's name is deliberately embedded in the poem.

Ward desperately needs his purported encoding, because he goes on to note that the poem falls within the *Meritum petere grave* series of poems, from there to noting that the same motto appears on the title page, and thence to the conclusion that Oxford compiled the entire book. This is a far-fetched inference, even if its starting point were true.

The content of this very series of poems contradicts Ward's case. As noted earlier, in one of these poems—"Of all the letters"—the writer begs his love to "Take dooble *G* for thy most loving letter," clearly indicating George Gascoigne. Ward himself notes that the letters cited in the poem's first stanza—A, O, G, N, C and S—are "an obvious anagram"[38] of "Gascon." Both of these sets of letters confirm that the first-person narrator is Gascoigne. Ward even goes on to argue that the subject of the poem is Elizabeth Breton, whom Gascoigne once wooed and eventually married, and that the "B" of the poem represents his rival at the time, Edward Boyes. Yet then, without cause and contrary to logic, he simply asserts, "I suggest further that Lord Oxford wrote it…."[39]

Ward goes on to pinpoint the time of composition as being "at the same time that Gascoigne was writing the *Complaynt of Phylomene*, namely, September, 1562."[40] Although this dating is indefensibly precise (see further discussion below), the problem here is that Oxford at that time was only twelve. Ward admits, "It may, of course, be argued that Lord Oxford was too young at that time to have written it,"[41] and counters that objection with proof of the pre-teen Oxford's command of English. But the point is not that Oxford *could* not have written it; the point is that a pre-teen boy *would* not have written a highly personal poem, in first person, for a twenty-eight-year-old man in love with a specific woman, much less when both lovers are commoners and he a nobleman, and when there is no evidence that the boy had any inkling that either person existed, and when there is evidence that the man involved

is himself an accomplished poet perfectly capable of writing his own poems. Ward extrapolates his idea into another scene: "we can well imagine that the thinly veiled and rather contemptuous reference to Elizabeth Gascoigne's reputation must have been very annoying to her husband when he saw the poem in print in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*."[42] But wait a minute. Why would a young boy write "a thinly veiled and rather contemptuous reference" to some woman more than twice his age, whom as far as we know he never met? Does it not make more sense that Gascoigne was simply writing about his own future wife?

The opening line of another one of the *Meritum petere grave* poems—"I that my race of youthfull yeeres had roon"—fails to fit Oxford, who was twenty-two years old when *Flowres* was published, whereas it fits the thirty-eight-year-old Gascoigne. It also conforms perfectly well to Gascoigne's musings about youth and middle age in the narrative poems he added to *Posies*.

The series' very motto, which is Latin for "to seek a serious reward," "points to Gascoigne; it expresses his major motive for publication as he freely admits in 75—a desire for preferment,"[43] which Oxford, a top member of the peerage and still wealthy in 1573, hardly required. Thus, from every angle, the appearance of the motto on the title page links the whole publication not to Oxford, as Ward would have it, but to Gascoigne.

Hess[44] listed not only the *Meritum petere, grave* series but also the three *Ferenda Natura* poems as Oxford's. But, as shown above, Gascoigne links this latter motto directly to himself.

To complete the set, the Ogburns asserted that "all" of the poems signed *Si fortunatus infoelix* are by Oxford and "contain revelations of his intimacy with the Queen."[45] But one of the poems in this series, "A Sonet written in prayse of the browne beautie," lavishes praise on a lady's "lovely nutbrowne face." Such a description hardly pertains to Elizabeth's pale visage, so we may reject the idea that the poems pertain to the Queen. This conclusion also counters the claim that the poems are about *Christopher Hatton's* contemporaneous pursuit of the Queen in the early 1570s. In either case one may dismiss Oxford's authorship, because if there is one thing upon which Shakespeare was firm, it is that pale white skin, not brown, is a mark of beauty; in the Sonnets, Shakespeare nearly tears himself apart for falling for the Dark Lady despite what he perceives as her off-putting complexion; the deepest insult toward a woman that he can devise in *Two Gentleman* (2.6) is that "Silvia—witness Heaven that made her fair—/ Shows Julia but a swarthy Ethiop"; and he has even the Moor of *Othello* (5.2) praise his wife's "whiter skin…than snow,/ And smooth as monumental alabaster." So the poems are not about the Queen, and Oxford did not write them. We may therefore reject this claim by the Ogburns on two counts.

What about the motto "*Ever or Never*"—capitalized and italicized as Oxford might do to suggest his name—which is found immediately below seven poems in *Flowres*? One would think, of all the series of poems in the book, that advocates of the Flowres-Oxford theory would have seized upon these poems as evidence of Oxford's authorship. The reason no one has claimed these poems for Oxford is that

they are listed as Gascoigne's, introduced as Gascoigne's and titled as Gascoigne's, and their lines contain references to him and his friend Lord Zouch. In *Posies*, Gascoigne adds another poem, "To binde a bushe," also signed "*Ever or never*." Clearly, this is one of Gascoigne's personal mottos. Therefore, it is important that in the second edition of the book *the same tag follows the F.J. story*. In other words, Gascoigne in 1575 attached one of his personal mottos to *F.J.*, denoting it as his own work. Flowres-Oxford theorists might charge that Gascoigne used his own motto to attach *himself* to *Oxford's* story, but to admit such a claim, one would have to have some basis upon which to link the *F.J.* story to Oxford in the first place, and we have none. Moreover, the original *F.J.* story contains a poem signed "Tyll then and ever" (which in the 1575 edition is rendered "Till then and ever"), a signature that is consistent with Gascoigne's *Ever or Never* tag. The *Ever or Never* tag also appears at the end of the pseudonymous *Willobie His Avisa*. But since that tag in *Flowres* is unequivocally Gascoigne's, one cannot use a theory of Oxford's authorship of *Willobie* to connect him to *Flowres*.

Observe in the end that Ward charges Oxford with hiding behind mottos in a book attributed to Gascoigne, but he disallows the simpler scenario that *Gascoigne* is hiding in such a manner in his own book. Which situation is more likely, given that Gascoigne is the only author connected to the volume?

The weakest of Ward's arguments, that "Lord Oxford under the nom de plume of 'G.T.' edited *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres,*"[46] concerns two descriptions of one of Gascoigne's personal experiences. In the dedication to *The Complaynt of Philomene* dated April 16, 1575, Gascoigne explains how he came to begin the poem while "riding by the high way betwene Chelmisford and London" some "twelve or thirtene yeares past," indicating 1562-1563. He describes being caught in the rain while riding, an incident that the preface of "De Profundis," one of the poems in *Flowres*, had earlier described. This is further evidence that Gascoigne wrote *Flowres*. Yet Ward begins, "Anybody will surely agree that two such similar and graphic accounts…of so trivial an incident as a ride in the rain, could only have been written by…." One would think the sentence should conclude with "the person who experienced it." But instead Ward says, "actual eyewitnesses [who] rode into London together."[47]

Citing the historical fact that Oxford traveled to London on September 3, 1562, and glossing over the fact that Gascoigne says only that he traveled from Chelmsford to London *sometime* in 1562 or 1563, Ward notes, "*If* Gascoigne was riding from Bury St. Edmonds or Lavenham [well north of Chelmsford], he must have passed Castle Headingham on the way."[48] This is all well and good, but then Ward postulates that Gascoigne actually traveled on September 3, 1562, hooked up with the new Lord Great Chamberlain of England—who was described as traveling with "seven score horse all in black,"[49] — and got caught in the rain with him! Never mind the coincidence required for Gascoigne and Oxford, *who were traveling in the same direction*, to have met each other even if they were traveling on the very same day; never mind that we have no idea on which day of which year Gascoigne made his trip; never mind the unlikelihood of Gascoigne sidling up to this twelve-year-old earl as he led his massive train of pomp; never mind the contradiction that Gascoigne's

own description of the event fails to mention Oxford and his glorious train, noting only that *he* was "overtaken with a sodaine dash of Raine." We are, even more naïvely, expected to believe that Oxford took up his pen eleven years later and reminisced about the incident in *Flowres*, without mentioning his own (if he were impersonating Gascoigne) or his companion's (if he were writing from his own point of view) participation, while attempting to hide behind anonymity, all as a sidebar to a mean-spirited publishing conspiracy designed to embarrass the Queen's favorite courtier, Christopher Hatton, and that Gascoigne recalled the same event in print two years later without mentioning his famous companion! Listing Ward's stunning leaps in conjecture is exhausting.

But we need not rely only on logic, reason, sense and statistical probability to dismiss Ward's scenario. Gascoigne tells us, in the dedication to *Phylomene*, the same source to which Ward refers, that he—not Oxford or anyone else—wrote "Deprofundis," thereby making it plain why he refers in both places to the memorable downpour:

> I called to minde that twelve or thirtene yeares past, I had begonne an *Elegye* or sorrowefull song, called the Complainte of *Phylomene,* the which I began too devise riding by the high way betwene Chelmisford and London, and being overtaken with a sodaine dash of Raine, I changed my copy, and stroke over into the *Deprofundis* which is placed amongst my other *Poesies*, leving the complaint of *Phylomene* unfinished: and so it hath continued ever Since until this present moneth of April. 1575. when I begonne my *Steele Glasse*.

So, Gascoigne wrote part of both works during the rain shower, which is why he mentions the event in both prefaces. Oxford, however, is nowhere in sight.

Ward, in fairness, scores a point when he observes that Oxford, in his dedication to Thomas Bedingfield for *Cardanus Comfort*, published in the same year as *Flowres*, claims to have brought the work to press against the wishes of the author as expressed in his "letters." This is exactly the same scenario that "H.W." reports in his preface to *F.J.* If the rest of the context justified doing so, we could surely take this as an indication that Oxford might be using the same device twice. But absent further support we must take careful note of significant differences: Oxford's tone is playful, not conspiratorial; he addresses his comments directly to his friend Bedingfield, not to "the Reader"; and he signs his name in big, bold letters: **E. Oxenford**, in no way hiding his presence. This evidence seems rather to show Oxford as a man who would *not* publish someone's private work sneakily for mean reasons rather than as one who would. Moreover, doubters might wish to contrast Oxford's magnanimous, learned, larger-than-life dedication to Bedingfield against H.W. with G.T.'s squirrely addresses—again, *published in the same year*—and see if they believe that the same man wrote them.

Finally, we might ask: Had Oxford done the deed of which he is accused, would there not be some indication that Gascoigne was upset with the earl? But there is no

evidence that Gascoigne was angry at Oxford at any time following the incident.

Ward declared about the supposedly scandalous *Flowres*, "The perpetrator of the outrage was Lord Oxford."[50] The true outrage is that theorists of the Flowres-Oxford theory have perpetrated a misconception that has hurt Oxford's reputation among his own advocates.

The Hatton Non-Connection

The source of much speculation about a supposed second-party contributor to *Flowres* is a snippet from Gabriel Harvey. In his 1578 Latin address to Christopher Hatton, he refers to "his symbol, *Foelix Infortunatus*"; and a hand-written marginal note next to a poem signed *Si fortunatus infoelix* in Harvey's personal copy of *Posies* he calls it "lately the posy of Sir Christopher Hatton."[51] These items suggested to Ward and his successors that the poems in *Flowres* appearing over this signature are connected to Hatton. In Ward's version of the scenario, Hatton wrote them; and in the Ogburns' version, they were slyly imputed to him. M. Anderson supports the Ogburns' view: Speaking of Hatton's private letters to Elizabeth, he says that his "lachrymose musings would soon be spoofed.... Hatton was now the subject of an elaborate courtly prank."[52] These theorists extend their conjecture to say that the title of the *F.J.* story—typed *F.I.* in the Elizabethan style—indicates *fortunatus infoelix* and therefore Hatton as well.

The proper initial response is, "So what?" Gascoigne said that he wrote poetry for other men's use. Where is the evidence that these poems are anything else? So, the first thing to observe is that even if suspicions were correct that Hatton is involved, there is no evidence to implicate Oxford as perpetrating any of the associated mischief. But we may reject the conspiracy theorists' line of reasoning anyway, by at least nine facts:

1) The juxtaposition of *fortunate/unhappy* and *unfortunate/happy* was somewhat of a generic formulation in the Elizabethan era. Robert Parry, writing in *Moderatus* (1595), speaks of the hero as "sonne to the renowned (and sometimes *infortunate*) but now *happie* Florentine Perduratus." The idea that this motto referred only to Hatton is therefore tenuous from the outset.
2) As noted above, in the series of poems signed *Si fortunatus infoelix*, the only identifier in the accompanying prose for one of the characters involved is "G.G.", this "dooble G" indicating George Gascoigne. The ensuing poem, "His Riddle," is composed by a character named G.G., yet it is still signed *Si fortunatus infoelix*. This is a strong and immediate connection of the motto to Gascoigne, not Hatton.
3) The similar phrase, *Fortunatus infoelix*, appears below the prefacing poem, "The argument of the Tragedie," attending the early play *Jocasta*, which Gascoigne co-wrote. One might leap to the conjecture that Hatton wrote the "argument" for Gascoigne's play; after all, he contributed the fourth act to *Tancred and Gismund* in 1568. But the evidence contradicts such a

conclusion. As noted above, sections of *Jocasta* are clearly marked as to its three authors. If Hatton were a fourth, surely he would have been named as well. The appearance of this signature here, then, links it *unequivocally* to Gascoigne but—by omission of Hatton's name in a context where writers are named—pointedly *not* to Hatton. As Pigman says, "Affixing this posy may be Gascoigne's way of indicating that he, not Kinwelmersh, wrote the argument."[53]

4) In *Posies*, where he takes full credit for both editions, Gascoigne maintains fifteen of the seventeen poems signed with the *Si fortunatus infoelix* motto. The two omitted poems from this series offer no evidence of literary deception, as the third omitted poem is from Gascoigne's *Haud ictus sapio* series.

5) Gascoigne consistently uses various signature phrases for his poetic series. Nothing seems to distinguish the poems within the *Si fortunatus infoelix* series from any of the others, as one might expect if either Hatton or Oxford were responsible for this material separately from the rest.

6) Both editions of the book quite clearly separate the two sets of initials: the *F.J.* of the story and the *S.F.I.* of the motto. In the opening pages of *Flowres*, the address from "The Printer to the Reader" speaks of "F.I. whome the reader may name Freeman Iones," clearly indicating the intention from the start that "F.I." stood for *F.J.*, not *F.I.* The name Ferdinando Jeronimi in the second edition extends this designation. When speaking of the upcoming poems prior to beginning the F.J. story, G.T. does say that he has tried to "set in the first places those which Master F.I. [meaning F.J.] did compyle." But following this thread leads to a conclusion in which someone with initials F.J. wrote poems signed with a motto whose opening letters are S, F and I. In other words, there is still no indication that *Si Fortunatus Infoelix*, even if it is F.J.'s motto, is intended to reflect his initials. Thus, we cannot use the initials F.J. of the story to support the theory that they indicate "Fortunatus Infoelix" and therefore Christopher Hatton.

7) Harvey initially *disassociates* Hatton from the *Si fortunatus infoelix* motto. In his 1578 address, he connects Hatton to only one motto; he says, "To the honorable and brave knight Christopher Hatton, counsellor to the Queen's Majesty, concerning his symbol, *Foelix Infortunatus*,"[54] which is different from *Si fortunatus infoelix*. He does *mention* the reverse motto but says (as translated), "*One* man is happy, but unfortunate; *another* is fortunate but unhappy."[55] As one can readily see, his construction specifically indicates that while the first motto is Hatton's, the latter—*the one that the Flowres-Oxford theory requires*—designates another man, and therefore belongs to anyone but Hatton.

8) As mentioned above, despite the existence of massive archives from the Elizabethan era, there is no indication that Hatton—or even any anonymous poet who might turn out to be Hatton—wrote any poetry signed *Si fortunatus infoelix*.

All of this evidence outweighs Harvey's undated marginal note that the *Si fortunatus infoelix* motto is Hatton's and indicates almost surely that Harvey made a simple error. Given his clear language in 1578 that the first motto pertained to Hatton, we can certainly understand a careless mental reaction—upon seeing the second, similar motto in Gascoigne's book—prompting him to scribble the marginal note relating it to Hatton. To conclude, the evidence linking Hatton to 17 poems in *Flowres*—which after scrutiny comes down only to Gabriel Harvey's single notation—which *contradicts* his earlier statement—is moot. This conclusion is important because, as Ward admits, "The identification of Hatton as the poet of 'Fortunatus Infoelix' or 'Master F.I.' of the *Flowres* rests [*entirely*] on the contemporary evidence of Gabriel Harvey."[56] With that evidence so severely compromised, there is no case.

Ward expanded his argument in 1928 by attempting, through a series of inferences, to link Christopher Hatton to George Turberville, whom he accepts as the "G.T." of the preface to *F.J.* For worthy stylistic reasons, no scholar today agrees with his assertion, "the letter of G.T. in the *Flowres* is a genuine document, penned by a real man, George Turberville."[57] Even if it were true, Ward still fails to connect Hatton to the document.

Ward also tries to connect Hatton to the poems of *Flowres* on the basis that H.W. says he published the poems without permission so as "to have gained a bushell of good will, in exchange for one pynt of peevish choler."[58] Starting with the idea that the poems are Hatton's, he leaps to the conclusion that only a man of "high rank…could with impunity publish Hatton's private love letters"[59] or would so disregard the danger of an angry reaction of the Queen's favorite as to label it merely "peevish choler." Then he takes an even bigger leap to conclude that Oxford—by reason of his high rank—must have published them. But Ward's line of reasoning for Oxford's authorship depends upon an initial assumption of Hatton's involvement, without which there is simply another void. One might far better attribute H.W.'s casual attitude simply to the fact that the other poets—if such existed—were *not* high ranking courtiers. But the best explanation for H.W.'s brave stance, which is consistent with everything else about the volume, is that *there were no other authors* and therefore no one to peeve. Consistent with this interpretation, the historical record is devoid of any indication that anyone *was* peeved.

The F.J. story contains no connection to Hatton, either. Nevertheless, from the story's initial setting "in the north partes of this Realme," Ward attempts to link it to Hatton, because "Hatton was born and had been brought up at Holdenby,"[60] which is about 110 km. north of London. Ward fails to mention that from 1557 to 1559 George Gascoigne was a Member of Parliament representing Bedford, which is about 100 km. north of London, a fact that nullifies the import of his argument. But even this connection fails, because in F.J.'s opening address to Elinor he states that he is "altogether a straunger in these parties" (i.e. *parts*, which in the next edition reads *Country*). In other words, F.J. is not from "the north partes of this Realme" at all! Ward's argument is thereby canceled twice. No one, including Ward, has proposed any other substantive reason to link the story to Hatton.

The *F.J.* story, to the extent that it might be *about* Hatton, might just as well be about one of the other men for whom Gascoigne says he wrote poems, or about someone else entirely, or about himself, or about no living person at all. But such questions are mere curiosities subordinate to the case that the *F.J.* story—whether fact or fiction—contains no link to Christopher Hatton.

Advocates of the Flowres-Oxford theory agree that *Gascoigne* did not write about Hatton, but they require a Hatton connection in order to insinuate the Earl of Oxford into their theory of his clandestine publishing conspiracy to "discredit Sir Christopher Hatton before the Queen."[61] As we have seen, all evidence contradicts any such connection. Therefore, we could, without further discussion, simply ignore Oxford's supposed motive: that he hated Christopher Hatton. But we can do better than that.

The Hatton-Oxford Non-Feud

Flowres-Oxford theorists link together their conjectures by accepting and at times extending Ward's argument that Oxford and Hatton were enemies, thereby justifying Oxford's supposed attack on him with the *Si fortunatus infoelix* poems, the *F.J.* story and the secret publication of *Flowres*. But the trail of inference leading to a charge of enmity between the two men lacks foundation.

Let us begin by noting that even if Oxford and Hatton did hate each other, such a fact would not constitute evidence that Oxford had anything to do with *Flowres*. It would just be another "So what?" Circumstance and evidence are two different things. But once again the conjecture is not proven.

Oxford had known Hatton since at least age twelve, when he sold him a reversion of property in Ashton.[62] A decade later, in May 1571, the two men joined forces with Charles Howard and Henry Lee for a tournament at Westminster. Ward argues that Oxford and Hatton's relationship went awry at this time. But documentary evidence relating to Oxford and Hatton's association mostly contradicts this idea.

A year after *Flowres* came out, a letter from the Countess of Suffolk shows that Hatton was serving the interests of Oxford's sister, Lady Mary Vere.[63] In 1578, Hatton served as a mediator in the matter of Oxford's debt to Peter Legate.[64] During this period, Lord Burghley wrote two letters confirming Hatton's friendship with Oxford. He wrote these letters one year and three years after the writing of the two texts by which Oxford allegedly intended to humiliate Hatton (*Flowres* in 1573 and *Twelfth Night* in 1580):

> Burghley to Walsingham on August 3, 1574, speaking of Oxford:
>
> I can not well end, nother will I end without also *prayeng yow to remembre Mr Hatton to continew my Lordes frend, as he hath manifestly bene*, and as my Lord confesseth to me that he hopeth assuredly so to prowe [prove] him....[65]

Burghley to Hatton on March 12, 1583:

> I perceived yesterday by my Lord of Leicester *that you had very friendly delivered speeches to Her Majesty tending to bring some good end to these troublesome matters betwixt my Lord of Oxford and Mr Thomas Knevet*; for the which doings I heartily thank you, and beseech you to continue your former good meaning....[66]

This latter friendly intercession appears to have been initiated on Hatton's part. Subsequent portions of the letter show that Burghley trusted Hatton to be sympathetic to Oxford's predicament. Justifying Burghley's trust, Hatton responded as follows on March 19, 1583:

> My Lord of Oxford's cause standeth but in slow course of proceeding to his satisfaction; but yet, *for my own part, I have some better hope than heretofore*.... His Lordship wrote me a *very wise letter*, in this case of his, *the report whereof her Majesty took in reasonable good gracious part*.[67]

This seems as straightforward a kindly reply, with respect to Oxford, as an officer of a contrarily disposed queen might ever be expected to compose. All these letters contradict the idea that Hatton "hated" Oxford.

Christopher Hatton died in 1591. Two years later, on October 25, 1593, Oxford in a letter reminded Burghley that Hatton had investigated his property suit to the Queen, "Wherupone *what he conceyved therby of my tytell, he was redie to have made his report unto her majestie*.[68] In his letter of October 20, 1595, he elaborated,

> ...her Magesty takinge exception to my arbitror, had her owne Sir Christopher Hatton then Lord Chanceler, *appoynted as indifferent for us bothe*, as she dyd measure yt. *He havinge hard [heard] the matter and her Magesty councell with myne, was resolved, and herupon wished me to urge her Magestie to call for his report, which accordinglie I dyd and the lord chancelor present*.[69]

So, the Queen considered Hatton an "indifferent" party, not an enemy of Oxford's. In a letter dated May 7, 1603, to Robert Cecil, Oxford clarifies that "Sir Chrystopher Hattone...was redie to make hys report *for me*.[70] Hatton's decision, moreover, went directly contrary to the Queen's sentiments, as Oxford reports in his 1593 letter (and reiterates in his 1595 letter): "she flatly refused, therin to here my lord Chanceler" on his behalf. If Hatton hated Oxford, he never would have attempted such a thing.

Ward's entire case that Oxford hated Hatton, presented in papers from 1926 and 1928, rests on two brief comments in letters. He cites a cryptic line from a letter written October 9, 1571 from Edward Dyer to Hatton vaguely suggesting that he

adopt a policy at court of "hating my Lord of Ctm." "In a foot-note Nicholas says quite unequivocally that 'My Lord Ctm' stands for Lord Oxford."[71] Whether Nicholas is right we can only guess. As to Dyer's motive, Ward charges him with advising Hatton "to cultivate a deliberate and secret enmity against him [Oxford], *for no reason* appearently other than that Oxford stood high in Her Majesty's favour."[72] He then presumes that Hatton took such advice, based on the evidence of an undated letter from Hatton to the Queen in which he writes, "the Boar's tusk may both raze and tear." Says Ward, "The unmistakable reference…obviously refers to Oxford, the de Vere crest being a Blue Boar."[73] Then he postulates further that Oxford—almost instantly, for the chronology to hold up— must have come to hate Hatton in return, thereby justifying his publication of the *Si fortunatus infoelix* poems to embarrass him.

Hatton's undated note to the Queen about the boar's tusk, although cryptic, seems germane. It might even justify suspicion that in the early 1570s, "Hatton and de Vere were now rivals for…Her Majesty's affections."[74] But the question is whether they were bitter rivals or amiable ones. To decide, we must assess the tone of the comment. Is it a dire warning about Oxford's dangerous nature, or is it a playful reference about a rival lover? We can't be sure, but the context within which Hatton makes the comment suggests that he was attempting to elicit a smile from his beloved. He minces, "The branch of the sweetest bush I will wear and bear to my life's end…. Reserve it to the sheep—he hath no tooth to bite; where the boar's tusk may both raze and tear."[75] In other words, Hatton says, "Don't let the boar carry your love-token, because he might tear it. As a sheep, I can carry it unharmed." His tone is more apt for pillow talk than a political warning.

Next consider Dyer's earlier note from 1571 mentioning "my Lord of Ctm." Anderson's explanation that the notation might be "a scrivener's misreading of 'my lord Chamberlain' or 'my lord of Oxon'"[76] is conjecture. Maybe it means "my Lord of Cornwall" or someone else who was in fact lord of somewhere beginning with C. And if "my Lord of *Crm*," as Ward first cited the letters, could stand for "my lord of *Oxon*," surely it would stand better for "my Lord of *Ormonde*," to whom Roger Townsend refers in a letter of 1582.[77] But let us allow that Dyer meant to write "Chm," meaning "my Lord of Chamber." Even this construction might indicate someone other than Oxford, who was Lord *Great* Chamberlain. Perhaps Dyer meant to indicate William Howard, then Lord Chamberlain, who held powerful sway over the Queen, or his thirty-five-year-old son, who "may have [taken over] some portion of the chamberlain's duties"[78] in 1570-1572, when his father fell ill. He was, after all, nearly the same age as the Queen and therefore perhaps a potential rival for her affections. No one has investigated whether there might be another candidate for the subject of Dyer's advice. Can we really feel confident with the idea that "my Lord of Ctm/Crm" obviously means de Vere and not someone else? Given the obscurity of the reference, even Nelson, despite scouring the archives for any and all indications of enmity toward Oxford, rightly did not stoop to mention it.

In order to create a narrative linking Oxford to Dyer's cryptic words of 1571, Ward dates Hatton's "boar's tusk" letter to 1572; but Anderson, drawing from

Clark, dates it to 1580 in order to fit his case for the supposed shredding of Hatton as Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*. If Anderson's dating is right, then the time interval weakens Ward's case that Dyer meant Oxford by "Ctm"; and if Ward's dating is right, it weakens Anderson's case that Dyer's letter is linked to *Twelfth Night*. One may take either half of the case (or neither) but not both halves. Obviously the dating of Dyer's letter is highly speculative, as is the dating of *Twelfth Night* to 1580.

Even if this note does refer to Oxford, one must make an extraordinary leap to conclude that Hatton, prodded by a single line from a Machiavellian cohort, would choose to take the unlikely step of fashioning his life to breed hatred between himself and one of the country's highest-ranking noblemen and indeed one of his established acquaintances, as Ward says "*for no reason*," Iago-like, aside from the assumption that they were both currying favor from the Queen. Is this story compatible with human nature? If an acquaintance sent you a note recommending that you hate a colleague at work, would you do it? But even this leap of faith is insufficient to get all the way to the case for Oxford's involvement with *Flowres*, which further requires that Oxford immediately reciprocated the hatred and then mounted an ill-conceived campaign to express it. If significant evidence supported such an unlikely chain of events, perhaps we would be led to entertain it; but as we have seen, it does not.

Moreover, as detailed above, Oxford's, Burghley's and Hatton's own surviving letters flatly contradict Ward's scenario. Yet his response is only to express wonder: "It is strange…to find Hatton apparently *ready and willing to use his influence with the Queen in furthering Lord Oxford's cause*. But there is little doubt that his assistance was more apparent than real and that he continued to follow Dyer's sinister advice given nine years before,"[79] said "advice" being about "my Lord of Ctm," about whom we know nothing, and said "following" of the advice being wholly hypothetical.

Ward, seconded by Clark, persists in referring to "Hatton's *apparent* befriending of Lord Oxford" and continues, "It is clear that neither Burghley nor Oxford had any idea that Hatton was *secretly* jealous of the Earl's high favour."[80] Stop for a moment and think: Could Hatton have kept such a secret, for twenty whole years, from the powerful Burghley, who was hyper-informed about court matters, especially as they might touch on his own son-in-law? Could Hatton have kept such a secret from Oxford, the target of his enmity? Would Walsingham (in 1574) or Leicester (in 1583), powerful men at court, ever have attempted to serve secretly as Hatton's tools against Burghley's interests, or would they have been foolish enough to do so unwittingly? One would have to rewrite the history of the English court to believe such things.

Anderson leaves room for Hatton's sincerity in referring to him in this role as one "whom de Vere *had once* so loved to hate."[81] But where is the portion of the scenario that explains how, or why, or when, the two men resolved their supposed bitter feud and became friends again? Both versions of the theory—that Oxford and Hatton reconciled or that they did not—are absurd. In the first case, we would have to believe that Hatton forgave Oxford for satirizing and exposing him as F.J. and for the withering, devastating portrayal of him on the stage as Malvolio (see discussion below), all of which he amiably brushed aside in representing Oxford before the

Queen. In the second case, we would have to believe that Hatton, plying a secret enmity, had Burghley, Walsingham and Leicester, the craftiest politicians of their own or any other era (not to mention Oxford) all fooled. The third case—that Oxford and Hatton mostly got along—is boring but fits the evidence.

In the early 1580s, Oxford's enemies "Arundell and Howard were…living in the custody of"[82] Christopher Hatton, and Arundel's letters to Hatton, containing wild accusations against Oxford, were signed in terms such as "your honour's fast and unfeigned friend." Proponents of Flowres-Oxford theory thereby imagine an alliance among these men and argue that Hatton therefore must have misled Burghley in his letter of kindness toward Oxford in 1583. Clark states, "[Although] Sir Christopher Hatton…replied sympathetically, he probably used all his influence against him [Oxford], not only because he remembered his own long-time enmity for the Earl, but *he was carrying on a secret correspondence with Charles Arundel*…."[83] This sentence contains three fantastical charges in a row, but we are concerned now only with the last one, for which, as with the others, no evidence aside from contrary evidence exists. The administration would not have been so naive as to place two suspected traitors in the custody of a sympathizer. Its very choice of Hatton contradicts the conspiracy theorists' case. Accordingly, in his letter of July 1581, Arundel refers to "*my* monsterous adversarye Oxford,"[84] not "our" adversary. Since Arundel had to communicate by letter, moreover, it is quite obvious that Hatton was not conferring with him in person. That Hatton did not destroy the letters indicates that he felt no qualms about their existence. If Hatton had responded in kind, Howard and Arundel, both of whom were eventually released from the Tower, would have had plenty of time to let others see any supportive letters to bolster their claims. If such letters existed, we would know about them today, yet no letters from Hatton are extant to indicate that he responded to Arundel, in "secret" or otherwise.

Nothing indicates that Hatton took any actions whatsoever on the traitors' behalf, much less that he aided them in their quest to destroy Oxford at court. If Hatton were Oxford's secret enemy, he might have taken advantage of such a situation, but there is no indication that he did, and Arundel's ultimate fate—fleeing to the continent—strongly suggests that he did not. Arundel's letter of December 1581, stating, "I builte my onelie trust on the frindshipp of yowr honor,"[85] may even suggest that Hatton was playing him. Hatton, moreover, may have had good reason to dissemble with Arundel, since in one of his letters "Arundel complains that Oxford had named him in public as the author of a satire against Hatton then circulating among the London wits."[86] Even Nelson admits, "the attribution may have been accurate—Arundel had a penchant for satire."[87] Here, then, we have evidence of Oxford outing one of *Hatton's* enemies, a man who had anonymously published an embarrassing tract about him, which is what Flowres-Oxford theorists say, with no evidence of matching value, that Oxford did to Hatton. Nothing in this record, then, supports Clark's assertion that "the favoured Oxford was in 1580 disliked by the jealous Hatton."[88] Rather, all this evidence fits the notion that Hatton was sympathetic to Oxford's cause, and that *Oxford was equally supportive of him*, far better than any case to the contrary.

Nelson did discover one important piece of evidence attesting to a rift between Oxford and Hatton. He notes, "On 14 October [1573] Edward Bacon wrote to his brother Nathaniel from Gray's Inn (*Stiffkey*): '…My Lord of Oxford and Mr Hatton were at great wordes in the chamber of presence, which matter is said to be before the Counsell'."[89] If there were good reasons to attribute *Flowres* to Oxford and connect the *Si fortunatus infoelix* poems and the F.J. story to Hatton, this quarrel, which took place in the same year that the book was published, might be evidence that Hatton was angered by the publication. It is a tad humorous that Nelson dates the "boar's tusk" letter to 1573, a *third* surmise opposing the already disparate dates suggested by Ward and Anderson, perhaps for a similar motive of tying it to this report of a quarrel. But scholars should be content to observe that even if the quarrel were about *Flowres*, one could just as well attribute these men's "great wordes" to Oxford's shock at being accused of something he did not do. Indeed, this is the more likely explanation, because of Hatton's benign, at times supportive, behavior towards Oxford thereafter. For my part, I would reject all such speculation and accept Nelson's conclusion: "of the incident no more is known."[90]

Even the relentless Nelson, a biographer who set out to prove Oxford a "monstrous adversary," discovered nothing further attesting to enmity between Oxford and Hatton, whom he discussed on forty-one pages of his narrative. Charges that Hatton was "one of de Vere's long-standing rivals"[91] have come only from advocates of the Flowres-Oxford theory.

Oxford, Hatton and Supposed Literary Caricatures

I believe we can also dismiss the Ogburns' argument,[92] echoed by many scholars, that Shakespeare satirizes Christopher Hatton as Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, thereby supposedly showing that Oxford would have been disposed to parody him earlier in *F.J.* One thing seems certain: If Oxford had made Christopher Hatton the laughingstock of London, Hatton would have hated his guts forever; he would never have forgiven him, much less to the point of cheerfully defending his interests at court. So, on the simple basis that the two men got along well enough after 1580—which is the date for the play provided by some Oxfordians, including those who believe that Hatton loathed Oxford—one would have to throw out the idea that Oxford made sport of Christopher Hatton's attempt to win over the Queen.

But, yet again, we can refute the very argument as it stands. That Malvolio is stuffy and called a Puritan is of no weight, since such traits could apply to countless Elizabethans; and the rest of the play's circumstances—Olivia's mourning, a cryptic note, yellow stockings, imprisonment, etc.—have no known ties to Hatton.

Indeed, the specific evidence supposedly implying that Malvolio is Hatton consists of only two items. First, Hatton, in his letters to the Queen, refers to himself as "Your Majesties Sheep," and in the play, "Sir Toby…calls Malvolio 'a rascally sheep-biter'."[93] Thus, we are told, Malvolio must be Hatton. On the contrary, Sir Toby's comment logically indicates that Christopher Hatton is the only person in Elizabethan England that Malvolio *cannot* represent, because he is a sheep *biter* and therefore *not a sheep*.

If Malvolio has anything to do with the real-life court of Elizabeth, he can only be a *rival* of Hatton's, one who would bite the sheep. According to the Flowres-Oxford interpretation of Hatton's letter to the Queen, the only possible sheep biter in the whole picture—the one with a "tusk [to] raze and tear"—is Oxford. But according to Oxfordian theory, the only person in Elizabethan England who cannot be a model for the unsavory Malvolio is the author of the play, Shakespeare, who is Oxford. One would have to abandon Oxfordian theory to fit Hatton's letter logically to *Twelfth Night*.

For the Malvolio-as-Hatton idea to be credible in the first place, it would seem that the sheep-biter phrase would have to be especially, if not uniquely, applicable to Hatton. But B.R.—very credibly identified as Barnabe Rich by Cranfill and Bruce[94]—in his preface to *Greenes Newes* in 1593 speaks of a "paltry Asse [who] in the end became a notable sheepe-byter, worrying and devouring whole flockes of poore sheepe."[95] What makes this citation especially relevant is that Barnabe Rich fondly dedicated no fewer than four books to Christopher Hatton, to whom, as we learn from the title page of yet another of Rich's books, he was "servant." So, we may be confident that the single person in Elizabethan England to whom "sheep biter" in this instance *cannot possibly refer* is Christopher Hatton.[96]

The other supposed clue for identifying Malvolio with Hatton is that the anonymous letter left for him is signed, "The Fortunate Unhappy," which is "an English reversal of the Latin pen name (*Felix Infortunatus*; 'the happy unfortunate') that Hatton used."[97] But there are at least two problems with this conclusion: First, it is not Hatton's known pen name at all, because in all his extant correspondence *he never used it*; it is only a motto that Gabriel Harvey, and only he, associated with Hatton. But more conclusively the signature at the end of the letter refers to its female *writer*, not its receiver, thus indicating unequivocally, exactly as in the case of "sheep-biter," that it means someone *other* than Malvolio, which by the theory in question must be someone other than Hatton. As far as I can discover, these are the only specific items that scholars use in the attempt to connect Hatton to Malvolio, and each of them does precisely the opposite.

One may readily confound, in precisely the same way, Clark's[98] assertion that Speed in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* is "surely a caricature of Sir Christopher Hatton."[99] Speaking to Speed, Launce observes that a woman's toothlessness is a good quality because "she hath no teeth to bite," and we are to believe, since the line is reminiscent of the line that Hatton wrote about himself in his "boar tusk" letter, that Speed is Hatton. But Speed is neither the speaker, whom one might thereby claim is Hatton, nor the subject, whom one might thereby claim is Hatton. Rather, Speed is just standing there listening, as a *third party* to the spoken line. Clark's identification, had it been accurate, would show a playful treatment anyway, not a vicious one, so it would be useless in supporting a case for enmity between Oxford and Hatton. No one seems bothered by Clark's unstated but necessary assumption that Oxford somehow secured the Queen's private, amorous correspondence, which seems to me highly unlikely. But none of this matters. It's just a joke in a play.

Anderson goes on to connect Malvolio's imprisonment in the play to the

treatment of Jesuit priest Edmund Campion, confounding the whole idea that Malvolio represents any one person by connecting him to *someone else entirely*. He says, "De Vere puts Hatton in Campion's shoes, expressing his discontent with a crooked system that could so heartlessly demolish a man in the name of religion."[100] Whatever the merits of this identification, in the Hatton context it makes no sense. If Oxford hated Hatton and was in the process of humiliating him, why would he use him for a model of suffering injustice and show him sympathy? The argument connecting Malvolio to Hatton becomes inconsistent.

On top of all this, we must note that all the conjectures involving *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Twelfth Night* and Arundel relate to 1579-1581, so even if they were valid, they would hardly serve to show that Oxford was motivated to write and publish *A Hundreth sundrie Flowres* back in 1573. Indeed, if Oxford had done so, then given Hatton's magnanimous non-retaliation, we are left with no reason for Oxford to continue baiting Hatton through his plays. Such speculations about these plays are also inconsistent with the fact that just three years later Hatton was representing Oxford before the Queen in the Knyvet matter. Assertions that "de Vere and Hatton were notorious rivals circa 1580, and *Twelfth Night* mocks Hatton relentlessly"[101] are unfounded on both counts.

To conclude, the claim that Hatton and Oxford detested each other is a myth. Therefore, any purported motive on Oxford's part to issue *A Hundreth sundrie Flowres* simply evaporates.

Contrary Evidence from Writing Style

The last basis upon which the case for Oxford's authorship of *Flowres* rests is the stylistic aspects of some of the writing, which some latter-day theorists have tacked onto Ward's story. Once this argument is nullified, no part of the case will stand. For the sake of brevity, we will review only a few main points.

Compared to Oxford's poetry, Gascoigne's poetic style is plain. Whereas Oxford would compare ladies' features to damaske rose, lillie, christall, pearle, alabaster, etc., one of the *Si fortunatus infoelix* poems reads, "Thy face is fayre, thy skin is smoth and softe,/ Thy lippes are sweet, thine eyes are cleere and bright." From these lines alone one may excuse Oxford from the entire *Si fortunatus infoelix* series. The defense of such mundane expression, moreover, comes from Gascoigne himself, in the essay on poetic method published in the second edition, where he declares: "I would neither praise hir christal eye, nor hir cherrie lippe, &c. For these things are *trita & obvia*."[102]

Gascoigne employs certain pet phrases throughout his work. Even his three titles — "A Hundreth *Sundrie* Flowres," "The *Adventures passed by* F.I." and "*Sundry adventures passed by* Dan Batholomew"— use the same language. The word *hundreth*, which Gascoigne uses again in the poem "A Hundreth sonnes," fails to fit Shakespeare, who prefers the word *hundred(s)* throughout his works.

Ward himself originally pointed out that *Dan Bartholomew*, which everyone agrees is Gascoigne's,

> …rather resembles *The Adventures of Master F.I.* Both have an "editor"— in this case "The Reporter"—who explains the circumstances in which the various poems were written.… It is written in the same seven-line stanzas as *The Grief of Joy* and *Dulce Bellum Inexpertis*—both indisputably by Gascoigne.… On the face of it it looks as though "The Reporter" and "Dan Bartholomew" might be two different people. But the evidence of style points very decidedly to a single author, that author almost certainly being Gascoigne himself.[103]

Moreover, in contrast to Shakespeare's plots and writing, the *F.J.* story is exhausting. The tedious opening paragraph of Gascoigne's *The Glasse of Government* (1575) is perfectly compatible with his authorship of *F.J.*:

> Surely Phylocalus I thinke myselfe indebted unto you for this friendly discourse, and I do not onely agree with you in opinion, but I most earnestly desire, that wee may with one assente devise which way the same may be put in execution, for I delight in your loving neighborhood, and I take singular comfort in your grave advise. [etc.]

Perhaps the poem in *Flowres* most suggestive of Oxford's composition is "This tenth of March," in the *Spreta tamen vivunt* series, which in particular has attracted attention. One stanza portraying a grieving woman invites comparison to the opening of *A Lover's Complaint*. Clark also sees Oxford in ensuing lines using the word *Ver* to indicate *spring*: "The lustie *Ver* which whilom might exchange/ My grief to joy, and then my joys increase,/ Springs now elsewhere.… What plant can spring that feels no force for *Ver*?"

Aside from the plainness of expression in this poem, there are specific contraindications of Oxford's authorship. The first line of the poem mentions "Aries… This tenth of March." The word *Aries* appears but once in all of Shakespeare, in *Titus Andronicus*, and it is *not* in an astrological context. In line five, the poet says, "I crost the Thames." Although Shakespeare refers to the Thames in three plays, none of his poems are set locally. When the lady in the poem spies the narrator, he says, "Lord how she changed hew." Oxford is not prone to using *Lord* as an exclamation. A few lines later, the poet says he memorized the lady's lament, and thereafter "I set them downe in this waymenting verse." Gascoigne's professed literary hero, Chaucer, used the word *waymenting*, but it does not appear in any of Oxford's poems or in Shakespeare. Variations on the poet's phrase, "do them boote," appear elsewhere in the Gascoigne canon ("do hir boote" appears in the preceding poem) but nowhere in Shakespeare, who prefers "bootless" or "it is no boot." Oxford's authorship even of this poem is therefore highly unlikely.

Parts of many poems that we *know* are Gascoigne's sound very much like parts of Oxford's. Consider the tantalizing lines, "My sweetest sour, my joy of all my grief,/ My friendly foe, mine oft reviving death…" which are akin to lines in Shakespeare's sonnets. They are from Gascoigne's *The Grief of Joye*, published in 1576. In other

words, Gascoigne often sounded like Oxford. Therefore, the case for Oxford's authorship of any portion of Gascoigne's material based on stylistic similarities is not credible. Advocates of the Flowres-Oxford theory need a powerful stylistic case—one far stronger than anything they have offered—to assign any portion of *Flowres* to Oxford.

Finally, Gascoigne's critics avoided calling him a poet. William Webbe called him a "rhymer,"[104] and Michael Drayton called him a "meterer,"[105] as distinct from a poet. Even Ogburn, who supported Oxford's involvement in the book, admitted, "No great poetry marks *Flowres*…."[106] Shakespeare's poetry, and even some of Oxford's early song lyrics, are on a higher plane.

Given that the language in the prefaces of *Flowres* matches Gascoigne's; that Gascoigne's stylistic quirks permeate the book, that much of Gascoigne's poetry sounds like Oxford's, that none of the poetry in *Flowres* is beyond Gascoigne's ability, and that most of it is beneath Oxford's talents, we are left with no stylistic reason to believe that Oxford had any role in penning any part of *A Hundreth sundrie Flowres*.

A Pause for Perspective

We might conclude with Fredson Bowers' restrained comment from 1937: "The years following the publication of B.M. Ward's arguments that George Gascoigne's *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1573) was in fact an anthology, to which the chief contributor was Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, have gradually seen disproved every piece of evidence or conjecture that he has advanced…."[107]

We can reflect calmly upon the unlikelihood of the Earl of Oxford collecting the old plays and poems of George Gascoigne and his friends or penning impossibly vague parodies, in verse and prose, of Christopher Hatton, buried within a massive, 413-page book. It seems equally improbable that he would issue the whole mélange anonymously, for the petty motive of embarrassing a fellow courtier, and without regard for how Gascoigne might respond, and then flee the country to avoid a fight at court, of which there is no indication. Extraordinary evidence would be required to counter this scenario, but there is none. As far as we know, in all the correspondence extant from Elizabethan England, there is not a single indication that Hatton was embarrassed by the book, not a single indication that Gascoigne was not its author, and not a single indication that Oxford had anything to do with it.

Literary scholars and historians should leave Gascoigne's legacy to Gascoigne. The 17th Earl of Oxford has enough enemies, and we should refrain from grafting fanciful stories onto his biography. If the works of Shakespeare serve as any guide, Oxford possessed as noble a mind as one could have. Percival Golding's description of Oxford as "a man in mind and body absolutely accomplished with honourable endowments."[108] matches what we see in Shakespeare, but fails to fit the circumstances required by the Oxford-Hatton-*Flowres* theory.

Endnotes

[1] John W. Cunliffe, Editor, *George Gascoigne The Complete Works*. In 2 Volumes. (Cambridge: The University Press, 1907, 1910), 384.

[2] G.W. Pigman, III, Editor, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. s.v. "Gascoigne, George (1534/5?–1577)." (Oxford: University Press, 2004). http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10421 (accessed March 9, 2009).

[3] Eva Clark, *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays.* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1974), 790.

[4] Dorothy Ogburn and Charlton Ogburn. *This Star of England*, (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1952), Chapter 6. http://www.sourcetext.com/sourcebook/Star/ch06.html (accessed March 9, 2009).

[5] Charlton Ogburn, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*. (McLean, VA: EPM Publications, 1984), 515.

[6] Verily Anderson, *The De Veres of Castle Hedingham.* (Colchester, UK: Terence Dalton, 1993), 198.

[7] Mark Anderson, *"Shakespeare" by Another Name*: *The Life of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, the Man Who Was Shakespeare.* (New York: Gotham Books, 2005), 69.

[8] A.W. Ward and A.R. Waller, Eds. *The Cambridge History of English and American Literature,* 3:10. s.v. "George Gascoigne. Bibliography." New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1907–21; New York: Bartleby.com, 2000. http://www.bartleby.com/213/1000.html; and 3:10 s.v. "George Gascoigne 2. The Posies" http://www.bartleby.com/213/1002.html (accessed March 9, 2009).

[9] Felicity A. Hughes, "Gascoigne's poses. (George Gascoigne)." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1997. *HighBeam Research*. http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-19321312.html (accessed February 19, 2009).

[10] Genevieve Ambrose, "Review, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*." *The Modern Language Review* Vol. 22, No. 2. (April 1927): 214.

[11] Ambrose, "Review, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*," 214.

[12] Cunliffe, *Gascoigne*, 5.

[13] Cunliffe, *Gascoigne*, 6.

[14] Ben Jonson, "De orationis dignitate." *Discoveries Made Upon Men and Matter and Some Poems*. In *The Works of Ben Jonson*. Edited by Francis Cunningham (London: Chatto & Windus, 1910), 413.

[15] Cunliffe, *Gascoigne*, 7.
[16] Cunliffe, *Gascoigne*, 7.
[17] Cunliffe, *Gascoigne*, 4.
[18] Cunliffe, *Gascoigne*, 12.
[19] Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft, Eds. *British Authors Before 1800: A Biographical Dictionary*. (New York: H.W. Wilson, 1952), 210.
[20] Sir Leslie Stephen, et al, Eds. *The Dictionary of National Biography.* Vol 7, s.v. "Gascoigne, George" by Sidney Lee (London: Oxford University Press, 1917), 916.
[21] For a detailed list of differences between these two publications, see Ward 1926, 187-89 and Pigman 2000 l-lvii.
[22] G.W. Pigman, III, Ed. *Gascoigne, George*. *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), liiii-fn.
[23] Cunliffe, *Gascoigne*, 7.
[24] George Gascoigne. *A Hundreth sundrie Flowres bounde up in one small Poesie,* p. 344. Durable URL: http://proxy.kennesaw.edu:2123/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.882003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99841417 (accessed March 9, 2009).
[25] B.M. Ward, Ed. *Gascoigne, George*. *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres from the Original Edition* (London: Frederick Etchells and Hugh Macdonald, 1926), ix.
[26] Pigman, *Gascoigne,* 596-fn.
[27] The motto "Meritum petere grave" shows up once more, in the margin beside Sonnet XXX in J.C.'s *Alcilia*, published in 1595. The mysterious initials, the marginal notes, the Latin posies, a reference to Chaucer, and the extended legal metaphor in the poem "Loves accusation," echoing "At Beautyes barre" within Flowres, all tag the collection as Gascoigne's, published posthumously.
[28] Pigman, *Gascoigne,* 596-fn.
[29] Pigman, *Gascoigne,* 596-fn.
[30] Pigman, *Gascoigne,* 1.
[31] Ogburn and Ogburn. *This Star of England*, Chapter 6, Internet.
[32] Fredson Thayer Bowers, "Gascoigne and the Oxford Cipher," *Modern Language Notes,* Vol. 52, No. 3 (March 1937): 183.
[33] Robert Prechter, "The Sonnets Dedication Puzzle," *Shakespeare Matters*, Vol.4, No.3 (Spring 2005):1; and Vol.4, No.4 (Summer 2005): 1.
[34] Bowers, "Gascoigne and the Oxford Cipher," 185.
[35] Bowers, "Gascoigne," 185.
[36] Ambrose, "Review, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*," 216.
[37] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xxxiii.
[38] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xxxiii.
[39] An illustration of this derivation is available at http://64.88.182.87/Flowres_anagram.pdf.
[40] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xxxiii.
[41] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xxxiv.
[42] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xxxiv.

[43] Pigman, *Gascoigne,* lv.
[44] W. Ron Hess, "*Another Rare Dreame*: Is this an 'authentic' Oxford poem?" *The Oxfordian* 8 (2005): 61.
[45] Ogburn and Ogburn. *This Star of England*, Chapter 6, Internet.
[46] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xxxii.
[47] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xxxii.
[48] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xxxii.
[49] Henry Machyn, *The Diary of Henry Machyn*, London, as qtd in Golding, Louis Thorn, *An Elizabethan Puritan: Arthur Goldling, the Translator of Ovid's Metamorphoses* (New York: Richard R. Smith, 1937), 35.
[50] Ward, *Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, 135.
[51] G.C. Moore Smith, *Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia*, London: Shakespeare Head Press, 1918. Quoted in Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn, *This Star of England* (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1952), 166.
[52] Anderson, M. *"Shakespeare" by Another Name,* 69-70.
[53] Pigman, *Gascoigne,* xlviii.
[54] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xii.
[55] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xii.
[56] B.M. Ward, "Further Research on A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres." *The Review of English Studies* 4, no.13 (January 1928): 47.
[57] Ward, "Further Research," 48.
[58] Gascoigne, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres,* 202.
[59] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xv.
[60] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xiii.
[61] Pigman, *Gascoigne,* xlv-fn
[62] Alan H. Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary: The Life of Edward DeVere, 17th Earl of Oxford* (Liverpool University Press: Liverpool English Texts & Studies, 2003), 14.
[63] Nelson, 172.
[64] Nelson, 185.
[65] Nelson, 114.
[66] Nelson, 284.
[67] Nelson, 286.
[68] Nelson, 343-344.
[69] Nelson, 351-352.
[70] Nelson, 420.
[71] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xxxiv.
[72] B.M. Ward, *Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, 1550-1604, from contemporary documents*. (London: J. Murray, 1928), 75.
[73] Ward, *Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, 75.
[74] Anderson, M. *"Shakespeare" by Another Name,* 69.
[75] Nelson, 96.
[76] Anderson, M. *"Shakespeare" by Another Name,* 69.
[77] Nelson, 282.
[78] Jorge H. Castelli, Ed. s.v. "William Howard (1st B. Howard of

Effingham)" tudorplace.com; http://www.tudorplace.com.ar/Bios/WilliamHoward(1BEffingham).htm (accessed March 9, 2009).

[79] Ward, *Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, 225.

[80] Ward, *Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, 96.

[81] Anderson, M. *"Shakespeare,"* 245.

[82] Anderson, M. *"Shakespeare,"* 167.

[83] Clark, *Hidden Allusions*, 494.

[84] Nelson, 273.

[85] Nelson, 275.

[86] Nelson, 275.

[87] Nelson, 275.

[88] Clark, *Hidden Allusions*, 370.

[89] Nelson, 104.

[90] Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary*, 104.

[91] Anderson, M. *"Shakespeare,"* 167.

[92] Ogburn and Ogburn, *This Star of England*, Chapter 22.

[93] Anderson, M. *"Shakespeare,"* 154.

[94] Thomas M. Cranfill and Dorothy Hart Bruce, *Barnaby Rich—A Short Biography*, (Austin TX: University of Texas Press, 1953), 70-77.

[95] B.R., *Greenes Newes both from Heaven and Hell* (London, 1593) A3.

[96] Ward's conjectures about Hatton and Oxford led to other incorrect conclusions, such as that Barnabe Rich's description of the Frenchified fop in an address prefacing his *Farewell* is a sketch of Oxford. Unfortunately, Clark accepts and expands upon this idea. But these writers were apparently unaware that in *A Souldiers Wishe* from 1604 Rich wrote a heartfelt commentary requesting King James to honor a certain unnamed person who was able "with one hand to holde the Speare…and with the other to hold the pen." Barnabe Rich. "A Souldiers Wishe to Britons welfare," (London: T. Creed for Jeffrey Chorlton, 1604), 61. Durable URL: http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri: eebo&res_dat=xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99855017 (accessed July 6, 2010).

[97] Anderson, *"Shakespeare,"* 154.

[98] Clark, *Hidden Allusions*, 306, 313.

[99] Clark, *Hidden Allusions*, 313.

[100] Anderson, M. *"Shakespeare,"* 155.

[101] Anderson, *"Shakespeare,"* 154.

[102] George Gascoigne. "Certayne Notes of Instruction in English Verse." (1575) In *English Reprints*. Edited by Edward Arber (London: King's College, 1869), 32. http://www.archive.org/bookreader (accessed July 6, 2010)

[103] Ward, *Gascoigne,* xxi.

[104] William Webbe. *A Discourse of English Poetrie,* (London: John Charlewood for Robert Walley, 1586[7]). Durable URL: http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&res_dat=xri:pqil:res_

ver=0.2&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99846918 (accessed July 6, 2010).

[105] Michael Drayton. "Of Poets and Poesie" in *Elegies Upon Sundry Occasions*, (London: Augustine Mathewes for William Lee, 1627). Durable URL: http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&res_dat=xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&rft_id =xri:eebo:citation:99856790 (accessed July 6, 2010).

[106] Ogburn, *Mysterious*, 517.

[107] Bowers, "Gascoigne," 183.

[108] Ogburn, *Mysterious*, 765.

An Accident of Note:
Chapman's *Hamlet* and the Earl of Oxford

Robert Detobel

In scene III.iv of *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois,* Chapman's Clermont recounts an anecdote of Count John Casimir inviting the 17th Earl of Oxford to view the troops with which he was to fight in France. The protagonist of the play, Clermont D'Ambois sets Oxford as an example for having declined the offer on the ground that "it was not fit to take those honours that one cannot quit." But as an example of what? There can be no doubt about the answer. The scene closes with a variation on an extract from the *Discourses* of the Stoic philosopher Epictetus, a work on which Chapman's play relies to no small extent. Epictetus lived from ca. 55 to ca. 135 A.D., the generation after Seneca (ca. 1-65 A.D.), another Stoic to whom references are found in the play. One of Epictetus' thoughts is precisely that virtue consists in doing only those things that are in our power,

> and if he has learned that he who desires or avoids the things which are not in his power can neither be faithful nor free, but of necessity he must change with them and be tossed about with them as in a tempest, and of necessity must subject himself to others who have the power to procure or prevent what he desires or would avoid.[1]

The allusion to Oxford is not something external to the play, but integrated into its fabric. After the first half of Clermont's information on Oxford, the Marquis de Renel remarks: "'Twas answer'd like the man you have describ'd." The man Clermont describes before speaking about Oxford is, as will be seen, an ideal Stoic. Clermont at that moment is meditating about a similar invitation to himself, namely to view

troops. This seems a noteworthy coincidence, the more so because Oxford happens to be integrated into a play of which Frederick S. Boas, in his excellent edition of both plays, *Bussy D'Ambois* and *The Revenge*, observes, "Had Hamlet never faltered in the task of executing justice upon the murderer of his father, it is doubtful if a brother of Bussy would ever have trod the Jacobean stage."[2] Indeed, *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* contains many references not only to Epictetus and Seneca but also to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Boas annotates the passage about the Earl of Oxford: "The subject of this remarkable encomium was Edward de Vere (1550-1604), seventeenth Earl of Oxford... The portrait here drawn of him is too flattering, as he was violent in temper and extravagant, but the Earl's literary gifts merited the praise of Chapman. Puttenham and Meres speak highly of him as a writer of comedy, and Webbe pays a tribute to his excellence in 'the rare devises of poetry.' Over twenty of his lyrics survive, chiefly in anthologies. And in the following note he asks: "Why, however, does Chapman introduce it here, and how did he know of it?"[3] The question is left unanswered. To answer it is the subject of this paper.

History

Boas identified the source of Chapman's two plays as well as of his two other French tragedies, *The Conspiracy of Charles, Duke of Byron* and *The Tragedy of Byron* as Edward Grimeston's translation of Jean de Serres's *Inventaire Général de l'Histoire de France*. Serres' account ended in the year 1598 with the Peace of Vervins between France and Spain. He covered the subsequent period, which covers the conspiracy and execution of Charles de Gontaut, Duke of Biron, from works of other French historians; Grimeston's translations were first published in 1607, shortly before Chapman's dramas appeared. The two Byron plays were published in 1608, *Bussy D'Ambois* in 1607 and *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* in 1613.

Louis de Clermont d'Amboise,[4] seigneur de (Lord of) Bussy, born in 1549, was the eldest son of Jacques de Clermont-d'Amboise and grandson of Louis de Clermont who married Renée d'Amboise. After the extinction of the male line of the Amboises, the name was added to that of the Clermonts. Thus, Clermont d'Amboise is not a first name and a surname but a composite family name. Louis Bussy d'Amboise probably held the title "seigneur de Bussy" by courtesy of his father. Bussy had two brothers, Hubert and Georges, three sisters and a half sister. His eldest sister Renée plays a role in Chapman's play *The Revenge*, where she is renamed Charlotte. However, he had no brother Clermont; Chapman's Clermont is an entirely fictitious person.

Marguerite de Valois, wife of Henry of Navarre, whose lover Bussy is reported to have been, mentions him a couple of times in her *Mémoires*. She always refers to him as "Bussy." She neither mentions her alleged love affair nor his death. But she speaks with admiration of him, and recalls his father Jacques as "a worthy father of so worthy a son."[5]

At the age of twelve, Bussy became a page to king Charles IX. Then, in 1573, at the age of twenty four, he accompanied the king's brother Henri to Poland where

he had been elected king. On the death of Charles IX one year later Bussy returned to France with Henri, who succeeded his deceased brother on the throne. He soon became a favorite of the king's brother and rival François, Duke of Alençon and Anjou, perhaps better known as "Monsieur."

Bussy was an indefatigable duellist. As a favorite of Anjou, he was an adversary of Henri III's "mignons." A gingerly, effervescent, fearless and arrogant aristocrat, he seduced Françoise (in Chapman's plays rechristened Tamyra), wife of Charles Chambes, Count of Montsoreau (Montsurry in Chapman's plays). Montsoreau was chamberlain of the Duke of Anjou and also his "grand veneur" ("great venerier," that is master of the hunting dogs). The affair became public, possibly because Bussy had boasted of it. The Count of Montsoreau trapped Bussy by forcing his wife to write an invitation to him. Bussy came, saw and....was slain by the count's servants.

Chapmen's Two *Bussies*

In *Bussy D'Ambois* Chapman follows history only to a certain extent. But the main thread of the plot, the love affair between Bussy and the Countess Montsurry, and Bussy's killing, is historical. On the other hand, Chapman reverts the time sequence of patronage. Bussy was first a favorite of King Henri III, then of the Duke of Anjou, who in either play is called Monsieur.[6] In Chapman's play Bussy is not of noble birth (historically untrue) but gains access to the court thanks to Monsieur. Monsieur, who wants to become king himself, cannot pardon him his defection, the less so because Monsieur is also courting the Countess of Montsoreau. Monsieur is one villain of the play; the other is the Duke of Guise. The enmity between Bussy and de Guise has nothing to do with religious affairs. De Guise hates Bussy because he suspects him to be courting his wife. Henri III is the equanimous, wise king above the fray, who likes Bussy's spiritedness. That Chapman wanted to present Henri III in a favorable light is perhaps best illustrated by his praise of the English queen:

> No queen in Christendom may vaunt herself;
> Her court approves it. That's a court indeed,
> Not mixt with clowneries us'd in common houses,
> But as courts should be th'abstracts of their kingdoms
> In all the beauty, state, and worthy they hold,
> So is hers, amply, and by her inform'd.
> The world is not contracted in a man
> With more proportion and expression
> Than in her court.
>
> (I.2.18-26)

In Chapman's play the scheme to entrap Bussy by forcing the Countess to write an invitation to her lover is concocted by Monsieur with the approval of de Guise. In his dying speech Bussy curses Monsieur and de Guise.

In *Bussy D'Ambois* Chapman allows himself considerable liberties with history; in

The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois this liberty is almost complete. It contains some shreds of history but most of them do not belong to the history of Bussy but to an episode after the execution of the Duke of Biron. We are also facing an amazing reversal of characters. Monsieur is still the villain, but he hardly plays a role of note. In act I he leaves the court for Brabant. His death is mentioned later but in a single line. But in this play the other villain is king Henri III, the wise king in *Bussy D'Ambois*. And Clermont's noble-minded friend and patron is no other than the Duke of Guise, the same de Guise who in Marlowe's *Massacre of Paris* had died, crying out "*Vive la Messe*! Perish the Huguenots" (scene xxii), and who was cursed by the dying Bussy. He is here presented as a morally irreproachable man, victim of a sordid king. Boas has suggested that Chapman might have turned Catholic. But both about-turns are probably best explained by Chapman's endeavours to focus on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In *Hamlet* Claudius is both false and lecherous; so is Henri III in *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, though nowhere in the play he is shown so. Chapman seems to have imported this vice from *Hamlet*, more particularly from scene V.2 (see below), without caring much to psychologically fit it into his play. The changed character of de Guise is probably due to his being treacherously murdered by the king's captains.

Clermont D'Ambois is urged by the ghost of his murdered brother to avenge him. Like Hamlet he is slow to execute the mission. He sends a challenge to the Count Montsurry, who, however, does not accept it. But Clermont does not want to undertake anything as long as Montsurry has not reacted to his challenge. The king distrusts Clermont as a friend of his greatest foe, the Duke of Guise, and devises a plot to imprison him a suitable distance from the court. Clermont is invited to muster troops in Cambrai, where he is ambushed and taken prisoner. It is via this mustering that Chapman brings the Earl of Oxford into his play. But forced by de Guise, the king orders Clermont's liberation. Then King Henri III invites de Guise to Blois under the pretext of taking council with him and kills him. Learning that his best friend is killed, Clermont kills himself.

As a dramatical composition *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* must be considered a failure. It looks as if Chapman was trying to achieve many things at the same time. First, to write a closet play with long speeches for the public stage with some spectacular scenes at the end; second, to write at the same time a sequel to his own play *Bussy D'Ambois* and yet to stage a very different Bussy, one not acting impulsively but through the considerate control of his own passions, a Stoic; third, to model his hero after Hamlet, incorporating a tribute to the Earl of Oxford.

Clermont and Hamlet: the Unconditional and the Inhibited Stoic

It would have been possible for Chapman to compose a revenge tragedy out of the historical material about Bussy d'Amboise available in his source. Why did Chapman invent a fictitious brother Clermont while a real close relative of the historical Bussy actually was striving for revenge:

> It was a sister, not a brother, who had devoted her own and her husband's energies to the task, though finally the matter had been compromised. He accordingly introduces Renée d'Amboise (whom he rechristens Charlotte), but with great skill he makes her fiery passion for revenge at all costs a foil to the scrupulous and deliberate procedure of the high-souled Clermont. Like Hamlet, the latter has been commissioned by the ghost of his murdered kinsman to the execution of a task alien to his nature.[7]

That Chapman intended to write a play aligned with Shakespeare's *Hamlet* appears most clearly from the ghost scenes. In contrast to *Hamlet* the ghosts do not appear at the beginning and in the middle, but only in the last act of either D'Ambois play. Chapman seems to have valued ghosts mainly as operators of dramatical apotheoses. In *Bussy D'Ambois* it is the ghost of the friar acting as go-between for Bussy and Tamyra that appears in the last act. In *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* the first apparition does not occur until the fifth and last act and in the last scene of the last act a whole bevy of silent ghosts make their appearance, not only Bussy but also de Guise, Alençon, de Guise's brother and even Lord Châtillon, in a dance of death around Clermont's corpse.[8] The apparition of Bussy's ghost is mentioned a couple of times in passing — without any dramaturgical impact, as if in *Hamlet* Barnardo would have answered Horatio's question "What, has this thing appear'd again tonight?"— "No, this week it has not yet appeared." But in the second apparition the analogies with the ghost in *Hamlet* are striking. In *Hamlet* the ghost appears a second time in the so-called closet scene to "whet thy almost blunted purpose" (III.4.111). In Chapman's play the ghost enters on stage solo, speaks a monologue, remains standing nearby and then makes his second apparition:

> Danger (the spur of all great minds) is ever
> The curb to your tame spirits.....
> Away, then! Use the means thou hast to right
> The wrong I suffer'd. What corrupted law
> Leaves unperform'd in kings, do thou supply,
> And be above them all in dignity.
> (V.1.78-79 and 96-99)

In the *Hamlet* closet scene the ghost remains invisible to to the queen:

> **Queen.** Alas, how is't with you,
> That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
> And with th'incorporeal air do hold discourse?
> ...
> Whereon do you look?
> **Hamlet.** Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see...
This is the very coinage of your brain.
(III.4.116.136)

In *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* the ghost remains invisible to Clermont's friend de Guise:

Guise. Why stand'st thou still thus, and apply'st thine ears
And eyes to nothing?
Clermont. Saw you nothing here?
Guise. Thou dream'st awake now; what was here to see?
Clermont. My brother's spirit, urging his revenge.
Guise. Thy brother's spirit! Pray thee mock me not.
Clermont. No, by my love and service!
(V.1.100-104)

Again, why would Chapman invent a brother of Bussy or fail to compose his revenge tragedy with Bussy's sister as heroine? It was his purpose to create a protagonist not only different from, but contrasting to Bussy D'Ambois and his bravado, a hero acting in compliance with Stoic ethics. The historical Renée d'Amboise, the Charlotte of the play, was not a very convenient choice. She was a strong-willed woman who seems to have shared her younger brother's bold spirit. As such she fitted better into Chapman's design as contrast to the scrupulous Stoic intellectual Clermont. In the first act Clermont sends a challenge to the Count of Montsurry, Bussy's murderer, so that he may have a fair chance in a duel. But the count does not accept the challenge, so delaying the revenge, which Clermont feels anyway not pressed to execute. In act III, scene ii, the following argument develops between Clermont and Charlotte:

Char. Send him a challenge? Take a noble course
To wreak a murther done so like a villain?
Cler. Shall we revenge a villany with villany?
Char. Is it not equal?
Cler. Shall we equal be
With villains? Is that your reason?
Char. Cowardice evermore
Flies to the shield of reason.
Cler. Nought that is
Approv'd by reason can be cowardice.
(III.2.94-100)

The argument between Charlotte and Clermont is partly the same argument with which Hamlet himself is engaged:

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action.
(III.1.83-88)

We have no Stoic affirmation from Hamlet to compare with Clermont's "Nought that is approved by reason can be cowardice." We have no pathetic exclamation from Clermont like Hamlet's concluding lines of the first act:

The time is out of joint. O cursed spite
That ever I was born to set it right.

With Clermont a similar reflection takes the form of a dispassionate proposition:

I repent that ever
(By any instigation in th'appearance
My brother's spirit made, as I imagin'd)
That e'er I yielded to revenge his murther.
(III.2.109-112)

Two other comparisons demonstrate that Clermont D'Ambois is, in fact, Hamlet turned Stoic. The first is between Hamlet's monologue after meeting Fortinbras and his army on the way to Poland (IV.4) and Clermont's monologue at the opening of III.iv. Both monologues set out from the self-perception of being too slow in action. Hamlet, like a flagellant in a medieval Good Friday procession flogging himself into ecstatic communion with the Saviour's passion, is verbally whipping himself into a revengeful rage, trying to spark off the initial ignition either from within himself or by irradiation from Fortinbras' example:

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge...
...
Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel with a straw
When honour's at the stake
(IV.4.32-56)

Then Hamlet manifests his double bind, forcibly driven to action without possessing the inner drive to complete the act. The double bind is shown through a chain of gloomy considerations and images intimating the absurdity of Fortinbras'

enterprise but glorified into a bright example of resolution.

> And let all sleep, while to my shame I see
> The imminent death of twenty-thousand men
> That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
> Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
> Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
> Which is not tomb enough and continent
> To hide the slain? O, from this time forth
> My thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth.
> (IV.4.59-66)

Nothing will come of this word-whirling resolution. In the next scene Laertes, on a "straw of suspicion" that Claudius has killed his father, unsheathes his sword, prepared to kill Claudius as soon as he comes into his view. But in act V, Hamlet, returned from England, and knowing that Claudius had plotted his murder, and apprehending that he is still seeking means to kill him, will still not proceed to action.

In Clermont's monologue in III.iv there is no trace of stirring up emotions through a cascade of suggestive images. Clermont "sets down decrees"as guidance for his conduct. He evokes Homer's "revengeful and insatiate Achilles" but makes no attempt to suck in an Achillean spirit. On the contrary, he attributes to Homer a Stoic motive in showing how Achilles' rashness leads him into destruction:

> I wonder much
> At my inconstancy in these decrees,
> I every hour set down to guide my life
> When Homer made Achilles passionate,
> Wrathful, revengeful, and instatiate
> In his affections, what man will deny
> He did compose it all of industry,
> To let men see that men of most renown,
> Strong'st, noblest, fairest, if they set not down
> Decrees within them, for disposing these,
> Of judgment, resolution, uprightness,
> And certain knowledge of their use and ends,
> Mishap and misery no less extends
> To heir destruction, with all that they priz'd,
> Than to the poorest, and the most despis'd.
> (III.4.13-25)

Stoic thoughts are not absent from Hamlet's mind. But he does not unconditionally subscribe to them. Twice he is contemplating the possibility of suicide but either rejects it for the reason of its incompatibility with Christian ethics:

Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter
(I.2.131-2)

or for fear of what might come after death:

To be, or not to be, that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
(III.1.56-58)
.....

For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th'oppressor's wrong, the proud's man contumely
(70-1)
.....
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin?
(75-6)

The monologue is infused with Senecan thoughts. Regarding "bare bodkin" this is a long-standing insight; on the other hand, it seems as if it has hitherto gone unnoticed that "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" and "the undiscover'd country" also owes a debt of inspiration to Seneca.[9]

At the end of Chapman's play similar thoughts enter Clermont's mind when, perceiving de Guise's ghost, he knows his best friend dead and himself barred from revenge by the *raison d'état* of the absolute monarchy:

Shall I live, and he
Dead, that alone gave means of life to me?
There's no disputing with the acts of kings,
Revenge is impious on their sacred persons.
(V.5.149-52)

and:

Piety or manhood — shall I here survive,
Not cast me after him into the sea,
Rather than here live, ready every hour
To feed thieves, beasts, and be the slave of power.
(V.5.189-92)

Other than in Hamlet's monologue the question is not a philosophical but a rhetorical one. No further reflections follow: upon these words Clermont commits suicide. Clermont is the Stoic Roman who Hamlet shrunk from being and exhorted Horatio not to be.

However, the Hamlet of act I-IV is different from the Hamlet of act V, especially in V.2, and calls for a separate examination.

The Inhibited Stoic

On Hamlet's words, "There's a divinity that shapes our ends,/Rough-hew them how we will" (V.2.10-11), Harold Jenkins remarks, "the present passage shows Hamlet recognizing a design in the universe he had previously failed to find."[10] The existence of a design in the universe, alternatively called the universal will, Nature, the Gods, or God, is *par excellence* a Stoic concept. In his Moral Epistle 107, "On Obedience to the Universal Will," Seneca writes:

> We should not manifest surprise at any sort of condition into which we are born, and which should be lamented by no one, simply because it is equally ordained for all. Yes, I say, equally ordained; for a man might have experienced even that which he has escaped. And an equal law consists, not of that which all have experienced, but of that which is laid down for all. Be sure to prescribe for your mind this sense of equity; we should pay without complaint the tax of our mortality. Winter brings on cold weather; and we must shiver. Summer returns, with its heat; and we must sweat. ... And we cannot change this order of things; but what we can do is to acquire stout hearts, worthy of good men, thereby courageously enduring chance and placing ourselves in harmony with Nature.[11]

Such is life, writes Seneca, and he adds what to him is the only attitude: to "keep the mind in readiness." Having been confronted on his journey to England with death and still haunted by the presentiment of his forthcoming death, Hamlet will answer to Horatio, who recommends him, to listen to his ominous feelings and not to fight the fencing match with Laertes: "Readiness is all" – in a profoundly Stoic passage:

> Not a whit, we defy augury; there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come', if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.
>
> (V.2.215-220).

For nearly each of the constituents of this answer, a fairly close match can be found in Seneca's *Moral Epistles* or *Moral Essays*:

Hamlet in *Hamlet*	**Seneca in his *Epistles***
Not a whit, we defy augury; there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow.	LVIII: On Being Let us at the same time reflect, seeing that Providence rescues from its perils the world itself, which is no less mortal than we ourselves…
If it be now, 'tis not to come', if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come.	IV: On the Terrors of Death Death arrives; it would be a thing to dread, if it could remain with you. But death must either not come at all, or else must come and pass away.
the readiness is all. Let be.	CVII: On Obedience to the Universal Will It is amid stumblings of this sort that you must travel out this rugged journey. Does one wish to die? Let the mind be prepared to meet everything. Moral Essays: Polybius on Consolation The Fates will seize one at one time, another at another; they will pass no man by. Let the mind, then, stand in readiness, and let it never fear whatever must be, let it always expect whatever may be.

	LXIX: On Rest and Restlessness
Since no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?	No one dies except on his own day. You are throwing away none of your own time; for what you leave behind does not belong to you.

Using an epithet Chapman coins for his hero Clermont D'Ambois, we are fully justified in saying that Hamlet here is a "Senecal man." It is the scene in which he relates to Horatio how he narrowly escaped death and dispatched Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Claudius' accomplices. The parallels in Chapman's play are obvious.

For two motives, Claudius explains to Laertes, Hamlet is sent to England to have him killed far away from the court: "The Queen his mother/Lives almost by his looks... The other motive.../Is the great love the general gender bear him" (IV.6 and 11-18). On the advice of his treacherous brother-in-law, Clermont is sent away from Paris to the town of Cambrai in the northern French province:

> With best advantage and your speediest charge,
> Command his apprehension: which (because
> The Court, you know, is strong in his defence)
> We must ask country swinge and open field.
> (II.1.11-14)

Clermont's brother-in-law justifies his betrayal of the public weal through the ideal of absolute monarchy centered in the king:

> Treachery for kings is truest loyalty:
> Nor is to bear the name of treachery,
> But grave deep policy.
> (II.2.32-34)

On the very same argument Rosencrantz and Guildenstern justify the unconditional acceptance of their lurid mission:

> **Guildenstern.** We will ourselves provide.
> Most holy and religious fear it is
> To keep those many many bodies safe
> That live and feed upon your Majesty.
> **Rosencrantz.** The single and peculiar life is bound
> With all the strength and armour of the mind
> To keep itself from noyance; but much more
> That spirit upon whose weal depends and rests

> The lives of many. The cesse of majesty
> Dies not alone, but like a gulf doth draw
> What's near it with it.
> (III.4.7-18)

And so argue the captains who have apprehended Clermont and are now by him accused of having sworn false.

> **Maillard.** No, I swore for the King.
> **Clermont.** Yet perjury, I hope, is perjury.
> **Maillard.** But thus forswearing is not perjury.
> You are no politician: not a fault,
> How foul soever, done for private ends,
> Is fault in us sworn to the public good.
> We never can be of the damned crew,
> We may impolitic ourselves (as 'twere)
> Into the kingdom's body politic,
> Whereof indeed we're members; you miss terms
> (IV.1.45-54)

Historically, the mustering episode does not belong to the time of Bussy d'Amboise, killed in 1579 (while his patron, the Duke of Alençon and Anjou, was courting Queen Elizabeth), but to the conspiracy of the Duke of Biron, executed in 1602. " *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* follows historical lines less closely than the "Byron" plays, but here, too, Grimeston's volume was Chapman's inspiring source, and the perusal of its closing pages gives a clue to the origin of this most singular of the dramatist's serious plays. The final episode included in the folio of 1607 was the plot by which the Count d'Auvergne, who had been one of Byron's fellow conspirators, and who had fallen under suspicion for a second time in 1604, was treacherously arrested by agents of the King while attending a review of troops. The position of this narrative (translated from P. Matthieu) at the close of the folio must have helped to draw Chapman's special attention to it, and having expended his genius so liberally on the career of the arch-conspirator of the period, he was apparently moved to handle also that of his interesting confederate."[12]

Another motive, probably the crucial one, must have presided over Chapman's choice of this episode: it offered him a number of elements by which to adapt his play to *Hamlet*, and more particularly to the Stoic Hamlet in V.2. And the search for some conformity to Shakespeare's play may also account for the stunning transfiguration of the good King Henri III in *Bussy D'Ambois* into a bad king (Claudius) and of the villain Guise into sort of Horatio. Hamlet is fostering suspicions when Claudius send him to England :

> **Hamlet.** Good.
> **King.** So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

> **Hamlet.** I see a cherub that sees them.
> (IV.4.50-51)

And his misgivings continue after his safe return: "Thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter. (V.2.208-9). Horatio proposes to seek an excuse for not going to the encounter with Laertes. It is then that Hamlet declares his "Senecal" decision.

In scene III.iv of *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, the scene in which the mention of the Earl of Oxford occurs, Clermont D'Ambois displays a similar Stoicism. Indeed, the whole scene is essentially a discourse on how the ideal Stoic man has to behave. Clermont, having been warned by an anonymous writer of the danger he would incur if he decided to accept going to Cambrai for viewing the troops, meditates:

> I had an aversation to this voyage,
> When first my brother mov'd it; and have found
> That native power in me was never vain:
> Yet now neglected it."
> (III.4.8-11)

The brother here is not Bussy D'Ambois but the treacherous brother-in-law. Then follows that part of the monologue which has before been compared with Hamlet's monologue subsequent to his meeting Fortinbras and his army. Just like Horatio to Hamlet, Clermont's friend the Marquis de Renel suggests that Clermont cancel his journey, to which Clermont replies with Stoic principle:

> I shall approve how vile I value fear
> Of death all time; but to be too rash,
> Without both will and care to shun the worst
> (It being in power to do, well and with cheer)
> Is stupid negligence, and worse than fear.
> (III.4.32-36)

The contempt of fear of death can be equated to Hamlet's "If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come." But as far as Hamlet is concerned, the other lines seem redundant. They serve, however, a purpose. As will be seen soon, they allow Chapman to unite in one and the same discourse about Stoic values the chararacters of Hamlet, especially the Hamlet of act V, Clermont D'Ambois, and the real Earl of Oxford.

The lines epitomize one of Chapman's main sources (as Boas has pointed out), the *Discourses* of Epictetus (*c*. 55-*c*. 135), the leading Stoic philosopher of the generation after Seneca (*c*. 1-65). Not death itself, Epictetus taught, is an evil, but the fear of death. Death is neither good nor bad, it is a necessity, independent of our will. Death, health and wealth are without moral value, because they are "externals" and therefore indifferent. Only such things that are within the power of our will can be

good or bad. Man should only undertake such things as are within his powers:

> The poor body must be separated from the spirit either now or later, as it was separated from it before. Why, then, are you troubled? for if it is not separated now, it will be separated afterward. Why? That the period of the universe may be completed, for it has need of the present, and of the future, and of the past.[13]

Toward things which are within the power of our will, we should exert caution, toward things not within the power of our will, we should be courageous:

> And thus this paradox will no longer appear either impossible or a paradox, that a man ought to be at the same time cautious and courageous: courageous toward the things which do not depend on the will, and cautious in things which are within the power of the will.[14]

Hence, according to Epictetus (and to Seneca as well), death obeys the universal will. In developing this subject, Chapman links up Clermont with Hamlet:

> But he that knowing how divine a frame
> The whole world is; and of it all, can name
> (Without self-flattery) no part so divine

and Clermont with the Earl of Oxford:

> As he himself, and therefore will confine
> Freely his whole powers in his proper part
> Goes on most God-like. He that strives t'invert
> The Universal's course with his poor way,
> Not only dust-like shivers with the sway,
> But, crossing God in his great work, all earth
> Bears not so cursed and so damn'd a birth.
> (III.4.66-75)

Like Hamlet in V.2, Clermont will not attempt to interfere with the Universal Will, God, Nature, Providence. However, part of this passage,

> As he himself, and therefore will confine
> Freely his whole powers in his proper part
> Goes on most God-like. He that strives t'invert

ties up this part of the discourse with what Clermont has stated a few lines before:

> For any man to press beyond the place
> To which his birth, or means, or knowledge ties him.
> For my part , though of noble birth, my birthright
> Had little left it, and to keep within
> A man's own strength still, and on man's true end
> Than run a mix'd course. Good and bad hold never
> Anything common: you can never find
> Things' outward care, but you neglect your mind.
> (III.4. 49-57)

One might be tempted into supposing that Chapman was writing this with the Earl of Oxford before his eyes. It may be a debatable perspective, but at least two arguments can be adduced in support. It cannot be readily seen how the phrase "though of noble birth, my birthright had little left it" would apply on the Clermont of the play. It suggests that Clermont would be somehow impoverished and in some kind of disgrace. Nowhere else in the play is this mentioned. He is certainly in disgrace with the king, but he is the closest friend of the powerful Duke de Guise. Then, it is this discourse which suddenly reminds Clermont of the Earl of Oxford and after Clermont's first statement about Oxford, the Marquis de Renel refers to this discourse with the words "'twas answered like the man you have describ'd."

D'Ambois and Oxford

While Clermont shares many features with Hamlet, he definitely shares also some with the Earl of Oxford as depicted in the play by Clermont himself. The dying Guise calls Clermont "The most worthy of the race of men" (V.4.72). Clermont calls Oxford "the most goodly-fashion'd man I ever saw" (III.4.96). De Guise esteems that Clermont exceeds his brother Bussy "because, besides his valour/He hath the crown of man, and all his parts,/Which learning is; and that so true and virtuous/That it gives power to do as well as say/Whatever fits a most accomplish'd man" (II.1.81-87). Clermont on Oxford: "He was beside of spirit passing great, /Valiant and learn'd." De Guise praises Clermont for his "liberal kind of speaking what is truth" (IV.4.24). Of Oxford Clermont says that he is"liberal as the sun." De Guise lauds Clermont for his steadfastness:

> In his most inexorable spirit
> To be remov'd from anything he chooseth
> For worthiness, or bear the least persuasion
> To what is base, or fitteth not his object,
> In his contempt of riches and of greatness,
> In estimation of th'idolatrous vulgar,
> His scorn of all things servile and ignoble,
> Though they could gain him never such advancement.

(IV.4.16.23)

Clermont says more or less the same of Oxford:

> And yet he cast it only in the way,
> To stay and serve the world. Nor did it fit
> His own true estimate how much it weigh'd,
> For he despid'd it; and esteem'd it freer
> To keep his own way straight, and swore that he
> Had rather make away his whole estate
> In things that cross'd the vulgar...
> (III.4.105-111)

De Guise on Clermont:

> His just contempt of jesters, parasites,
> Servile observers, and polluted tongues
> In short, this Senecal man is found in him
> (IV.4.40-42)

This "Senecal" man Clermont himself recognizes in Oxford:

> Had rather make away his whole estate
> In things that cross'd the vulgar, than he would
> Be frozen up stiff (like a Sir John Smith,
> His countryman) in common nobles' fashions,
> Affecting, as the end of noblesse were,
> Those servile observations.
> (III.4. 110-114).

What the meaning of the comparison between Oxford and his countryman Sir John Smith (as he was indeed Essex-born) is and what might be the meaning of "common nobles' fashions" and Sir John Smith's "servile observations" will be examined in the next and last section. Here, another possible "Senecal" characteristic of Oxford deserves mention.

In 1975 Steven W. May published an article on the authorship of the popular song (set to music by William Byrd), "My Mind to me a Kingdom is." This followed his discovery of a manuscript of what is considered a sequel poem, "I Joy not in no Earthly Bliss."[15] Both poems are commonly ascribed to Sir Edward Dyer, though an attribution in a manuscript might rest on a mere guess and ought to be handled with caution, the ascription to Dyer is still being confidently repeated, despite Professor May's well-founded caveat:

> It is entirely possible that Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford,
> is responsible for this perenially favorite work. Indeed, in the Harvard

manuscript the poem is attributed to Lord Ver. What is more, though "were I a King" is undoubtedly Oxford's poem and in an anonymous reply to this poems it is alluded to "My Mind a Kingdom is" in a way which suggests that the latter poem too is by the same author, Oxford's claim, which seems much stronger than Dyer's, is not yet generally accepted. The alluding lines are most probably wrongly attributed to Sir Philip Sidney:

> Wert thou a king, yet not commaund contente;
> Where empire none thy mind could yet suffice.[16]

And in another anonymous reply allusion is made to the sequel, in which the line occurs "The Court or Cart I like nor loath."

> To be a king thy care would much augment,
> From Court to Cart the fortune were but bare.[17]

What seems to have been overlooked hitherto is that both poems are a breviary of Stoic thought, especially of Seneca's philosophical essays and letters. As in the case of Hamlet shown above, it is possible to set off the majority of verses in either poem against a corresponding sentence from Seneca.

Oxford and Sir John Smith

Chapman's statement about Oxford is not an alien interjection, but an integral part of his play, fitting into a discourse on Stoic values: "An incident of high and noble note,/that fits the subject of my late discourse," Clermont says. It may also be useful to remember that the behavior Clermont/Chapman ascribes to Oxford is at the same time the observation of a Stoic rule of conduct, several times pointed out in Epictetus' *Discourses*: "We must make the best use that we can of the things which are in our power, and use the rest according to their nature." It is this observation which allows Chapman to integrate the Earl of Oxford in the discourse along with Hamlet and Clermont:

> And 'twas the Earl of Oxford; and being offer'd
> At that time, by Duke Casimir, the view
> Of his right royal army then in field,
> Refus'd it, and no foot was mov'd to stir
> Out of his own free fore-determin'd course:
> I, wondering at it, ask'd for his reason,
> It being an offer so much for his honour.
> He, all acknowledging, said 'twas not fit
> To take those honours that one cannot quit.
> (III.4.95-103)

The same is said by the Marquis de Renel to Clermont:

> But the pretext to see these battles rang'd
> Is much your honour.
> (III.4. 78-9)

It would therefore appear that Chapman chose for his hero a situation from an alien episode closely corresponding to the situation into which Duke Casimir's offer brought the Earl of Oxford. Matter enough to wonder at, and one is tempted to cut the Gordian Knot, deciding that Chapman connected the Earl with such an event for purely dramaturgical reasons. But because the event has hitherto been considered as factual, an examination of the circumstances reported by Chapman cannot be avoided. Caution, however, will require us to speak in the conditional: it would be an extraordinary coincidence that Chapman experienced the Earl of Oxford in a situation similar to that of the Count d'Auvergne in Edward Grimeston's translation and wove it into the fabric of a play about an entirely fictitious hero, Clermont D'Ambois.

Frederick S. Boas seems to have had some doubts.[18] But, finally, he decided in favor of factuality:

> In 1575 he paid a visit to Italy, and it is apparently to an episode on his return journey in the spring of 1576 that reference is made here, and in the following lines....The *Duke Cassimere* here spoken of was John Casimir, Count Palatine, who in the autumn of 1575 entered into alliance with the Huguenots and invaded France, but, after suffering a check at the hands of the Duke of Guise, made a truce and retired. The incident here spoken of apparently took place in the spring of the next year.[19]

Immediately, a difficulty crops up. Count John Casimir raised troops which he led into the battle of Dormans in which he was defeated on 10 October 1575 by the Duke de Guise but managed to operate a junction with other troops and to take three towns at the beginning of 1576; however, not in Germany but in Burgundy.[17] And in January 1576 Oxford was still in Italy. By the end of March he arrived at Paris. It is not very likely he met Casimir during the latter's military operations in Burgundy. Was Chapman ill-informed?

In April 1575 Oxford was visiting John Sturmius at Strasbourg, in Alsacia, then considered to be a German region. It does not seem impossible that about that time Count Palatine John Casimir was recruiting mercenaries for his subsequent campaign against the army of King Henri III. But to suppose that Chapman meant an episode in the Spring of 1575 instead of 1576 would be stretching the meaning of "coming from Italy" and "overtook" much too far:

> I overtook, coming from Italy,
> In Germany, a great and famous Earl
> (III.4.84-5)

And how could Chapman have known it? He was born in 1559 or 1560, would have been only 16 or 17 years old and would either have accompanied the Earl of Oxford to Italy or traveled independently to that country. Chapman is not mentioned in Oxford's letters; nor is he known ever to have mentioned it himself. Furthermore, there is hardly a trace of an Italian experience in Chapman's works. The setting of his four tragedies is France and two of his comedies, *Monsieur d'Olive* and *An Humourous Day's Mirth*, have also a French setting. Is the episode between Count John Casimir and Oxford the mere product of Chapman's dramatic invention?

It cannot be ruled out and even seems the most satisfactory hypothesis. In the dedication of *The Revenge* to Sir Thomas Howard, the second son of the Earl of Suffolk, Chapman writes:

> And for the autentical truth of either person or action, who (worth the respecting) will expect it in a poem, whose subject is not truth, but things like truth? Poor envious souls they are that cavil at truth's want in these natural fictions; material instruction, elegant and sententious excitation to virtue, and deflection from her contrary being the soul, limbs, and limits of the autentical tragedy.[20]

Chapman's handling of the play had met with some unknown criticisms ("in the scenical presentation it might meet with some maligners"), perhaps the "maligners" took issue with his representation of the noble character of Guise.

The next passage, with the reference to Sir John Smith, adds to the interpretative difficulties.

> And yet he cast it only in the way,
> To stay and serve the world. Nor did it fit
> His own true estimate how much it weigh'd,
> For he despis'd it; and esteem'd it freer
> To keep his own way straight, and swore that he
> Had rather make away his whole estate
> In things that cross'd the vulgar, than he would
> Be frozen up stiff (like a Sir John Smith,
> His countryman) in common nobles' fashions,
> Affecting, as the end of noblesse were,
> Those servile observations.
> (III.4. 105-115)

Boas comments:

> Though alluded to in so contemptuous a way, this Sir John Smith appears to be the noted soldier of fortune, diplomatist, and military writer, who lived from about 1534 to 1607. After serving for many

> years in continental armies, in 1574 he became an agent of the English government, and took part in various diplomatic missions. In 1590 he published "Certain Discourses concerning the formes and effects of divers sorts of Weapons" and dedicated the work to the English nobility, whom he calls in one part of his "proeme" the "verie eyes, eares and language of the king, and the bodie of the watch, and redresse of the Commonwealth.[21]

Hence, perhaps, the allusion in l. 113 to "common Nobles fashions." But what could it mean that Sir John Smith was "stiff frozen up" in those fashions? Another approach, based upon a letter printed in B.M. Ward's biography of the 17th Earl of Oxford, has been made by Hilda Amphlett.[22] In a letter of 28 July 1588 Leicester wrote from Tilbury camp, "My Lord of Oxford... returned again yesterday by me... I trust he be free to go the enemy, for he seems most willing to hazard his life in this quarrel."[23] B.M. Ward continues:

> Lord Leicester concludes with an amusing contrast between Oxford's eagerness to fight and the antics of a certain Sir John Smyth: 'Sir, You would laugh to see how Sir John Smyth hath dealt. Since my coming here he came to me and told me that his disease so grew upon him as he must needs go to the baths. I told him I would not be against his health but he saw what the time was, and what pains he had taken with his countrymen and that I had provided a good place for him....He said his health was dear to him and desired to take his leave of me, which I yielded unto. Yesterday being our muster day he came again to dinner to me, but such foolish and glorious paradoxes he burst without any cause offered, as made all that knew anything smile and answer little, but in sort rather to satisfy men present than to argue with him. After at the muster he entered again into such strange tries for ordering of men and for the fight with weapons as made me think he was not well.[24]

Was it to this event that Chapman referred? It must again be asked how Chapman could have known of Leicester's letter. Of course, a mustering is mentioned in Leicester's letter. But it nowhere appears what part Oxford took in it or if he played a part in it at all. Moreover, Leicester's letter presents Sir John Smith as a queer or bizarre man who was rather more reluctant and querulous than servile. Nothing in Leicester's letter indicates that it was this event that Chapman was thinking of when he compared Oxford favorably with Sir John Smith. The contrast revolves around the terms "crossed the vulgar" on Oxford's side and "frozen stiff up," "common nobles' fashions" and "servile observations" on Sir John Smith's side.

According to Sidney Lee's biography in the old *DNB,* Smith grew more reluctant and even rebellious in the following years. In 1590 he published a book on the use of weapons in which he strongly pleaded for not replacing the English longbow by fire weapons, probably the odd sort of weapons Leicester meant in his letter. Along with technical reasons he also adduced an educational one: the

exercice of the longbow will keep both body and mind "unweakened."[25] In 1595 he was imprisoned for having publicly vituperated against corrupt mustering practices and tried to obtain pardon by declaring he had been drunk. It's certain that Sir John Smith cannot be said to have been a servile observer of the common practices of the time nor one who shrank from challenging the public order. In what kind of "common nobles' fashions" was he "stiff frozen up?" Another biographic detail may lead to an understanding of what Chapman meant. But let us leave Sir John Smith for a while and return to him later.

Learning and Honesty

Both Oxford and Clermont are praised for their learning. De Guise places Clermont above his brother:

> Because, besides his valour,
> He hath the crown of man, and all his parts
> Which learning is; and that so true and virtuous
> That it gives power to do as well as to say
> Whatever fits a most accomplish'd man
> (II.2.83-7)

Of Oxford it is said that he "Spoke and writ sweetly, or of learned subjects" (III.4.93), which Bussy D'Ambois "for his valour's season, lack'd/ And so was rapt with outrage oftentimes/Beyond decorum." (II.2.88-90). Guise's words could have been taken straight out of Cicero's *De Officiis*, one of the most influential educational works in early modern times and a major source of Baldesar Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*. The title "De Officiis" has been variously translated as "Of Duty," "Of Dutiful Behaviour," etc. It could also be translated as "Of Correct Social Behaviour." The first criterion of such behaviour, Cicero writes, is learning, for "knowledge of truth, touches human nature most closely. For we are all attracted and drawn to a zeal for learning and knowing."[26] The second criterion is composed of justice and liberality (in the sense of "generosity"), the third is valour. The fourth and last criterion is temperance, "the one in which we find considerateness and self-control, which give, as it were, a sort of polish to life; it embraces also temperance, complete control of all the passions, and moderation in all things, what in Latin may be called *decorum*."[27]

"Decorum" is derived from the verb "decet," meaning "to be fit" or "to be proper" with connotations such as "beautiful," "gracious.," "elegant." "Decorum" and "honestus" are reciprocal: "nam et quod decet est honestum et quod honestum est decet," "what is proper is honest and what is honest is proper." The word "honestum" is best translated as "honorable," though in the 16th century Sir Thomas Elyot in *The Book of the Governor* (1531) and Roger Ascham in *The Scholemaster* (1570) rendered it as "honest," probably because the word "honour" was too charged with feudal and chivalric meaning. The range of meanings connected with "honesty" was very broad:

civility, graciousness, control of the passions, refinement, cultivation, etc., including the restricted modern sense of "not deceitful," which was, however, not the most usual meaning Elizabethans attached to it.

The purpose of this excursion is to show that the contradiction between Oxford and Sir John Smith that Chapman must have had in mind was between "uncouth" and "refined"; between " in "military prowess" and "learning"; or, as it was often expressed, between "arms" and "letters." When Chapman has Clermont say of Oxford that mustering troops did not "fit/ His true estimate how much it weigh'd,/ For he despis'd it," he definitely declares that Oxford, though an aristocrat, was much more attracted by cultural and humanist values. This is also a characteristic of Hamlet, who thought himself far from being a Hercules.

Common Nobles' Fashions

It is perhaps not so well known that the largest part of the nobility in medieval and early modern times was hostile to learning. Most aristocrats regarded learning as incompatible with military and chivalric valour. At the end of the 16th century the Spanish Marquis de Santillana exhorted the nobility to abandon their prejudices. "Letters neither slacken the spear nor weakens the sword in the hand of the knight."[28]

In the first quarter of the 16th century Castiglione wrote the *Book of the Courtier*. It was not published until 1528, but circulated in manuscript several years before. Castiglione must have begun writing in or before 1515, the year Francis I was crowned king of France, as at one place he is still called Monsieur d'Angoulème. Castiglione subscribes to the precedence of arms over letters: "And forsomuch as this disputation hath already been tossed a long time by most wise men, we need not to renew it, but I count it resolved upon arms' side."[29] Despite this obvious preference, he has little to say about arms but much about letters; he underscores the necessity for the courtier not only to be universally educated but to behave with grace and elegance. He has Count Lodovico declare that, "although the Frenchmen know only the nobleness of arms, and pass for nothing beside: so that they do not only not set by letters, but they rather abhorr them, and all learned men they count very rascals, and they think it a great villany when anyone of them is called a clerk."[30]

To which the Magnifico Giulano replies: "You say very true, this error indeed hath long reigned among the Frenchmen. But if Monseigneur d'Angoulème have so good luck that he may (as men hope) succeed in the Crown, the glory of arms in France doeth not so flourish nor is had in such estimation, as letters will be, I believe."[31]

Even if Roger Ascham was laying it on a little thick in the 1560s to attract the attention of his readership, he nevertheless did not consider it superfluous to add this passage from Castiglione (without expressly referring to it) to his other warnings at the address of young noblemen:

> Yet I hear say, some young gentlemen of ours, count it their shame to be counted learned and perchance, they count it their shame, to be counted honest also, for I hear say, they meddle as little with the one, as with the other. A marvelous case, that gentlemen should so be ashamed of good learning, and never a whit ashamed of ill manners: such do say for them, that the Gentlemen of France do so: which is a lie, as God will have it... And though some in France, which will needs be Gentlemen, whether men will or no, and have more gentleship in their hat, than in their head, be at deadly feud with both learning and honesty, yet I believe, if that noble Prince, king Francis the first were alive, they should have neither place in his Court, nor pension in his wars, if he had knowledge of them.[32]

The symmetry should be marked: "ashamed of good learning, and never a wit ashamed of good manners," and "some young gentlemen count it their shame to be learned, and perchance they count it their shame, to be counted honest also." To Ascham "honesty" means "good manners"; ill manners are "dishonest." He attaches the adjective "honest" to a number of other exercices: learning, dancing, recreation in general.

Towards the end of the 15th century and during the first quarter of the 16th century the situation in England was markedly worse than in Ascham's time:

> The most superficial examination of the most conspicious data tells us with certainty at least this: that in the sixteenth century there was a great deal of complaint about the education of the aristocracy and that with a few exceptions the Jeremiahs of the time were all saying pretty the same thing. The well-born were indifferent to learning, and they preferred to stay that way.[33]

A gentleman told the humanist Richard Pace that he had rather his son hanged than be a "clerk." Learning did not fit a gentleman. All he had to learn was "to blow the horn nicely, to hunt skilfully, and elegantly to carry and train a hawk."[34] Even about half-way the 15th century in Renaissance Italy this attitude seems to have still prevailed. The famous humanist Leon Battista Alberti wrote that he would welcome it to see young noblemen more often with a book in the hand than with a hawk on the fist.[35] Alberti held this "common fashion of noblemen" for the opinion of a simpleton.

With the ever growing need of learned officers in a centralizing state, this situation could not endure. As, once again, Ascham warned:

> The fault is in yourselves, you noble men's sons, and therefore you deserve the greater blame, that commonly, the meaner men's children come to be the wisest councillors and greaterst doers in the weighty affairs of this Realm.[36]

In other words: you aristocrats will be displaced from the helm of the realm if

you continue to despise learning and honesty, good manners. It will be the very task of the aristocracy to set the standards of proper social behavior:

> Take heed therefore, you great ones in the Court, yea though you be the greatest of all, take heed what you do, take heed how you live. For as you great ones use to do, so all mean men love to do. You be indeed makers or marrers of manners of all men's within the Realm.[37]

It seems to be in this sense we must understand the words ascribed to Oxford by Chapman:

> To keep his own way straight, and swore that he
> Had rather make away his whole estate
> In things that cross'd the vulgar, than he would
> Be frozen up stiff (like a Sir John Smith,
> His countryman) in common nobles' fashions,
> Affecting, as the end of noblesse were,
> Those servile observations
> (III.4.109-115)

Sir John Smith certainly did not lack learning. He was sent several times on diplomatic missions. He wrote a series of discourses on the use of weapons. But he seems to have lacked "honesty."

Sprezzatura or Vulgar Chivalry

Cicero wrote that considerateness and self-control gave a sort of polish to life. In Elizabethan literature the concept of polish adopts several names: "sweet" and "honey-tongued," "silver-tongued," "honed" and "smooth, "refined," "grace,," etc. The concept was developed in detail by Castiglione in his *Book of the Courtier*. "Grace" is best acquired, according to Castiglione, by means of a certain nonchalance, "sprezzatura," the display of a behavior artful to the point of appearing enntirely natural and artless. Though Castiglione maintained that arms should remain the courtier's main occupation, he was utterly contemptuous of the type of bragging soldier, the *miles gloriosus*. He illustrates this ill-mannered type in the following anecdote:

> Yet will we not have him for all that so lusty to make bravery in words, and to brag that he hath wedded his harness for his wife, and to threaten with such grim looks, as we have seen Berto do oftentimes. For unto such may well be said that a worthy Gentlewoman in a noble assembly spoke pleasantly unto one, that shall be nameless for this time, whom she to show him a good countenance, desired to dance with her, and he refusing both that, and to hear music and many other entertainments

> offered him, always affirming such trifles not to be his profession, at last the Gentlewoman demanding him: "what is then your profession?" He answered with a frowning look: "To fight."
>
> Then said the Gentlewoman: "Seeing you are not nowe at the war nor in place to fight, I woulde thinke it best for you to be well besmeared and set up in an armory with other implements of war till time were that you should be occupied, least you wax more rustier then you are."[38]

Sir John Smith, it would seem, was cast in the same "miles gloriosus" mold. According to Sidney Lee, he prided himself of having refused to take part in "very great entertainment that he was offered by certain very great and foreign princes," and spoke disparagingly of the ladies of the French Court. Chapman might well have been thinking of this anecdote in *The Book of the Courtier*, replacing "besmeared and set up in an armory" by his own metaphor "frozen up stiff" —immobilized in antiquated fashions and avoiding the "very great entertainment" of foreign princes.

Conclusion

Did Count John Casimir really request Oxford to view his troops? Or did Chapman invent the anecdote? It seems possible that Chapman, having woven into his "text" the episode on the Count D'Auvergne, remembered a similar proposal that had actually been put to Oxford. But it is also possible that Chapman merely invented it.

Our conclusion, which not everyone will want to share, favors the latter assumption. As a preliminary it should be indicated that this conclusion is influenced by Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, especially by chapter VI, subchapter *C*, "The Means of Representation in Dreams":

> For representing *causal relations* dreams have two procedures which are in essence the same. Suppose the dream-thoughts run like this: 'Since this was so and so, such and such was bound to happen.' Then the commoner method method of representation would be to introduce the dependent clause as an introductory dream and to add the principal clause as the main dream. If I have interpreted arigh, the temporal sequence may be reversed. But the more extensive part of the dream always corresponds to the principal clause.[39]

Freud more than once draws the analogy between dreams and the unconscious, on the one hand, and literary censorship on the other:

> A similar difficulty [as censorship within the dream] confronts the political writer who has disagreeable truths to tell to those in authority... A writer must be beware of the censorship, and on its account he must

> soften and distort the expression of his opinion….he finds himself compelled either merely to refrain from certain forms of attack, to speak in allusions in place of direct references…[40]

Let us suppose that Chapman wanted to transmit to his readers a knowledge of a specific relationship between Hamlet and the Earl of Oxford. As this had remained concealed, Chapman could only state it by indirect allusion. He established a connection between his play and *Hamlet* by picking up the episode on the Count d'Auvergne. This allowed him to put Clermont, conceived as an ideal Stoic, in phase with the Stoic Hamlet of Shakespeare's play (V.2). The positioning could have served to communicate any one of three propositions: Whether Oxford wrote *Hamlet*, was the model for Hamlet, or *both* wrote the play *and* was the original of the title character, this scene III.4 was the ideal place to introduce him. We have, then, answered Boas' question as to why he introduced Oxford here and nowhere else.

We have now to cast a rapid look at how Chapman did it. In other words: by which "means of representation"? We have first the introductory part. Clermont describes an ideal Stoic and mentions an attribute particularly stressed by the Stoic philosopher Epictetus: "one should do only what is in his powers." Then he associates Oxford with a situation similar to that by which Clermont is confronted. Whether it is Oxford, Clermont, or Chapman the admonition is the same: "cast it only in the way to stay and serve the world." What this is has been said before: virtue, civility, valor, liberality, learning, cultivation ("spoke and writ sweetly"). It is repeated afterwards: therein he was the contrary of his countryman Sir John Smith, to whom refinement and cultivation signified little. Sir John Smith preferred military matters, Oxford humanistic values and learning. In Chapman's testimony, moreover, Oxford was so devoted to this task that he "had rather make away his whole estate in things that crossed the vulgar."

Chapman's witness accords with the characterization of Thomas Nashe's in Summer's Last Will and Testament (pub. 1598), where Ver declares: "What I had, I have spent on good fellows." Using Roger Ascham's terminology for "cultivation" or "honesty," that is, Chapman also tells us that Oxford wanted to "cross the vulgar," to "sow honesty." This is what (about the same time) Sir John Davies of Hereford tells us… of "Will Shake-speare." According to Chapman, Oxford was a very different man from his countryman Sir John Smith, more devoted to military matters — and that Oxford, using Ben Jonson's formula, was more concerned with "brandishing lances" at the "eyes of ignorance."

Endnotes

[1] Epictet. *Discourses*, I.I.

[2] George Chapman, *Bussy d'Ambois and The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*, edited by Frederick B Boas, Boston and London, 1905, http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/20890

[3] Boas, *Bussy*.

[4] The correct French spelling is "d'Amboise." It will be used when reference is made to the historical personage; reference to the character of Chapman's plays follows the original author's spelling, "D'Ambois."

[5] *Mémoires de Marguerite de Valois*, Sylvie Rozenker, ed. Toulouse: Éditions Ombres, 1994, 131-3.

[6] His title as heir apparent, as Sir Tomas Smiths explains: "But as in France the king's eldest son hath the title of the dauphin, and he or the next heir apparent to the crown is monsieur." *De Republica Anglorum*, I:18.

[7] Boas, *Bussy*.

[8] De Guise's brother, a cardinal, was assassinated shortly after the Duke of Guise himself in December 1588; Châtillon is Admiral Gaspard de Coligny, killed on St Bartholomew's day in August 1572; none of them figures in Chapman's play.

[9] For "bare bodkin," see *Moral Epistle* 70: "Non opus est vasto vulnere dividere praecordia: scalpello aperitur ad illam magnam libertatem via et puncto securitas constat. Quid ergo est quod nos facit pigros inertesque? Non opus est vasto vulnere dividere praecordia: scalpello aperitur ad illam magnam libertatem via et puncto securitas constat. Quid ergo est quod nos facit pigros inertesque?/If you would pierce your heart, a gaping wound is not necessary - a lancet will open the way to that great freedom, and tranquillity can be purchased at the cost of a pin- prick. What, then, is it which makes us lazy and sluggish?" For "slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune," see Epistle 104:"Unus est enim huius vitae fluctuantis et turbidae portuseventura contemnere, stare fidenter ac paratum tela fortunae adverso pectoreexcipere, non latitantem nec tergiversantem./The only harbour safe from the seething storms of this life is scorn of the furture, a firm stand, a readiness to receive Fortune's missiles full in the breast, neither skulking nor turning the back." For "But that the dread of something after death,/The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn/No traveller returns, puzzles the will," see Epistle 82: "Illa quoque res morti nos alienat, quod haec iam novimus, illa ad quae transituri sumus nescimus qualia sint, et horremus ignota./And there is another element which estranges us from death. we are already familiar with the present, but are ignorant of the future

into which we shall transfer ourselves, and we shrink from the unknown."

[10] Harold Jenkins. *Hamlet*, Routledge: London & New York, 1982: 557.

[11] Seneca, *Moral Epistles*, CVII.

[12] Boas, *Bussy*.

[13] Epictetus, *Discourses*, II:I.

[14] Epictetus, *Discourses,* II:I.

[15] May, Steven W. "The Authorship of 'My Mind to me a Kingdom Is'," *Review of English Studies*, New Series, Volume XXVI: 104 (November 1975), 385-395.

[16] May, 389.

[17] Ringler, William. *Poems of Sir Philip Sidney*. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1962, 557.

[18] Boas, *Bussy*.

[19] Boas, *Bussy*.

[20] Thomas Marc Parrot. *The Plays and Poems of George Chapman: The Tragedies*. George Routledge and Sons: London, 1910, 77.

[21] Boas, *Bussy*.

[22] Amphlett, Hilda. "Sir John Smith," *Shakespearean Authorship Review*, No. 13, Spring 1965. Reprinted in Turner Clark, Eva. *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays*. Edited by Ruth Lloyd Miller. Jennings LA: Kennikat Press, 1974, pp. 705.

[23] Ward, B.M. *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford 1550-1604*. London: John Murray. 1928, 289-90.

[24] Ward, 290.

[25] Smith's book is extensively quoted from online at: http://www.archerylibrary.com/books/english_bowman/html/30.html

[26] Cicero. *Of Duty*, translated by Walter Miller, Loeb edition, Cambridge, MA, 1913. http://www.stoics.com/cicero_book.html. Book I.18.

[27] Cicero, I.27.

[28] Pelorson, Jean-Marc, *Les Letrados – juristes castillans sous Philippe III. Recherches sur leur place dans la société, la culture et l'état*. Poitiers, 1980, 208.

[29] Castiglione, Baldesar. *The Book of the Courtier*. Translation by Thomas Hoby. Books I, XLV. Available online at http://www.luminarium.org/renascence-editions/courtier/courtier.html.

[30] Hoby, I, XLII.

[31] Hoby, I, XLII.

[32] Ascham, Roger. *The Scholemaster*. London: John Day, 1570, 18.

[33] Hexter, J.J. "The Education of the Aristocracy in the Renaissance," *The Journal of Modern History*, XXII (March 1950) 1-2.

[34] Hexter, 2.

[35] Alberti, Leon Battista. *I Libri della Famiglia*. Available online at http://www.filosofico.net/albertifamiglia4libri.htm.

[36] Ascham, 14[r].

[37] Ascham, 22[r].
[38] Castiglione, I, xvii.
[39] Freud, Sigmund. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. New York : Avon Books, 1965, pp. 349-350.
[40] Freud, 175-6.

Maniculed Psalms in the de Vere Bible:
A New Literary Source for Shakespeare

Richard M. Waugaman

As a practicing psychoanalyst, I distinctly recall my disappointment when I first learned many years ago that Freud made the embarrassing "error" of thinking some obscure nobleman wrote the works of Shakespeare.To my surprise, in 2002 the usually reliable *New York Times* now claimed that Roger Stritmatter had earned his Ph.D. with a dissertation using Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible to strengthen existing evidence that Freud was actually correct—at least about Shakespeare. When I re-read this article a few months later, I was intrigued to discover that de Vere's Geneva Bible is owned by the Folger Shakespeare Library.

I received "reader" privileges at the Folger and I spent many hours over the ensuing years examining de Vere's Bible. During the first three of those years, my research interests took me in unexpected directions. For example, I noticed that two anonymous poems in the 1585 edition of *Paradise of Daintie Devises* were likely by de Vere.[1] In addition, I was intrigued by the parallels between Julius Caesar's dying words in Latin and Jesus's dying words in Aramaic.[2]

Reanalyzing Stritmatter's extensive data on de Vere's Bible, I helped show that de Vere and "Shakespeare" had comparable levels of interest in a given biblical verse. There are 450 Biblical verses that Shakespeare cited in the canon just once; only 13% of these verses are marked in de Vere's Bible. However, of the 160 verses Shakespeare cited *four* times, de Vere marked 27% of these. There are even eight verses that Shakespeare cited *six* times – de Vere marked 88% of these.

Then, while looking at the metrical psalter at the back of de Vere's Bible in July 2008, I noticed a parallel between a phrase in one of the psalms that de Vere annotated and the words in a Shakespeare sonnet. Psalm 12:4 states, "Our tongues

are ours, we ought to speak./ What Lord shall us control?" Sonnet 66 includes the line: "And art made tongue-tied by authority." The latter is thus the antithesis of the former. I found similar echoes and parallels of other marked psalms in Shakespeare's works. Scholars knew that Shakespeare's work frequently echoes the Psalms, and we know that de Vere's uncle, Arthur Golding, dedicated his translation of John Calvin's commentaries on the Psalms to de Vere in 1571. In his dedication, Golding wrote, "And David… exhorteth you by his own example… to talk of [the Psalms] afore kings and great men, to love it, to make songs of it…" (Anderson 439). That is just what de Vere did.

The version of the Psalms bound at the end of de Vere's Bible was *not* in the Geneva Bible's translation of the Psalms, nor in the Coverdale or Bishop's translations, but in a now obscure translation of the Psalms that was phenomenally popular in de Vere's day and for the next century (it went through almost 1,000 editions). In fact, it was often bound with Bibles and Books of Common Prayer. This was the translation begun by Thomas Sternhold under Henry VIII, and later completed by John Hopkins and others. It was published as *The Whole Book of Psalms* (WBP). (Consult the appendix for a complete list of the WBP psalms that de Vere annotated.)

I was struck the first time I saw these psalms in de Vere's Bible that he drew ornate manicules, or pointing hands, in the margins next to many of them. He marked one psalm with a large and elaborate fleur-de-lys. He marked the summaries of additional psalms in the introductory "Treatise of Athanasius," which directs the devout reader to specific psalms to recite under specific conditions. Moreover, WBP was a metrical version of the psalms, written as "fourteeners," with seven iambs per line, often printed as one line of four iambs, followed by a line of three iambs. The simple, fixed meter meant they could be set to music in what is still referred to as "Common Meter" in current hymnals. WBP did in fact constitute an Elizabethan hymnal. As Beth Quitslund has explained in her recent book on WBP, by 1560 English congregations were singing hymns together (previously, only the choirs did the singing).[3] So de Vere's intense interest in WBP may have been influenced by both the text and the music, as he was nearly 50% more likely to annotate a psalm that was printed with the music on the same page (most of the psalms directed the reader to another psalm for the music).

Starting in the 18th century, the literary quality of WBP came in for some criticism, in particular its awkward phrasing. In C.S. Lewis' mostly authoritative summary of 16th century literature, he observes that WBP was of poor quality, but that it did no damage since it had no influence on literature.

After two years of research on the topic, I beg to differ. In fact, I am discovering that WBP may have had a wider and more significant influence on de Vere than any other book of the Bible, and it certainly was more influential on his work than any other translation of the Psalms. Unfortunately, there is still a widespread lack of interest in biblical influences in general on Shakespeare. It is a sad fact of human nature that we remain largely trapped within our own psychology, treating the outside world as one big ink blot, onto which we project the contents of our own

mind, overlooking most of what we cannot relate to.

These days, few of us have any interest in the Bible, and that lack of interest carries over into Shakespeare research. In the past, Shakespeare scholars have argued that Shakespeare was a "secular" writer whose occasional allusions to the Bible are of minimal significance. They thereby fail to step outside themselves, and miss the enormous importance that religion, theology, and the Bible had for Elizabethans, including de Vere. (When some scholars say that Shakespeare of Stratford only knew the Bible through hearing it read in church, I do not dispute them. The Bible he heard there, by the way, was by law the Bishop's Bible, not the Geneva translation that is widely agreed to be the one quoted most in Shakespeare's works.)

In July, 2008, I shared my discoveries about Psalm 12 with Roger Stritmatter. He told me he was unaware that anyone had noticed that parallel and he encouraged me to follow up on this lead. Naseeb Shaheen's comprehensive list of biblical echoes in Shakespeare mentions only a couple of echoes of WBP in his index; there are a few more in his book that are not indexed.[4] However, Shaheen did not realize how important WBP was for Shakespeare.

What to do with my discoveries? We psychiatrists routinely tell patients who are feeling overwhelmed by a task to break it down into manageable components, and pursue them one at a time. What was I going to do with all my data? Stritmatter proposed a "mousetrap strategy." That is, to submit selected discoveries to a mainstream journal, deleting all mention of de Vere's Bible. We both believed that explaining this source of my discoveries would in all likelihood lead my article to be rejected. Mainstream journals practice an unwritten "don't ask, don't tell" policy with respect to the authorship question—they publish articles by Oxfordians, as long as those articles refrain from overt endorsement of de Vere as Shakespeare.

In September of 2008, I submitted to *Notes & Queries* a brief note on "Psalm 8 as a Source of Sonnet 21." Characteristically, I found that de Vere's allusions to the WBP psalms strongly influence our interpretation of his work. For example, I discovered that Sonnet 21's "that Muse" was not some Elizabethan poet, as many had assumed, but was none other than the psalmist—traditionally, King David. The sonnet echoes so many phrases and concepts of Psalm 8 that it is clearly structured as a reply to that psalm, implying that de Vere was comparing himself with King David. Even more blasphemously, the sonnet thus compares the Fair Youth with God himself (or herself). I thus compared Shakespeare's poems with "holy psalms turned to lovers' sonnets," reversing John Lyly's words in his novel, *Euphues*.

I received a polite acknowledgement from *Notes & Queries* that they would consider my submission. That was all the encouragement I needed to write more, and that journal's format of publishing brief articles made the writing task seem more manageable. A few days later, I sent them "Echoes of Psalm 51 in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*." This "chief penitential psalm" is echoed frequently in the play. Most saliently, its echoes in Lady Macbeth's "Out damned spot" speech highlight the gap between her primitive fears of punishment and Psalm 51's characterization of the genuine state of contrition that can lead to God's forgiveness.

By the time this note was acknowleged a week later, I had a third note to

submit. It was on "The Sternhold and Hopkins Psalms as Sources for *The Rape of Lucrece*." Here, the echoes are extensive. Shakespeare uses the word "warble" only once in all his poetry, in line 1080 of *Lucrece*. That word is also found only once in WBP, in Psalm 137:5. An earlier phrase says of Lucrece that "she that never coped with stranger *eyes*" could not "read the subtle-shining *secrecies/ Writ in* the glassy margents of such *books*" (lines 99-102). Not only do all five highlighted words come from Psalm 139:15-16—this psalm captures much of the theme of *Lucrece*, including efforts to conceal sin in the darkness of night, and its eventual revelation and punishment.

I sent four additional notes on WBP and Shakespeare to *Notes & Queries* over the next few weeks. During this period I attended a lecture by David Schalkwyk, the new Director of Research at the Folger, and *Shakespeare Quarterly* editor. His comments on Sonnet 125 in his lecture led me to re-examine the previous sonnet. Two days later, I sent him my 10-page article on the many allusions to Psalm 103 in Sonnet 124. Schalkwyk generously replied that my article changed his reading of this sonnet. In another note, I showed the influence of that same Psalm 103 on a second sonnet, Sonnet 69. (I later found it prominently echoed in *Edward III*, II.1.)

In early 2009, I was delighted to receive an email from *Notes & Queries* asking me to write an article incorporating all seven notes. I promptly did this and submitted it a week later. In April, they notified me that my article had been accepted, including the strong claim of its title — "The Sternhold and Hopkins' Whole Book of Psalms is a Major Source for the Works of Shakespeare" (December 2009, 56:4, 595-604). It is my understanding that *Notes & Queries* seldom publishes long articles, so I was especially pleased that they thus seemed to be endorsing the significance of these discoveries.

I want to emphasize how I found these allusions to WBP in Shakespeare's works: *Each of the ten psalms I wrote about in my article was marked by de Vere*. It was de Vere himself who "pointed me" to these psalms through his marginal manicules.

But I voluntarily "manacled" my impulse to tell the "manicule" part of my story in a mainstream journal. I decided the better part of valor in this case was discretion about my "source." I remained "tongue-tied" by the authority of the Shakespeare establishment, afraid that the subversive implications of my discoveries for traditional authorship assumptions might lead to their suppression. I will probably never know if my fears were well-founded.

Stritmatter's discoveries about the hundreds of connections between de Vere's annotations of his Bible and biblical echoes in Shakespeare's works have not yet received the recognition they deserve. Among the counter-arguments that have been offered are the claim that de Vere and Shakespeare merely showed interest in biblical passages that were of interest to all Elizabethans. Although Stritmatter has refuted this counterargument by showing that a preponderance of marked verses were *not* in fact popular ones among other Elizabethan writers, insidious dismissals still hold sway. Similarly, the so-called "seven penitential psalms" were translated by Elizabethans far more often than any other psalms. Yet de Vere marked only two of these in his WBP (6 and 51). Again, de Vere shows a distinctive, idiosyncratic interest

in psalms that were less popular among his contemporaries.

Will the echoes of WBP in Shakespeare's works be harder to dismiss? These allusions had been virtually ignored for 400 years (along with WBP itself in the past 200 years). I seriously doubt that some later owner of de Vere's Bible noticed all the echoes of WBP in Shakespeare's works, and took the trouble to draw 16th-century manicules next to those psalms (and only those psalms). Scholars' blind spots about WBP means that there is a rich lode of sources for Shakespeare to mine here. I do not think it was a coincidence that my Oxfordian perspective on authorship, which led me to immerse myself in de Vere's Bible, in turn led me to wonder if the psalms he marked might have influenced his literary works.

I believe the onus is now on Stratfordians to show that psalms *not* marked in de Vere's Bible had more influence on Shakespeare's works than those that de Vere did mark. He marked a total of 20 psalms in a variety of ways, leaving 130 unmarked psalms. My research thus far has naturally yielded many echoes of unmarked psalms in Shakespeare's works and is consistent with Stritmatter's discoveries with the rest of de Vere's Bible.


PSALME CIII. T. S.

Benedic anima mea.

¶ This is a Psalme most excellent, wherin the Prophet doth prouoke men and Angels, and all creatures to prayse the Lord for his fatherly mercies, and deliuerance of his people from all euils for his prouidence ouer all thinges, and the preseruacion of the faithfull.

M Y soule geue laud vnto the Lord, my sprite shall doo the same: and all the se-

cretes

Figure 1. Psalm 103, as marked with a manicule in the Folger Library de Vere copy of STC 2106 (Shelfmark 1427).

Since *Notes & Queries* accepted my article, I continued to write further articles on WBP, having found that Psalm 103 is echoed throughout *Edward III*, thus helping to establish its authorship by Shakespeare/ de Vere. Psalm 137 is echoed repeatedly in *Richard II*.[5] Moreover, the play *Henry VI, Part One* echoes Psalms 8, 51, and 137. *Notes & Queries* asked me to combine the three articles I sent them on these plays, and published them in 2010.[6] Once again, de Vere marked three of these psalms with his pointing hands; he marked Psalm 8 with a flower in the Treatise of Athanasius. The unmarked psalms have *not* proved to be as rich a source for previously undiscovered allusions in Shakespeare's works.

One Stratfordian emailed me that all Oxfordians suffer from the "fact" that we lack even a single "electron" of evidence for de Vere's authorship of Shakespeare's works. As the adage advises, "don't get mad—get even." So I wrote a paper whimsically titled, "An Oxfordian Quark or a Quirky Oxfreudian? Psalm Evidence for de Vere's Authorship of Shakespeare's Works." This paper was accepted for presentation at the 2010 Southeastern Renaissance Conference, and it will be

published in *Renaissance Papers*. It summarizes my findings, and adds fresh material on echoes of the maniculed Psalm 77 in Sonnet 28 and in *Hamlet*.

Let me give some further examples of echoes of WBP in de Vere's works. The maniculed Psalm 12 contributes significantly to Sonnet 80.[7] Sonnet 80 is a detailed response to Christopher Marlowe's poem *Hero and Leander*.[8] Naturally, de Vere often blends more than one source of literary allusion in a single work.[9] In this case, the allusions to Psalm 12 effectively contradict his ostensible praise of Marlowe as the rival poet. Sonnet 80 seems to lavish praise on the rival's superior poetic powers ("a better spirit,"[10] "the proudest sail"[11] in contrast with de Vere's "tongue-tied," "humble," "inferior," "worthless"[12] self-portrait). After calling Southampton's worth "wide as the Ocean is," de Vere compares himself to a "saucy[13] bark (inferior far to his" [i.e., Marlowe's].[14] "On your *broad main*" echoes the only previous use of this phrase in EEBO, by Arthur Golding, in his translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses:* "So shall we on the *broad main* sea together jointly sail." But, by also echoing Psalm 12, de Vere subtly but effectively turns all this around on his more voluble rival. This psalm characterizes those who speak so freely as "vain," "flattering," "deceitful," "proud," "ill," "wicked" men who "lie," "feign," "make great brags," and are "full of mischiefs."

Helen Vendler acknowledges her puzzlement about Sonnet 80. Addressing the couplet's rhyme, she says, "I confess that I am somewhat at a loss here to explain what Shakespeare had in mind… Why, one wonders… does Shakespeare use a rather unidiomatic word like *decay* for shipwreck and being cast *away*, when *–ay* is a sound easy to find [other] rhymes for?" (359). In fact, Psalm 12 begins with this very rhyme with which Sonnet 80 ends: *decay/away*. The first line announces that it is "good and godly men" who "do perish and decay." So de Vere's reference to "my decay" would thus mark him as a "good and godly" man. Verse 1 begins with the plea, "*Help*, Lord"; line 9 of Sonnet 80 refers to Southampton's "shallowest *help*," one of many psalm echoes that implicitly compare Southampton with God.

Psalm 87, though unmarked, also drew de Vere's interest. 87:1-4's "Upon the holy hills…*Full glorious* things… are said of thee, thou city of our God./ On Rahab I will cast an *eye*" is beautifully echoed in Sonnet 33's opening line, "*Full* many a *glorious* morning[15] have I seen,/ Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign *eye*…" ("Full" occurs four times in this psalm.) Thus, "full," "glorious," and "hills" or "mountain tops" open the sonnet and occur in the first half of the psalm. "Pale streams" in the sonnet echo "my fountains and my pleasant springs" of the psalm. "My *love*" echoes "God *love*s the gates of Sion best… He *love*d them more than all the rest."

Sonnet 33 also offers some significant contrasts with Psalm 87. For example, Psalm 87's argument [or summary] locates "misery" solely in the past, during the Babylonian captivity. The argument states that "The holy ghost promiseth that the condition of the Church, which was a misery after the captivity of Babilon, should be restored to great excellency." The psalm offers several forms of assurance that the current condition of God's grace "shall full well endure"; "can no *time decay*"; and "doth there abide." By contrast, Sonnet 33 places the poet's *happiness* with the Fair Youth solely in the past, and mourns the fact that the youth "was but one hour

mine." Likewise, "this dis*grace*" of the sonnet contrasts with "his [God's] *grace* doth there abide" of the psalm. Vendler says that Sonnet 33 is "the first sonnet to remark a true flaw in the friend" (178). Perhaps de Vere sought in the promise of the psalm's argument some comfort that the Youth's favor will one day be restored and will then "shine" on him again.

Sonnet 65 also echoes Psalm 87. The psalm begins with the promise that, after the Israelites' release from Babylon, Jerusalem will "endure," and "it can no *time decay*." 87:2 asserts that "God loves the *gates*[16] *of* Sion best." By contrast, Sonnet 65 contradicts the psalm by asserting that nothing can escape the destruction of "sad mortality." Its list of objects vulnerable to time's destruction begins with brass, stone, and earth; these may allude to the trumpeters and "groundwork" or foundations of the psalm. The octave ends by repeating that neither "rocks impregnable" nor "*gates of* steel" will remain, because "*time decays*." This latter echo is the most obvious challenge to Psalm 87. (De Vere is the first author listed in EEBO who made "time" the subject in the phrase "time decays.")[17] By implication, de Vere thus claims for his poetry the "miracle" of the very sort of timeless endurance that Psalm 87 claims for God's favored city of Zion.

"Time decays" in Sonnet 65 also echoes Erasmus's "Epistle to persuade a young gentleman to marriage,"[18] which is a recognized source for the first 17 "Procreation Sonnets." The phrase occurs in a sentence that has further parallels with the imagery of Sonnet 65: "A city is like to fall in ruin, except there be watchmen to defend it in armor. But assured destruction must needs here follow except men through the benefit of marriage supply issue, the which through *mortality* do from time to *time decay"* (folio 24). De Vere similarly wrote of the destructive power of "sad *mortality*." Erasmus's military imagery is consistent with the sonnet's "Against the wrackful siege of batt'ring days,/ When rocks impregnable are not so stout,/ Nor gates of steel so strong, but *time decays*." Through the allusion to Erasmus, Sonnet 65 hints that the "black ink" of de Vere's poetry must take the place of Southampton's offspring, since he has not (yet) married.

De Vere marked verses 15 and 16 of Psalm 31 with a bracket and three dots (his only such notation in WBP)—"The length of all my life and age, O Lord, is in thy hand:/ Defend me from the wraths and rage, of them that me withstand./ To me thy servant, Lord, express, and show thy joyful face:/ And save me, Lord, for thy goodness, thy mercy, and thy grace." Psalm 31 has several echoes in Sonnet 71 ("No longer mourn from me when I am *dead"*). This fatalism of the sonnet contradicts the promise of the psalm, in the face of death. For example, the psalm begins "O Lord, I put my trust in thee." The second line of the sonnet "Than you shall *hear* the surly sullen bell" more resignedly echoes a word in the second verse of the psalm: "*Hear* me, O Lord, and that anon, to help me make good speed." The sonnet says "I am fled/ From this vile world with vildest worms[19] to dwell"; 31:17 similarly speaks of "the grave." "With vildest worms *to dwell*" also turns to a dark line from the "Creed of Athanasius" bound with his WBP: "And they into eternal *life* [note de Vere's reversal of this word through metathesis to "vile"] shall go, that have done well: Who have done ill, shall go into eternal fire *to dwell*." Line 7 is "That *I* in your sweet thoughts

would be *forgot*"; Psalm 31: 12 is "As men once *dead* are out of mind, so am *I* now *forgot* (this is the only WBP psalm that thus links "I" and "forgot"). Line 11 of the sonnet is "Do not so much my poor *name rehearse*." "*Name*" occurs in 31:3, and the psalm's introductory summary includes the phrase, "first he [David] *rehearse*th what meditation he had by the power of faith when death was before his eyes." Line 12 says "But let your love even with *my life* decay." Psalm 31 is the only psalm that repeats the phrase "*my life*" three times. Other words from Psalm 31 that are echoed in Sonnet 71 are *hand, love, and woe*.

I have been asked how my 34 years of clinical work as a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst have influenced my work on de Vere. First of all, it was my admiration for Freud's intellect that led me to reconsider the possible validity of his endorsement of Looney's Oxfordian hypothesis. (That is why I now think of myself as an "Oxfreudian.") Secondly, psychoanalytic work is centrally based on the discovery that the dynamic unconscious is a vital source of human motivation. Analysts are constantly attuned to thoughts, feelings, and conflicts that may be outside a person's awareness. Blind spots are not limited to our patients—they are ubiquitous in all of us, including psychoanalysts. "Group think" is well known to lead to the fundamental cognitive error of misinterpreting fresh evidence according to a widely accepted explanatory theory, rather than attending objectively to data that are more consistent with an alternative theory. "Selection bias" filters out evidence that is inconsistent with the prevailing theory. There is a failure to re-examine previously rejected hypotheses. Members of the group value consensus above accuracy. Anyone who disagrees is stereotyped in a way that dismisses their ideas.[20] My 100 publications have frequently taken up topics that had previously been ignored because of such "group think" on the part of other analysts.

Perhaps the best example involves what used to be called multiple personality, and is now known as "dissociative identity disorder." During the first years that I was working intensively with a few patients who suffered from that illness, its very existence was highly controversial among psychiatrists and psychoanalysts. I was still earning my credentials as an analyst during those years, and I worried—somewhat realistically—that my career might be thwarted if colleagues with the power to advance or to hinder my advancement disapproved of my opinion that dissociative identity disorder was a genuine illness.

Only after I became board-certified in psychoanalysis, then appointed as a training and supervising analyst in my institute, did I write my first article about my clinical work with dissociative patients. I believe I was the first training analyst within the American Psychoanalytic Association to write such an article. I now felt I had less to lose. In fact, I felt something of an obligation to speak out on behalf of colleagues who were similarly "tongue-tied by authority." One respected colleague then told me he was disappointed in me for my alleged gullibility in believing dissociative identity disorder existed. Another warned me, when I later shared my new-found interest in de Vere, "Drop it—you'll jeopardize your reputation!" Since there seems to be a spectrum of dissociated self states or ego states in everyone, I have become fascinated with the possibility that pseudonymous authors who are

creative geniuses have an unusually flexible and adaptive relationship among their various ego states. Fernando Pessoa's 70-plus "heteronyms" are the most extreme example.[21]

My earlier self-censorship about dissociative disorders has now taken a new form when I write about Shakespeare for a mainstream journal. I notice that, in the process, I give less thought to connections with de Vere. David McCollough once told an interviewer "I write to find out what I think." So not being able to write freely makes it more difficult to find out what we think. Even our private reflections are stymied by any forces that suppress the later expression of our conclusions. Victims of child abuse, as one extreme example, are often threatened by their abusers never to tell anyone what happened. If the abuse happens to a very young child, the child is at risk of dissociating the memory of it from her conscious mind, in order to protect herself from the abuser's threats.

Another psychoanalytic influence on my Shakespeare research is the surmise that envy is a powerful but unacknowledged force in Shakespeare scholarship. It was Melanie Klein and her followers who demonstrated the powerful role of envy in the mind. Our feelings of admiration for someone we deeply respect are often admixed with painful feelings of competition and envy that this person is superior to us. Often, without realizing it, envy leaks out in the form of efforts to diminish the person we admire.

I believe that envy of Shakespeare's extraordinary works is a significant reason for the stubborn refusal of Stratfordians to look at the authorship evidence objectively. In addition, rather than own up to their unacknowledged feelings of envy, they project this problem onto Oxfordians, in the form of the *ad hominem* charge that we are snobs who cannot abide the man from Stratford because he was a commoner. That is, I suspect their insistence that he *must* be a commoner is the first of many ways they cope with their envy of his literary accomplishments. But there are many other examples. Think of all the times a Shakespeare scholar pounces on alleged errors in Shakespeare's works—Shakespeare's "embarrassing" (though imaginary) howlers about Bohemia having a coastline; someone going from Verona to Milan by boat; and anachronisms galore, such as the clock in *Julius Caesar*.

This is anything but a recent phenomenon. Ben Jonson clearly struggled with his envy of de Vere, with his snide remarks about his "little Latin and less Greek" and his wish that Shakespeare had blotted out more of his first drafts. Later, Samuel Johnson (in his 1765 preface to Shakespeare's works) excoriated Shakespeare for numerous shortcomings. Making the sort of denial of his envy that psychoanalysts call a negation (a defense that paradoxically calls attention to the underlying truth of what is being denied), Johnson said "Shakespeare ...has likewise faults, and faults sufficient to obscure and overwhelm any other merit. I shall show them... *without envious malignity* [my emphasis]... He sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is so much more careful to please than to instruct, that he seems to write without any moral purpose... The plots are often so loosely formed... and so carelessly pursued, that he seems not always fully to comprehend his own design."

Johnson faulted Shakespeare for not slavishly adhering to Aristotle's dramatic

unities of time and place. So there were the notorious anachronisms— "He had no regard of distinction of time or place, but gives to one age or nation, without scruple, the customs, institutions, and opinions of another." Even though we Oxfordians are often dismissed as snobs, I detect a whiff of snobbery in Johnson's allegation of Shakespeare that "neither his gentlemen nor his ladies have much delicacy, nor are sufficiently distinguished from his clowns by any appearance of refined manners."

Speaking of Aristotle, I would argue that Shakespeare scholars are fixated in what is an essentially medieval approach to their work. Aristotle's authority distorted centuries of scholarship by ignoring new evidence because of the misguided use of deductive reasoning based on his sometimes false premises. All too similarly, Shakespeare scholars seem unable to recover from the false premise of Shakespeare's identity as the man from Stratford. This false premise is never allowed to be questioned or re-examined with objectivity. Instead, we are supposed to reason deductively from that assumption, rather than using post-medieval inductive reasoning based on a fresh examination of the evidence. To give one example, Shakespeare of Stratford is assumed to be the author of the works bearing his name, so then it must be assumed that he attended the grammar school in Stratford, and that school must have provided an outstanding education. Or, what is even worse, for centuries it was assumed that Shakespeare's rudimentary education instead proved that his genius represented the divine workings of Nature, in the absence of much educational Nurture. It was only ever so slowly that Shakespeare scholars have acknowledged the stupendous scope of Shakespeare's reading, and his profound grappling with most of the thorniest intellectual problems of his day.

So, perhaps I am being quixotic in assuming that my discoveries about the profound influence of de Vere's marked verses in WBP will lead a single Stratfordian to question her authorship premise. Instead, she will probably react like medieval astronomers who maintained a geocentric model of the universe by constructing ever more "epicycles" to account for new observations that were seemingly inconsistent with their earth-centered premise. Two prominent Shakespeare scholars have already told me my findings are "unconvincing"—that my alleged allusions to WBP are merely common words that show no evidence of WBP's influence on Shakespeare. If that dismissal fails, perhaps we will be told that these were simply the most popular WBP psalms of the era. Given the many correlations between de Vere's entire Bible and Shakespeare's works, it is only a matter of time before someone claims that Shakespeare of Stratford must have borrowed de Vere's Bible and marked it up.

Nevertheless, I agree with Freud that the small, quiet voice of reason will eventually prevail. Many major advances of science during past centuries have taken place only after furious resistance from partisans of prevailing but erroneous paradigms. We will soon reach a tipping point when young scholars of Elizabethan literature will realize they have a far brighter future if they have the courage to defy their elders and search for the truth about the authorship of Shakespeare's works.

Appendix of de Vere WPB Annotations

Psalms Marked with a Large Manicule: 6, 12, 25, 30, 51, 61, 65, 66, 67, 77, 103, 137, 139, and 146.

Psalms marked in the Treatise of Athanasius with a Small Manicule: 8, 11, 15, 23, and 59.

Other Annotations:
large fleur-de-lys next to verse 11 of Psalm 25
rounded brackets and three dots next to verses 15 and 16 of Psalm 31
large **C**-shaped drawing next to heading of Psalm 130

Endnotes

[1] "A Wanderlust Poem, Newly Attributed to Edward de Vere," *Shakespeare Matters* 7(1):21-23 (2007); "A Snail Poem, Newly Attributed to Edward de Vere," *Shakespeare Matters* 7(2):6-11(2008).

[2] "Unconscious Communication in Shakespeare: 'Et tu, Brute?' Echoes 'Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabbachthani?'" *Psychiatry*, 70:52-58 (2007).

[3] *The Reformation in Rhyme* (Ashgate, 2008).

[4] *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Plays* (London, 1999).

[5] Hannibal Hamlin had previously discovered most of the allusions to Psalm 137 in *Richard II* (see his 2004 *Psalm Culture and Early Modern English Literature*). He was using the Coverdale translation, however, which lacks many of the words echoed from the WBP 137 in this play.

[6] The only hint I made in the two *Notes & Queries* articles about the connection with de Vere's Bible was in a footnote, in which I stated that the psalms I wrote about were all annotated in the Folger's STC 2106—the catalogue number for de Vere's Bible.

[7] Another psalm may have contributed the word "soundless," which the OED suggests was coined by the Countess of Pembroke in *her* 1586 translation of Psalm 148:4 — "Then *soundless* deeps, and what in you residing low, or moves, or rests."

[8] Richard M. Waugaman, "Shakespeare's Sonnet 80, Marlowe, and *Hero and Leander.*" *Shakespeare Matters* (in press).

[9] In fact, these endnotes include many additional possible sources for the "Shakespeare" passages that I discuss. De Vere's mind was extremely associative, and also extremely synthetic. I draw attention to these possible sources so that their possible influence on him may be considered.

[10] Thomas North's translation of Plutarch described the lame Spartan ruler Agesilaus as "having a *better spirit*" when he was a boy. North's Plutarch added that the Spartan general Lysander (who ended the Peloponnesian War against Athens) "fell in love" with Agesilaus when the latter was a boy. If de Vere was conscious of this allusion,

The Arte of English Poesie:

The Case for Edward de Vere's Authorship[1]

Richard M. Waugaman

Abstract

This paper will challenge the traditional attribution of the 1589 *Arte of English Poesie* to George Puttenham. The psychological and methodological obstacles one must overcome in making such a case mirror those faced in challenging the traditional attribution of the works of William Shakespeare to Shakespeare of Stratford. After reviewing the evidence on which the traditional attribution of *The Arte* is based, I next examine bibliographical and historical evidence that point to Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, as the author of this anonymous work. The trail of evidence links *The Arte* to the pseudonymous Elizabethan poet known as "Ignoto." I therefore present evidence to support J.T. Looney's claim that Ignoto was Edward de Vere.

Whigham and Rebhorn's recent edition of *The Arte of English Poesie* provides us with a much-needed opportunity to reexamine the authorship of this important anonymous work of 1589. Widely recognized as possibly the most important Elizabethan book on literary theory, *The Arte* is directed at courtiers, advising them not only on writing poetry, but on proper behavior and dress. Whigham and Rebhorn accept the conventional theory that George Puttenham (1529-1591) was the book's author. They note the book's central emphasis on the art of deception, yet they fail to consider the possibility that the book's author has successfully practiced this art

on the readers of his book over the ensuing centuries. We do not in fact know with certainty who wrote this classic, and I suggest that the author was Edward de Vere (1550-1604), who deliberately disguised his authorship of this book by planting false clues that scholars have accepted at face value. I hope to show that de Vere's claim to authorship is more compelling than that of Puttenham, the traditional author.

In making this case, I expect to encounter the entrenched resistance that always fights off any challenges to traditional authorship attributions. One major intellectual discovery of the early modern period was inductive reasoning, which minimizes preconceptions, and develops theories based on empirical evidence. Ironically, when it comes to authorship attribution studies, we often regress to Aristotelian logic, which begins with an unquestioned premise and reasons deductively from that initial premise. This gives the weight of tradition undue authority, and results in an irrational prejudice that traditional attributions must be accepted unless there is overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Scholars are often unaware that they filter out evidence that contradicts traditional beliefs before they have weighed it objectively. The bar for minimal evidence is thus set higher for subsequent authorship attribution than it is for establishing initial attributions. Consequently, the burden of proof is always placed on those who attempt to replace the traditional author with an alternative. The result of this reasoning is that, while it may protect us from false new attributions, it also leads us to cling to traditional but erroneous ones. The only way to avoid such cognitive distortions is to begin with a clean slate, and evaluate evidence for the traditional candidate (whether Shakespeare of Stratford; or Puttenham) with the same stringency to which we subject evidence for competing candidates.

Willcock and Walker,[2] in their edition of the *Arte*, acknowledged that "it is impossible to establish George Puttenham's claim to the authorship of the Arte with any finality."[3] Steven May concluded that Puttenham's claim to authorship is "not indisputable," but that it "trumps that of any other candidate."[4] May's strongest evidence is Harington's 1590 reference to the book's author as "Putnam," and Bolton's 1610 reference to "Puttenham" as the author (these claims will be explored below). May saw evidence of Puttenham's rhetorical skills in a 1571 legal case, and Puttenham's inventory of ninety books shows that he owned works on law, rhetoric, French history, politics, and Latin poetry. May felt that, as John Throckmorton was involved with Puttenham's affairs and is praised in the *Arte*, this is further suggestive evidence of Puttenham's authorship.

Despite the disclaimers of Willcock and Walker, as well as May, most scholars now treat Puttenham's authorship as definitively established, so it is important to enumerate its weaknesses. Acknowledging them, May admits that "George Puttenham the fugitive excommunicant is not easily reconciled with Puttenham the author."[5] May further states that Puttenham's translation of a fragment of Suetonius "bears faint witness to his literary interests;"[6] his library inventory omits any reference to English poetry "such as... Tottel... or the works of George Gascoigne and George Turberville, all drawn on heavily in the *Arte*, and all in print by 1576,"[7] the date of Puttenham's inventory. The author claimed to have studied at Oxford

and to have been brought up in foreign courts. May admits that neither was true of George Puttenham (nor of his brother Richard, a much weaker claimant). Yet scholars illogically still treat other autobiographical material in *The Arte* as though it must be taken at face value, and that it therefore invalidates de Vere's authorship.

When the *Arte* was discussed in a seminar devoted to it at the 2009 Shakespeare Association of America, Whigham, Rebhorn, and May each acknowledged that there are many unanswered questions about it.[8] May noted that early modern publishers made their profit on subsequent editions of books, as first printings were typically too small to recoup expenses. But *The Arte* was never reprinted. With its many woodcuts, May said it would have been an expensive book to print, and its publication may have been subsidized. May's recent archival research failed to make a convincing case for Puttenham's authorship.

The Arte was published anonymously, and most commentators have not speculated as to why Puttenham never claimed authorship of this well-regarded book. The legend that Puttenham wrote it started with John Harington's 1590 written request to *The Arte*'s printer, Richard Field, that he publish Harington's forthcoming book "in the same printe that Putnams book ys."[9] This feeble straw is the foundation on which attribution of *The Arte* to Puttenham has been built. Ironically, Harington himself subsequently offered much stronger evidence that the author was actually one "Ignoto"; I will show that this pseudonym in every instance probably alluded to de Vere, and that Harington knew it.

Edmund Bolton's 1610 *Hypercritica* reports a rumor that "one Puttenham, gentleman pensioner to Queen Elizabeth, wrote the *Arte*."[10] However, May continues, "Neither George nor [his brother] Richard served as pensioners or in any other capacity under Elizabeth." May then concludes, unpersuasively, "yet clearly [sic] someone named Puttenham wrote *The Arte*." May exemplifies Marcy North's central thesis that scholars abhor an authorship vacuum, and he thus fails to give adequate weight to the possibility that authorship of the *Arte* has never been conclusively established.

It is more parsimonious to conclude instead that, by 1610, there were two incompatible rumors about the identity of the author, both of which may have been false. It is possible that Edward de Vere himself helped spread the deliberate disinformation that "Putnam" wrote the book.[11] This possibility is consistent with de Vere concealing his later work behind Shaksper of Stratford, as well as his possibly concealing his commentary on Edmund Spenser's *The Shephearde's Calender* behind Spenser's friend Edmund Kirke ("E.K.") in 1579. There may well be[12] a partial truth contained in the 1610 rumor— that *The Arte* did have everything to do with a royal pension. It is likely that some insiders knew this origin of *The Arte*. They would have known that de Vere was successful in winning a royal pension, in 1586, three years before the *Arte*'s publication.[13]

My hypothesis is that de Vere wrote an earlier draft of this book as a document addressed to the Queen alone, with the goal of obtaining the unprecedented 1,000 pound annuity that she granted him in June, 1586.[14] He justified his petition with *The Arte*'s list of past monarchs who had rewarded their favorite poets.[15] He told the

story of Alexander the Great sleeping with a copy of Homer under his pillow. In fact, that passage uses a phrase that re-appears in the works of Shakespeare. *The Arte* states that the poems of Homer "were laid under his pillow and by day were carried in the rich jewel coffer of Darius."[16] The highlighted phrase occurs in Henry VI, Part 1, 1.5.25, as Charles is praising Joan of Arc—"In memory of her when she is dead,/ Her ashes, in an urn more precious/ Than the rich-jewell'd coffer of Darius."[17]

Another example—"King Henry VIII, her Majesty's father, for a few psalms of David turned into English meter by [Thomas] Sternhold, made him groom of his privy chamber, and gave him many other good gifts."[18] This metrical translation of the Psalms, finished by other poets, is bound at the end of de Vere's Geneva Bible. Using the 20 psalms de Vere annotated (usually with ornate manicules, or pointing hands), I have found a wealth of previously unnoticed but pivotal sources for the works of Shakespeare.[19] *The Sonnets, The Rape of Lucrece, Titus Andronicus*, and the history plays are especially rich in newly discovered echoes of the marked metrical psalms.[20]

It seems likely that the Queen liked de Vere's draft so much that she encouraged him to expand and publish it, in order to foster the flowering of English poetry that marked her reign. If this hypothesis is correct, it is an important instance of de Vere's anonymous publication as early as 1589. Two poems published anonymously in the 1585 *Paradise of Daintie Devises*[21] have been attributed to de Vere.[22] De Vere apparently had written one of them in an eventually successful attempt to win the Queen's permission to travel to the Continent. This hypothesis would establish an important precedent for de Vere's using his literary skill to win the Queen's favor. Chapter I:19 of *The Arte* may have been de Vere's brief eloquent pleading for the Queen's commission for his writing the pro-Tudor "Shakespeare" history plays. The chapter champions the persuasive power of "poesy historical," while emphasizing that it is all the more instructive if it is not slavishly factual. It cites Xenophon as a "well-trained courtier" who wrote a "feigned and untrue" history of a monarch, that was beneficial for posterity (and, importantly, beneficial for the monarch's future image).

The exuberant tone of *The Arte*, while taxing one early reader,[23] is consistent with de Vere's personality, as well as his role as leader of the euphuist movement. A central feature of the book is that it is written to the Queen. It is not dedicated to her (in fact, it is dedicated to Lord Burghley, de Vere's father-in-law and former guardian), but it is repeatedly addressed to her in the second person. These facts are consistent with my speculation about the circumstances of its composition.

The book evinces an irrepressible impulsivity of expression, including in its (Shakespearean) bawdiness. For example, the author teases the reader with the propriety of his explanation of the etymology of epithalamion. ("Here, if I shall say that which appertaineth to the art and disclose the mystery of the whole matter, I must and do with all humble reverence bespeak pardon of the chaste and honorable ears, lest I should either offend them with licentious speech, or leave them ignorant of the ancient guise in old times used at weddings, in my simple opinion nothing reprovable... the tunes of the songs were very loud and shrill, to the intent there

might be no noise out of the bedchamber by the screaking and outcry of the young damsel feeling the first forces of her stiff and rigorous young man."[24] The author — implying he had seen them —even praises the Queen's breasts and nipples.[25]

A contemporary, while attesting to de Vere's position as one of the Queen's favorites in 1571, when he was 21 years old, wrote, "If it were not for his fickle head, he would surpass all of them [other courtiers] shortly."[26] The *DNB* entry also notes that his "perverse humour" was a source of "grave embarrassment" for Lord Burghley. Whigham and Rebhorn perceive many traits in the author of *The Arte* that are consistent with de Vere's character. For instance, they note the centrality of deception and disguise in the book. Even figures of speech are defined as deceptions: "As figures be the instruments of ornament in every language, so be they also in a sort abuses, or rather trespasses, in speech, because they pass the ordinary limits of common utterance, and be occupied of purpose to deceive the ear and also the mind, drawing it from plainness and simplicity to a certain doubleness, whereby our talk is the more guileful and abusing [deceiving]."[27] Further, Whigham and Rebhorn observe that "By aggressively calling attention to the courtier-poet's duplicity, Puttenham creates a moral problem for him [the courtier-poet] (and for himself)."[28] De Vere's exile from court in the early 1580s is consistent with their observation that "Puttenham's authorial address... bespeaks his complex but abiding sense of disenfranchisement."[29] The sharp ambivalence with which they characterize the author's attitude toward court is consistent with de Vere's likely bitterness about his recent public humiliation by the Queen. Whigham and Rebhorn note "the author's own (partial and leaky) self-dissembling"[30]—their observation is consistent with an attribution to de Vere.

Marcy North persuasively documents the prevalence of anonymous authorship in early modern England.[31] In doing so, she inadvertently provides powerful arguments that support de Vere's authorship of the *Arte*.[32] She convincingly highlights the central importance of literary anonymity in *The Arte*, in the context of "a society that delighted in hidden names."[33] She steers us away from any simplistic interpretation of the role of anonymous authorship in the Elizabethan period. She instead finds "perpetual changes, continuous tensions....between the dangers and benefits of making one's name public."[34] I will examine North's arguments in light of de Vere's possible authorship of the *Arte*.

If de Vere wrote under pseudonyms, the *Arte*'s exploration of anonymity may be crucial in assessing his possible authorship of Shakespeare's works. The Elizabethans' use of anonymity made it "an evocative but surprisingly indefinable convention...a silent request for acknowledgement within a circle of insiders."[35] North elucidates its many subtle implications. For the courtier, literary anonymity offered a chance to enact Castiglione's ideal of *sprezzatura*, or "nonchalance" about receiving credit for one's poetic creations.[36] North shows compellingly that the author of *The Arte*, by remaining anonymous, added further layers of complexity to the contradictory advice he gave to the reader about literary anonymity.

North shows that concealment is a central theme in the *Arte*. Its advice about

proper courtly conduct only seems explicit — she demonstrates that there is another level of "mystification" of "intricate social codes" beneath the surface. Referring to the author's anagram on Queen Elizabeth's name,[37] she says the author "suggests that identity functions like natural talent. Even when disguised or altered, an important name will shine through the veil to call attention to itself. Puttenham's anagrams verge on the supernatural," in that the author implies that divine providence helped him create his anagram.[38] North concludes that the message is that "The noblest form of identity announces itself without the aid of a patron or friend....Puttenham's name games ...demonstrate how poets might have hoped their identities would emanate from their work even when their names were not attached." [39]

There is a story about a man who reacted with great humility to any recognition he received. A friend rebuked him acerbically — "You're not important enough to be humble." Similarly, only courtiers who were "important enough" could succeed with the ploy of anonymous authorship. North writes of anonymity's "double-edged function as concealer and revealer, its potential to lead to fame or to obscurity," and she links it with "*The Arte*'s ambiguous depiction of anonymity as a mark of social status, one that paradoxically must be visible in order to be effective."[40] She feels certain that the anonymous author of the *Arte* takes pleasure from the intricacies of the revelation of concealed names. He "works by the assumption that devices which alter or conceal a name say more about the historical person, not less....The disguising of the name points to an identity which is potentially more revealing than a proper name."[41]

North missed crucial opportunities to draw further plausible conclusions about the author of the *Arte*. She is artfully ambiguous in her only explicit reference to the authorship of this book-- "an author, now thought to be George Puttenham."[42] Her tentativeness is a fitting acknowledgement that this commonly accepted attribution has never been definitively established. North's entire argument would be immeasurably enriched by the tantalizing possibility that de Vere has successfully concealed his authorship of this book for more than four centuries.

North believes that the author expressed "dismay that social protocol could persuade talented gentlemen to suppress their works and their names in order to retain the respect of the court."[43] She then quotes the well-known line about "many notable Gentlemen in the Court that have written commendably, and suppressed it agayne, or els suffred it to be publisht without their owne names."[44] A similar passage in the *Arte* lists de Vere as the first example of such Gentlemen.[45] Consider the further layers of complexity and irony if de Vere is commenting on his own anonymous works, including the *Arte* itself. It suggests that de Vere was saying for the record that he was publishing this book anonymously under duress.

North does not pursue further implications raised by *The Arte*'s anonymity. Its inconclusive attribution to Puttenham rests partly on shaky internal evidence, and partly on rumors from the decades after its publication. As we speculate about authorship, we are playing the very game the author describes, trying to establish ourselves as the insiders who can penetrate the author's disguise and successfully

identify him. Previous scholars have often regarded the author's clues about his identity as reliable ones, left deliberately or through carelessness. They overlook the possibility that the author was serious about disguising his identity.[46] For example, many scholars now falsely assume that Puttenham was also the author of an anonymous collection of seventeen poems called the "Partheniades" that claimed to be a New Year's gift for Queen Elizabeth. These poems were not published until 1811. Attributing them to Puttenham betrays circular reasoning — there is no independent evidence for such an attribution. The author of *The Arte* has dragged some red herrings across his trail, and these have thrown scholars off his scent. In so doing, he put into practice some of the complex attitudes toward anonymity that North so perceptively describes.

How do we know what the author of *The Arte* was thinking in publishing his book anonymously? We usually put ourselves in the other person's shoes, and imagine why we might have acted as they did. Such implicit identifications are often helpful. But the anonymous author serves as a Rorschach card, whose ambiguity inevitably elicits projections of our own psychology. So we must be mindful of the cultural context in which the author lived. We now live in the age of plagiarism, which departs radically from former conventions of literary anonymity.[47] A frequent underlying premise in literary studies of anonymity is that the author had a predominant wish to be identified. This belief projects what North identifies as our abhorrence of the vacuum of anonymity. This may mislead us into a false assumption that the anonymous author surely provided us with reliable clues because he must have wanted us to unlock the mystery of his identity.[48]

Was there in fact a "stigma of print" in the early modern period? May[49] shows that some noblemen did publish poetry under their own names in this period. But North cites with agreement J.W. Saunders' evidence in favor of the existence of such a stigma. North names de Vere as one of the Elizabethan poets whose attributed work is so scarce because of "the courtiers' fashion of limiting readership through close manuscript circulation."[50] She notes that "Whether poems are extant or common today is hardly an accurate measure of their effectiveness in early court circles."[51] This conclusion is consistent with the high esteem in which de Vere's contemporaries held his poetry, plays and interludes,[52] despite the paucity of the former and the absence of the latter in what has survived under his name.

If de Vere's contemporaries knew of his authorship, would they not have identified him in the historical record? North addresses this question indirectly in speculating that some Elizabethan compilers of anonymous poetry, such as John Lilliat, knew the identity of an anonymous poet, but chose to respect that anonymity rather than violate it.

North finds it "paradoxical" that *The Arte*'s author names poets such as de Vere who wrote anonymously, but adds that "it conforms to the principle that a reader's revelation of the author is seemlier than self-naming" and it "completes a cycle of concealment and revelation."[53] "Paradoxical" is an understatement if de Vere himself wrote the Arte. The alternating layers of concealment and revelation are then like Russian dolls, toying with the reader's efforts to identify the author. This

is consistent with Shakespeare's genius for creating and maintaining tension among various interpretations of motivation and meaning in his words, characters, and plots.

"Puttenham"'s inventiveness in introducing new words rivals Shakespeare's—further evidence of de Vere's authorship. In fact, it was "Puttenham" who coined the verb "coin" as meaning to create a new word. The *Arte* alone is the source of some 1,164 examples of word usage in the OED, compared with 1,370 for the complete works of Marlowe, 4,848 for Jonson, and 6,554 for Shakespeare. *The Arte* may well include more such examples than any other single early modern book. Many are English versions of Greek and Latin terms of rhetoric and of poetics, only some of which have endured. These include anaphoric, dactylic, and trochaic. Many more words that were coined remain in general usage, including anagram, baiting, beaked, climax, colon [as a punctuation mark], dramatic, emphasis, encomium, exemplary, exigence, grandiloquence, harmonically, impertinency, indecency, installment, major-domo, marching, and misbecoming. Many of the coined words echo Shakespeare's language. For example, David Crystal noted that Shakespeare coined 309 words beginning with "un."[54] According to the *OED*, *The Arte* coined *undecency, underchange, underlay, under-peer, unfloor, unleave,* and *unveritable*.

Willis[55] draws many connections between the *Arte* and the works of Shakespeare. Although I do not share his belief that Puttenham was the author of both, I agree with him that one person did write both. That hypothesis finds a range of support in the pages of *The Arte*. We read, for example, of someone (Philino) who hid "behind an arras cloth,"[56] reminiscent of the location where Polonius was killed by Hamlet. *The Arte* shows an intimate knowledge of stagecraft. It praises dramatists. Edward Ferrers is described as having "much more skill and magnificence in this meter, and therefore wrote for the most part [for] the stage in tragedy and sometimes in comedy."[57]

Caroline Spurgeon[58] used an intriguing methodology to understand the mind of Shakespeare, by discerning what specific types of imagery occurred to him as he was writing —his typical patterns of visual association, as it were. Borrowing her assumptions, we can approach some details of *The Arte* in a similar way. For example, what number came to mind when *The Arte*'s author wanted to speak of the many rules that govern English poetry? "[T]wenty other curious points in that skill" (96; emphasis added). He also wrote of "twenty other ways that well-experienced lovers could recite"[59] and of "twenty manner of sweet kisses."[60] When Shakespeare wanted to refer to a large number of things in a figurative rather than in a literal way, what number did he choose? Also twenty. With the exception of thousand, he used it far more often than dozen, thirty, forty, hundred, etc. In the works of Shakespeare, we find twenty swords,[61] gashes,[62] murders,[63] lies,[64] consciences,[65] husbands,[66] merchants,[67] messengers,[68] cooks,[69] orators,[70] Fallstaffs,[71] angels,[72] torches,[73] shadows,[74] kisses,[75] nose-gays,[76] glow-worms,[77] horses,[78] popish tricks,[7941] and [royal, not monetary] crowns[80] (to list only twenty examples).

Spurgeon noted Shakespeare's fascination with the human body in motion—what she called "this marked delight in swift, nimble bodily movement[81]" "Pictures

drawn from the body and bodily actions form the largest single section of all Shakespeare's images."[82] *The Arte* calls motion "the author of life."[83] It uses an intriguing trope of human runners for various metrical feet in poetry—"[N]othing can better show the quality than these runners at common games, who, setting forth from the first goal, one giveth the start speedily and perhaps before he come halfway to the other goal, decayeth his pace as a man weary and fainting; another is slow at the start, but by amending his pace keeps even with his fellow or perchance gets before him...."[84]

Spurgeon further observes that "one of the secrets of [Shakespeare's] magical style" is his capacity to "endow inanimate and motionless objects with a sense of life."[85] As Whigham and Rebhorn note, the *Arte* similarly personifies rhetorical terms—the author "transforms the vast majority of the tropes and schemes into characters... Sometimes the personifications seem to identify actual social types... Puttenham's personifications essentially turn life into a continual allegory."[86]

Literary studies lack a fully reliable methodology for investigating authorship claims. Physicians are encouraged to consider a broad "differential diagnosis" before arriving at a single diagnostic hypothesis that best accounts for the patient's history of illness, symptoms, physical examination, and laboratory studies. The physician then prescribes a course of treatment. However, if the patient fails to respond favorably, or if symptoms arise that are inconsistent with the initial diagnosis, the physician is taught to go back to square one and question that diagnosis. A frequent cognitive error of physicians, nevertheless, is to place undue weight on those observations that are consistent with one diagnosis, and explain away those that are not. A related "confirmatory bias" is a well-recognized danger in all scientific research—the investigator should always be mindful of the danger of selectively attending to confirmatory data that support his or her hypothesis, while downplaying, ignoring, or explaining away contradictory evidence.

The field of literary studies has not yet come to terms with its own problems of methodology. As North puts it, we abhor the "vacuum" of anonymous authorship, so that once an author receives enough of a critical mass of support, we are in danger of engaging in circular reasoning to highlight favorable evidence, and downplay contradictory evidence. Once George Puttenham had won that critical mass of support, we entered such a phase. North is exceptional in challenging Puttenham's claim to authorship.

Why did Harington write to the publisher Richard Field about "Putnam" as author of *The Arte*? We do not know. But we know that de Vere concealed his authorship of his best works behind another person. I believe that by 1591 Harington knew the truth about de Vere's authorship. Perhaps a taboo arose against mentioning de Vere's name in connection with his literary activities from the mid-1580s onward. Anonymous authorship may have been a condition for de Vere's return to court from exile in 1583. Harington was Queen Elizabeth's godson; his father's first wife was reputedly an illegitimate daughter of Henry VIII. He had the reputation of being an "impudent gadfly" at court.[87] He was known for his satirical epigrams. "We can identify few of the objects of his satire by name... but doubtless

the contemporary court readily would recognize them."[88] Harington is on record as having exposed the identity of another literary figure. He violated the taboo against identifying Lady Rich as the "Stella" of Phillip Sidney's sonnet sequence, *Astrophel and Stella*.[89]

To this day, the theatrical community keeps alive what may be a displaced version of a Shakespearean name taboo in connection with one specific play — *Macbeth*. Many professional actors use the euphemism "the Scottish play" in the belief that saying "Macbeth" aloud will bring bad luck. This can be compared to the theory that the community of children have kept alive detailed "memories" of the medieval plague in the words of "Ring around the rosie" (referring to the red rings on the skin, an early symptom of the plague); "Pocket full of posie" seemingly refers to the apotropaic use of posies of herbs; "Ashes, ashes all fall down" may allude to cremation after death.[90] The intergenerationally traumatic impact of the massive number of deaths from the plague would help explain the endurance of this nursery rhyme. There may have been one or more deaths in de Vere's time that were believed to represent punishment of those who violated the taboo against publicly connecting de Vere with his literary works. Rumors of such deaths would have powerfully enforced the taboo against naming him in connection with his "Shakespearean" plays.

Harington's 1591 preface to Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* contains strong evidence that, by then, he knew de Vere was the author of the *Arte*. Harington referred to the author of the Arte as "that unknown Godfather... our Ignoto."[91] "Ignoto" is Latin (and Italian) for "unknown." (It does not merely mean "Anonymous," as many seem to think.) This change from "Putnam" to "that unknown Godfather... our Ignoto" amplifies the mystery of the author's pseudonymity. Given North's finding that concealed authorship was common in early modern England, we might expect to find hundreds of poems subscribed "Ignoto." Not so. "Ignoto" was first used as a pseudonym in 1590, below a commendatory poem in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. It was subscribed to only twenty-six known Elizabethan poems, in print or in manuscript. Why so few?

The full story of Ignoto has never been told, but it is highly relevant to the authorship of *The Arte*. Before 1590, *Early English Books Online* (*EEBO*) lists its use in English exclusively in the phrase "Ignoto Deo," from the book of Acts in the New Testament. St. Paul said the Athenians had statues dedicated to their various gods, with one statue dedicated instead "to the unknown God," or "Ignoto Deo." Harington was alluding to this origin of the pseudonym "Ignoto" by linking it with "that unknown Godfather." In Exodus 3:14, God answered Moses' question about God's name by replying "I am that I am." (In I Corinthians 15:10, St. Paul, who never lacked self-confidence, also wrote, "But by the grace of God, I am that I am.") What Elizabethan author had the hubris to join St. Paul in quoting God's "I am that I am" in a letter and in a sonnet? Edward de Vere — in his angry postscript to his October 30, 1584, letter to his father-in-law, Lord Burghley; and also in Sonnet 121. His grandiosity in so doing is consistent with his chutzpah in appropriating the pseudonym Ignoto from the phrase *Ignoto Deo*.

To return to Harington, his interest in *The Arte* increases the significance of his comments in his preface to his translation of Ariosto. On the first page of that preface, Harington writes:

> I must arm myself with the best defensive weapons I can, and if I happen to give a blow now and then in mine own defense, and as good fencers use to ward and strike at once, I must crave pardon of course, seeing our law allows that it is done se defendo.[92]

Why the fencing trope? I contend it was a transparent allusion to one of the most lurid of the many scandals that marked de Vere's life. While living as William Cecil's ward, de Vere, at the age of 17, killed an under-cook with his fencing sword. The coroner's inquest ruled that the servant "ran and fell upon the point of the Earl of Oxford's foil."[93] De Vere would have been executed for this offence if he had been found guilty. The future Lord Burghley assisted in de Vere's legal defense, which led to the coroner's exculpatory verdict. Burghley wrote in his journal that de Vere killed the servant "se defendo"—in self-defense.

"Se defendo" was not a common phrase in literary works. Harington's use of it in the above quotation is the first one cited in *EEBO*. And the phrase "se offendendo" in the discussion of Ophelia's death (5.1.9) has been linked by Oxfordians with the same story:

> It must be "se offendendo;" it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act hath three branches: it is, to act, to do, to perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

Here, as in the accusation against de Vere in 1567, the topic is a death, ostensibly by suicide (and its religious implications).

I believe Harington is making a snide reference to de Vere's past scandals, just before he compares *The Arte* unfavorably with Philip Sidney's *Defense of Poetry*. The fact that he favors Sidney over the Arte is consistent with Harington knowing de Vere wrote *The Arte*, as de Vere's longstanding feud with Sidney likely polarized their respective associates. Sidney's engagement to Burghley's daughter was broken when Burghley found a more promising match in his ward de Vere. Years later, Sidney and de Vere had their famous tennis court quarrel. (Perhaps Sidney's death in 1586 was yet another factor that motivated de Vere to write his competing work on literary theory.)

There may be a further allusion to de Vere near the end of Harington's preface, when he returns to *The Arte*'s having slighted the significance of translators: "Now for those who count it such a contemptible and trifling matter to translate, I will but say to them as M. Bartholomew Clarke an excellent learned man, and a right good translator, saith in the matter of a prettie [clever] challenge, in his Preface (as I remember) upon the Courtier, which book he translated out of Italian into Latin."[94] Harington knew that de Vere not only wrote the preface to the Castiglione

translation, but took the initiative to have the book published. So it may not have been coincidental that the translator Harington named was Clarke.

North cites Ruth Hughey's belief that Harington had "inside information about Oxford's authorship"[95] of one poem in the commonplace book of poems known as the Arundel Harington Manuscript. Did Harington similarly have inside information about de Vere's authorship of the *Arte*? I believe he did.

In Harington's 1596 *Apologie*, he again speaks of "this ignoto." We know that Harington kept the same Latin cognomen for a given person in his writings.[96] Two pages after mentioning "this ignoto," Harington mentions Richard III. Four pages after that, he cites "the rules of taming a shrew." Four pages later, he writes of riding "like a hotspurre."[97] Perhaps Harington is hinting that he knew about the Shakespearean plays that Ignoto was writing.

North comments that E.K.'s epistle in Spenser's 1579 *Shepheard's Calender* begins with the words "uncouth, unkissed." North does so in order to link these words with the "passive obscurity"[98] of anonymous authorship. As noted earlier, Shakespeare is credited with coining some 309 words that begin with "un." E.K.'s epistle coined the word "unstayed," eleven years before the first use noted in the *OED*. E.K. also coined "unheedie" in his gloss of a subsequent poem later in the book. In the epistle, E.K. coined two additional words: scholion and quidam. Such usages link E.K. with Shakespeare/de Vere. Mike Hyde recently reviewed previous evidence supporting the identification of E.K. as de Vere.

In 1590, Spenser's third dedicatory sonnet in *The Faerie Queene* was addressed to Oxford. It included a reference to "Envy's poisonous bite." (The Latin proverb "Virtutis comes invidia" taught that "Envy is the companion of excellence.") Similarly, one of the prior commendatory poems refers to "a mind with envy fraught" and to "free my mind from envy's touch." That was the poem signed "Ignoto." Again, this was the first use of the pseudonym Ignoto, one year before Harington referred to the author of *The Arte* as "our Ignoto."

Two poems signed "William Shakespeare" in the 1598 *Phoenix Nest* ("The unknowne Sheepheards complaint" and "Another of the same Sheepheards") were reattributed to "Ignoto" in the 1600 *England's Helicon*. Three poems later in the latter book is a poem signed "Earle of Oxenford." Two other poems in *England's Helicon* were initially attributed to Walter Ralegh and Fulke Greville, respectively; but cancel slips were glued over each name, replacing them with "Ignoto."

One noteworthy example from the short list of Elizabethan "Ignoto" poems is on p. 169 of the 1601 *Loves Martyr*. The 6-line poem "The first" is printed above the 8-line poem "The Burning." Both are signed "Ignoto." This is one of four pages in the book that feature printer's headpieces and tailpieces. The other three pages are the first two pages of Chester's dedicatory poem, and p. 172, which contains a poem titled "Threnos." It is subscribed "William Shake-speare." (It is not well known that "hyphenated surnames in English originated in the nineteenth century,"[99] only after a 19th-century law led wealthy men who lacked sons to require a prospective son-in-law to combine the latter's surname with his wife's, with a hyphen between. In the early modern period, by contrast, hyphenated surnames of the form verb-noun

were transparent pseudonyms.) One can make a case for pp. 169-172 constituting a single poetic work.[100] The fact that "Let the bird of loudest lay" famously lacks a title is consistent with this hypothesis. The implication is, once again, that Ignoto and Shake-speare are the same person. If so, the many references to two becoming one in "Let the bird of loudest lay" would refer, among other things, to these two pseudonyms becoming one person: de Vere. There are some fourteen key words in these two Ignoto poems that are also used in the adjacent "Shake-speare" poem, further linking them together. This hypothesis is consistent with the 1598 "Shakespeare" poems that were attributed to "Ignoto" two years later. I speculate that the early modern "Ignoto" poet was de Vere in every or nearly every published case.[101]

J. Thomas Looney was the first to attribute the Ignoto poems in *England's Helicon* to de Vere. The eminent scholar Hyder Rollins attributes four poems from the 1614 second edition of *England's Helicon* to Ignoto. One of them, "The Sheepheards Slumber," has a direct connection with de Vere. It survives in the 1585-90 Harleian Manuscript, which has been called the most extensive surviving anthology of Elizabethan courtier verse. Harleian Manuscript 7392, folio 51, contains a 28-line earlier version of "The Sheepheards Slumber" that is signed "L ox"— which, as Rollins acknowledges, refers to "Lord Oxford." The fact that this poem has been attributed to "Ignoto" by Rollins, but was signed "L ox" in the Harleian Manuscript, further supports the hypothesis that Ignoto and de Vere were one and the same.

What difference does it make, after all, who wrote *The Arte*? The same question is often asked of those who doubt the traditional theory of the authorship of Shakespeare's works. It would be of enormous interest if the same person wrote both *The Arte* and the works of Shakespeare. We are depriving ourselves of significant opportunities for scholarly advances in our understanding of the works of Shakespeare by clinging to insubstantial if widely accepted evidence for the legendary author. This evidence erodes considerably if we take seriously the studies of North, Mullan and others on literary anonymity. We will then have to acknowledge that the case for the traditional author of Shakespeare's works is based largely on the questionable assumption that all contemporary references to this name were indisputably references to the (front) man from Stratford rather than to a pseudonym. I have attempted to reopen the related question as to who in fact wrote *The Arte of English Poesie*. Further attention should be devoted to the possibility that it was "our Ignoto" —Edward de Vere. If he did in fact write *The Arte*, it would give us further evidence that he published later literary works anonymously.

Endnotes

[1] An abbreviated version of this article was presented at Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn's Seminar on *The Arte of English Poesie* at the Annual Meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America, April 9, 2009. I am grateful to Steven May for his helpful comments on this paper. All citations from the *Arte* in the present article, unless otherwise indicated, are from Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn, *The Art of English Poesy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).

[2] Willcock, Gladys Doidge and Alice Walker, *The Arte of English Poesie*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936).

[3] Willcock and Walker, xxxi.

[4] Online *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [*ODNB*] Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003 (no pagination).

[5] Online *ODNB* entry on Puttenham (no pagination).

[6] Online *ODNB* entry on Puttenham (no pagination).

[7] Online *ODNB* entry on Puttenham (no pagination).

[8] Whigham and Rebhorn placed special emphasis on the cart and court trope in the Arte. It is therefore noteworthy that the poem "In praise of a contented mind" that Steven May believes may be written by de Vere contains the line "The Court ne cart I like ne loath." The poem was first published in 1588, just a year before *The Arte*.

[9] Quoted in Whigham and Rebhorn, 18.

[10] Quoted in Whigham and Rebhorn, 19.

[11] De Vere's older half-sister Katherine married a relative of George Puttenham (his wife's stepson). See Willis (2003, 258).

[12] Yes, I am speculating—as do Schoenbaum, Greenblatt, and others.

[13] Internal evidence suggests the Arte was written around 1586.

[14] The annual budget of the Office of Revels was reduced by roughly 1,000 pounds around the same time; see W.R. Streitberger, "Chambers on the Revels Office and Elizabethan Theater History" *Shakespeare Quarterly* 59:185-209, 2008.

[15] In Book 1, chapter 8. Further examples are on 148f, 196f, 362, etc. (all page references are to Whigham and Rebhorn's edition). This practice is burlesqued in *The Tempest* by Stephano, when he promises that "Wit shall not go unrewarded while I am king of this country" (4.1.241).

[16] See Richard M. Waugaman, "The Sternhold and Hopkins Whole Book of Psalms Is a Major Source for the Works of Shakespeare," *Notes & Queries* 56:595-604, 2009; "Echoes of the *Whole Book of Psalms* in *1 Henry VI, Richard II*, and *Edward III*," *Notes & Queries* 57:359-364, 2010; and "An Oxfordian Quark, or a Quirky Oxfreudian? Psalm Evidence of de Vere's Authorship of Shakespeare's Works,"

Renaissance Papers, in press. An excellent digitized version of de Vere's Bible is now available on-line, on the Folger Shakespeare Library's website. The manicules and other annotations are visible.

[17] See also Hammond, Paul, "Sources for Shakespeare's Sonnets 87 and 129 in *Tottel's Miscellany* and Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie*," (*Notes & Queries* 150: 407-410, 2003).

[18] Whigham and Rebhorn, 107.

[19] Waugaman, Richard M., "The Discovery of a Major New Literary Source for Shakespeare's Works in de Vere's Bible," forthcoming, *Brief Chronicles II* (2010).

[20] Although Roger Stritmatter (2001) did not find these psalm echoes in Shakespeare's work, he did note the psalm manicules, and it was his work that led me to research de Vere's Bible.

[21] Cf. *The Arte*'s "the new devices are ever dainty" (244).

[22] Waugaman, "A Wanderlust Poem, Newly Attributed to Edward de Vere," *Shakespeare Matters* 7:1, 21-23, 2007; and "A Snail Poem, Newly Attributed to Edward de Vere," *Shakespeare Matters* 7:1, 6-12, 32.

[23] The early owner of one first edition especially ridiculed the geometric poetic forms, writing in his copy [Folger STC 20519 (5)], "The puerile absurdity of mechanical versifying is fully displayed by Puttenham's table of geometrical figures... [T]he author must have been seized by a poetic cramp." Alastair Fowler, *Triumphal Forms: Structural Patterns in Elizabethan Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), by contrast, argued that "These sections, often brushed aside as frivolous curiosities, should in some instances be seen as serious though fumbling attempts at a theory of numerical composition" (11). Fowler's and Paula Blank's *Shakespeare and the Mismeasurement of Renaissance Man*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006) includes discussion of the role of number and measurement in the *Arte* and in Shakespeare's works. These are consistent with the great interest de Vere showed in Biblical passages dealing with numbers. The first Biblical passage that de Vere annotated in his Geneva Bible was Genesis 18: 26 — "And the Lord answered, If I finde in Sodom fifty righteous within the citie, then will I spare all the place for their sakes." Richard M. Waugaman ("Shakespeare's Sonnet 6 and the First Marked Passage in de Vere's Bible," *Shakespeare Matters* [in press]) argues that this verse and its context are an important source for Sonnet 6. I Samuel, which de Vere annotated most densely, has eighteen different numbers among its marked verses. II Samuel has fourteen numbers among its marked verses. De Vere underlined only the phrase with numbers in I Kings 8: 63-- "And Solomon offred a sacrifice of peace offrings which he offred unto the Lord, to wit, two and twentie thousand beeves, and a hundreth and twentie thousand shepe: so the King and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the Lord." He also wrote in the margin next to this verse, "Oxen 22000; shepe 1220000 [sic]."

[24] Whigham and Rebhorn, 139.

[25] In *Cymbeline*, Jachimo uses as evidence that he has been intimate with Imogen his description that "under her breast... lies a mole" (5.2.134-135). [I am grateful

to an anonymous reviewer of this article for bringing that parallel to my attention.]

[26] *Dictionary of National Biography* (*DNB*).

[27] Whigham and Rebhorn, 238.

[28] Whigham and Rebhorn, 55.

[29] Whigham and Rebhorn, 56.

[30] Whigham and Rebhorn, 56.

[31] See my review of Marcy L. North's *The Anonymous Renaissance: Cultures of Discretion in Tudor-Stuart England*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003) in *Shakespeare Matters*, 8(3):20, 25, 26, 2009.

[32] North, Marcy L., "Anonymity's revelations in *The Arte of English Poesie*." *Studies in English Literature* 39: 1-18, 1999.

[33] North, 1999, 2.

[34] North, 2003, 9.

[35] North, 1999, 5.

[36] Much of the *Arte* seems modeled on Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, for which de Vere wrote a prefatory letter. Furthermore, *The Arte* competes with *The Defense of Poetry* by Philip Sidney, one of de Vere's arch-rivals at Court (d. 1586).

[37] In the eight unnumbered pages that intriguingly survive only in Ben Jonson's copy, perhaps because they include this anagram that called the Queen "aged." She was notoriously sensitive about her age. *The Arte*'s hostility toward the Queen is consistent with her exiling de Vere from court for two years in 1581. Ben Jonson's copy, by the way, had marginal manicules, according to Whigham and Rebhorn.

[38] North, 1999, 10.

[39] North, 1999, 10-11.

[40] North, 1999, 2.

[41] North, 1999, 13.

[42] North, 3; emphasis added. North did confirm that she doubts Puttenham was the author—"let *The Arte* work its magic anonymously" (personal communication, April 8, 2009).

[43] North, 1999, 5.

[44] North, 1999, 5.

[45] This sentence in Chap. 31, Book 1, ends with "that noble gentleman Edward Earle of Oxford." Edward Arber's 1906 reprint retained that full stop, whereas Whigham and Reborn apparently read the period as a typo and replaced it with a comma. However, the subsequent sentence is ungrammatical either way. I would argue that their comma inadvertently deprives de Vere of his rightful prominence in this section. Any injustice the comma does to de Vere, however, pales in comparison with Alan Nelson's prejudicial *ODNB* revision of the far more objective 1899 *DNB* biography of de Vere (for the latter, click on "*DNB* archive" in the left margin of the online *ODNB* entry).

[46] Cf. his quoting the maxim "Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare" ("He who

cannot dissemble, cannot rule") (271).

[47] The internet, of course, is reviving authorial anonymity.

[48] Cf. John Mullan, Anonymity: A Secret History of English Literature. London: Faber and Faber, 2007.

[49] May, Steven, "Tudor aristocrats and the mythical 'stigma of print.'" Renaissance Papers. (Raleigh: Southeastern Renaissance Conference, 1981) 11-18.

[50] North, 2003, 8.

[51] North, 2003, 8.

[52] The *Arte*'s author mentions his comedy *Ginecocratia* (218) and his interlude *Lusty London* (256).

[53] North, 1999, 7.

[54] Crystal, David, and Ben Crystal, *The Stories of English* (London: Penguin, 2004).

[55] Willis, Charles Murray, *Shakespeare and George Puttenham's Arte of English Poesie*. (East Sussex: UPSO, 2003).

[56] Whigham and Rebhorn, 218.

[57] Whigham and Rebhorn, 148.

[58] Spurgeon, Caroline, *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935.

[59] Whigham and Rebhorn, 136.

[60] Whigham and Rebhorn, 141.

[61] *Romeo and Juliet* 2.2.76.

[62] *Macbeth* 3.4.30.

[63] *Macbeth* 3.4.95.

[64] *The Merchant of Venice* 3.4.76.

[65] *Tempest* 2.1.308.

[66] *The Merchant of Venice* 1.2.61.

[67] *The Merchant of Venice* 3.2.286.

[68] *Anthony and Cleopatra* 1.5.70.

[69] *Romeo and Juliet* 4.2.2.

[70] *Richard III* 4.2.41.

[71] *The Merry Wives of Windsor* 1.1.2-3.

[72] *The Merry Wives of Windsor* 2.2.68.

[73] *Julius Caesar* 1.3.17.

[74] *Richard II* 2.2.14.

[75] *Titus Andronicus* 5.1.22.

[76] *The Winter's Tale* 4.3.42.

[77] *The Merry Wives of Windsor* 5.5.77.

[78] *Timon of Athens* 1.1.267.

[79] *Titus Andronicus* 5.1.78.

[80] *3 Henry VI* 3.2.168.

[81] Spurgeon, 1935, 50.

[82] Spurgeon, 1935, 49.

[83] Whigham and Rebhorn, 187.

[84] Whigham and Rebhorn, 159.

[85] Spurgeon, 1935, 51.
[86] Whigham and Rebhorn, 59.
[87] Gotfried , Rudolph (ed.), *John Harington's Orlando Furioso.* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1963, xix).
[88] Gotfried, 1963, xx.
[89] Moore, Peter R., "The Stella Coverup." *Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter* 29:12-17, 1993. Reprinted in *The Lame Storyteller, Poor and Despised*. (Germany: Verlag Uwe Laugwitz, 2009).
[90] Although folklorists are now skeptical of this explanation, their attempts to dismiss this theory as a false myth have generated lively and contentious debates on the discussion page of the relevant Wikipedia article. We should not forget that anthropologists were similarly dismissive of Plutarch's description of the intoxicating gases that caused trances for the priestesses of Apollo at Delphi, until John Hale's recent research vindicated Plutarch.
[91] Harington, John, translator, *Lodovico Ariosto, Orlando Furioso* (London: Richard Field, 1591), folio iii, recto.
[92] Harington, 1591, folio ii, recto.
[93] Mark Anderson, *Shakespeare by Another Name.* New York: Gotham Books, 2005, 35.
[94] Harington, 1591, folio vii, recto.
[95] North, 1999, 178.
[96] McClure, Norman Egbert (ed.), *The Letters and Epigrams of Sir John Harington*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1930, 51.
[97] John Harington, *An Apologie* (London: Richard Field, 1596), folio Dd 2, recto.
[98] North, 2003, 52.
[99] Murray, Thomas E., "The overlooked and understudied onomastic hyphen." *Names: A Journal of Onomastics* 50:173-190, 2002 (180).
[100] Katherine Duncan-Jones hints subtly in *Shakespeare's Poems* (London: Arden, 2007) that she realizes Ignoto and Shake-speare may be the same poet—she reproduces in an appendix (p.169 of the 1602 first edition) a facsimile of "The first" and "The burning" so that readers can see that "Let the bird of loudest lay" seems to be a continuation of those poems. Even the "printers' flowers," used rarely in this volume, occur below the name "Ignoto," and later below the name "William Shake-speare." She also observes that "The burning" uses "quasi-theatrical language" (112).
[101] There is a fascinating, bawdy Ignoto poem in Sir John Davies' *Epigrammes and Elegies* (Middleborugh: n.p., 1599). Some modern editions misleadingly attribute it to Marlowe, but it has no subscription; 'Ignoto' appears at the top of the poem. It is cleverly ribald—e.g., "Faith (wench) I cannot court thy sprightly eyes,/ With the base Viall placed between my thighs." The "bass viol" puns on a base container of semen. This poem shows striking verbal and thematic parallels with Dark Lady Sonnets such as 130, 132, and 141. An Ignoto poem in Francis Davison's anthology *A Poetical Rapsodie* (London: V.S., 1602) is titled, "An Invective Against Women." It contains the phrase, "they will beguile ye." The only previous use of that phrase in EEBO is found in a 1530

edition of Sir John Oldcastle's 1413 "Endenture" (edited by William Thorpe in *The examinacion of the honorable knight syr Jhon Oldcastell*, [Antwerp: J. van Hoochstraten]) which records his trial for heresy. One is tempted to conclude that de Vere read that book and picked up that phrase, while researching the man who was transformed into Falstaff (I am grateful to Robert Detobel for bringing Davison's anthology to my attention).

Cordelia's Silence, Edgar's Secrecy:

Emblems of the Authorship Question in *King Lear*

Heward Wilkinson

Abstract

Explores the significance of the silence of Cordelia, and the profound secrecy and anonymity of Edgar, in *King Lear*, in terms of what they may tell us about the authorship.[1]

Why is Cordelia silent in *King Lear*? Why is Edgar so concealed, so anonymous, and so various in his identity? And – Freud's[2] question - why does Cordelia die? Since I wrote the chapter[3] from which this essay derives, James Shapiro[4] has published *Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?* on which I have commented at length.[5] My aim in the chapter was to strengthen the assumption that it is possible to make complex (not one-to-one, but potently dialectical) inferences from an author's writings, which have a strong relationship to the author's life, and then to deepen interpretion of *King Lear* on the basis of that.

Shapiro wavers between a principled, and a circumstantial, rejection of this kind of conception. At the end of the book he states the principled version (connections between life and work are misguided in principle):

> We can believe that Shakespeare himself thought that poets could give to "airy nothing" a "local habitation and a name." Or we can conclude that this "airy nothing" turns out to be a disguised something that needs

> to be decoded, and that Shakespeare couldn't imagine "the forms of things unknown" without having experienced them first hand. It's a stark and consequential choice.[6]

The more hesitant circumstantial version (connections between life and work are misguided because we know so little, and interpretations are so clumsy) is found earlier:[7]

> Even if Shakespeare occasionally drew in his poems and plays on personal experiences, and I don't doubt that he did, I don't see how anyone can know with any confidence if or when or where he does so. Surely he was too accomplished a writer to recycle them in the often clumsy and undigested way that critics in search of autobiographical traces – advocates and sceptics of his authorship alike – would have us believe.[8]

This assumption of Shapiro's has very many precursors in the orthodox position (discussed in *The Muse as Therapist*).[9] But it is now held and propounded by him in a stronger form than ever before — an indication, I believe, of deep unease. That it is a "position of convenience," ill-thought out, is suggested by the fact that, on the one hand, Shapiro[10] can flay Looney, for instance, in taking Ulysses' speech on degree out of context:

> Lifting these words out of context, and italicising the lines that highlight his hierarchical views, Looney ignores how wily Ulysses mouths these pieties to manipulate his superior, the buffoonish Agamemnon, who has ample reason to hear degree and "due of birth" defended so aggressively.[11]

But, at the same time, on the other hand, his crucial attribution of opinion to Shakespeare himself, the climax of his book, consists in attributing the skeptical-positivist Theseus' views on imagination to Shakespeare the author, doubly out of context (because, without noticing it, he is violating his own rule in the very act of propounding it and "demonstrating" it):

> One of the great pleasures of this speech is that Theseus is himself an "antique fable." Along with lovers and lunatics, writers share a heightened capacity to imagine the "forms of things unknown." But only writers can turn them "to shapes" and give "to airy nothing/a local habitation and a name." It's hard to imagine a better definition of the mystery of literary creation. Not long after delivering this speech, Theseus watches a play performed by Bottom and the other rude mechanicals and finds himself transformed by the experience. His reaction to their play ranks among the most wonderful speeches in Shakespeare: "the best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them." His captive bride-to-be Hyppolyta is quick to remind him, as well as us: "It

must be your imagination then, and not theirs" (5.1.210-12).[12]

The morass of historical and epistemological confusion in which Shapiro is mired is considerable and beyond exploration here (elaborated in *De-Imagining Imagination*).[13] We need not of course go to the opposite extreme and attribute a purely biographical significance to the content of works of art; that would be to miss the profound effects of form and frame. The greatest literary and dramatic creators, particularly in the Renaissance period, profoundly and symbolically transmute their sources and experience origins, but of course they have to have something to transmute. We may prefer the version of John Keats, who grasps both aspects so profoundly:

> A man's life of any worth is a continual allegory – and very few eyes can see the mystery of his life – a life like the scriptures, figurative – which such people can no more understand than they can the hebrew Bible. Lord Byron cuts a figure – but he is not figurative – Shakespeare led a life of Allegory – his works are the comments on it.[14]

In the Renaissance this outlook was readily expressed likewise in a myriad of different forms of anonymity and pseudonymous authorships and conventions, whose intricacies and many modes and categories have been explored in depth by Marcy L. North.[15] The role of Edgar as an emblem of anonymity and hiddenness is central to the present essay.

This essay explores the riches that come to us in understanding *King Lear*, if we adopt the wider dialectical assumption. William Farina has previously pursued this general strategy.[16] Of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, a very great deal indeed is known, much of it highly ambiguous, mercurial, and demonic (in a Byronic way), but what is not in doubt is that he ran through virtually his entire fortune in his lifetime. He was, as Nina Green[17] has shown, financially and legally foredoomed by machinations of the Queen and the Earl of Leicester. He was additionally, certainly in his early life, very lavish, and acquired a reputation of improvident "unthrift." By the 1590s he was no doubt popularly known by the nickname Nashe and Harvey attributed to him of "Pierce Pennilesse."[18] In the process he had also marred his reputation in a multitude of ways, morally and prudentially, some, such as Alan Nelson,[19] would say, on several fronts. Financially, to take the obvious case, he certainly appeared to fulfill the requirements to be the original of *Timon of Athens*, who lavishes, and squanders, his entire fortune, in Shakespeare's play.

Can we start from the other end, and infer *from the greatest plays themselves* that they are written from within an experience of the author's own life as being a lavisher, on the grand scale, a "spender," not only financially, but psychologically, in many ways? I set out to ascertain this by taking the greatest of the tragedies, *King Lear*, as a test.

I must first note that, so great is *King Lear*, that *any* actual man proposed as the author must still seem utterly inadequate to it. And to respond to the play means a kind of submission to it (a submission modelled *within* it, particularly in the roles of Cordelia and Edgar).

The first thing that hit me on rereading the very first lines of *King Lear* is that, between Lear and Gloucester (who are uncannily linked as ego and alter ego, as their "incognito encounter"[20] near Dover suggests), Edward de Vere's entire family situation is duplicated, in terms of number, gender, and legitimacy status. I discovered later that William Farina[21] has already mapped this in very similar terms.

The family situation of Edward de Vere in the 1590s was: three surviving daughters from his first marriage to Anne Cecil, Lord Burghley's daughter, Elizabeth, b. 1575, Bridget, b. late 1570s, Susan, b. 1587, and two surviving sons – one legitimate from his second marriage to Elizabeth Trentham (Henry, b. 1593) and one illegitimate (Edward, b. 1581), from his liaison with Anne Vavasour.

Oxford, when in early puberty, faced a legal challenge to his legitimacy, which, as a youthful poem on "Loss of Good Name" (Looney, 1921), indicates, highly sensitized him to such matters (c.f., *Othello*, 3. 3. ll.). His illegitimate son Edward, who went to University abroad in Leyden, Holland, and who was eventually knighted by King James I, established himself as a comrade in arms of Oxford's cousins Francis and Horace/Horatio,[22] as one of the "fighting Veres," who are celebrated in Marvell's "Upon Appleton House," quoted in turn in Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*.[23] Melville significantly names his Napoleonic era sea captain Edward Fairfax Vere, nicknamed "the starry Vere" in *Billy Budd* on the strength of the Marvell poem (Oxford's emblem was the star). This all suggests that Edward was not denied and neglected by his father.[24]

Both in *King Lear*, and in the relevant Sonnets, shame, "burning shame," is the central emotion from the start, the nature and roots of which the play explores. Gloucester's opening remarks both indicate his own shame, and are themselves shaming, in their "nod and wink" masculine freemasonry; Edmund deals with his shame by a "brazing" (in Gloucester's word) it out into, converting it into a deeper, and nihilistic, character:

> His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge:
> I have so often blushed to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to it.[25]
>
> (1.1. 8-10)

We cannot simplistically turn Shakespeare into a thoroughgoing developmental psychologist (though the grasp of such issues is profoundly there, in Cordelia and her sisters, for instance). Nevertheless, despite Edmund's nearly complete and utter villainy (countermanded genuinely, but ineffectually, for a moment, when he is dying), which results directly in his father's blinding, and his brother's banishment and intended death, and much else of evil, there are many tokens in the text which reveal that the author by no means has the same contempt and disgust towards him,

which he clearly bears towards Iago, in *Othello*, whose villainy is comparable. His brother Edgar, despite Edmund's utter treachery to him and his father, treats him with fate-acknowledging forgiveness after their fight, when he is dying.

Shakespeare clearly also regards him as significantly embodying *one view* of nature (in contemporary terms perhaps that of Machiavelli) which is not simply false in the final analysis, though it is grossly incomplete. John Danby[26] identifies Shakespeare's three views of Nature, which oscillate and interchange wildly in the play, as cosmic order (Gloucester); raw power and force (Edmund); and healing reconciliation/restoration/transformation based in restored equilibrium (Cordelia).

All three leave little room for the positive dialectic with culture we find elsewhere, for instance, in *The Winter's Tale*. Here is Edmund:

> Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
> My services are bound. Wherefore should I
> Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
> The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
> For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines
> Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
> When my dimensions are as well compact,
> My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
> As honest madam's issue?
> (1.2.1-9)

Now, there is virtually no direct exploration of monetary issues in *King Lear*; the word "debt" occurs once, and "usury" and "usurer" are as infrequent. If there is a presentation of lavishing/squandering it is *purely symbolic*, in the form of the direct and absolute — a deliberately unanalyzed abdication of the monarchy. The premise from which the play starts is far starker than that found in the possibly earlier *The True Chronicle History of King Leir and His Three Daughters,*[27] and the other earlier sources in Geoffrey of Monmouth, Holinshed, *The Faerie Queene*, *Arcadia*, and the Irish/Welsh legend of Lir's daughters, turned into legendarily silent swans. Farina notes, intriguingly, that one of Sidney's own sources in *Arcadia* was probably a work of Heliodorus, translated in 1569 and dedicated to de Vere.[28] In a manner Shakespeare excises the monetary equation entirely from the *peripiteia* (dramatic reversal), so that the theme of squandering could be traced to its source in dereliction/abdication of duty, without distractions.

What *is* included in *King Lear* is an exploration, connected with the "nature" theme, of the most extreme kind, of the stripping off of garments, of coverings, falsifications, both real and symbolic, and reduction of "culture" to "nature" and "naked truth" in every sense. Yet it is also, by the same token, in an uncanny doubling, which is the heart of the paradox and the "equation" of the play, about the necessity of disguise. This theme provides a profound link with those of Dickens' *Little Dorrit*,[29] deeply influenced by *King Lear*. In a very Freudian reversal of Freud, "civilization" itself is a squandering, in *King Lear*. How do the themes connect? Lear

struggles to articulate this when Goneril and Regan are about to deny him his unruly followers:

> **Regan.** What need one?
> **Lear.** O, reason not the need: our basest beggars
> Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
> Allow not nature more than nature needs,
> Man's life's as cheap as beast's: thou art a lady;
> If only to go warm were gorgeous,
> Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
> Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true need —
> You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
> (2. 2. 438-445)

King Lear has more interwoven themes than any other Shakespeare play. But the play plummets downwards from its first moments of Lear's abdication, to the abyss of the ejection of Lear on to the heath in the storm, and the blinding of Gloucester, with a cataclysmic, symphonic, ferocity. *King Lear* combines the terrible concentration of drama and action of *Macbeth* and *Othello*, with the vastness carried within the sprawling spaciousness of *Hamlet*. It has a cosmic reach and interconnectedness which is unique in literature, despite, and because of — in a complex unity — the sheer *ineptitude*, though not merely ineptitude, as one may call it, of Lear and Gloucester. The musical dimension of *King Lear* is commensurate with a pre-communicable, pre-verbal, dimension, and goes with the general sense of cosmic "beyondness," neither purely Christian, purely pagan, nor naturalistic, but utterly, enormously, *numinous*, in what Wilson Knight calls "the *Lear* universe."[30]

King Lear points us towards a way of understanding the tragic ineptitude – one which, in Hegelian mode, positively incorporates the ineptitude right into the heart of the tragedy as such. Significantly, there is a very great deal of ineptitude, combined with burlesque grandiosity, in Oxford's own life, which researchers such as A.L. Rowse or Alan Nelson are not reticent to emphasize. But it operates in favor of the case for his authorship, not the reverse. And the miserly characteristics of William Shakespeare of Stratford, which Shapiro[31] interestingly dilutes and normalizes by invoking the speculatively supposed business role of his wife, do not count against him because he is *bad*, as Ogburn,[32] for instance, is drawn constantly into implying, but simply because these characteristics *do not fit* the author of the plays.

We find ourselves asking about *King Lear*, what are *the roots and limits of morality in nature*? Is God dead? Are the gods dead? Do they torture us for their pleasure? Is there any basis in nature for our "natural" or human desire for providential justice? Why does someone as totally good-hearted as Cordelia die? Why is Cordelia (so uncannily, as Freud realized[33] — and this is Shakespeare's addition) silent? These Nietzschean questions, three centuries before their time, are at the heart of *King Lear*, nor is it likely that the play offers any final answers; multiple perspective, and "negative capability,"[34] reign.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries —the centuries of Leibniz's optimistic *Theodicy*, and Voltaire's and Dr. Johnson's pessimistic responses to it (*Candide* and *Rasselas*), and the questioning provoked by the Lisbon earthquake of 1751— found it simply impossible to cope with the death of Cordelia following upon her reconciliation with her father (which, again, is a telescoping, and extreme intensification, of Shakespeare's sources).

Even Dr. Johnson (hardly a natural optimist about the state of things in this life) wrote:

> In the present case the publick has decided. Cordelia, from the time of Tate, has always retired with victory and felicity. And, if my sensations could add any thing to the general suffrage, I might relate, that I was many years ago so shocked by Cordelia's death, that I know not whether I ever endured to read again the last scenes of the play till I undertook to revise them as an editor.[35]

That this is not an isolated reaction, confined to its own time, is indicated by a representative remark, from two centuries later, of F.R. Leavis's from around 1958:

> "King Lear," certainly there the disturbing radical attitude to life. The desperate Shakespeare is definitely there. The last turn of the screw, really disturbing. Not prepared to talk glibly about it. No one is. Not prepared to say anything about it.[36]

Harold Bloom says simply: "Every attempt to mitigate the darkness of this work is an involuntary critical lie."[37] It is difficult for us to imagine that the universe has not got a moral response to us. Even the Nietzschean position oscillates between cosmic neutralism, and a doctrine akin to Edmund's, in which "Nature" is taken to support values such as power, strength and beauty. Darwinism exhibits the same oscillation in its history. It is hard not to interpret *King Lear* in the light of this. At some level we can take Shakespeare to be wrestling with such a view, even though it is constantly deconstructed, through the impingement of the presence of a stark absolute realism which is indifferent (or, alternatively, hostile) to man.

But this deconstructing is dialectical, not abstract; it interacts with other frameworks, significances, not a mere affirmation of indifference. If we start with this, then why does Cordelia die? And why the silence which triggers this vast catastrophic unfolding, an addition to the sources? In Shakespeare's Cordelia, we have the most overwhelmingly moving, heart-rending portrayal of devoted filial love since Sophocles' Antigone. She is matched by the poignancy of the character who is undoubtedly based upon her, Amy Dorrit in *Little Dorrit*,[39] which is Dickens' symbolic commentary on *King Lear*, just as her father William Dorrit is based upon Lear in some way, as Welsh plausibly argues.[38]

The scene ("You do me wrong to take me out of the grave…." *King Lear*, 4.5. 38 ff.) where Lear is restored to sane consciousness, surrendered to his extreme

contrition towards Cordelia, but overcoming his shame through her total acceptance and love (his "do not laugh at me" is exceptionally poignant and telling, in relation to the expression of shame), in her presence, is beyond all description in its sublime simplicity and nobility.

In life Oxford's youngest daughter was Susan Vere. She later married Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery, one of the "incomparable paire of brethren" (William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and at that time Lord Chamberlain, with power to control what was and was not printed, a post he had fought for tenaciously, was the other).[40] To them the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays was dedicated. They shared with Ben Jonson, and Heminge and Condell, the "cunning plan" of achieving the mysterious publication of this enigmatic, ambiguous, and extraordinary volume in 1623. In 1602 a law student at the Middle Temple, John Manningham, the gossip who kept a diary for a year,[41] and to whom we owe a fortunate knowledge of several vital things, recorded an epigram couplet of **La(dy) Susan Vere:**

Nothing's your lott, that's more then can be told
For nothing is more precious then gold.

Compare this to the early dialogue between Lear and Cordelia:

Lear. Now, our joy,
Although the last, not least; to whose young love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interess'd; what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.
Cor. Nothing, my lord.
Lear. Nothing!
Cor. Nothing.
Lear. Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.
Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty
According to my bond; nor more nor less.
Lear. How, how, Cordelia! mend your speech a little,
Lest it may mar your fortunes.
Cor. Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, loved me: I
Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty:
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.

Lear. But goes thy heart with this?
Cor. Ay, good my lord.
Lear. So young, and so untender?
Cor. So young, my lord, and true.
Lear. Let it be so; thy truth, then, be thy dower.
(1.1. 82-108)

The pun on Vere/Ver ("verity," "verily," "verie," "very") as Truth is one Oxford had often made. Nathaniel Baxter, who had traveled to Italy with Oxford in the 1570's, writes a fairly frank poem about him to Susan in 1606 (he died in 1604), whose first letters form the words:

VERA NIHIL VERIUS SUSANNA NIHIL CASTIUS,

that is,

Nothing truer than truth, nothing chaster than Susan.[42]

Alan Nelson[43] interprets Davies' 1602 couplet as a mocking allusion to Oxford as a "deadbeat dad," who had handed over the care of his daughters to Lord Burghley, when he had lost all his estates, and become virtually destitute. But, as Warren Hope[44] argues, this overlooks the connection of Cordelia's dialogue with Lear in this passage, which brings home that the "nothing" which is more precious than gold, is *truth*. As the King of France says of her:

Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most loved, despised!
(1.1.250-251)

In many ways familiar to contemporary thought, Cordelia *aletheia-ically* (from the Greek alhqeia, "truth") enacts truth as "nothingness." She was always mysteriously and poignantly for me the prototype of what I have latterly come to identify in my work under the rubric of *pre-communicability* (and which helped me immensely to value creative silence in my work, both with, and in, my clients). Yet Cordelia is murdered — and murdered following her most poignant moments of reconciliation and transfigured love with her father.

What does this symbolize? Does truth condemn her to death? The possibility is bypassed of such a miraculous ending as those of *The Tempest* or *A Winter's Tale*, which show, by contrast, there is no inevitability about this, and therefore that it is intentional, that it is clearly deliberately passed over by Shakespeare.

In fact, four of the five children die: Edmund, bastard son of Gloucester, and the three daughters of King Lear, all die, within minutes of one another; only Edgar, Gloucester's legitimate son, is left alive at the end — left to rule the kingdom. Here, as elsewhere, Edgar has a special role. So, let us pause from the situation of Cordelia,

to consider the implication of Edgar's role in the play.

What marks Edgar is that *he is apparently without relationships*, except of loving service, by contrast with all four of the others (three of whom, further, are engaged in lustful and passionate advances between themselves, as reflected in Edmund's wry and witty remark at the death of Regan and Goneril):

> I was contracted to them both: all three
> Now marry in an instant.
> (5.3.203-204)

Edgar has no ordinary human position in the play, and his peculiar combination of melodramatic sententiousness, with imposed roles, has been often noted, for instance, negatively, by Mason.[45] His position is one of *filling a role* — as the stooge his brother sets up at the start of the play; as Poor (mad) Tom; as Gloucester's "most poor man" guide after his suicide attempt; as the fake peasant who kills Oswald in protecting Gloucester; or as Edmund's mysterious challenger; in each case there is a role, although crucial at the time, which melodramatically denies him personhood. These are all additions to the role of Leonatus in the source material in Sidney's *Arcadia*. They are also roles into which the extremes of the suffering of others are poured, within the field conditions of the play.

He is, in a way, the most *depersonalized*, anonymized, individual in the whole drama. One cannot but see him as *celibate*, which none of Cordelia, Goneril, Regan, and Edmund are. Bloom, who *does* recognise his central importance in the play, albeit on a naturalistic model which ultimately prevents him from grasping its significance, in this iconically "poetic drama," says:

> There is something so profoundly disproportionate in Edgar's self-abnegation throughout the play that we have to presume in him a recalcitrance akin to Cordelia's, but far in excess of hers. Whether as bedlamite or as poor peasant, Edgar *refuses his own identity* [my italics] for more than practical purposes.[46]

Now, there exists an intriguing three-way link between Shakespeare, Edgar, and Oxford. In the Sonnets (for instance, Sonnet 37 includes almost the very same phrase: "so I, *made lame by fortune's dearest spite*") the bard portrays himself several times as lame; Oxford, in his letters several times[47] refers to his lameness or infirmity); in the Quarto version of *King Lear* of 1608, Edgar describes himself to Gloucester as

> A most poor man, *made lame by fortune's blows*;
> Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
> Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
> I"ll lead you to some biding.[48]
> (20.213-216)

In the Folio of 1623 this becomes:

A most poor man, made *tame* to fortune's blows
(4.4. 220)

What, then, do we make of the fact that, as Poor Tom, but as acting a part (and how does this literal-minded man manage that, considered naturalistically?), *Edgar takes on the lustful persona of both his father, and of Edmund (and Goneril and Regan)*? Notice how this is also linked with the squandering motif – c.f., below, "thy pen from lenders' books":

Lear. What hast thou been?
Edgar. A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curled my hair; wore gloves in my cap; served the lust of my mistress" heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven: one that slept in the contriving of lust, and waked to do it: wine loved I deeply, dice dearly: and in woman out-paramoured the Turk: false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, l lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to woman: keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders" books, and defy the foul fiend. Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind: Says suum, mun, ha, no, nonny. Dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa! let him trot by.
(3.4.78-94)

Where has the author got this all from? I found myself initially asking whether Oxford is putting *himself* into this also, that Edgar's simulated madness is an expression of Oxford's own real near-madness, but also, in his role-playing, what is closely allied to that near-madness, his huge self-concealment and psychological carrying of the predicament of his time. Lear's mockery of Edgar's (lack of) dress even possibly replicates all this in the context of *clothing*; in *Speculum Tuscanismi* Gabriel Harvey[49] mocks Oxford's Italianate penchant for archaically elegant clothing; and here Lear comments to Edgar (ironically to us, but "seriously" for Lear):

You, sir, I entertain for one of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your garments: you will say they are Persian attire: but let them be changed.
(3.6.36-40)

When Edgar has mortally wounded Edmund in their duel (which Edmund, in the same strange non-naturalistic way, accepts) he reveals himself to him exchanging forgiveness, in a way which conveys the same strange affinity between them, and

then the comment, in somewhat Karmic fashion:

> Thou hast spoken right, 'tis true;
> The wheel is come full circle: I am here.
> (5.3.164-165)

The Karmic or perhaps Zodiacal connection between them also points to this strange affinity, between darkness and light, perhaps – which also reminds me of the earlier incognito encounter (this is also an incognito encounter) between Lear and Gloucester on the heath.

And in becoming Poor Tom, also, Edgar takes on his "other" imaginatively, both sexually and psychically. Likewise, in becoming Edgar, the author takes on *his* other. Paradoxically Edgar, in his own persona, emerges as the most sane and stoical of individuals, albeit excessively sententiously virtuous. This element is strongest in the Quarto of 1608, and is somewhat pruned and streamlined in the Folio; the revisions move the play even further from a naturalistic conception. But Edgar is also the one, who, in the famous remark, "ripeness is all," utters this play's equivalent of Hamlet's beautiful speech:

> Not a whit, we defy augury; there's a special providence in the
> fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come, if it be not to come, it
> will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since
> no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.
> (5.2.165-170)

And, like Hamlet, *he feigns madness*. There is a clue in this, to which we shall return. The Fool, however wonderfully Joycean in his witticisms and linkages, remains very much his own person; but Edgar is, uniquely, thoroughly, *Other-determined* at every step in the play.

Symbolically, he seems like a kind of dream (or entry into the darkness, "the dark and vicious place") of his father and brother, through whom they enact their mutual hatred, and their shared "hatred of women." For we must now come to the oft noted central "hatred of women" which is at the heart of this play.

This connects with Freud's profound interpretation of this play, [50] in conjunction with the theme of the three caskets in *The Merchant of Venice*, by relation to which he interprets *King Lear* as *also* representing a love-contest. As the pioneer of masked meanings and reversed interpretations, Freud of course is comfortable with the incessant reversals and disguises in Shakespeare — which lead him eventually to accept the Oxfordian thesis.[51] Along with the interpretation of Cordelia's death as the expression of the indifference of nature, and as punishment (e.g., for Lear's continued infantile self-absorption) there is now the Freudian interpretation of Cordelia as death. He explores her meaning as the third of the Fates, the Parcae, Atropos the inexorable, Death - Truth as Death, Death as Truth, Woman as Death, Death as Woman, Woman as Entropy. Freud here is foreshadowing *Beyond the Pleasure*

Principle,[52] and the relation of Truth, Death, and Nothingness is, as we have touched on, profoundly germane for De Vere as "Shakespeare." Freud's is an interpretation that does justice to our sense that a happy ending, such as Nahum Tate's as discussed by Johnson, [53] is utterly impossible here.

Clearly, in the general overdetermination, this is not incompatible with other interpretations. Nor is it incompatible with a feminist view of Cordelia tacitly functioning as scapegoat-sacrifice for the "depravity" and "cruelty" of "woman" in general, and as innocent scapegoat-sacrifice for the irresistibility of sex, which in *King Lear* is very much, though not entirely, projected on to women.

Once again, this is very far from absent from the Sonnets, in particular and notoriously (though directed more against "sex" than "woman" as such – and note the link with "expense," "expenditure," "spending," etc, an incessant theme in the Sonnets) Sonnet 129 ("shame" again!).

In *King Lear* it comes out in representative form during the period of Lear's madness:

> **Glocester.** The trick of that voice I do well remember:
> Is 't not the king?
> **Lear.** Ay, every inch a king:
> When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.
> I pardon that man's life. What was thy cause? Adultery?
> Thou shalt not die: die for adultery! No:
> The wren goes to 't, and the small gilded fly
> Does lecher in my sight.....
> There's hell, there's darkness, there's the
> sulphurous pit,
> Burning, scalding, stench, consumption; fie,
> fie, fie! pah, pah! Give me an ounce of civet,
> good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination:
> there's money for thee.
> (4.5.106-127)

In all of this "hatred of women," there are a mass of themes which we need only note in passing, without succumbing to reductive temptations, which invoke both the psychoanalytic and other related dimensions: castration anxiety (which is also expressed in Gloucester's blinding, if we follow Freud on such matters); "procreation envy" (as one might call it); fear of the "terrible mother" (Jung); birth anxiety; sexual guilt; etc.

At the root of such themes, arguably, is *sexual shame*, together with other forms of shame; shame is what, at this point, is keeping Lear away from Cordelia. It originally prevented Cordelia from speaking of her love for him — though that is profound *social* shame, not to contaminate her love with the public hypocrisy of her sisters. This emerges clearly in him in the "wheel of fire" passage already quoted (is his Catherine- "wheel of fire," like Schopenhauer's "wheel of Ixion," a sexual wheel?).

If sexuality is shame, we thus get a strange and, as yet, enigmatic, inference: in a manner, only in relation to Edgar is the play free of shame. But Edgar also *takes on* the whole shame and abjectness of others.

Immediately following the passage quoted above, where Edgar as Poor Tom explains what he is to Lear, we have the following famous passage, relating to the "clothing" issue:

> **Lear.** Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three on 's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! come unbutton here. [*Tearing off his clothes]*
> (3.4.95-103)

And this "animal" theme connects with the whole clothes and nature and "society" issue, even into Lear's final speech:

> And my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life!
> Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
> And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,
> Never, never, never, never, never!
> Pray you, undo this button: thank you, sir.
> Do you see this? Look on her, look, her lips,
> Look there, look there!
> *[Dies]* (5.3.281-287)

We are, then, dealing with something like a Pauline-Augustinian conception of the Fall of Man, in which, in some way, it is connected with the whole theme of sexuality. In parallel with the reduction to nature and animality element, in short order, we might first say that the reason Cordelia has to die is the same as the reason why Christ has to die, (and perhaps also why Edgar has to live), the utterly innocent facing the utmost abyss of despair, abandonment, final judgment and retribution; all of Wilson Knight's intuitions regarding the Christian dimension of the plays come into their own. Compare the passages from Matthew and *Lear*:

> And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
> (Mt. 27:46)

> **Lear.** Howl, howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones:
> Had I your tongues and eyes, I'ld use them so

That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever!
I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking-glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.
Kent. Is this the promised end
Edgar. Or image of that horror?
Albany. Fall, and cease!
(5.3. 232-239)

The intimate connection between Cordelia and Lear's Fool, which is expressed in this reminiscence at the point of Lear's death, is reflected in the Fool's profound "truth-telling," which is *aletheiaic*.

Here also is a Pauline understanding (*First Letter to the Corinthians*), a *Kenotic* understanding,[54] of tragedy, which Shakespeare somehow combines with a capacity to evoke the tragic equal, if not superior, to that of the great Greeks:

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the mighty things,
And vile things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, That no flesh should rejoice in his presence.
(1 Cor. 1.27-9)

That this Cordelian motif of "nothing" can be combined with an erotic evisceration is illustrated by Donne in *A Nocturnall Upon St Lucies Eve* (where the Pauline echo is equally clear):

Study me then, you who shall lovers bee
At the next world, that is, at the next Spring:
For I am every dead thing,
In whom love wrought new Alchimie.
For his art did expresse
A quintessence even from nothingnesse,
From dull privations, and leane emptinesse:
He ruin'd mee, and I am re-begot
Of absence, darknesse, death; things which are not.[55]

But Christ's way of life, too, in the Gospels is portrayed as celibate, annulling of sexuality, as Paul was celibate, and there is the famous passage in Matthew:

For there are some eunuchs, which were so born of their mother's belly; and there be some eunuchs, which be gelded by men; and there be some

> eunuchs, which have gelded themselves for the kingdom of heaven. He that is able to receive this, let him receive it.
>
> (Mt.19.12)

Can the epiphanies of Christian forgiveness encompass sexual affirmation as opposed to sexual denial? As in Mozart, they can. However, I think *Lear* (with much else of Shakespeare) falls within the group of those works, in which human sexuality is either repudiated (Wagner's *Parsifal*, Schopenhauer's philosophy), treated as a profound disturbance (Kierkegaard, Henry James, Thomas Mann, Beckett), or anatomized and belittled (Swift, Flaubert, Eliot, Proust):

> **Vladimir.** Astride of a grave and a difficult birth. Down in the hole, lingeringly, the grave digger puts on the forceps. We have time to grow old. The air is full of our cries.[56]

But this happens, as with Wagner's *Parsifal*, in the context of what is otherwise a profound life-affirmation, for *King Lear*, though a work in many ways savage in the extreme, never loses its sense of meaning and of the cosmos, is never merely cynical. And Edgar, to whom we shall return in a moment, is central to the accomplishment of this — through Christian resonances in particular.

What is going on?

It seems to me, reflecting upon the play in the light of the hypothesis of the autobiographical elements, however transformed they are in it, that this play, like *Measure for Measure*, *is one of those plays in which the author splits himself*. Here we find dramatizations of aspects of himself of which he is profoundly ashamed, and about which he feels profound contrition, but also non-naturalistically conceived *deus ex machina* Ideal self (or "I"-Ideal), which is in some way exempted from, or lifted above, the ordinary course of procreative mortality, and through which he is enabled to "redeem" the base self or selves:

> **Angelo.** O my dread lord,
> I should be guiltier than my guiltiness,
> To think I can be undiscernible,
> When I perceive your grace, like power divine,
> Hath look"d upon my passes.
>
> (*Measure for Measure,* 5.1.563-567)

And the figures which embody *that* position, like Edgar, *do* have the "indeterminate" "No-Self" status which Emerson and Bloom attribute to William Shakespeare of Stratford ("As to the poetical Character itself.... it is not itself — it has no self — it is every thing and nothing - It has no character"[57]). But it also belonged in another way to Oxford — the humiliated abyss of his ultimate non-personality, his un-personing, as creator of literature. It was this which made the Stratford man so paradoxically fascinating to me as the ultimate *mystery non-person* whose creativity

came from the beyond, in my youth. This is perhaps the element of truth which is - most ironically! - transposed into the Stratfordian orthodoxy, reaching its current apotheosis in Shapiro's *Contested Will*.[58]

Lear's three children are, all three of them, utterly real and convincing characters. Of Gloucester's children, Edmund, while there is a "morality play villain" touch about him, is nevertheless consistently presented, has enormous charm, a human touch of vanity, need for love, and a quixotically chivalric style, which comes out both in relation to Goneril, and at the end, and enables him humanly to respond "despite of mine own nature," and which also makes him respond, as he had no need to, to Edgar's anonymous challenge.

Neither brother is entirely naturalistically convincing (it may be relevant that Oxford, unlike William Shakespeare of Stratford, had no brothers). But Edgar's character is on the face of it *a thoroughgoing non-naturalistic* anomaly, which has to be accounted for (for instance, Bloom talks about his self-humiliation, for which he gives no adequate reason). As already indicated, he has no overt character of his own (he is on the run from the very start of the play) *but only a series of functions*, dictated (with a trickster element) by the needs of others (even his Tom a' Bedlam disguise mirrors or emerges from a remark of his brother's):

> And pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy: my cue is villanous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam. O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi). (1.2.131-135)

At the end he emerges as a true challenger, only appearing on the third sound of the trumpet, like a Knight of the Holy Grail. In between he acts like a psychopomp (an underworld guide, like Dante's Virgil in the *Inferno*) leading Lear into the madness he, Lear, seeks, partly as relief, unlike Gloucester, for whom madness is not available, from *his* "huge sorrows":

> **Gloucester.** The king is mad: how stiff is my vile sense,
> That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
> Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract:
> So should my thoughts be sever"d from my griefs,
> And woes by wrong imaginations lose
> The knowledge of themselves.
> (4.6.279-283)

But the madness is also the license to release Lear to utter the wisdom which has not been available to him in his "sanity," and while he still seeks to retain the needs which vanity and esteem, as the antithesis to shame, appear to require. (See, e.g., "O reason not the need....") And Edgar acts as the psychopomp who, conversely, leads Gloucester back to life affirmation. He is in many ways the play's "touchstone" (see commentary below).

The world which opens up for Lear is a world in which the antithesis to royalty, royalty which Lear has forfeited, but which, in forfeiting, opens to him a reality of which he had had no comprehension before, the world of poverty, of the recognition of "wretches" (the key word Gerard Manley Hopkins[59] picked up from these passages, in his Lear-linked poem *No Worst There is None*):

Lear. Prithee, go in thyself: seek thine own ease:
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. But I"ll go in.
[to the Fool]
In, boy; go first. You houseless poverty,--
Nay, get thee in. I"ll pray, and then I'll sleep.
[Fool goes in]
Poor naked wretches, whereso'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.
Edgar. [Within] Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor Tom!
[The Fool runs out from the hovel] (3.4.23-38)

Now, Edgar's Grail-quest-like "entering into his opposite" is prefigured in an allusion which invokes something equivalent:

Edgar. Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still,--Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man.
(3.4.170-172)

The *Britannia Kids Encylopaedia* notes:

> Childe Roland (sometimes spelled Rowland) is a character in an old Scottish ballad. A son of the legendary King Arthur, he is the youngest brother of Burd Ellen, who has been carried off by the fairies to the castle of the king of Elfland. Guided by the enchanter Merlin, Childe Roland undertakes a quest to Elfland and rescues her. Shakespeare alludes to the ballad.[60]

Edward de Vere's ancestor, who, Gardner notes,[61] came over with the Conqueror, was Alberic de Vere – Albry, Aubrey, Auberon, Oberon (the fairy king in *A*

Midsummer's Night's Dream, Albe Righ = the Elf King); arguably Cordelia is related to Persephone, visitant to Hades, a connection which is explicit in Perdita in *A Winter's Tale*.

Edgar, like Parsifal in Wagner's final opera, is making a journey into his non-respectable "other," his "alter," his "dark tower," his opposite, sexuality, madness, poverty, nakedness, degradation, victimisation, illegitimacy, sacrifice ("No worst, there is none..," in GM Hopkins' epitomisation); and then he describes "himself," his previous self, to Gloucester, after he has engineered Gloucester's faked suicide by throwing himself over the cliff which did not exist:

> **Edgar.** As I stood here below, methought his eyes
> Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
> Horns whelk'd and waved like the enridged sea:
> It was some fiend; therefore, thou happy father,
> Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
> Of men's impossibilities, have preserved thee.
> (4.5.69-74)

This is a fine evocation (which Wilson Knight[62] thinks simply "a fantastic picture of a ridiculously grotesque devil") precisely of the Elf King, - or the Celtic Horned god Cernunnos,[63] the Hobby Horse (mentioned in *Hamlet*), Oberon and Puck (with the phallicisation of Bottom), or the phallic Green Knight of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. This is the kind of territory we are in here.

Similarly, the names of the fiends which torment poor Tom, through which he is able to simulate hallucinatory behaviors with graphic fidelity, are derived ostensibly from a book by Samuel Harsnett, about exorcisms performed by Roman Catholic priests, published in 1603. But Bowen[64] shows that this in turn relates back to an earlier book of "Miracles," from around 1585-6, and this, however contemporary its form, was the title given to the Medieval Mystery Cycle Plays, as Chambers argues.[65] So this derivation not only enables us to place *King Lear* earlier than the standard dating of 1605/6, but also takes us right back to the world of the Mediaeval Drama and the origins of drama, as one would expect from the author whose childhood memories included Hamlet's of "Yorick" (*Hamlet*, 5.1. 179 ff.).

So, taking all this together with his Parsifal-like challenge, clad in armor, to Edmund at the end, it is possible to plausibly confirm that Edgar is *one of those disguised presences of the author in the play* as magician or psychopomp, familiar in Shakespeare, which we find as Prospero in *The Tempest*, the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, and also there is an element of this in Touchstone the Clown in *As You Like It* (where Touchtone's affinity and connection with the Hamlet-esque figure of Jacques is significant).

Edgar is, however, *unique in the scale* of his purgatorial descent into the darkness, which in psychotherapeutic terms has Jungian alchemical connotations, and which for me has been the central nucleus or eye of the vortex of this journey of discovery. But the appearances of such figures in Shakespeare always signifies *attempt at an*

exorcism of wrongs, and cleansings of the body politic, along the lines of Jacques' own comment in *As You Like It*:

> Invest me in my motley; give me leave
> To speak my mind, and I will through and through
> Cleanse the foul body of the infected world,
> If they will patiently receive my medicine.
> (2.7.58-61)

On which the Duke Senior comments significantly:

> Most mischievous foul sin, in chiding sin:
> For thou thyself hast been a libertine,
> As sensual as the brutish sting itself;
> And all the embossed sores and headed evils,
> That thou with licence of free foot hast caught,
> Wouldst thou disgorge into the general world.
> (2.5.64-69)

When Shakespeare is in this mode, it is a fair preliminary inference that, among others, it is always also *himself* he is condemning. And so, in this aspect, when Cordelia dies, the ultimate judgment on Lear's dereliction is enacted.

Touchstone, with whom as Fool in his Motley Jacques is identifying, just as Edgar is associated with the Fool in the Storm scenes in *King Lear*, is the significant utterer of one of those moments in the plays and sonnets where an absolute identity claim, an absolute authority claim, is implied. They invoke either "the thing itself," or the "I AM THAT I AM" of Moses' vision of Jahweh in Exodus (3.14). In the case of Touchstone it is noteworthy the moment comes in rebuking, contemptuously, the country character, significantly called "William," but also implying that the water of identity has been poured into the wrong receptacle (though this is swiftly sidestepped again as soon as it has appeared):

> **Touch.** You do love this maid?
> **Will.** I do, sir.
> **Touch.** Give me your hand. Art thou learned?
> **Will.** No, sir.
> **Touch.** Then learn this of me: to have, is to have; for it
> is a figure in rhetoric that drink, being poured out
> of a cup into a glass, by filling the one doth empty
> the other; for all your writers do consent that ipse
> is he: now, you are not ipse, for I am he.
> **Will.** Which he, sir?
> **Touch.** He, sir, that must marry this woman.
> (5.1.35-45)

We see the affinity with Lear's evocation of Edgar *as animal*: "Ha! here's three on's are sophisticated! *Thou art the thing itself* unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor bare, forked animal as thou art" (3.5.101-103, my italics).

And the paradox of this, in Edgar's case, is that this is *also* a disguise – the absolute reversal paradox of the concept of Nature.

A letter of Oxford's to Burghley (I draw from Barrell here[66] as well as de Vere[67]) challenging his spying on him (this is in parallel, of course, with *Hamlet*), which also mirrors Lear's famous "I know not what they shall be but they shall be The terrors of the earth" threat to Goneril and Regan, 4.2, at the end of the "reason not the need" speech already quoted, contains an analogue comment:

> My Lord, this other day your man Stainer told me that you sent for Amys, my man and, if he were absent, that Lyly should come unto you. I sent Amys, for he was in the way. And I think very strange that your Lordship should enter into that course toward me whereby I must learn that I knew not before, both of your opinion and goodwill towards me. But I pray, my Lord, leave that course, for I mean not to be your ward nor your child. I serve her Majesty, *and I am that I am* [my italics], and by alliance near to your Lordship, but free, and scorn to be offered that injury to think I am so weak of government as to be ruled by servants, or not able to govern myself. If your Lordship take and follow this course, you deceive yourself and make me take another course that yet I have not thought of. Wherefore these shall be to desire your Lordship, if that I may make account of your friendship, that you will leave that course, as hurtful to us both.[68]

This, again, is paralleled in Sonnet 121, which we can almost feel being dashed off to relieve his feeling:

> 'tis better to be vile than vile esteem'd,
> .....
> No, *I am that I am* [my italics], and they that level
> At my abuses reckon up their own.
> (*Sonnet 121*)

Which in turn reminds us of (significantly, in its arrogance, just before the "no worst" moment when Edgar's hubris is deflated, when he encounters his father, blinded):

> **Edgar.** Yet better thus, and known to be contemn"d,
> Than still contemn'd and flatter'd.
> (4.1. 1 ff.)

As we have noted, Edgar duplicates Hamlet in *mimicking madness*. Hamlet, in a catastrophic kind of way, and unable to master his relation to the whole situation until the very end of the play, nevertheless, in a Prospero-like fashion, *stage manages* the whole denouement of the process of the play, as the authentic representative of the author, and as heaven's "scourge and minister." Similarly, Edgar facilitates Lear's descent into madness (truth-in-madness) which enables him to return, though partly in a second childhood way, to Cordelia. Lear only returns to "truth" in the loss of her. Lear is unable, while she is living, to see her as a person in her own right, as opposed to a derivative of himself, even in the "court news" (5.3) exchange when they are led off to prison, and maybe this is his ultimate egotism, which can only be surpassed towards the other, by her loss through death. Edgar equally facilitates, in a psychopomp way, which, in the characteristic style of behaviour of psychopomps, seems ruthless and inhumane (as noted by Mason), [69] Gloucester's return to truth, and his refusal of both madness and suicide.

Both Lear and Gloucester incur, in a non-moral unfolding, the consequences of their derelictions, and egotisms, and it is Edgar who, in a way, ruthlessly stage-manages and orchestrates that unfolding, and likewise the subsidiary one of the melodrama of Edmund, Goneril, and Regan. Edgar, like Prospero, and the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, is left, alone, to rule the kingdom at Lear's death, when Kent declines the task. Accordingly, it seems to me that we must reconsider the famous moment, which we have already touched upon, of Lear's realization of the nature of man:

> Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three on's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! come unbutton here. *[Tearing off his clothes]* (3.4.95-103)

If we are to consider only the author in his projection of himself into the play, then *this becomes the most extreme of all the self-identity formulations in the plays and poems*. It is one in which, representing both tenacious and unconquerable social order, and its sheer annulment, the twin poles of the play, in shame, and destitution, and (disguising) reduction to animality, shame-less nothingness, paradoxically absolutely deprived of role, "unaccommodated," he is penitentially (or nihilistically, or both) *reduced entirely to his animal and elemental cosmic being solely*: "unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor bare, forked animal as thou art" (3.4.101).

This, as we have seen, is poignantly echoed in Lear's final speech. In the loss of Cordelia he himself has become Other, "wretch," and "unaccommodated man."

Edgar's Grail Journey in search of identity, and of his "sister" (Burd Ellen, who, perhaps like Cordelia, "ran the reverse way round the church") to the abode of the Elf-King has led him to this. And Lear attributes it to his "daughters":

Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.
(3.4.66-67)

It seems to me that, symbolically, Lear and Gloucester are *conducted by Edgar into the loss of everything*, as they approach death. Edgar is the emblem and instrument ('scourge and minister") of their reluctant renunciation. In a way, in terms of Freud's[70] model, therefore, *Edgar also* is Death. The final loss is the sacrificial death of Cordelia, which Edgar inadvertently, by delay, at least in the Quarto, brings about, symbolizing, in an overdetermined way, the many things touched on in this analysis.

By enacting *the loss of everything*, the author symbolically, Lear-like, commands something which was in reality beyond his control, but in the expiatory total reduction to "the thing itself," which is enacted in the trajectory of the play, he surrenders it again – except in the form of the act of renunciation which he enacts through the disguise-based "null character" Edgar. Freud makes similar comment about the reversal of the reversal, in which Lear carries Death – as Cordelia/Atropos - dead in his arms, as Freud[71] compellingly asserts.

This is what I meant by Oxford as the author in a manner neutralizing himself penitentially, more than in any other play, in Edgar, who nevertheless, parallel to Prospero, takes over the Kingdom at the end, and, *in a disguised way*, is more potent than anyone else in the play. This may be the emblem of the authorship predicament.

In Edgar, Shakespeare has *dramatized disguising itself*, in an uncanny double take, in which case *King Lear* is also dramatizing the agony and shame of the authorial concealment as such – which is so often expressed in the *Sonnets*, e.g., 72 ("*My name be buried where my body is*"). I cannot see this as anything less (though it is also more) than comprehensive penitence and alchemical descent; and therefore I cannot conceive of the author as doing anything other than (though of course also *more than*) enact his comprehensive losses, and abdications, for which he feels responsible to an abyssal extent, in this profound symbolic expiation.

This significantly matches the life of Oxford in a literal way (for he must have come near to this pass in the 1590s, as Anderson and Stritmatter argue),[72] in the way much of *Hamlet* does, but it is also profoundly *symbolically* congruent with what we know of it (in much the same way as, for instance, Wotan's relation to Fricka in *The Ring* is congruent with Wagner's own relation to Minna). And indeed the symbolic aspect of it is expressed monumentally in the *disguise* motif which Edgar embodies – as the iconic enactment of the author who, if the hypothesis is true, is the greatest disguised genius in history.

I cannot see that there is anything remotely comparable in what we know of the life of William Shakespeare of Stratford, nothing which could *come to life specifically*, as congruent, in the way Oxford's life does, or that of Dickens' own father's time in *Little Dorrit*'s Marshalsea Prison;[73] the only serious possible exception to this argument, it seems to me, is the Catholic Recusant dimension of the Shakespeares of Stratford. But this creates a mass of puzzles of its own in relation to the Authorship.

In so doing, Oxford/Shakespeare creates one of the greatest of all dramas — in which *his own* admission that "he hath ever but slenderly known himself"— is obliquely conducted into the profoundest self-knowledge through the impersonal "imaginary" cypher, Edgar.

Edgar never meets Cordelia alive during the play. But Nahum Tate's modification in which Cordelia lives and marries Edgar – paradoxically, the two "death" figures of the play - nevertheless does, therefore, symbolically and mysteriously correspond to something fitting, which is enacted in *Little Dorrit*.[74] An extended comparison of the two works, with consideration of the profound relation of marriage and death, would take this analysis further.[75] But here I must just note this. Having myself here made this Keatsian journey of descent into the darkness, the old oak forest evoked in Keats' Sonnet on reading *King Lear,*[76] once again, and having been privileged to discern the extraordinary role of Edgar, which I never saw previously, I find myself asking, with Ogburn:[77] what must have been the depths of the personal descent of the author of a work of such darkness, a work yet imbued, nevertheless, with the sustained and starkest determination to realize "the true" (veritas)? The Oxfordian hypothesis alone gives us an author into whom our fullest intuitions about the allegorical communication of the plays can expand. This does not in itself make it true, of course, but if the requirement of congruence, however denied by Shapiro[78] and his orthodox colleagues is part of truth, it establishes some preliminary conditions for inquiry.

Thus our spiritual detective journey into the creative psyche of the authorship points to the character of Oxford as profoundly compatible with the authorship, and William Shakespeare of Stratford (with the mentioned reservation) not at all. And thus this quasi-psychotherapeutic, quasi-literary, methodology, can contribute, in a modest way, to the return of this historically repressed heritage, and so to the longer-term righting of a deep and centuries-long-sustained historical wrong.

"Inside" and "outside" the text, criticism, and creation, are relative concepts. The enactment and journey we have been drawn into, in exploring this whole issue, is one which straddles life and work, and in which a creative totality is at work which transcends both separately.

Endnotes

[1] All biblical quotations in what follows are from the Geneva Bible of 1560/1599 (Geneva Bible, 1560/99/2007), which would have been the Bible Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford would have known, and, indeed, of which he possessed a copy, explored in Stritmatter, R (2001) *Doctoral Dissertation on Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible* University of Massachusetts PhD dissertation All Shakespeare references are to the Oxford Shakespeare, 2005; if not identified further, they are to *King Lear*. Grateful acknowledgements are due to Karnac Publishers, London, and United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy, publishers of *The Muse as Therapist*: *a New Poetic Paradigm for Psychotherapy*, of which this is a modified version of chapter four.

[2] Freud, S. (1913/1957) *The Theme of the three Caskets*, 1913, in *Collected Papers Vol IV*, London: Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psychoanalysis, 244-256.

[3] Wilkinson, Heward. *The Muse as Therapist: A New Poetic Paradigm for Psychotherapy*, London: Karnac-UKCP, 2009.

[4] Shapiro, James. *Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare*, London: Faber and Faber, 2010.

[5] Wilkinson, H (2010) *De-Imagining Imagination: An Essay on* Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare? *by James Shapiro*, online at: <http://hewardwilkinson.wordpress.com/2010/04/04/de-imagining-imagination-an-essay-on-%E2%80%98contested-will-who-wrote-shakespeare%E2%80%99-by-james-shapiro/>.

[6] Shapiro, 316.

[7] Shapiro, 305.

[8] Shapiro, 305.

[9] Wilkinson, *Muse*, 86ff.

[10] Shapiro, 198-9.

[11] Shapiro, 199.

[12] Shapiro, 315-6.

[13] Wilkinson, *De-Imagining Imagination*.

[14] Keats *Letter to George and Georgiana Keats, 14 Feb- 6 May, 1819*, Keats Letters, Ed. MB Forman, Oxford University Press, 1947, 305.

[15] North, Marcy L. *The anonymous Renaissance: cultures of discretion in Tudor/Stuart England*, Chicago/London: Chicago University Press, 2003.

[16] Farina, William. *De Vere as Shakespeare: An Oxfordian Reading of the Canon*, Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 2006.

[17] Green, Nina The Fall of the House of Oxford, *Brief Chronicles* Vol. I (2009), 49-122 online at: <http://www.briefchronicles.com/ojs/index.php/bc/article/view/7>.

[18] Anderson Mark K. and Roger Stritmatter, The Potent Testimony of Gabriel Harvey: Master "Pierce Penniless" and his 'sweetest Venus in print… .armed with the complete harness of the bravest Minerva," *Shakespeare Matters* 1:2 (Winter 2002), 26-29, online at: <http://www.shakespearefellowship.org/Newsletter/Paradigm_Shift_Winter_2002.pdf>.

[19] Nelson, Alan. (*Monstrous Adversary: The Life of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford*,

Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 2003.

[20] The "incognito encounter" is my label for a phenomenon found at peak moments of the greatest literature: the reunion of Joseph and his brethren in the book of *Genesis*, the encounter between Jesus and his disciples on the Road to Emmaus, in *Luke's Gospel*, Wotan's encounter with Siegfried in *Siegfried* in *The Nibelung's Ring*, the encounter of Oedipus and Laius on the crossroads outside Thebes, Pip and Magwitch on Magwitch's return in Dickens" *Great Expectations*, Nostromo with Dr Monygham in Conrad's *Nostromo*, and so on. It always indicates an hidden relationship – either familial, or by conjoint participation in some fundamental enterprise.

[21] Farina, 203.

[22] Bowen, G. *Sir Edward de Vere and His Mother Anne Vavasour*, first published in *Shakespearean Authorship Review* (1966), online in *Shakespeare Authorship Sourcebook* at: <http://www.sourcetext.com/sourcebook/library/bowen/17vavasor.htm>

[23] Melville, H. *Billy Budd and Other Stories*, London: Penguin, 1986.

[24] Barrell, C.W. *'Shake-speare's" Own Secret Drama*: *Discovery of Hidden Facts in the Private Life of Edward de Vere, Proves Him Author of the Bard's Sonnets,* First published in Shakespeare Fellowship Newsletter (American), 1941-2. Available online at the Shakespeare Authorship Sourcebook: <http://www.sourcetext.com/sourcebook/library/barrell/05Sonnets1.htm>.

[25] Shakespeare, W *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, *King Lear*, First Folio version unless otherwise indicated, Ed. S Wells, G Taylor, J Jowett, and W Montgomery, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

[26] Danby, J. *Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature: "King Lear,"* London: Faber and Faber, 1949, 125ff.

[27] Anonymous *The True Chronicle History of King Leir and His Three Daughters*, London, 1605. Available online at *Elizabethan Authors* <http://www.elizabethanauthors.com/king-leir-1605-1-16.htm>.

[28] Farina, 202.

[29] Dickens, C.(1857/2003) *Little Dorrit*, London: Penguin. The connection I touch on here is, for lack of space, not taken far enough in detail to enable me relevantly to give page numbers. It is taken further in in *The Muse as Therapist*, chapter IV., 151-158

[30] Wilson Knight, G. *The Wheel of Fire*, London: Methuen, 1930, 1960: 177ff.

[31] Shapiro, 75, 307.

[32] Ogburn, C *The Mystery of William Shakespeare*, London: Cardinal Books, 1988., e.g., 24ff.

[33] Freud, *Three Caskets*, 247.

[34] Keats, John. Sunday 21 Dec.,1817 letter (32) To G. and T. Keats. In M.B. Forman (1947 Ed.), *The letters of John Keats* (72). London: Oxford University Press, 72.

[35] Johnson, S. *Preface to Shakespeare,* in *Johnson on Shakespeare*, Ed. W Raleigh, London: Oxford University Press, 1765/1958, 161-162.

[36] Leavis, F.R. *Essays and Documents*, Eds. MacKillop, I.D., Storer, R, Sheffield: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1995, 82.

[37] Bloom, H. *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*, London: Fourth Estate, 1999, 485.

[38] Welsh, A. "A King Lear of the Debtors Prison: Dickens and Shakespeare on Mortal Shame," *Social Research: An International Quarterly of Social Sciences Issue,* 70:4 (Winter 2003), 1231 – 1258.

[39] Dickens, *Little Dorrit*

[40] Bowen, G. (1961) *The Incomparable Pair and 'the Works of William Shakespeare,"* first published in *Shakespearean Authorship Review (English)* online in *Shakespeare Authorship Sourcebook* at: <http://www.sourcetext.com/sourcebook/library/bowen/12pair.htm>

[41] Manningham, J. (1976) *The Diary of John Manningham of the Middle Temple 1602-1603* Edited by R. B. Sorlien, Hanover (NH): University Press of New England.

[42] "Oxford the Deadbeat Dad," on Alan Nelson's website: <http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~ahnelson/oxdad.html>

[43] Nelson, "Deadbeat Dad."

[44] Hope, Warren. "Lear's Cordelia, Oxford's Susan, and Manningham's Diary," The Elizabethan Review, Autumn 1997 (5:2), 123-126.

[45] Mason, HA., "King Lear: Radical Incoherence," *The Cambridge Quarterly* 1967, II (3): 212-235

[46] Bloom, 480.

[47] Nina Green's Oxford Authorship Site, *Oxford's Letters*, online at: http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/oxfordsletters.html.

[48] Shakespeare, W. *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, *The History of King Lear*, Quarto Version of 1608, Ed. S Wells, G Taylor, J Jowett, and W Montgomery, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, 213.

[49] Harvey, G. *Speculum Tuscanismi* available at *Harvey* (1580) on Elizabethan Authors website, at: <http://www.elizabethanauthors.com/harvey101.htm>

[50] Freud, *Three Caskets*, 244ff.

[51] Freud, S. (1930). The Goethe Prize. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XXI (1927-1931): The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and its Discontents, and Other Works, 205-214.

[52] Freud, S, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis (1961), e.g., 32ff.

[53] Johnson, *Preface*, 161-162.

[54] Wikipedia: ***Kenosis*** is a Greek word for emptiness, which is used as a theological term. The ancient Greek word *kénōsis* means an "emptying," from kenos "empty." The word is mainly used, however, in a Christian theological context, for example Philippians 2:7, "Jesus made himself nothing (*ekénōse*) ..." (NIV) or ."..he emptied himself..." (NRSV), using the verb form *kenóō* 'to empty"

[55] Donne, J. (1941) *Complete Poetry and Selected Prose*, London: Nonesuch Press, New York: Random House, 32.

[56] Beckett, S. *Waiting for Godot*, London: Faber and Faber, 1953/1959., 91

[57] Keats, J. Tuesday 27th October, 1818, Letter to Richard Woodhouse, (1947 Ed.), *The Letters of John Keats* (227-8). London: Oxford University Press, 227.

[58] Shapiro, e.g., 314-316.

[59] Hopkins, GM. "No Worst There is None," in *Collected Poems*, Ed. Gardner, London: Oxford University Press, 1948, 106-107.

[60] *Kids Encylopaedia Britannica*, "Childe Rowland," online at: <http://kids.britannica.com/comptons/article-9319519/Childe-Roland>.

[61] Gardner, Sir L. (1999) "In The Realm of the Ring Lords," *Nexus Magazine*, 6:6 (October-

November 1999) <http://www.nexusmagazine.com/articles/ringlords2.html>.

[62] Wilson Knight, *Wheel of Fire*, 172.

[63] Mystica Encyclopaedia, (no date) *Entry on Horned Celtic god Cernunnous*, online at: <http://www.themystica.com/mystica/articles/c/cernunnous.html>.

[64] *Hackney, Harsnett, and the Devils in Lear*, first published in *Shakespearean Authorship Review (English)* (1965) online in *Shakespeare Authorship Sourcebook* at: <http://www.sourcetext.com/sourcebook/library/bowen/16hackney.htm>.

[65] Chambers, EK *English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages*, London: Oxford University Press, 1945.

[66] Barrell, CW (1941-2) *'shake-speare's" Own Secret Drama*: *Discovery of Hidden Facts in the Private Life of Edward de Vere, Proves Him Author of the Bard's Sonnets,* First published in *Shakespeare Fellowship Newsletter* (American), 1941-2, Online in Shakespeare Authorship Sourcebook: <http://www.sourcetext.com/sourcebook/library/barrell/05Sonnets1.htm>.

[67] De Vere, E. (30th October, 1584) *Letter from Oxford to Lord Burghley*, online at: Oxford Authorship Site: <http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/oxfordsletters1-44.html#15>.

[68] De Vere, E. (30th October, 1584) *Letter from Oxford to Lord Burghley*, online at: Oxford Authorship Site: <http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/oxfordsletters1-44.html#15>.

[69] Mason, HA. (1967) "King Lear: Radical Incoherence," *The Cambridge Quarterly* 1967, II (3): 212-235.

[70] Freud, *Three Caskets*, 255-256.

[71] Freud, *Three Caskets*, 255-256.

[72] Anderson, Mark K. and Roger Stritmatter, "The Potent Testimony of Gabriel Harvey: Master "Pierce Penniless" and his 'sweetest Venus in print… .armed with the complete harness of the bravest Minerva,'" *Shakespeare Matters* 1:2 (Winter 2002), 26-29, online at: <http://www.shakespearefellowship.org/Newsletter/Paradigm_Shift_Winter_2002.pdf> , 26.

[73] Dickens, *Little Dorrit*.

[74] Dickens, *Little Dorrit*.

[75] This relationship between *King Lear* and *Little Dorrit*, of Edgar and Cordelia in relation to Clennam and Amy Dorrit, I pursue in a beginning kind of way in *The Muse as Therapist*, chapter IV., 151-158.

[76] Keats, J., "On Sitting Down To Read King Lear Once Again," in *The Poetical Works of John Keats*, London: Frederick Warne and Co (1818/1902), 337.

[77] Ogburn, e.g., 136-138.

[78] Shapiro, 314-316.

The 17th Earl of Oxford's "Office" Illuminated[1]

Christopher Paul

On July 7, 1594, Edward de Vere, 17th earl of Oxford, wrote a letter seeking help from his sometime father-in-law William Cecil, Lord Burghley, in which he twice mentioned his unspecified "office" and anonymous abuses and hindrances to which it was being subjected. There has been a mystery attached to this letter and the unexplained "office" since 1928, spawned by Captain B. M. Ward's speculation in his still valuable biography of Oxford published that year. Ward compounded the mystery by linking it to Oxford's £1,000 annuity granted by the queen on June 26, 1586.

This paper has several objectives. The first is to resolve the modern-day misconceptions that have built up around Oxford's "office" and to dispel any necessary connection with his £1,000 annuity. Second, I will determine the sources of the "sundrie abuses" Oxford was complaining about. Third, trace the trajectory of Oxford's particular efforts concerning his "office," spanning the next ten years to its ultimate destination at the end of Oxford's life. These efforts, I suggest, may have been part of a decade-long attempt to achieve some form of justice intended to disburden the crown's subjects of a particular grievance, simultaneously increase the queen's (and subsequently the king's) profits, and offer some degree of financial stability to his son and heir as well as his countess. Several other objectives herein are "compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects, and indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels."

These goals shall be achieved in a chronological expedition—beginning with a reinspection of the original letter in conjunction with other primary documents, including the disclosure of a previously unexamined letter written by Oxford four months later, on November 9, 1594. These in turn have a direct bearing on a further revelation concerning Oxford's role in James I's Parliament of 1604—namely, a hitherto overlooked bill, along with two other documents in which Oxford may have had a hand, and a third possibly related to his involvement. By elucidating

the actual subject and reason for Oxford's 1594 letters, their repercussions in 1604, and the connection they had to the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, the final intentions of this article are to add new details to our understanding of the *official* Great Chamberlainship of England, and cast a new perspective on some of the inner workings of the English government in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

Oxford's Office Abused

The focal point of our interest in the foregoing resolutions must begin with the *mystery* letter in question of July 7, 1594:

> My very good Lord, yf yt pleas yow to remember that about halfe a yere or there about past, I was a sutor to yowre Lordshipe for yowre favoure: that whearas I found sundrie abuses, wherby bothe her Maiestie & my selfe were in myne office greatly hyndred, that yt wowlde please yowre Lordship that I myght fynde suche fauoure from yowe that I myght have the same redressed. At which tyme I found so good forwardnes in yowre Lordship that I thowght my self greatly behowldinge for the same; yet by reason at that tyme myne atturnye was departed the towne, I could not then send him to attend vpon yowre Lordship accordinge to yowre appoyntment. But hopinge that the same dispositione styll remaynethe towards the iustnes of my cause, and that yowre Lordship, to whome my estate is so well knowne, & how muche yt standethe me on not to neglect as hertofore suche occasions as to amend the same may aryse frome myne office, I most hartely desyre yowre Lordship that yt will please yow to giue eare to the state of my cause, and at yowre best lesure admit ether myne atturnie or other of my councell in lave [=law] to informe yowre Lordship, that the same beinge perfectly layd open to yowre Lordship, I may inyoy [=enjoy] the fauoure from yow which I most ernestly desyre. In whiche doinge I shall thinke my self singulerlye behowldinge in this, as I have ben in other respects. This 7th of Iuly, 1594.[2]

Ward refers to the "office" in the foregoing as an "obscure reference" and surmises that Oxford "is evidently referring to some work he is doing for her Majesty, no doubt in return for his £1,000 a year." In Ward's view, it is "most tantalising that [Oxford] tells us so much and yet so little; for he gives no hint—any more than the Queen did in her original warrant—what this work is."[3] Earlier, Ward had speculated that the £1,000 annuity the queen had granted to Oxford in 1586 was for "some secret service," namely, being "the chief agent in providing the winter entertainments."[4] He reiterated the assertion the following year in a *Review of English Studies* article that Oxford "was given the money for work in connection with literature and the stage."[5] Unfortunately, Ward's suggestions were extremely misleading, and just provocative enough to have been embellished by other writers ever since. The phrasing in Oxford's 1586 annuity is clear enough, however, in that

it should continue until the impoverished earl was "otherwise provided for to be in some manner relieved."[6] But Ward didn't heed this; nor have others. On the heels of Ward's biography, his father, Colonel B. R. Ward, published an article in the *Royal Engineers Journal* (Dec. 1928) titled "Shakespeare and Elizabethan War Propaganda," in which he expounded the notion that Oxford was performing some service to the crown under the terms of his £1,000 grant, and that the earl was probably protesting in his July 7, 1594, letter "that his stage propaganda work was suffering owing to the action of the Privy Council, a body from whom he would naturally expect support and not hindrance against the inveterate hostility of the City authorities."[7] In 1937 E. M. Tenison puzzled over the matter in her magisterial *Elizabethan England*, pondering "[w]hen we consider that Oxford held no official position,—except that of Great Chamberlain which was hereditary and unpaid,—that he was never a Privy Councillor, and never commanded any naval or martial expedition, the question is why did he receive £1,000 a year." At a loss, and having missed her own lead, Tenison leaned on B. M. Ward's supposition, writing "that the allowance was first given to help to meet the expenses of Lord Oxford's Company of Players" and that it "is most likely to have been conferred for services in connection with the stage."[8] The idea was entrenched by 1952, when Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn, Sr. published their magnum opus, *This Star of England*, writing that his July 7, 1594, letter "contains no explanation of the matter in question" but that "we see he was continuing the work for which he had been allowed the sum of £1000 per annum," concluding that it was "probably the Puritans who were making trouble; they were tireless in their opposition to the theatre."[9] Charlton Ogburn, Jr. was somewhat more cautious in *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (1984). Writing that Oxford's letter was "destined to tantalize future readers," Ogburn's prescient statement more accurately deduces that the subject matter was "[i]n connection with some unspecified legal cause," but nevertheless implies relevance in the fact that Oxford's letter was written "[i]n the month after the Lord Chamberlain's company was formed."[10]

The much more recent biography of Oxford by Mark Anderson, *"Shakespeare" by Another Name* (2005), stipulates that B. M. Ward "may have overreached when he wrote that the language of Elizabeth's Privy Seal warrant [for Oxford's £1,000 annuity] was made out following 'the usual formula made use of in the case of secret service money.'"[11] On the other hand, Anderson does propose that "the widespread abuse of the Shake-speare name in the first half of 1594 provides another suggestion that the 'office' had something to do with the Shake-speare brand" and that perhaps Oxford hoped Burghley would help him "preserve some dignity and semblance of ownership over the writings that were slipping out of his grasp" in order to "establish some more permanent relationship with the country's best theatrical company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men."[12] Traveling a completely different path in his 2003 biography *Monstrous Adversary* (largely intended to quash claims that de Vere wrote Shakespeare), Alan H. Nelson fares little better in his attempt to explain the "office": "The specific favour requested by Oxford is not spelled out; perhaps he is referring to his claim to Waltham Forest, or perhaps he was still hoping for the monopoly on wools, fruits, and oils."[13] As Oxford clearly refers to an office he presently held, never

obtained the said monopoly at any time, and his stewardship of Waltham Forest would be nine more years forthcoming, Nelson's reasoning is not readily grasped.

While most of the foregoing writers (and many remaining unnamed) were but following the leads of their predecessors, the younger Ward and Nelson certainly saw the original letter, rendering it inexplicable why they did not connect its form of endorsement to the "office" referred to in the letter. It was the usual practice then to endorse letters with the sender's name, date, and subject. At least Burghley's secretary made the connection when he endorsed the letter: "7 Iuly 1594, Erl of Oxford to my Lord: Great Chamberlainshipp of England." This endorsement proves it was clearly understood at the time that the "office" referred to—the fundamental subject of the entire letter—was that of the Great Chamberlainship of England. The real mystery is how it ever came to be a mystery in the first place. There were any number and variety of positions referred to as "offices" in Oxford's day; e.g., forester, steward, chamberlain, parishioner, secretary, lawyer, solicitor, comptroller, parliamentarian, Churchman, Statesman, etc.,—all administrating or ministering to the crown or their lord that charged them with authority to perform some function or duty in the way of service. Until he gained the stewardship of Waltham Forest in 1603 under a grant from King James, the (arguably) hereditary Great Chamberlainship was the only "office" Oxford ever held. Novelist and playwright John Lyly, Oxford's secretary throughout the 1580s, nicely reveals the contemporary perception in his dedication to Oxford of *Euphues and His England* (1580): "I could not finde one more noble in court, then your Honor, who is or should be vnder hir Maiestie chiefest in court, by birth borne to the greatest Office, & therfore me thought by right to be placed in great authoritie."[14] Thus the association of Oxford's "office" to anything theatrical, or even ambiguous—certainly on the face of it—is baseless, owing its inception to Oxford's first biographer, and its undue promulgation to the spate of writers since. Oxford's £1,000 annuity—again on the face of it—had no connection whatsoever with his "office." This is not to say that Oxford didn't spend any of his annuity on theatrical endeavors, as in all probability he did.

Harlakenden's Hold

What remains in need of clarification, however, are the "sundrie abuses" Oxford wrote of touching this office, which apparently sprang from two fundamental elements. The first of these was Oxford's relationship with his onetime servant Roger Harlakenden, to whom he had sold the manor of Earls Colne in 1584.[15] Some years after the Earls Colne transaction, in 1592, Oxford commissioned Harlakenden to sell another property, Colne Priory, who instead contrived to purchase it in his son Richard's name. This latter transaction resulted in a succession of convoluted lawsuits that kept the attorneys of both families busy well into the next generation. Though it would remain unresolved during Oxford's lifetime, the matter escalated after the earl came to believe, with some justification it seems, that the Harlakendens—father and son—had defrauded him in their purchase of Colne Priory on February 7, 1592, by cunningly inserting "general words" into the conveyance whereby several properties

passed to them that were never intended. "Contrary to the truste in him reposed," Roger Harlakenden was accused of having "contrived naughtyly and fradulently" in his undervalued and overreaching purchase of Colne Priory, including several parcels "*whi*ch were never meant to be conveyed," gotten "by the deceipte and fraude … at a lesse value by a greate deale then the same land*es* were worth." The charges included allegations of bribery: "And that the said Harlakenden doubting the Earle would make further enquiry of the value corrupted one of the said Earles servant*es* with a bribe of CC*li* [=£200] to concur with him in the reporte of the value, and to p*er*suade the Earle of the honesty and duetyfull service of the said Harlakenden."[16]

Some of the details that impinged on Oxford's "office" as it related to the Harlakendens' purchase can be gleaned from a series of Chancery depositions and decrees that began in earnest circa 1593/94 which dovetail with the timing of his July 7, 1594, letter. For the purposes of discovering specifically what the "sundrie abuses" were relating to Oxford's "office," the protracted and myriad details of the real estate fraud can be dispensed with.[17] One of Oxford's grievances, as it concerns us here, can be gleaned from the following undated bill of complaint, which begins:

> Ed*ward*us Comes Oxon*ie*, quer*ent*. Roger*ius* Harlakinden, defen*dan*t. The complain*an*te sheweth that he was lawefullie possessed of sondrie l*ett*res patentes, charters, evidences & leger books, & other escriptes & mynim*en*tes concerninge the office of Greate Chamb*er*laine of England & the ffees, duties & proffittes therevnto belonginge, & diuerse manors, landes, &c. giv*en* to his auncestors w*i*th the said office or in respecte thereof, & nowe of right belonginge to the said compl*ainan*te.[18]

The approximate date of Oxford's "complaint" can be determined from Roger Harlakenden's "answer" to it, which, although also undated, has a definitive *terminus a quo* of August 4, 1598, the date of Lord Burghley's death, who is referred to in the "answer" as deceased, and a *terminus ad quem* of February 18, 1600, the date of another deposition, in which Roger Harlakenden was pressed: "What ch*art*res have you seene concernynge the office of Great Chamb*er*len of England, and whether have you any of them in yor custodie or hand*es* or where ells are they or any of them to yor knowledge or as you thinke or beleve in yor conscience?" Harlakenden, referring "himself to his answere made to the s*ai*d compl*ainantes* bill," replied "that he hath in his custody certain ch*art*res or euidenc*es* w*hi*ch (as this dep*onen*t thinketh) do concerne the office of Great Chamberlayn of England, as he hath already confessed in his s*ai*d answere."[19]

Harlakenden's words were indeed reflected in his earlier "answer" to Oxford's "complaint," which also contained other telling information:

> The said defendaunt [=Harlakenden] … further saieth th*a*t by virtue of another warraunte in wrytinge vnder the hande & seale [of] the saide compl*ainan*t to him the saide defen*dan*t directed … bearinge date the xviijth [=18th] daie of October 1593, whereby the saide defen*dan*t

> was required to deliu*er* … all the saide compl*ainan*tes deeds, escriptes, mynym*en*tes, and wrytinges … as he coulde finde then remayninge in the custodie of the saide defen*dan*t … And the said defen*dan*t saieth th*a*t he the saide defen*dan*t hath in his keepinge diu*er*se other p*ar*celles of evidences and wrytinges w*hi*ch weare not founde at the saide former searche whereof some doe concerne … the saide compl*ainan*tes Earledome of Oxenforde and his Office of Greate Chamberlaine of England.[20]

Oxford would have accounted Roger Harlakenden's hold on his papers (let alone his estates, once he'd discovered the degree to which he held he'd been swindled) a form of gross misconduct. Probability dictates this fell among the "sundrie abuses" relating to his "office" mentioned in his letter to Burghley of July 7, 1594, wherein he indicated that he'd originally sought Burghley's intercession on the matter "about halfe a yere or there about past"—in other words, around the beginning of 1594—only ten weeks or so after Oxford's October 18, 1593, warrant for Harlakenden to hand over his papers. Although we only learn from depositions near the end of the decade that those papers concerning the Great Chamberlainship "weare not founde at the saide former searche," Oxford himself would have been aware by the time he wrote to Burghley of the abuses in his office. Moreover, with the revelation of a new letter, it is now possible to discern why Oxford wanted to ensure his office was unencumbered at that time and to obtain all documentation relevant to it that was then in Harlakenden's possession—some of which would have touched upon the precedent of a particular, if little known, facet of the office of the Great Chamberlainship.

An Overlooked Letter

On November 9, 1594, four months after his previous letter, Oxford wrote to his former father-in-law once again on a matter pertaining to his office. Beyond its calendar listing in the catalogue of the Harleian manuscripts and a couple of other brief notices,[21] this letter has unaccountably been overlooked by any modern writer or biographer of Oxford. It is here transcribed for the first time:

> My very good Lord, wheare I was a swter [=suitor] to yowre Lordship for the puttinge in executione of a lawe (for sume few yeares past neglected), whiche is that her Ma*ies*ties tenantes showlde do ther homage for ther landes howlden of her Hyghnes as to her Ma*ies*ties auncestors hathe bene accustomed and as the lawe requirethe. And that homage showld not be respited forever as now yt ys (whiche is a thinge directly bothe against the lyfe and meaninge of the lawe) for the only gayne of a privat office, to the hinderance of her Ma*ies*ties service and the disinheritance of my selfe of bothe service and fees belonginge to myne office: Of whiche my swte yowre Lordshipe was pleased to take honorable consideratione. But for asmuche as M*aster* Osborne, yowre Lordships Remembrancer, wilbe the only man as I

> vnderstande that will obiect against yt, I beseche yowre Lordshipe that yow wilbe pleased to require him to sett downe in wrightinge suche causes as he alleagethe why the sayd homages showld not be done, that I may thervpone replye & drave [=draw] the cause to a shortte ysswe [=issue] for a hearinge before yowre Lordshipe, wherin I will move for nothinge but that the lawe and Iustice of the land requyrethe, and as meete for her Ma*ies*ties good service and preservatione of her inheritance. This 9th of Nouember. An*no* 1594.[22]

The letter is endorsed "The Erle of Oxford to the L*ord* Treasurer" with the words "against Respitt of Homage" struck out, followed by, "For the reviving of a law, for the Queens tenants to do homage for their lands holden of her: Wherin his both service & fees consisted, as L*ord* High Chamberlain." The endorsement makes it crystal clear that when Oxford writes "myne office," he is again referring to the Great Chamberlainship of England. However, in the instance when Oxford complains that homage should not be respited indefinitely "for the only gayne of a privat office," he is referring to that office held by Master Osborne, the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer.

Although we now know precisely what Oxford's "office" was, and the probable "abuses" to which he referred—be they Harlakenden's hold on his papers, Osborne's accountability for his "disinheritance" (and subsequent hindrance serving the queen), or a combination of the two—this new letter raises a number of questions. What were the specific service and fees belonging to the Lord Great Chamberlainship to which Oxford alludes? What exactly is the meaning of "respite of homage"? And who was Master Osborne? All of these questions will be answered, but others will be raised in the process, leading in turn to further revelations concerning a hitherto overlooked bill positioned by Oxford before James I's Parliament of 1604. Besides reviewing definitive documentation related to the foregoing, it is also necessary to question certain nebulous documents that, although vague due to very probable misdating among the state papers, appear to be strongly linked to Oxford's cause in 1594 and 1604, thereby warranting meticulous reconsideration. An inclusive examination of the minutiae is required as corroboratory evidence in establishing some few hypotheses put forward by the present author.

The Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, Respite of Homage, and Exchequer Abuses

"Master Osborne" was John Osborne (1551-1628), later knighted, son of Peter Osborne (1521-1592), and the second of four generations of Osbornes to hold the office of Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, whose chief function was to take final charge of all audited accounts, or, put another way, the review and pursuit of outstanding sums owed to the crown. While he initiated and supervised proceedings arising from the routine accounts of escheators, sheriffs, and bailiffs relating to rents

and other incomes from crown lands, particular emphasis was given to levying debts not paid when the account was rendered. He oversaw a support staff, including a deputy, secondaries, and sworn clerks who acted as attorneys. Peter Osborne, a close personal friend of Burghley's, held this office from 1552 to 1553, was imprisoned during Queen Mary's reign, and held the office again from 1559 until his death.[23] He wrote to Burghley thanking him for procuring for his son John the reversion of his office, presciently claiming that it would be the stay of his house, his wife, and his children after him. The Calendar of Salisbury manuscripts dates this letter January 13, 1577/8,[24] but the year should perhaps be dated 1576/7, as the Calendar of Patent Rolls dates the grant December 10, 1576, in which John's appointment was made: "[i]n consideration of his knowledge and experience in the office both by instruction of his father and by continuance in the work of the office."[25] As Peter Osborne's letter to Burghley was contiguous with the grant of reversion, one or the other is misdated by one year.

Peter Osborne died on June 7, 1592. His son John sent a letter to Burghley six days later in which he expressed sorrow over the loss of his father while simultaneously seeking to fill his shoes, closing his letter by "humbly praying licence I may wayte vpon your L*ordship* to morrow, to desyre I may be sworn that day by the Barons."[26] It was this Osborne, born one year apart from Oxford, to whom the Earl referred in his letter to Burghley of November 9, 1594, when he said he was "the only man" who would object to termination of respite of homage. Despite Oxford's plea that Burghley compel Osborne to set down his objections in writing so that he might answer them forthwith, nothing ascertainable seems to have become of the matter at that time, or for the remainder of Elizabeth's reign (apart from the peripheral "Act for the better Observation of certain Orders in the Exchequer" in the Parliament of 1601, encountered below). It was not until James ascended the throne that we see the specific matter of respite of homage once again raised, with Oxford at its very center. Considering the circumstances, we may be confident that John Osborne was in the thick of it as well. In addition, there is positive evidence that Osborne did, at some point, have to set down his objections in writing, to which it appears Oxford may have had the opportunity, after all, to reply (see Appendix).

John Osborne's father Peter had enumerated the processes and writs that issue out of the office of the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer in his tract *The Practice of the Exchequer Court*,[27] including the admission of all applicable men "to do their fealty, or to pay their fine for a respit of homage, at any Terme they come in after the same sent forth, and so keeping still the payment of the same Fine every fifth Terme."[28] While an exegesis on the system of feudal tenures is outside the scope of this article, an excursion into the historical meaning of "homage" and "respite of homage" in that age will be helpful.

There were several kinds of homage, including the obligation a tenant owed his *mesne* lord (intermediate between his tenant and the monarch), of whom he held his land.[29] The form and oath of this type of homage excluded the faith owed to the king, or *homagium ligium* (liege homage), which was the bond of allegiance due the king irrespective of land tenure.[30] Then there was the feudal homage due to the

king by those who held land directly *in capite* (in chief) from the crown by knight's service or socage. More than mere ceremonial allegiance, paying homage to the king literally entailed payment of a fine due upon investiture, that is, when the tenant in chief came of age and sued for his general livery, or when land to which homage was attached was alienated or inherited, the homage then being transferred to the new tenant. Although in principle the fine for homage was to go to the crown, substantial portions were allotted to certain of the king's chief officers for their specific roles in seeing homage done and collected, as well as to the clerks and officers of the Exchequer for administrative fees. It was during the reign of Henry VIII that this once-in-a-lifetime payment gave way to a process known as "respite of homage." This was basically a dispensation of the formal event for fees, supposedly proportionate to the value of the land, that became due in rotating installments. The responsibility—and benefit—of collecting these fees at the appropriate intervals ended up falling exclusively to the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (via process of the sheriffs, bailiffs, et al.). However, the Lord Great Chamberlain had at one time been instrumental in collecting homage for the crown.

Since the king could not be at leisure to personally take the homage of every tenant in chief who came of age and sued for livery, the Lord Great Chamberlain served as an intermediary. This service, as indicated in the endorsement of Oxford's November 9, 1594, letter, came with its own fees. However, after homage had been respited—despite wording to the contrary in Henry VIII's 1542 "Act concerning the Order of Wards and Liveries"—this privilege was somehow lost along with the formality of swearing homage to the monarch. As Joel Hurstfield observed in 1958, respite of homage "converted what had been a ritual into a periodic tax payable to the crown."[31] Ultimately, the burden to the tenant and profit to the crown provided by this system proved unsatisfactory, which is not to imply that the original system was any better; both of them were laden with more cons than pros for the actual tenant, abuse was rife, and even with the advantage of hindsight, it's difficult to judge which one yielded more or less profit to the crown—the fundamental argument was between the middlemen. It is ironic, however, that the word "respite" should have been used in the creation of this alternate system of paying homage since, by definition, respite meant then what it means now: *a temporary suspension*. That is certainly how Oxford understood it when he made the statement to Burghley that "homage showld not be respited forever as now yt ys (whiche is a thinge directly bothe against the lyfe and meaninge of the lawe)," yet respite of homage remained in perpetuity until feudalism was totally abolished by the 1660s.

Hurstfield seems to be one of the few, if not the only historian, to have ever expounded upon the subject:

> If the crown benefited by respite of homage, who was the loser? The payment for the respite was, as we have seen, organized by the officials of Chancery and the Exchequer … Clearly the Lord [Great] Chamberlain regretted the new fashion. But it was not simply the revenues which were at issue. The total official revenue from these respites cannot have

> exceeded a few hundred pounds a year (the act of 1542 tried to keep the charge down to one shilling for the poorer tenants); but the net was sufficiently widely spread to irritate and disturb a large section of the community. The desire for its abolition was equally widespread, for reasons which had nothing to do with those given by the Lord [Great] Chamberlain.[32]

The "reasons" given by the Lord Great Chamberlain to abolish respite of homage will be considered hereunder. What Hurstfield seems to have missed, however, is that the implementation of respite of homage did not entail revoking the fees that the Lord Great Chamberlain was entitled to receive. Specifically how this aspect of the procedure fell by the wayside—unlike Oxford's "office"—remains something of a mystery, one that nevertheless calls for examination.

It is apparent that the system of respiting homage was wanting not long after it was put into effect. Entries in the journals of the House of Lords and Commons in Elizabeth I's reign reveal attempts to find a different means of collecting homage in February 1563 during the second Parliament, without resolution, and then again throughout April and May 1571 during Elizabeth's third Parliament, but the bill remained uncommitted after the queen caused it to be put by. Interestingly enough, the young Oxford attended these Parliaments. The antiquary John Hooker, a member of the lower house, offers a glimpse of the difficulties in his journal entry of May 30, 1571, the day after that Parliament was dissolved: "As for the bill of Respite of Homage, whereof the Commons find themselves so much grieved, as also the excessive fees of the lawyers, her Majesty will in time see the reformation and take order therein."[33]

Despite the queen's pronouncement, the bill to overthrow respite of homage was never revived during Elizabeth's reign, not only because it trespassed upon her prerogative, but probably because she wanted to protect Exchequer servants and interests, as well as retain the yearly revenue yielded by this system, however meager its shavings by the time it finally reached the crown. However, the vetoed 1571 bill did lead to an order given later that year under privy seal for regulating process, fees, etc. in the office of the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, which was itself an expansion of an Act of Parliament circa 1455 (33 Henry VI c[aput]. 3). This 1571 privy seal led to a second one on June 15, 1573, extended with eight specific rules of governance set down for regulating respite of homage, along with a table specifying the "Rates of Fines and Fees on Respite of Homage." These rules make no mention of the role once played in the process by the Lord Great Chamberlain, but only how the business was to be conducted by the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, preceded by the stipulation that if he, his deputy, or clerks, should "award any Processe, exact any Pleading, or take any fees, or other wise in any pointe demeane him or themsel[u]es, contrary to the true meaning of any the sayd Orders, That then for euery such offence … the said Lord Treasurers Remembrancer himselfe shall forfeit and lose the Summe of Twentie poundes … The Orders set downe for respect of Homage, by the Right Honourable Sir William Cecil [followed by Cecil's titles and names of certain other

lords] … in that behalfe directed, and witnessed vnder their hands as followeth."[34] (Bear in mind that at the time "*respite* of homage" and "*respect* of homage" were used interchangeably.)

Thereon follow the eight regulations. Regardless of this monition, these were little heeded by either of the Osbornes over the next twenty-eight years, apparent in the fact that they were recited in a bill titled "An Act for the better Observation of certain Orders in the Exchequer, set down and established by virtue of Her Majesty's Privy Seal" in Elizabeth's tenth Parliament of 1601, and would make still another appearance after that.[35] John Chamberlain included a skeptical reference to it in a letter to Dudley Carleton dated November 14, 1601: "The parliament handles no high matters, only they haue had a cast at Osbornes office, to correct and amend yt at least, but there is no great hope of successe."[36] Chamberlain's skepticism proved well founded. Carleton wrote back to him on December 29: "I send you the booke of the Subsidies, w*hi*ch was out in print by Tvesday, w*i*th the Q*ueen*s speach and the bills w*hi*ch passed .[37] It was much mervayled and grutched [=marveled and grudged] at that the bills touching the abuses in the Exchequer and the transportation of ordinance [=ordnance] were putt by."[38]

As would continue to be the case, John Osborne seems to have gotten away without any genuine reforms to his job. Although he was not on the 1601 committee concerned with "the better Observation" of the 1573 privy seal, Osborne did appear before the panel, as reported in the Commons by Francis Bacon on November 18:

> This Bill hath been deliberately and judicially considered of by the Committees, before whom Mr. *Osbourn* came; who (I assure you) so discreetly Demeaned himself, and so submissively referred the state of his whole Office to the Committees, and so well Answered in his own Defence, that they would not Ransack the heaps, or sound the bottom of former Offences, but only have taken away something that was superfluous and needless to the Subject.
>
> Though the Committee have reformed some part, yet they have not Eyed so nearly every particular, as if they would pare to the quick an Office of her Majesties Gift and Patronage.
>
> This Bill is both Publick and Private; Publick, because it is to do Good to the Subject; and Private, because it doth no Injustice unto the particular Officer. The Committees herein have not taxed the Officer by way of Imputation, but removed a Tax by way of Imposition.[39]

As the matter touched the queen's prerogative (i.e., she had granted Osborne the patent for his office), Bacon had certainly supported Osborne, yet was all but certainly put up to it by someone with a vested interest, just as some unnamed "great personage"—surmised by many scholars to be Burghley—had defended Peter Osborne in 1589 in not dissimilar circumstances.[40] It would not be surprising if the

sway in 1601 had come from the Lord Treasurer, then Lord Buckhurst, although Robert Cecil has also been suggested.[41] After a sequence of intriguing, not to say baffling circumstances, this very same bill would be revisited towards the conclusion of the first session of King James's first Parliament, which began on March 19, 1604. Respite of homage was broached on the 26th of that month when Sir Robert Cecil, Oxford's one-time brother-in-law who had succeeded his father as Master of the Wards, propounded the motion in the upper house that a conference should be held with a select number from the lower house, not only on matters touching the Union of England and Scotland, but in issues concerning the public state—*two in particular*: "Purveyors, [and] Respite of Homage."[42] This proposal, delivered to the lower house by Lord Chief Justice Popham with some others, was appended to the Commons' request for a petition to the king "to treat of Matter of Wardship."[43] Thenceforward the bills dealing with respite of homage and wardship, though dealt with by separate committees, were closely linked, the reason given in the lower house the following day being that they were two branches growing from the same root. The clerk further recorded "that in the Matter of Respite of Homage, present Order was to be taken, by special Direction from his Majesty." A second scribe noted on the same day: "Respite of Homage, by his Majesty's special Direction, to be taken Order … Lords propounded Respite of Homage. *As they are zealous of the Furtherance, so they are jealous of any Impediment*." (my emphasis)[44]

By all appearances the bill concerning respite of homage, having derived from the upper house via Robert Cecil, was strongly supported by the king. However, were Cecil and the king the initial impetus behind it, or could it feasibly have been Oxford? There is no direct evidence one way or another, but that he was in some manner involved is definitive. Although it appears the earl did not attend a single sitting of this first session of Parliament, possibly due to failing health,[45] we find a telling clue in the House of Commons journal for the 16th of April: "An Act for the due Receiving of Homage and Fealty by the Lord Great Chamberlain of *England*, for and in the behalf of the King's Majesty: The first Reading."[46]

Oxford's 1604 Bill

This "Act"—"bill" in reality—which so far as I can discover has been accorded no studious attention whatever, received its second reading ten days later, on the 26th of April.[47] It is precisely here where we begin to understand the motivation behind Oxford's letter to Burghley of November 9, 1594, and the ramifications of respite of homage to the office of the Great Chamberlainship of England. The April 26th entry in the Commons Journal contains a lengthy footnote that covers the bottom of two pages, beginning with the explanation: "A Paper is here inserted in the Journal, relating to this Matter, endorsed, 'The Earl of *Oxenford* for Respite of Homage.' Which Paper is in these Words…"

This "Paper" proves most informative, and while the House of Lords Record Office informs me that it is no longer inserted in the Journal, a contemporary copy (if not the original) is preserved among the state papers.[48] Its calendar listing is

found alongside six related documents dealing with alternative writs for homage, preserving the king's tenures, and the abolition of wardship.[49] They are all undated, but the calendar editor (or arrangers) conjectured they belonged to 1606.[50] However, after a detailed examination of the originals, there can be no doubt that they are all directly related to the bills in the Parliament under discussion, and should be dated accordingly to the second quarter of 1604.

The collated citation offered here (see Table 1) uses as its basis the printed entry in the Commons Journal footnote. Words in square brackets are inserted from the manuscript, or otherwise explain variations between the two.

Table 1. The Earl of Oxenford for Respite of Homage

	The ancient Course of suing of Livery, and how Homage hath been taken, and ought to be taken, by the Lord Great Chamberlain of England, for the King.
	Every Person, that held Land by Homage, was to prove his full Age by a Writ of *Ætate probanda*,[51] and ought to return the same into the Chancery.
12 *H. IV. Placito* 4.	The Chancellor was to certify the Lord Privy Seal that he was of full Age.
Natura Brevium.	The Lord Privy Seal was to certify the Great Chamberlain thereof, requiring him to receive his Homage.
Stamford's *Abridgment*.[52]	The Great Chamberlain ought to receive the Homage, and to certify the Lord Chancellor, that the Party had done his Homage; whereupon the Party had Livery of his Land.
	This Course hath been omitted, and Homage respited in the Exchequer; which hath much grieved his Majesty's Subjects of all Sorts.
Westm. 2.[53]	The Lord Great Chamberlain is now a Suitor, that Homage may be done as in Time past [it] hath been, and no more respited [but in certain Cases of necessity]; and that he may take such Fees for the receiving of Homage, as by [the] ancient Statutes of this Realm hath been allowed.[54]
	Respite of Homage is a Charge paid every fifth Term; if Default be made, a Noble is lost; [which] is doubled every Term; and in short time groweth to a great Charge.
	Homage is done but once in a Man's Life-time; and then *the ordinary Fees, and a reasonable Fine, paid* [the foregoing italicized words read in MS.: "some small and reasonable fees paid"], and no further Vexation [during the life of the Party].

Notwithstanding that the doing of Homage hath been omitted, as is aforesaid; yet the Fine thereof hath been usually paid out of the Petty Bag, upon the recording of the Livery. [The preceding sentence is struck out in manuscript, but remained in the printed copy of the journal.]

The Persons that have Fees upon the Suit of Livery:

The Lord Chancellor - - - - - -	Notwithstanding the Payment of the said Fees.
The Master of the Rolls - - - - -	By Respite of Homage the Charge certain is yearly.
The Lord Great Chamberlain -	The Charge uncertain, is daily, [and] continual.
The King's Secretaries - - - - -	Which is clean taken away and ended in doing of Homage [and the Party at quiet during his life].
The Master of the Wards - - - -	
And divers other Persons have Fees also out of every Livery [upon the Recording thereof].	

Although Oxford's bill was for restoration of the original form of homage, had he merely been interested in collecting his fees due from its respiting, he could have instead referred to "An Act concerning the Order of Wards and Liveries" passed in 1542 (33 Henry VIII c. 22), in which it was stated:

> PROVIDED alwaye[s] and be it enacted by auctoritie aforesaide, that the Lorde Privie Seale, the Lorde Greate Chamb*er*leyne, the King*es* Chief and Principall Secretaries, the Master of the Rolles and the King*es* Clerkes of the Signet and Privie Seale, the Clerk*es* of the Pettie Bagge, and all and everie other Officer and Officers & Clerk*es* in the Chauncerie or els where in any other Court*es* where suche Liveries shall passe, shall have and be paide all suche their fees as hathe bene accustomed ... For the seale of everie suche Liverie xij d. [=twelve pence] and to the clark*es* of the Pettie Bagge for the writinge & enrollinge thereof xx d. [=twenty pence] and for the respite of homage in the Hanaper eight pence, and to the Lorde Great Chamberleyne xx d. and to the Maister of Rolles xx d. and to the Clerke of the Liveries for the warrant and enrollinge of the Lyverie twentie pence.[55]

As can be seen, even with the effectuation of respite of homage—which remained part and parcel of suing for one's livery—the Lord Great Chamberlain was still entitled to his fee, namely, twenty pence per tenant. How the process came to be entirely usurped by the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer remains to be explained.[56] Nevertheless, with the foregoing information, we begin to make sense of Oxford's November 9, 1594 letter. Though he had never managed to get his proposition off the ground under the aegis of Elizabeth, we see that it was given full and serious consideration under the auspices of the new Scottish king, a monarch

whose patronage afforded the beleaguered earl a reversal of fortune, including the long sought stewardship of Havering-atte-Bower and the Forest of Waltham. Unfortunately for Oxford, his renaissance was destined to be short-lived.

After April 28, 1604, when notice was given of Sir Robert Wroth (probably acting in collusion with Robert Cecil)[57] having been added to the committee touching the bill on homage, we hear nothing more of the matter until the 12th of May, when one of the clerks records: "Earl of Oxenford; Respite of Homage." Though succinct, the entry reveals that the bill, inextricably linked with Oxford, was still in motion. It is also significant that Oxford's bill was being appraised that afternoon in conjunction with "Chequer Abuses"[58] (considered further in the Appendix).

On Saturday, May 19, Sir Edwin Sandys presented the bills on wardship and respite of homage to the upper house, simultaneously delivering the message that the lower house was desirous to petition the king on the matter. The Lords signified that they would give their answer upon the following Monday, May 21. On that day, the Commons received the message that the Lords had made choice of thirty committeemen for conference with them about the said matters, and that they should "come furnished with the Grounds and Reasons to induce the King [to abolish wardship and respite of homage], as they also mean to do."[59] The lower house, accordingly, chose the members for its own committee the following day.

A Sudden Reversal

The committees of both Houses were originally scheduled to meet on the 25th at 2:00 in the afternoon. However, on the 24th, messengers from the Lords informed the lower house "[t]hat whereas a Meeting was appointed to be as To-morrow, for Conference about the Matter of Wards, and Respite of Homage; at the which Conference certain of the Lords Committees could not then be present, in regard they were commanded to attend the King's Majesty at that Time, for some other Occasion; their Lordships desired, that the said Meeting might be deferred till Saturday, the 26th."[60] There are no indications what this "other Occasion" was that had detained certain unnamed lords from attending the committee in order to meet with the king; but one would like to know, for it seems there were consequences.

The following day (the 26th), the Commons' intended petition "to treat with his Majesty of a Composition" in lieu of wardship and respite of homage was read in the lower house.[61] All was for naught, however, as the conference ground to a halt that very day, the negotiations having reached some crashing impasse. The vague report of it, mysteriously enough, was not entered until four days later, and then only in the Lords Journal, related here by William Cobbett in his *Parliamentary History*:

> What was done or said at this Conference is not handed down to us; but a remarkable Entry is made in the Journal of the Lords for that day [entered on May 30], in these words: "26 Maii prædict. Report made by the lord chancellor of that which passed in the Conference with the lower house, concerning the matter of Wards and Respite of Homage; and a repetition

> thereof also by the lord Cecil. The conclusion whereof was, That the Lords did, by way of advice, move and wish them to forbear any further dealing therein, or to offer any further Petition for it to the king; both for divers considerations in the matter itself, and in respect of this time of his majesty's first parliament. Which they thought to be inconvenient and unseasonable for it." Thus this business dropped for this time.[62]

One must wonder from whence this "advice" originated to cease and desist. Was this, perhaps, the result of the king's meeting with those select lords the day before, and if so, what lay at the bottom of it? It seems strange, to say the least, that James's first Parliament was suddenly considered an inopportune time to raise the matter, when, as will be recalled, Robert Cecil had originally submitted the bill "by his Majesty's special Direction." Of this situation, Wallace Notestein observed it was "probable that rumors that the King had changed his mind had reached the [Lower] House … The Lords had possibly heard, too, that the King had shifted his position … This sudden turnabout of the Lords must have been a blow to the Commons." Similar observations have been asserted by other historians, e.g., A. G. R. Smith noted that this "was a complete *volte face*," while Pauline Croft, focusing on Cecil as the probable force behind the decision, commented that the lower house must have been "startled," and that the decision was "a staggering change of tack."[63] Sundry explanations for the motivation behind this abrupt reversal have been suggested, Croft's perhaps the most cogent, but there is no clear answer or comprehensive understanding, and room remains for further hypothesizing.

Having posited earlier that the earl of Oxford may have been the true begetter, so to speak, let us now consider whether he may have been the reason, or at least a contributing factor, for the billowing sail having unexpectedly gone slack. Though little noticed by modern historians, Oxford's bill was probably more than just a plank in the stern of this particular parliamentary vessel—it had perhaps been a trim tab in the rudder—and when it was scuttled on the 26th of May 1604, it turns out Edward de Vere was not long for this world. His decease, of unknown causes, occurred just less than one month later, on Midsummer Day, the 24th of June. Robert Cecil's (and consequently the king's) awareness of Oxford's impending demise has a certain explanatory power, not just for the abrupt cessation of his own bill, but the quashing of the entire deliberation concerning composition for respite of homage; it was almost without doubt among the "divers considerations in the matter itself." The reason is otherwise left open to question, since the Lords had been "zealous of the [bill's] Furtherance" and "jealous of any Impediment" only two months before, and were prepared to induce the king, along with the Commons, to agree to the abolition of wardship and respite of homage a mere five days before. Seeking answers for the Lords' puzzling "change of heart," Smith wrote that "it must be concluded that sometime between 21 and 26 May [Robert Cecil] changed his mind … or he may have been told by the king to drop the matter."[64] Had the scheme from the beginning been sincere, or rather an intended bait and switch? James's willingness to consider the Commons' proposal of a composition for respite of homage (essentially one form

of taxation replacing another) may have been no more than lip service, doubting it would ever yield commensurate revenue, whereas the reinstatement of homage conceivably would. Of course respite of homage was only one layer in the onion; other grievances concerning purveyance and wardship, and additional burdens attached to tenures in chief, were undoubtedly in play, so this must admittedly remain impressionistic. Yet if the proposal seems far-fetched, it nevertheless fits the outcome.

Although Cobbett asserted that the "business was dropped for this time," the rest was not silence. While the Lords had informed the lower house on the 26th of May "to forbear any further dealing therein," an alternative arrangement to the current system of collecting homage—one other than that proposed in Oxford's bill—was nevertheless sought. On June 1, respite of homage was briefly touched on in the lower house, while Sir Edwin Sandys delivered a report of the late conference with the Lords, describing their rejection as "no other then Matter of Expostulation, Opposition of Reason to Reason, Admonition, or precise Caution." Sir Thomas Ridgeway subsequently made a motion inducing the house to consider that since the king had expressed such displeasure, that they should seek a resolution whereby the matter "so advisedly and gravely undertaken and proceeded in, might not die, or be buried, in the Hands of those that first bred it."[65] Ridgeway's wording may be construed as unintentionally ironic if, as has been suggested, Oxford was the one who first bred it, and was, to all intents and purposes, about to die and be buried.

Consequent to Ridgeway's motion "a select Committee" was chosen "to set down something, for Satisfaction to the King, to right his Majesty's Conceits,"[66] which in turn led to the first reading in the lower house, on the 13th of June, of a new bill "for the Continuance, and due Observation, of certain Orders for the Exchequer, first set down and established by virtue of a Privy Seal from the late Queen Elizabeth's Time." Fourteen individuals were added that same day "to the Committee in the Bill for receiving of Homage." It received its second reading in the lower house on the following day, and its third reading, upon which it was passed, two days after that.[67] Oddly though, on that same day was introduced "a new Bill for the Reviving of the Statute 13º Eliz[abeth] touching Accountants," described by the second diarist as "Abuses against [i.e., "by"] Accountants in the Exchequer." Why this bill was termed "new" on June 16 is not clear (the record is deficient), but it was drawn to the same purpose as the preceding one on the 13th and was essentially the same. In any event, if this bill has a familiar ring it is because we have seen it before: born in 1571, modified in 1573, and reborn in 1601. With such continual recycling, one is hard pressed not to get the impression that, in the Parliament of 1604, this was an eleventh hour substitution for what had come before. (Compare the wording in the 1601 bill, an act—"for the *better* Observation of certain Orders *in* the Exchequer, set down and established by virtue of *Her Majesty's Privy Seal*" to that of 1604, an act—"for the *Continuance*, *and due* Observation, of certain Orders *for* the Exchequer, *first* set down and established by virtue of *a Privy Seal from the late Queen Elizabeth's Time*." Obviously the 1571/1573 privy seal required *better* observation in 1601, and the *continuance* and *due* observation of that *better* observation in 1604. Did

the tweaking of a few words fool anyone, or were memories truly so short? On the contrary; this was but lip service.)

The newly revised bill received its first reading in the upper house on Saturday, the 23rd of June.[68] As the following day was a Sunday, the Parliament adjourned, and it was on this day, June 24, 1604, that Oxford quietly shuffled off his mortal coil. Besides a letter from his wife to Robert Cecil written sometime before August 20 concerning the continuation of Oxford's annuity for their eleven-year-old son,[69] no letter has survived mentioning his death, and any form of eulogy would be two more years forthcoming.[70] Strangely, the passing of England's Lord Great Chamberlain seems to have been little noticed, other than the fact that his name remained on the roster of lords (eligible to attend) in the upper house on the 25th and 26th of June, but disappeared after the 27th.[71]

On the 30th of June, the revised bill received its second reading in the upper house, with the following details appended:

> Upon this Second Reading of the Bill, it was Ordered by the House, That, if Mr. *Osborne*, the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer in the Court of Exchequer, did desire to be heard, touching any Particular of that Bill, which doth concern his Place and Office, he should have Hearing before their Lordships accordingly; and that Warning shall be given unto him for that Purpose, to attend their Lordships in the House upon *Monday* next, the Second of *July*, by Eight of the Clock in the Morning.[72]

Here again, Osborne is making an encore, replaying his role that Bacon had defended so victoriously in 1601. Accordingly, on July 2, the Lords Journal concisely reports: "Mr. *Osborne*, the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer called into the House, and heard what he could say touching the Bill of the Exchequer."[73] Whatever Osborne's input, the charade received a third reading the following day, July 3, and was passed. The Parliament was abruptly dissolved on July 7, and the final "Act" was delivered the following week to Robert Barker, the king's printer.[74]

When we consider that Queen Elizabeth's privy seals touching this matter had proven singularly ineffective thrice before, its last-minute implementation in 1604 smacks of some desperation: Oxford's bill for the revival of homage had vanished sans trace, almost as did the earl himself, and alternative proposals for composition by the lower house were apparently unsatisfactory. There was no more time to devise a brand new scheme: on the one hand it was business as usual, while on the other hand it seems no crack had been ignored that might allow succeeding generations to breach this impenetrable mystery. By having the procedure endorsed by the new king, the perhaps anxious hope may have been that these rules would be enforced this time around. It's doubtful that anyone was reassured, however, and in the end it proved to be merely a turn of the screw. Respite of homage would reappear in different frameworks in the fourth and last parliamentary session of 1610 (as part of Robert Cecil's "Great Contract"), the second Parliament of 1614, and again in the

third Parliament of 1621, each time without resolution.[75] Moreover, entries in the parliamentary journals make it clear that the time-dishonored practices in the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer's office continued unabated, and that discontent with Osborne was ongoing.

An undated document annexed to a letter of June 30, 1616, wherein the Privy Council was attempting to find means for increasing the king's revenue, is worth noting. The letter is endorsed "to consyder of a proiect … concernn*ing* respites of hommage," the letter itself referring to the project as "hereinclosed." The undated enclosure, however, actually consists of two propositions; the second, involving disforesting distant woods, chases, etc., need not detain us here, but the first considers both homage and respite of homage, denouncing each as unsatisfactory systems:

> The first Proposici*o*n: Homage is due to the King, in all cases wher land is holden of the King *in capitie* by knight*es* service.
>
> Homage is a solemne service of right due to the King and taken by the Lord Chamberlaine of England w*hi*ch cannot be done w*i*thout extraordinary cost and preiudice in labour and attendance by every one of the King*es* tennant*es* holding by the former services.
>
> This service was personally observed vntill about the Raigne of Henry the 8t[h] when this service became to be respited, and soe by tyme brought to the custome in which it is now setled, to the exceeding charge and trouble of the subiect, and to very little or noe benefitt to the King in his revenewe.[76]

The proposal, while obviously opposed to the reinstatement of homage, goes on to indicate the inadequate profit brought to the king by the current system, and complains of "the respiting of homage being entirely managed by one and the same officer who sendeth out the process, receaveth the mony, dischargeth the parties, awditeth him selfe his owne accompt, and the King paid noe more then what this officer will pay him, being vncontrowlable by any other officer." Though unnamed, the officer in question was of course John Osborne. The upshot of the proposition then follows: "The remydy of this mischeife to the subiect and to bring the entyre p*ro*fitt to the King*es* owne purse is to reduce this service to a certen composici*o*n or reasonable some of money by way of a fyne to be paid to his Ma*ies*ties vse," after which the individual fines are listed in descending order—"to be managed by Commission"—for every duke, marques, earl, viscount, baron, knight, esquire, gentleman, and lastly "every yeoman or other inferior person."

As is frequently found to be the case among miscalendared state papers, it's possible this undated document was not the original enclosure with the 1616 Privy Council letter, which specifically refers to respite of homage while making no mention of composition, or of disafforestation.[77] That the enclosure was once

separate from the letter is further suggested by the fact that the Public Record Office proto-archivist—astutely observing the analogous situation with the opening of James's first Parliament—has written on it "prob*ably* March 1604." It seems probable that the association between the enclosure and the letter is one made by the archival sorting of the state papers rather than the two being found together. Its origin cannot be conclusive in the absence of definitive evidence, but considering that the Commons' desire was the elimination of homage altogether by means of an alternative composition, it is quite plausible this document was composed by someone in the lower house during the Parliament of 1604. The evidence at present available is strong enough to justify this assumption, though it is not sufficient to yield absolute proof.[78]

Conclusion — Or, What Does This All Mean?

Although it has long been known that "fees" were attached to the office of the Great Chamberlainship of England, precisely what these fees were—other than those received for the Great Chamberlain's ceremonial function at coronations—has, until now, remained exasperatingly vague.[79] With the exception of Hurstfield, it seems that the office's specific connection with homage, and consequently respite of homage, has been largely overlooked by modern scholars. Among other sources, I have been unable to find any acknowledgement of it, let alone explication, in the works of J. H. Round, who specialized in the study of this office, or in G. H. White's monograph on the Lord Great Chamberlain in volume 10, Appendix F of *The Complete Peerage*—the most comprehensive exposition on the overall subject to date. Considering the paucity of literature on this topic, the foregoing data, in addition to enhancing the biography of the 17th Earl of Oxford, contributes a significant understanding of both the history and function of this office.

May we gather from these revelations that Oxford was interested in being a tax collector, or reviving an antiquated system of fealty connected to feudal tenures? Unfortunately, there is no clear answer, notwithstanding the poet expressing himself: "My conscience clear my chief defense;/ I neither seek by bribes to please,/ Nor by deceit to breed offense./ Thus do I live, thus will I die."[80] According to Alan Nelson, the "Exchequer pipe rolls known as the 'Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer' reveal that Oxford was a tax-defaulter in 1600-01, in debt for £20 … The document roll is well-known to Shakespeare scholars – by now the playwright had apparently paid up on his obligation outstanding since 1597, while Oxford remained delinquent."[81] It may not be stretching the truth too far to say the man from Stratford was wealthier at the turn of the century than the earl of Oxford, and, ironically, £20 is precisely the sum the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer was ostensibly to be fined for every vow broken in his office. Despite the fact that he had married Elizabeth Trentham in 1591, one of the queen's maids of honor (who—via the help of her wealthy brother Francis—managed to maintain and regain some of his estate), Oxford's earldom was in dire financial straits by then: whether as the result of the queen's and the earl of Leicester's perverse exploitation of his wardship, his profligate recklessness,

having been generous to a fault, or some combination of all the foregoing, remains arguable.[82] Whatever the reasons, by the 1590s, despite his £1,000 annuity and covert stake in the Great Garden property at Aldgate, Oxford was surely desperate to restore those sources of income that were due his office—one of the few assets remaining to him—not only, perhaps, for his wife's jointure, but moreover for his newborn heir.[83] This is very apparent from what he wrote to Burghley in the so-much misunderstood letter of July 7, 1594: "that yowre Lordship, to whome my estate is so well knowne, & how muche yt standethe me on not to neglect as hertofore suche occasions as to amend the same may aryse frome myne office." As things stood, homage was going to be paid one way or the other, and fees were going to come out of it regardless before reaching the crown. The Lord Great Chamberlain had received a percentage of homage long before the Remembrancer overtook it, and Oxford wanted—and obviously needed—what he felt was lawfully his. Considering certain expressions in Oxford's two 1594 letters and 1604 bill, it is tempting to think that other, selfless, factors may have been in play as well, such as curbing the extortion by Osborne and those in his office, thereby disburdening the queen's—and subsequently the king's—subjects. However, the unravelling of very complicated, not to mention incomplete, historical evidence, with reasonable conclusions as to what the evidence means, is largely an abstract construct. In attempting to shed new light on Oxford's life, I realize history is comprised not so much of facts as interpretation, and therefore leave the door open for other researchers to reinterpret these findings. That said, here is my own interpretation.

In sum, the so-called *mystery* attached to Oxford's "office" since the early twentieth century is now resolved, a new letter brought to light, and original biographical information regarding Oxford's activities in the months and weeks preceding his death rescued from ignorance. Had he lived longer, there is reason to believe Oxford's bill may have passed the 1604 Parliament, rather than being suddenly dashed just weeks prior to his death.[84] The winds of his fortune had altered dramatically for the better under King James, who referred to him as "Great Oxford,"[85] and the region cloud hanging over this nobleman's tarnished reputation seemed at long last to be lifting. By all appearances there was triumphant sunshine in his forecast, but out alack: Edward de Vere—sometime poet, playwright, and patron—departed the stage, destined not to outlive the golden age that bred him. Only his words, like living art, would last to serve his wit….

> The labouring man, that tilles the fertile soyle,
> And reapes the haruest fruite, hath not in deede
> The gaine but payne, and if for all hys toyle
> He gets the strawe, the Lord wyll haue the seede.
> The Manchet fine, falles not vnto his share
> On coarsest cheat, his hungrye stomacke feedes
> The Landlord doth, possesse the fynest fare
> He pulles the flowers, the other pluckes but weedes.
> The Mason poore that buildes the Lordlye halles

Dwelles not in them, they are for hye degree
His Cotage is, compact in paper walles
And not with bricke, or stone as others bee.
The idle Drone, that labours not at all
Suckes vp the sweete, of honnye from the Bee
Who worketh most, to their share least doth fall,
Wyth due desert, reward will neuer bee.
The swiftest Hare, vnto the Mastive slowe
Oft times doth fall, to him as for a praye:
The Greyhounde thereby, doth misse his game we know
For which he made, such speedy haste awaye.
So hee that takes, the payne to penne the booke
Reapes not the giftes, of goodlye golden Muse
But those gayne that, who on the worke shal looke
And from the soure, the sweete by skill doth chuse.
For hee that beates the bushe the byrde not gets,
But who sittes still, and holdeth fast the nets.[86]

Appendix

Here we'll consider the role that Oxford may have had in two undated documents filed consecutively among the state papers. The calendar entries for these place an uncertain "1611?" beside them, describing the first as a "[s]tatement of the advantages to accrue from granting to private persons the collection of the King's fees for respite of homage, which are now paid into the [Remembrancer's] office," and the second as "[a]nswers to objections stated against removing the payment of fees for homage from Mr. Osborne, the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer's Office, to assignees appointed by the King."[87]

Although respite of homage continued to be an issue at regular intervals after 1604, I can discover no clue for the conjectural date of 1611 assigned to these documents by the calendar arrangers, nor any incidence of it in that year which might suggest a connection. There is sufficient evidence, however, to put forward the Parliament of 1604—in direct relation to Oxford's bill—as the likeliest provenance for the documents in question.

The first of these two undated state papers—which will require citing *in extenso* to follow the thread of the argument for derivation—lists the reasons against respite of homage that Oxford would have offered to Burghley in 1594 had the Lord Treasurer been willing to listen, and that he certainly would have offered in 1604, when he (or rather, his advocate) had the floor. Very much in the style of Oxford's so-called "tin memoranda,"[88] both in thought and expression, this unsigned record begins by summarizing the disproportionate division of profit between the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer and the crown:

> If anye man paye vnto his Ma*ies*tie for (respect of homage) the some [=sum] of 3s 4d or nott above;
>
> Off suche some his Highnes vsuallye hathe butt 4d;
>
> And the mayster of the offyce hathe 16d;
>
> And the attorney or clarke of the offyce whoe wrytethe the p*ro*sces for the same sheire [=shire] (where the landes holden lyethe, whoe dothe vsuallye receyve the same) hathe the rest, w*hi*ch is 20d;
>
> Soe that his Ma*ies*tie in suche case hathe butt a tenthe p*ar*te.
>
> And lykewyse yf anye man paye vnto his Highnes for (respect of homage) the some of 13s 4d, or any greater some;
>
> Off anye suche some his Ma*ies*tie never hathe above a fowerthe [=fourth] p*ar*te att the moste aunswered vnto hym.
>
> Soe that the subiectes arre in this kynde muche chardged & burdened, & yet his Highnes hathe the leaste p*ar*te of the benefytt thereby arysynge.
> By this proiect itt is ment, & itt wylbe provyded for, that his Ma*ies*ties subiectes shalbe muche eased, yf nott cleerelye dysburdened, of the greate & intolerable chardges w*hi*ch they arre nowe vsuallye putt vnto (for pleadynge of theire tenures & conveyaunces vppon alyenac[i]ons of anye of theire landes soe holden, or otherwyse) w*hi*ch they arre compelled to doe, nott soe muche for anye profytt that his Highnes receyvethe thereby, as for the privat benefytt of the clarkes & offycers.[89]

The easement and disburdening "of the greate & intolerable chardges" that the king's subjects are put to reflects the wording of Oxford's 1604 bill, which indicated that respite of homage "hath much grieved his Majesty's Subjects" and that if timely payment were not made, the subject was penalized a noble (half a mark or 6s 8d), which "doubled every Term; and in short time groweth to a great Charge," whereas if homage were done, a "reasonable Fine" was paid with "no further Vexation [during the life of the Party]." Additionally, in the last few words of the foregoing, we see a pronounced echo from the second of Oxford's two 1594 letters, where he wrote "that homage showld not be respited forever as now yt ys … for the only gayne of a privat office, to the hinderance of her Ma*ies*ties service."

After the complaint of the "privat benefyt" gleaned in the Treasurer's Remembrancer's office, the undated statement continues:

> A man of able Iudgem*ent* & experyence in these cases wyll knowe & assure hym selffe that what is before expressed is true.

> And besydes, by this course, his Ma*ies*ties p*ro*fytt herebye yerelye growynge shal*l*be made more then double soe muche as heretofore itt hathe be*e*n, & shalbe soe setled, ascerteyned, & aunswered vppon good seaurytye [=surety] to be geven therefore.

Under Queen Elizabeth, Oxford had demonstrated an affinity for schemes whereby he could improve not only his own estate (which was close to bankrupt after the 1580s), but advance the crown's profits at the same time. He had attempted this, for instance, in his competition with Lord Buckhurst for the Cornish tin monopoly, in which Oxford's analysis of the commercial and fiscal aspects, by all appearances, contained the more astute—and profitable—of the two proposals. Exactly five months after Oxford's letter regarding Osborne and respite of homage, he wrote to Burghley, not so much as his former father-in-law, than as the queen's principal counselor and Treasurer of England, who should have been especially concerned with her revenue: "I thinke yt best for her maiestie to take that course which is best for her seruice … yf yt shall pleas her Magestie to imploy my service I will vse all diligence, to further her profite."[90] Among several others, further echoes of Oxford's holograph phrasing can be found in an undated memorandum from sometime after 1595:

> Sythe her Magesty hathe hadd so good a consideratione of her pore subiects, yt ys reasone also that she benifites her selfe. And therfore yf she will, as she may without any reasone to the contrarie, rayse the other happenye [=halfpenny], then sume one nobleman or other whome yt shall please her Magesty to bestowe yt one [=on] may yeld her sume 300*l*, 500*l*, or perhapes a 1000*l* a yere for the same, to have yt in farme, which is very muche for so smale a matter, and yt ys better for her Magesty to have sumthinge then nothinge … And further, which ys to be aduertised, how muche ys her Magesty abused in thys that she ys made beleue she releus [=relieves] 500 pore people of her subiects, whearas in dede she benifites 5 or 6 of the rychest sort, and nothinge att all the pore.[91]

Despite Oxford's intricately devised outline, the queen (as was her wont following his 1581 Catholic calamity and impregnation of one of her maids of honor) turned an indifferent ear to him. For one reason and another, England's second-ranking earl[92] and one-time favorite of Elizabeth had fallen from grace, and was not to be redeemed until James ascended the throne, albeit briefly. That Oxford was finally given due consideration in the matter of respite of homage is proven by the Commons and Lords journal entries cited above. It is quite possible, though beyond proof, that that same consideration encompassed this undated record, which concludes:

> And yett his Ma*ies*ties subiectes shalbe better delt with then heretofore they haue be*e*n, & shall paye lesse.

> And itt shalbe otherwyse (in dyu*ers* respectes) better, bothe for his Highnes, & for his subiectes.

Although the foregoing document makes no specific case for the fees being restored to the Lord Great Chamberlain, its description in the Calendar of state papers as a "[s]tatement of the advantages to accrue from granting to private persons the collection of the King's fees for respite of homage" is clearly misleading, as the only arguments it presents are the disadvantages of the fees then being paid into the Remembrancer's office. It refers to a project, and a course, that will be more advantageous to the king and his subjects, but gives no details as to what it is, or who is proposing it.

If there is no sure way to affirm Oxford's presence behind the foregoing document, the second of these two undated records, which is undoubtedly connected to the first, should appreciably increase the reasons for theorizing it. Recall Oxford's request in 1594 that Osborne be required "to sett downe in wrightinge suche causes as he alleagethe why the sayd homages showld not be done, that I may thervpone replye & drave [=draw] the cause to a shortte ysswe [=issue]." One way or another, whether during the 1604 Parliament or at some point thereafter, this request was finally borne out—if not by way of Oxford, then by means of another party with strikingly similar interests. It is worth considering, however, that this and the foregoing record may be the very statements submitted in the parliamentary deliberation on May 12, 1604, when the diarist recorded hand-in-hand: "Earl of Oxenford; Respite of Homage; Chequer Abuses:—This Day, in the Afternoon" (above, p. 185).[93] The articles—better termed arguments—are condensed into a single, abbreviated document consisting of four point-counterpoints acquiring the format of a dialogue, or written fencing match, between two persons, one of whom (the one "objecting") was certainly Osborne, if not his spokesman. The one "answering" may well have been Oxford, but whatever the case, it stands to reason that Osborne's objections were prompted by the previously cited document, and they thus survived in tandem. This "dialogue" begins with the header: "Advertizeme*n*tes touchinge the respecte of homage payable in the Thr*esur*ers Remembrauncers office drawn from the observac*i*ons of xxv [=25] yeres experience in the same."[94]

A hint is offered at the very outset for the dating of this record, albeit a dubious one. Osborne states his observations come from "25 years" of experience in the office, which, as with most historical documents, can be interpreted in more than one way. Recall that John Osborne officially became the Treasurer's Remembrancer in June of 1592, when he received the reversion of the office upon his father's death. If "25 years" is taken exactly, it would place this record circa 1617. However, this "experience" in the office probably does not refer to the date Osborne *officially* inherited the title of Remembrancer, and "25 years" in any case may be a generalization. On this point, John Osborne's actual grant of reversion in the Calendar of Patent Rolls from December 10, 1576, should be considered, coming as it did "[i]n consideration of his knowledge and experience in the office both by instruction of his father and by continuance in the work of the office" (above, p. 8).

Osborne was therefore already considered "experience[d] in the same" as early as December of 1576. If we take this date as a *terminus a quo* for the 25 years of experience, we are brought to December 1601, for all practical purposes 1602. Moreover, as pointed out above, it's possible the dating in the Calendar of Patent Rolls is in error, and that Peter Osborne's letter dated January 13, 1577/8 in the Calendar of Salisbury manuscripts, in which he thanks Burghley for the reversion of his office to his son, is in fact correct (I have not seen the original manuscripts of either). If so, John Osborne's grant should be dated December 10, 1577, which would then give us a *terminus a quo* of December 1602 for the 25 years of experience, for all practical purposes 1603—closer still to the parliamentary proceedings in which Oxford was attempting to have respite of homage terminated and the original process reinstated. But to reiterate, the said "25 years" may be a generalization. Nevertheless, although we can fairly well determine the *terminus a quo* for Osborne's grant of reversion itself, we really cannot for the amount of his said "experience" at that time.[95]

After the header, the undated "Advertizeme*n*tes" proceed to Osborne's first objection; *En Garde*:

> 1. It may be obiected that the writt*es* yssuinge out of M*aste*r Osbornes office for respecte of homage grounded vpon the Kinges tenures in cheife amountinge tearmely to eighte thowsand writt*es* or thereaboute*s*, are the foundac*i*on and substance of the said office. And that yf the attorneys fees arrysinge vpon the acquittances for the said respecte of homage be taken from them, they cannot be hable to maintaine clerkes to write the said writt*es* and p*er*forme the busines of th[e] office therevpon growinge.

The riposte, from whomever it came, indicates that Osborne was blustering in this regard:

> 2. It may be aunswered: that the homages tearmely payable are but a third p*ar*te of the writt*es* aboue menc*i*oned, and that vpon the alterac*i*on of eu*e*ry ten*a*nte that houldeth land*es* of the Kinge in cheife or by knight*es* s*e*ruice, &c., the ten*a*nte in possession muste bringe in his licence or p*ar*don, indenture, ffyne, or deede, and a plea must be drawne by the attorney toward the sheire that taketh xijd [=12 pence] for every sheete and vjs viijd [=6 shillings 8 pence] vpon every rolle. The Remembrauncer hath other vjs viijd for his ffee and iiijs iiijd vpon every plea inrolled for givinge Iudgement therevnto. Yf the ten*a*nte come by discent, then muste he bringe in speciall or gen*er*all livery, wherevpon the attorney taketh vjs viijd and what he please for entring the scedule of the livery. The M*aste*r of th[e] office hath likewise vjs viijd for his ffee. So that (the p*re*misses considered) neither the Remembrauncer nor his clerkes the attorneys can be greatlie indempnified by takinge from them

> the receipte of the Kings homage togeather *w*ith th[e] acquittances and ffees therevnto belonginge.

Apparently unscathed, Osborne forged ahead:

> 3. It may likewise be obiected that the yssues and amercyame*n*t*es* due to his Ma*ies*tie vpon the defaulte of not payinge the homages tearmely as they growe due are very chargeable and painefull both to the Remembrauncer and his clerk*es*.

Osborne's point is somewhat puzzling and challenging to ascertain. As we've observed, a tenant incurred amercements (penalties) for not paying his fine for respite of homage on time, that is, on a prescribed date every fifth term. The tenant's debt would thus accumulate, the burden increasing the longer his debt remained undischarged. Osborne seems to encourage the penalties as the interest gained was greatly to be desired, for himself and his clerks, if not the tenants. One man's gain is another's loss: whereas a onetime payment would prove advantageous to the tenant, it would be contrariwise to the Exchequer's coffers, or rather, Osborne and his officers' purses, possibly trickling down to the very sheriffs posted to levy the impositions after such arrearages had been audited. From Osborne's point of view, he and his officials would be the ones out of pocket were respite of homage to be abolished rather than the other way around. Osborne's antagonist parried with the following counterpoint:

> 4. It may be aunswered: it is the cheife service he doth for his office, and yet not*w*ithstandinge his ffather and this Remembrauncer alsoe hath had out of the receipte vpon the Lord Th*resur*ers warr*a*unte Cli [=£100] at a tyme for their travell [=travail] therein, *w*ith the w*hi*ch the many diu*ers*e other secrett meanes of gaine alsoe considered, they may houlde them[selves] fully satisfied *w*ithout the receipte of the Kings homage, as for example by the scrowle of accomptant*es*, the booke of veiwes, specyall writt*es*, warrant*es*, commissions, p*ar*ticulers, exemplifica*c*ions, inrollement*es*, accompt*es*, sheriff*es*, petic*i*ons, &c.

The knowledge of the additional £100 paid by the Lord Treasurer to John Osborne and his father Peter before him, apparently over and above their nominal salary of £30 per annum,[96] as well as "many diu*ers*e other secrett meanes of gaine," reveals an insider's familiarity with the situation. Oxford's long and close association with Burghley, and his obvious acquaintance with Osborne, would have made him ideally placed to be privy to such information.

Nicked or no, and not to be disadvantaged, Osborne thrust forward:

> 5. It may be obiected that the discontinuinge the paym*en*t of the Kings homage in *forma quo prius* [i.e., "as in the previous form"] may breede a

> discontentment to the subiecte and make a confusion in the Thr*esur*ers Remembrauncers office.

This passado was easily sidestepped as the subsequent solution, or truce, if you will, was served in return, though likely little to Osborne's satisfaction, as he still would have viewed himself hamstrung:

> 6. It may be thus aunswered: that the Kinges assignees may contynue the receipte of the same homages in the same Remembrauncers office, or in some suche place neere vnto the same office in th[e] Exchequer, as M*aste*r Chauncellor of th[e] Exchequer shall thinke meete. And that the said assignees of the Kinge or theire deputies shall bringe their book*es* of receiptes of the Kings homage vnto the seu*er*all attorneys of the same office, and at the end of every tearme cease such writt*es* in every sheire as haue paid theire homage beinge then due, accordinge to the accustomed course of the same office. So that it can cause no discontentm*en*t to the subiecte, nor breede any confusion in the office.

Recall Oxford's 1604 parliamentary suit headed "The ancient Course of suing of Livery, and how Homage hath been taken, and ought to be taken, by the Lord Great Chamberlain of England, for the King" (see Table 1). Within that paper were listed "The Persons that have Fees upon the Suit of Livery," beginning with the Lord Chancellor, the Master of the Rolls, the Lord Great Chamberlain, and so forth. These were considered "the Kinges assignees," and had Oxford's bill been passed in that Parliament, as Lord Great Chamberlain, he would have been one of them.

The duel dwindles somewhat anticlimactically to its conclusion, in what amounts to splitting half-pence with the short sword:

> 7. It may be further said that M*aste*r Osborne standeth charged w*i*th p*ar*chem*en*t *vltra* [i.e., over and above] the Kings allowance.

Although stationery was not always provided for in the overhead of some courts, in this instance the person answering, whether Oxford or someone else, knew otherwise, and rebounded with the final blow:

> 8. The Kinge alloweth him a yerely some of money for p*ar*chem*en*t, and what hath exceeded that allowaunce, the booke of Orders in that office hath formerly discharged.

Here the document ends, after several palpable hits to Osborne. As noted, there is no discernible reason for the uncertain date of 1611 conjecturally assigned by the calendar editor or archivist to the two foregoing state papers. The evidence presents no certainty, but the probability that the date of 1604 is the correct one seems quite strong. If the 17th earl of Oxford was not the instigator of these two documents, his

influence and actions relating to respite of homage, not only in 1594, but particularly 1604, surely served indirectly as their impetus.

Abbreviations

BL	British Library (all quotations by permission of the BL)
CJ	*Journals of the House of Commons* (London, 1742- [all references herein to vol. 1, 1547-1629])
CP	Cecil Papers (all quotations by permission of the Marquess of Salisbury)
CSPD	*Calendar of State Papers: domestic series of the reigns of Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, James 1547-1625, preserved in the State paper department of PRO* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, & Roberts, 1856-1872)
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*, 63 vols. (1885–1900), suppl., 3 vols. (1901); repr. in 22 vols. (1908–9); 10 further suppls. (1912–96); *Missing persons* (1993)
Econ. Hist. Rev.	*The Economic History Review*
EHR	*English Historical Review*
ERO	Essex Record Office (all quotations by permission of the ERO)
HMC Hatfield	Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Calendar of the manuscripts of the Marquess of Salisbury at Hatfield House*, 24 vols. (London, 1883-1976)
HMSO	His Majesty's Stationery Office
IPM	*Inquisitio Post Mortem*
Lansd.	Lansdowne Manuscripts in the BL
LJ	*Journals of the House of Lords*, 19 vols. (London, 1767- [all references herein to vol. 2, 1578-1614])
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 60 vols. (Oxford; New York: Oxford UP, 2004)

PH	*Parliamentary History: A Yearbook* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, St. Martin's Press, c1982-)
SR	*The statutes of the realm* (11 vols. in 12; Reprint of the 1810-1828 ed. London, 1963)
STC	Short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland & Ireland and of English books printed abroad, 1475-1640
TNA, PRO	The National Archives, Public Record Office, Kew (all quotations herein are not subject to Crown copyright)
UP	University Press
WING	Wing, Donald Goddard. Short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America, and of English books printed in other countries, 1641-1700

Endnotes

[1] For their invaluable assistance in researching this paper, I wish to thank Dr. Ruth Paley of the History of Parliament Trust and Victoria Britton of The Parliamentary Archives, House of Lords Record Office, as well as the insights of Robert Brazil, Robert Detobel, and Steven W. May, as well as particular thanks to Nina Green.

[2] BL Lansd. 76/74, fos. 168-69.

[3] B. M. Ward, *The seventeenth earl of Oxford, 1550-1604, from contemporary documents* (London: J. Murray, 1928), 312.

[4] B. M. Ward, 257-61, 282.

[5] B. M. Ward, "John Lyly and the Office of the Revels," *RES* 5, no. 17 (Jan. 1929): 57-59.

[6] TNA, PRO: E 403/2597, fos. 104v-105. The reason for the annuity is confirmed in the dowager countess of Oxford's letter to Robert Cecil written before August 20, 1604, in which she stated that "the pencyon of a thousande poundes was not giuen by the late Queene to my L*ord* for his life, and then to determine, but to continew vntill she might raise his decay by some better prouision" (CP 189/147). Around the same time, King James referred to Oxford's annuity in a letter to Cecil when Lord Sheffield was dogging him for more than a £1,000 pension: "I had already told him, never greater gift of that nature was given in England. Great Oxford when his state was whole ruined got no more of the late Queen" (HMC Hatfield, 16:397).

[7] As cited by Ruth Loyd Miller, ed., *Oxfordian Vistas*, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (Port Washington,

NY/London: Kennikat Press for Minos Publishing Co., 1975), 2:478. Miller devotes an entire chapter titled "Lord Oxford's 'Office'" advancing this premise (2:448-83).

[8] E. M. Tenison, *Elizabethan England: being the history of this country "in relation to all foreign princes"*, 13 vols. (Royal Leamington spa: Issued for the author to subscribers only At the sign of the Dove with the Griffin, 1933-1961), 6:133-34.

[9] Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn, Sr., *This Star of England: "William Shake-speare" Man of the Renaissance* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1952), 935.

[10] Charlton Ogburn, Jr., *The Mysterious William Shakespeare, the Myth & the Reality* (McLean, VA: EPM Publications, 1984 [cited from 2nd ed. 1998]), 735-36.

[11] A discerning judgment in Anderson's excellent book: moreover, nowhere has any writer shown us a comparison of the alleged "secret service" formula.

[12] Mark Anderson, *"Shakespeare" by another name: the Life of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, the Man who was Shakespeare* (New York: Gotham Books, 2005), 281-82, 506 (note to p. 210).

[13] Alan H. Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary: The life of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford* (Liverpool: at the UP, 2003), 348.

[14] John Lyly, *Euphues and his England. Containing his voyage and his aduentures ..., giuen to the wise, and lesse occasion of loosenes proffered to the wanton*. (London: T. East for Gabriell Cawood, 1580), sig. A4v [STC 17068]; (italicized letter supplied from tilde).

[15] TNA: PRO, C 66/1267, mm. 5-7. It was apparently argued in the time of Charles I that the manor of Earls Colne had been held by Oxford in grand sergeanty as Lord Great Chamberlain of England, and that Richard Harlakenden, who inherited the manor from his father, therefore had a claim to the Great Chamberlainship by the same tenure. J. H. Round alluded to this in 1911, writing that while Henry I's bestowal of the hereditary office of Great Chamberlain on the de Veres was unconnected with the tenure of land, and that their barony (with its *caput*, Hedingham Castle) had been held by knight-service since the Conquest, it was nevertheless "clearly shown in the Great Chamberlain case [c.1902] that this office was found in 'Inquests after death' to be attached to their barony, the *reductio ad absurdum* being reached when Richard Harlakenden—whose father [Roger], the earl's steward, had purchased Earls Colne on the dissipation of their estates,—was found, under Charles I, to have held that manor by the grand sergeanty of being Chamberlain of England" (J. H. Round, *The King's Serjeants & officers of state, with their coronation services*, [London: J. Nisbet, 1911; cited from London: Tabard Press Ltd, 1970 facsimile reprint], 44). Contrary to Round's misleading phrasing, Richard Harlakenden was of course never the Lord Great Chamberlain of England, but that this office was attached to the de Veres' barony by grand sergeanty throughout their tenure as the earls of Oxford is confirmed in: the fourth earl's *IPM* (*The Complete Peerage* [revised edition by H. A. Doubleday, Geoffrey H. White and Lord Howard de Walden, London: St. Catherine Press, 1945], 10, Appendix F: fn. f, 54-55); the sixteenth Earl's IPM (TNA: PRO, C 142/136/12); and the

Court of Wards accounting for Oxford's lands c. 1563-1564 (TNA: PRO, WARD 8/13, part 32 [of 78]). See also Elizabeth Read Foster, *Proceedings in Parliament, 1610,* 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1966), 1:56 and *William B. Bidwell and Maija Jansson, eds., Proceedings in Parliament 1626,* 4 vols. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1991-1996), 1:141, 218-19.

[16] TNA: PRO, C 78/104/17. A full transcription of this document, by Alan Nelson is available at http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~ahnelson/DOCS/oxvharlak.html (accessed on September 20, 2010). One of the witnesses in the case was Oxford's servant Barnaby Worthy, who offered vacillating testimony as to whether or not Harlakenden had bribed anyone (those accused of having accepted bribes included Edmund Felton, Thomas Hampton, and John Drawater). Nelson observes: "[Worthy's] extraordinary reversal, so complete that [the Chancery examiner] declared that it amounted to a cancellation of his entire testimony, admits of two explanations. Either he was threatened by Harlackenden's side into withdrawing evidence unfavourable to their cause; or the testimony which he gave in the first deposition was doctored by partisans of Oxford's cause. Either way, Worthye seems to have become caught up in a dispute that threatened to overwhelm him." See *Monstrous Adversary*, 346-48. Nelson cites Huntington Library MSS [EL] 5871 and 5872; these should, however, be compared with Worthy's deposition in TNA: PRO, C 24/239/46, which Nelson does not cite. Regardless of whether the bribery charges were true, Harlakenden was, at the very least, a cunning businessman. Oliver Rackham observes, with regard to Chalkney Wood (which made up part of the Earls Colne estate), that Harlakenden "knew his wood well and drove a shrewd bargain. Some he sold to distant purchasers … The prices that he got for the remaining wood, even if it was as much as twenty years old, seem to be well above average." *Ancient woodland: its history, vegetation and uses in England* (London: Edward Arnold, 1980), 250.

[17] For a concise but precise background of the disputed Harlakenden swindle, see Nina Green, "Fraud at Colne Priory," *The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* 40:2 (2004), 3-4; the relevant records (and many others referenced in this article) are also meticulously transcribed by Green in modern spelling transcriptions at http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com under the Documents link. Modern spelling versions of many of these records are also available on the Earls Colne website at http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/earlscolne/document (*Caveat Lector*: the transcripts on this website are serviceable for basic research purposes but riddled with errors and should not be taken at face value). H. R. French and R. W. Hoyle expound on the Oxford/Harlakenden imbroglio throughout *The character of English rural society: Earls Colne, 1550-1750* (2007), but unfortunately this book is deeply flawed due to the authors' misplaced confidence and total reliance upon the imperfect Earls Colne website transcriptions rather than seeking out the original documents. Daphne Pearson offers her own viewpoint of the Oxford/Harlakenden affair in *Edward de Vere (1550–1604), The Crisis and Consequences of Wardship* (Aldershot: Ashgate,

2005), chaps. 4 and 8-10, but here again prudent discretion is in order as Pearson's unreliable research has been thoroughly exposed (see reviews by Christopher Paul, *EHR* 121:493 (2006), 1173-74; Christopher Paul, *The Oxfordian* 9 (2006), 91-112; Lloyd Bowen, *Econ. Hist. Rev.* 59:3 (2006), 638-39; Eric N. Lindquist, *Renaissance Quarterly* 59:2 (2006), 612-13). Alan Macfarlane offers perhaps the most neutral perspective in "The strife of two great tides; the Harlakenden case" at http://www.alanmacfarlane.com/TEXTS/Strife.pdf (rough draft of a talk given to the Earls Colne Society in May 1990; see specifically the subsection "The power struggle in Earls Colne"), accessed on September 20, 2010.

[18] ERO, D/DPr 425.

[19] TNA: PRO, C 24/277 part 1 piece 35. The variety of answers from the other deponents in the foregoing record is of exceptional interest, as when Israel Amice, one of Oxford's former servants, answered that Oxford had sent him to Castle Hedingham, where "he in serching for the *sai*d evidenc*es* w*i*th the rest of his associat*es*, found lyeng vnderfoot among the dust dyvers writing*es* concerning the office of Great Chamberlain of England." If true, such disregard for the said documents is astonishing, but no more so than another accusation that the evidences "concerning [Oxford's] office of Great *Ch*amberlayn of England w*i*th the ffees and other thing*es* belonging to the same" had been contained in a "black booke," and that the late earl of Leicester—one of Oxford's greatest adversaries—had commanded Israel Amice to deliver the black book to him, and then to burn it. Amice prudently denied the charge.

[20] ERO, D/DPr 424.

[21] *A catalogue of the Harleian manuscripts in the British museum*, 4 vols. (London: G. Eyre and A. Strahan, 1808-1812), 3:484. The catalogue reference is also noted under "Edward de Vere" in C. H. and T. Cooper, *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, UK: Deighton, Bell, MacMillan; London: Bell, Daldy, 1858-1913), 2:392. The most detailed notice I've discovered, though hardly extensive, is in *The Complete Peerage* 10:252, fn. b: "In November 1594 he petitioned for the restoration of the paying of homage by the tenants of the crown in order that he might obtain the 'Fees belonging to his office as Lord High Chamberlain.'"

[22] BL Harleian MS. 6996/117.

[23] *ODNB*, 42:20.

[24] HMC Hatfield 2:171. The slash [/] between year numbers denotes the specific year (New Style), with the latter number understood as the date intended. In Oxford's time the 'civil' or 'legal' New Year began March 25th (the Feast of the Annunciation) rather than January 1st, hence the genuine dates must be calculated accordingly.

[25] *Calendar of the Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office*, 1575-1578 (London: HMSO, 1891-), 328, no. 2279.

[26] TNA: PRO, SP 12/242/54 fo. 98.

[27] This tract, unpublished until 1658, was incorrectly attributed to Thomas Fanshawe. See R. B. Outhwaite, "*A Note on* The Practice of the Exchequer Court, With its

severall Offices and Officers, *by Sir T. F.*," *EHR* 81 (1966), 337-39; W. H. Bryson, "Exchequer Equity Bibliography," *American Journal of Legal History* 14 (1970), 333-48.

[28] Thomas Fanshawe (*sic*), *The Practice of the Exchequer Court* (London, 1658), 61 [Wing F420].

[29] All English land had been held of the crown since William the Conqueror, and was awarded in recognition of service. Those who held land directly of the crown held the land in fee, and were tenants *in capite*. They in turn could sell, lease, or bequeath this same land to others, who became their sub-tenants. For the description of homage owed a *mesne* lord, see *SR*, 1:227 ("The Manner of Doing Homage and Fealty").

[30] For further elucidation on homage, see T. E. Tomlins, ed., *Lyttleton, his treatise of tenures* (London; NY: Garland Pub., 1978), 117-25, 178-86; William Stubbs, *The constitutional history of England in its origin and development*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891), 3:532-34; Sir Frederick Pollock and Frederic William Maitland, *The history of English law before the time of Edward I*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, UK: at the UP, 1952), 1:296-307, 348-49, 2:291; Sir William Searle Holdsworth, *A history of English law*, 7th ed., 16 vols. (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1903-1966), 3:54-57; and D. E. C. Yale, ed., *Sir Matthew Hale's 'The Prerogatives of the King'* (London: Selden Society, 1976), 92:59-60.

[31] Joel Hurstfield, *The Queen's Wards* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1958), 176.

[32] Joel Hurstfield, 177. It seems to have been an idiosyncrasy of Hurstfield's to refer to the Lord Great Chamberlain simply as the Lord Chamberlain, possibly because the title was sometimes so abbreviated contemporaneously.

[33] T. E. Hartley, ed., *Proceedings in the parliaments of Elizabeth I*, 3 vols. (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1981), 3:255.

[34] *SR* 4, pt. 2:1052-53. The very same would be re-enacted in King James's first Parliament and subsequently printed in *At the Parliament begun and holden at Westminster ... 19 March-7 July 1604*, (London: Robert Barker: printer to the Kings most Excellent Maiestie, 1604), ch. 26:sigs. G8r-H2v [STC 9500.6]. The wording was identical but for the spelling; I chose to use the latter in the quoted citations.

[35] *LJ*, 237-56; Sir Simonds D'Ewes, *A compleat journal of the votes, speeches and debates, both of the House of lords and House of commons throughout the whole reign of Queen Elizabeth, of glorious memory* (Wilmington, DE.: Scholarly Resources [1974?]; facsimile reproduction of the 1693 ed.), 614-46, 631, 642, 647, 651, 684-87.

[36] TNA: PRO, SP 12/282/54 fos. 114-15; also in N. E. McClure, ed., *The Letters of John Chamberlain* 2 vols. (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939), 1:135.

[37] See STC 9495.

[38] TNA: PRO, SP 12/283/48 fos. 140-42.

[39] Heywood Townshend, *Historical collections* (London, 1680), 223 [Wing T1991].

[40] For discussions of Peter and John Osborne's roles in bills in the 1589 and 1601

Parliaments, see J. E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and her parliaments, 1584-1601* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1957), 207-8, 212, 417-19; and David Dean, *Law-Making and Society in Late Elizabethan England, The parliament of England, 1584-1601* (Cambridge, UK; NY: Cambridge UP, 1996), 92-97. However, Dean was apparently confused in conflating respite of homage and *quo titulo ingressus est* (94n126), which were considered and treated as two separate abuses in the Exchequer. The latter was a writ under which Exchequer officials encumbered tenants in chief by inquiring into the certainty of their titles, i.e., how they entered upon their land, the intent of which was to prohibit them from alienating any part of their land without a license, which to obtain involved assigning a third of the land's value to the king, or otherwise paying a fine at the rate of one year's value of the land; see Steve Sheppard, ed., *The selected writings and speeches of Sir Edward Coke* (Indianapolis, IN.: Liberty Fund, 2003), 2:893. This process involved exactions *apart* from respite of homage, which was not a precise parliamentary issue in 1589 or 1601, as implied by Dean. Neale is also not clear on the point, but makes the distinction in *Elizabeth I and her parliaments, 1559-1581* (London: Jonathan Cape [1953]), 224.

[41] See James Spedding, ed., *An account of the life and times of Francis Bacon: Extracted from the edition of his occasional writings*. 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1880), 1:377-78 (available in numerous editions of Spedding's *Works*), where he writes of this matter that "shortly after Bacon had delivered his bill to the sergeant, symptoms of the smothered fire, the significance of which appears to have been well understood at head quarters, found their way to the surface … From what happened after, it may be suspected, that this was contrived with the Speaker's concurrence by Cecil, in order to evade or postpone the dangerous question … therefore, while they were proceeding with the naming of the Committees, [Robert Cecil] 'spake something in Mr. Speaker's ear:' … and so the House adjourned. Whether Cecil's whisper had anything to do with it, I do not know; but some irregularity there clearly was."

[42] *LJ*, 266. Purveyance—the king's prescriptive right to have his household supplied and transported at less than market value—was generally bracketed with the miscellaneous revenues arising from tenure in chief by knight's service. See Dean, 80-83; Samuel Rawson Gardiner, *History of England from the accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War 1603-1642*, 10 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1883-1884), 1:170-72; Pauline Croft, "Parliament, Purveyance and the City of London 1589-1608," *PH* 4 (1985): 9-34; and G. E. Aylmer, "The Last Years of Purveyance, 1610-1660," *Econ. Hist. Rev.* 10:1 (1957), 81-93.

[43] *CJ*, 154. Cf. *Report on the manuscripts of the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry*, 3 vols. in 4 (London, 1899-1926), 3:82-83. Wardship and homage had, as a rule, been interrelated, since both fell under the feudal practice of knight's service tenure.

[44] *CJ*, 937 (*Diarium*).

[45] Then again, Oxford's health may have had nothing to do with his absence; the *LJ* reveals that he had not attended a single sitting of Queen Elizabeth's tenth (and

last) Parliament from Oct. 27 to Dec. 19, 1601, had attended only one sitting of the ninth Parliament c.1597/98, and had attended only sporadically in previous Parliaments. It should be noted that on March 15, 1604—four days before the opening of James's first Parliament—Oxford's health was apparently good enough to allow his participation in James's triumphal progress from the Tower to Whitehall, which had been postponed due to the plague. In his office of Lord Great Chamberlain, Oxford took his place immediately in front of the king, with the countess of Oxford following behind the queen—if John Nichols' account can be relied on in *The progresses … of King James the First*, 4 vols. (London: J. B. Nichols; Printer to the Society of Antiquaries, 1828), 1:326-27.

[46] *CJ*, 172, (*Diarium*, 947).

[47] *CJ*, 185-86. Wallace Notestein notices the bill without explication in *The House of Commons 1604-1610* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1971), 514n18.

[48] TNA: PRO, SP 14/24/59 fo. 100. Though unusual, other original parliamentary bills have ended up among the state papers; see Dean, 96n137. I was not aware of Hurstfield's reference to this document when I rediscovered it for myself, but gladly acknowledge his earlier claim. However, Hurstfield was evidently unaware of this document's connection with the 1604 Parliament, referring to it only as "a summary account, by a seventeenth-century writer" (169-70).

[49] *CSPD* James I, 24:341 (items 59-65).

[50] Mary Anne Everett Green, editor; the entry also incorrectly describes SP 14/24/59 fo. 100 as a statement wherein "the Lord Chancellor" wished to revive the ancient course of suing for liveries and taking homage, rather than "the Lord Great Chamberlain."

[51] An inquisition to record proof of age.

[52] The marginal notation "Stamford's *Abridgment*" refers to Sir William Stanford's *An exposition of the king's prerogative collected out of the great abridgement of Justice Fitzherbert and other old writers of the laws of England*. Sir Anthony Fitzherbert's *La graunde abbregement* was first published in its French form c.1514-1516, and had utilized materials from plea rolls and now lost manuscript sources stretching as far back as Henry III. Stanford's 1548 English translation was first published in 1567, with four reprints up to 1604. The relevant segment of Stanford's book to which the above citation refers is found in the chapter titled *Livery*; see STC 23213, fol. 79. For Fitzherbert's original French version, see STC 10954, sig. E.II. Interestingly, the filmed STC copy (Huntington Library) of the 1567 edition of *An exposicion* belonged to Lord Keeper, Sir Thomas Egerton, created Baron Ellesmere and Lord Chancellor soon after James's accession.

[53] Westminster 2 [James I]; i.e., Parliament 1604.

[54] A statute passed in 1285 (13 Edward I c. 42) reveals remnants of the original precedent wherein the king's chamberlains were to collect fees for homage and fealty (*SR* 1:92). This statute was recorded soon thereafter in *Fleta* ("De Feodis Camerarii" ["Of the fees of the Chamberlain"]), ed. and trans. by H. G. Richardson and G. O. Sayles (London: Selden Society, 1953) 72: Bk. 2, Chap. 7, 116. Edward Chamberlayne expanded this construct in his *Angliæ Notitia, or*

the Present State of England (London: T. N. for John Martyn, 1669), 225 [Wing C1819]: "The Fifth *Great Officer* of the Crown is the Lord *Great Chamberlain* of *England*, an Officer of great Antiquity, to whom belong *Livery* and *Lodging* in the King's Court, and certain Fees due from each *Archbishop* and *Bishop* when they do their *Homage* or *Fealty* to the King, and from all *Peers* of the Realm at their *Creation*, or doing the *Homage* or *Fealty*."

[55] *SR* 3:861-62. Terminal -es graphs have been amended to "es" and one contraction has been expanded.

[56] An entry in the *CJ* of May 2, 1614, does nothing to resolve the question: "An Act for the better avoiding of Charge and Trouble of his Majesty's Subjects, upon Respite of Homage … That the Intention of this Bill good, but trencheth not far enough. That this no ancient Right: Not before H[enry] VIII['s] Time, when one *Smyth*, the Treasurer's Remembrancer [w]ould have the Duty, now remaining, to be continued to his Majesty," 470.

[57] See Nicholas Tyacke, "Wroth, Cecil and the Parliamentary Session of 1604," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 50, no. 121 (May, 1977): 120-24; Pauline Croft, "Wardship in the Parliament of 1604," *PH* 2 (1983): 39-48.

[58] *CJ*, 971.

[59] *CJ*, 221, 976.

[60] *LJ*, 304-5.

[61] *CJ*, 227.

[62] William Cobbett, *The Parliamentary history of England from the earliest period to the year 1803*, 36 vols. (London: Printed by T. C. Hansard [*etc*.] 1806-1820), 1:1027.

[63] Notestein, 93-94. A. G. R. Smith, "Crown, Parliament and Finance: The Great Contract of 1610," *The English Commonwealth 1547-1640: Essays in Politics and Society*, eds. P. Clark, A. G. R. Smith and N. Tyacke (New York; Leicester: Barnes & Noble Books, 1979), 111-27 at 117; Croft, *PH* 2, 41. For further context and considerations of the sudden reversal of direction in the House of Lords on May 26, see also Gardiner, *History of England*, 175-77.

[64] Smith, 117.

[65] *CJ*, 230.

[66] *CJ*, 984.

[67] *CJ*, 237, 238, 240, 991, 992, 993.

[68] *LJ*, 327.

[69] HMC Hatfield 16:258 (CP 189/147); see note 6 above.

[70] Nathaniel Baxter, *Sir Philip Sidney's Ourania, that is, Endimion's Song and Tragedy, Containing all Philosophy* (London: Edward Allde for Edward White, 1606), sigs. B2r-B2v [STC 1598].

[71] *LJ*, 327-30.

[72] *LJ*, 334.

[73] *LJ*, 338.

[74] *LJ*, 354; printed by Barker as Chapter 26 in his 1604 book of Statutes (STC 9500.6); see note 34 above.

[75] For exposition of the parliamentary circumstances in 1610—as they concern us

here—see H. E. Bell, *An introduction to the history and records of the Court of Wards & Liveries* (Cambridge, UK: at the UP, 1953), 139-44; Foster, 1:16, 54, 58, 64, 66, 80, 117, 172, 178, 201-2, 212-13, 254, 2:36, 71, 331n, 415; Samuel Rawson Gardiner, ed., "Parliamentary debates in 1610," *Camden Society*, o.s., 81 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1862): 16, 133, 150, 164; Notestein, 266, 299, 416. The circumstances in 1610 are considered peripherally, and those in 1614 at length, by Clayton Roberts and Owen Duncan in "The parliamentary undertaking of 1614," *EHR* 93 (1978): 481-98.

[76] TNA: PRO, SP 14/87/75[I] fos. 155-56.

[77] The letter, though not the enclosed "project," is printed in *Acts of the Privy Council*, 1615-1616 (London: Printed for HMSO by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1890-[1925]), 637-38. There are actually two records annexed to the letter as filed in the state papers, the second (two copies in Latin; TNA: PRO, SP 14/87/75[II] fos. 157-62) being rates of fines levied for respite of homage and of fees paid thereon to the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer and attorneys, with lists of number of briefs sent from the Remembrancer's Office.

[78] One objection to this suggestion may be that the document's second proposition concerns disafforestation as a means of composition, which is not known to have been proposed in 1604. It is not unreasonable, however, to think that such a strategy was considered, if not pursued. Less than one month before the opening of James's first Parliament, William Waldegrave (d.1613) of Little Illford in West Ham, Essex, wrote a detailed letter to Robert Cecil's associate Michael Hicks, regarding "some great proffitt th*a*t the king*es* ma*ies*tie may receaue … yf that his ma*ies*tie canne or wilbe contented to disforest the fforest" (BL Lansd. 89/5, fo. 10). Waldegrave was specifically referring to Waltham Forest, at which time Oxford was then Steward. In his essay "Disafforestation and drainage: the Crown as entrepreneur?" Hoyle tells us that "James was notoriously opposed to disafforestation," which "doubtless explains why the disafforestation of even *remote* forests, although suggested as early as 1552, taken up by [Sir Robert] Johnson in 1602, widely advocated in the following decade and a part of the general currency of debate thereafter, had barely commenced on the King's death in 1625" (*The Estates of the English Crown, 1558-1640*, ed. R. W. Hoyle [Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge UP, 1992], 357-58).

[79] According to Oxford"s *IPM*, "the foresaid Earl while he lived was seised in his demesne as of fee of the office of Great Chamberlain of England and also of divers fees, profits, issues and revenues yearly owed and paid out of the office commonly called the Petty Bag in the court of the Lord King of his Chancery to the said office of the said Earl of Great Chamberlain of England appertaining and belonging, and thus being seised" (TNA: PRO, C 142/286/165 and TNA: PRO, WARD 7/37/12; here translated from the Latin). The "fees and other profits pertaining to the same office" in the sixteenth earl of Oxford's *IPM* amounted to £106 13s 4d (TNA: PRO, C 142/136/12); and the subsequent Court of Wards accounting for Oxford's lands (TNA: PRO, WARD 8/13,

part 32 [of 78]) indicated that this amount derived from the county of Middlesex, though why that county, and what, specifically, these "fees and profits" consisted of, remains open to question. When the office of Lord Great Chamberlain was in dispute after the 18th earl's death, it was noted in the parliamentary hearing of March 28, 1626, that "[t]he livery proves the descent of the office, and the yearly value £100 per annum" and, rather incongruously (considering homage was still respited at that time) maintained that the "[f]ees [are] upon liveries, homages" (Bidwell and Jansson, *Proceedings … 1626*, 1:217).

[80] Edward de Vere, *Letters and Poems of Edward, Earl of Oxford*, ed. Katherine Chiljan (1998): 175.

[81] Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary*, 396.

[82] Oxford's reputation as a wastrel and spendthrift has long overshadowed his great, if not foolhardy, generosity. In the *DNB*, Sir Sidney Lee did observe that "Oxford had squandered some part of his fortune upon men of letters whose bohemian mode of life attracted him" (20:227). While no monetary amount can be assigned to Oxford's patronage, descriptions in personal letters, literary references, and dedications to him—even bearing in mind the usual sycophancy—paint an adequate picture of his overly-generous nature. Anticipating the rebuff of certain scholars on this point, a few examples are in order. Perhaps one of the most vivid is found in a 1590 letter to Burghley by Oxford's former servant and poet Henry Lok, who went to some lengths describing the "ouermany gre[e]dy hors[e]le[e]ches w*hi*ch had sucked to[o] rauen[o]usly on [Oxford's] swe[e]t liberality" (TNA: PRO, SP 12/234/6). Angel Day described Oxford's "exceeding bountie" in *The English Secretary*, wherewith he "hath euer wonted to entertaine the desertes of all men" (London: Robert Waldegrave for Richard Jones, 1586), sig. 2v [STC 6401]. In *Four Letters and certaine Sonnets*, Gabriel Harvey wrote that "in the prime of his gall*an*test youth, [Oxford] bestowed Angels vpon mee in Christes Colledge in Cambridge, and otherwise voutsafed me many gratious fauours" (London: John Wolfe, 1592), 21:sig. C4r [STC 12900]. John Farmer wrote in his *First Set of English Madrigals* that he was dedicating the book to Oxford "onlie as remembrances of my seruice and witnesses of your Lordships liberall hand, by which I haue so long liued" (London: William Barley for Thomas Morely, 1599), sig. A1v [STC 10697]. Posthumous testimonies continued to sound out Oxford's munificence, as in Nathaniel Baxter's *Sir Philip Sidney's Ourania*, where Oxford was praised for his "bountie in expence," although "some thinke he spent too much in vaine,/ That was his fault: but giue his honour due,/ Learned he was" (London, 1606), sigs. B3v-B3r [STC 1598]. George Chapman similarly described Oxford in *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*—universally recognized as a Stoic commentary on *Hamlet*—as "learn'd, and liberall as the Sunne,/ Spoke and writ sweetly, or of learned subiects,/ Or of the discipline of publike weales" (London: Thomas Snodham for Iohn Helme, 1613), sig. F4v [STC 4989]. Gervase Markham expounded on Oxford's "bountie" in *Honour In His Perfection*, calling the earl "Magnanimus," and that "[i]t were infinite to speake of his infinite expence,

the infinite number of his attendants, or the infinite house he kept to feede all people … the almes he gaue (which at this day would not only feede the poore, but the great mans family also)" (London: B. Alsop for Benjamin Fisher, 1624), 16-17 [STC 17361].

[83] It's possible that it was Oxford's new business-savvy brother-in-law, Francis Trentham, who roused him to the fact that he was not receiving all the fees and profits due his office of Lord Great Chamberlain, and may have further urged him to retrieve his papers relating to the office from Harlakenden. According to Oxford's *IPM*, he had farmed the office of Lord Great Chamberlain to Israel Amice for a term of 31 years on Nov. 6, 1583, whereby Amice would attain whatever profits derived from the office and pay to Oxford a fixed sum of £42 per year. This suggests that Oxford never seriously considered abolishing Respite of Homage prior to that date, and likely not prior to 1591—when he became engaged to Elizabeth Trentham—since the reinstatement of paying Homage would all but certainly have yielded more profit than £42 per year. Amice was subsequently outlawed for debt circa April 20, 1584, with the result that his "goods, chattels, and debts" came into the possession of the queen, thus entitling her to the said profits of the office, while paying Oxford the same fixed sum of £42 a year. She, in turn, by letters patent dated May 3, 1591 (TNA: PRO, C 66/1367, mm. 2-3), granted to John Drawater and John Holmes what had been forfeited to her by Amice, entitling Drawater and Holmes to what remained of the 31-year term, wherein they took to themselves the profits of the office and were to pay Oxford £42 a year. However, two months later, on July 4, 1591, Oxford, on the one part, John Wolley and Francis Trentham, on the second part, and Drawater, Holmes, and Amice, on the third part, entered into a tripartite indenture by which Trentham and Wolley were to take the balance of the profits of the office for the remainder of the original 31-year term after paying to Amice, Drawater, and Holmes £42 per year, to be divided between them (TNA: PRO, C 146/286/165). In a third provision to the tripartite indenture, Oxford granted to Trentham and Wolley the profits of his office of Lord Great Chamberlain for a further 80-year period beyond the original 31-year term, provided that Trentham's sister, Elizabeth (whom Oxford married during this time frame), should live so long. The entire arrangement may have been entered into so that Oxford could provide a jointure for Elizabeth Trentham, with her brother Francis and John Wolley acting as her trustees.

[84] One must wonder why the bill was not advocated in the interest of Oxford's son, who inherited his titles upon his death in 1604. A point needing further investigation is that, although Henry de Vere was styled Lord Great Chamberlain in numerous documents throughout his minority, his service therein seems not to have been officially activated until May 1619, when he was twenty-six-years-old (see TNA: PRO, SP14/109/41 and Nichols, *Progresses … James* 3, pt. 1:547). The office therefore seems to have been in abeyance from 1604 to 1619. That Earl Henry was abroad from 1613 through 1618 may only partially explain the circumstances.

[85] HMC Hatfield 16:397; see note 6 above.

[86] Quoted from Thomas Bedingfield, *Cardanus comforte translated into Englishe. And published by commaundement of the right honourable the Earle of Oxenford* (London: Thomas Marshe, 1573), sig. A4v [STC 4607].

[87] *CSPD* James I, 67:107 (items 150 and 151; a third record, item 152, is a copy of item 151).

[88] Cf. TNA: PRO, SP 12/252/49; BL Lansd. 86/66; CP 25/76; Huntington Library EL2335, EL2336, EL2338, EL2344, EL2345, and EL2349. Transcriptions by Alan H. Nelson are available at http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~ahnelson/lltinmem.html (accessed on September 20, 2010).

[89] TNA: PRO, SP 14/67/150 fo. 225.

[90] CP 31/79, dated April 9, 1595.

[91] Huntington Library EL2335. For another perspective on Oxford's attempt to gain the tin monopoly, see G. D. Ramsay, "The Smugglers' Trade: A Neglected Aspect of English Commercial Development," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., 2 (1952): 131-57, 153-55.

[92] The only higher ranking earldom than Oxford's was that of Arundel (not to be confused with the surname of Oxford's sometime friend and foe, Charles Arundel).

[93] *CJ*, 971.

[94] TNA: PRO, SP 14/67/151 fos. 226-27; some missing letters at torn edges and holes are supplied by copy (SP 14/67/152 fo. 228).

[95] John Osborne was an auditor of the Exchequer by March 15, 1571, which could certainly apply to his knowledge and experience in the office (*CPR*, 1569-1572, 290, no. 2216). However, taking this date as a *terminus a quo* for "25 years" experience would take us to around 1596—too early to be considered since the "Act for the better Observation of certain Orders in the Exchequer" in the Parliament of 1601 certainly involved respite of homage abuses, although the specific abolishment of respite of homage was not so identified again until the 1604 Parliament. Another option is if Burghley did heed Oxford's 1594 plea to require Osborne to set down his objections in writing at that time, which is a remote possibility, since Oxford had indicated in the earlier of the two 1594 letters concerning his office: "[T]hat whearas I found sundrie abuses, wherby bothe her Maiestie & my selfe were in myne office greatly hyndred, that yt wowlde please yowre Lordship that I myght fynde suche fauoure from yowe that I myght have the same redressed. At which tyme I found so good forwardnes in yowre Lordship that I thowght my self greatly behowldinge for the same; yet by reason at that tyme myne atturnye was departed the towne, I could not then send him to attend vpon yowre Lordship accordinge to yowre appoyntment."

[96] According to Michael Sparke's 1651 *The narrative history of King James, for the first fourteen years…*, the "FEES and ANNUITIES payable out of his Majesties *Exchequer* … To John Osborne Esquire. The Lord Treasurors Remembrancer" was £30 per annum (WING S4818; p. 42, sig. F1v).

"Is that True?"

Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?

by James Shapiro

NY: Simon and Schuster, 2010, 339 pages

reviewed by Warren Hope

> This is the kind of argumentation one associates with political maneuvering rather than a serious quest for the truth on great issues and it makes one suspect that he is not very easy in his own mind about the case. —J.Thomas Looney on the tactics of Professor Oscar Campbell

We are indebted to both James Shapiro and Alan Nelson for establishing a new phase in the history of the Shakespeare authorship question through the publication of two books—first Alan Nelson's *Monstrous Adversary* (2003) and now James Shapiro's *Contested Will*. They are both grotesque books, reminiscent of gargoyles without the attractiveness, but they are grotesque for a reason. The authors treat evidence as if they were preparing show trials for some nightmarish dictatorship not because they are demonic or dumb, but because they are expressions of the painful change that must take place if the study of Shakespeare is to be put on a rational footing.

Although they perform the function of advancing the debate, they do so unintentionally and unconsciously, almost as if they are expressions of some Shakespeare authorship *zeitgeist*, or hybrids thrown up by the reconciliation of opposites in the evolution of an idea. Readers interested in a critique of Nelson's pseudo-biography of Oxford should consult Peter Moore's "Demonology 101," or the review essays by K.C. Ligon, Roger Stritmatter, or Richard Whalen. Those wanting a good, traditional book review of Shapiro's treatment of the authorship question should read William S. Niederkorn's excellent review in the April issue of *The Brooklyn*

Rail. I'd like to do something different here; I'd like to use some thoughts on Shapiro's treatment of Looney and the Oxford case as a way to get at some larger issues.

Although Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens will be remembered for many of his judicial opinions, to my mind one of his best "dissents" is the one that showed him open to Looney's case for Oxford as Shakespeare. Unfortunately, Shapiro's clear aim is to stigmatize Looney's world view and that of anyone who accepts his hypothesis as "dead set against the forces of democracy and modernity," as holders of a "retrogade vision" that "comes too close for comfort to Freud's account of the Nazi rise to power in 1933." For Shapiro, this world view necessarily includes questionable attitudes toward Jews that, he suggests, Looney held.

Niederkorn is right to point out that this tactic cheapens the debate about authorship because it is an *ad hominem* attack: it provides an example of the logical fallacies that English teachers point out in freshman writing classes. But there is more at issue here. Because of his faith in the Stratford cult, Shapiro distorts not only Looney's arguments, but also Shakespeare's work.

James Shapiro decided to write this book because he had run into many who doubted that Will Shakspere of Stratford wrote the plays and poems of Shakespeare when he went on tour to promote his last book, *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599*. (At least, that is what he said in the promotional material in the back of the paperback edition of that book). But he was quick to point out that he did not plan to join the debate. It is refreshing to have a college professor frankly and publicly announce that he is going to research and write a book on a subject about which he has a completely closed mind.

"It's an exasperating question, for the evidence is overwhelmingly conclusive that only William Shakespeare of Stratford could have written these plays and poems. I gradually came to understand that at the heart of this 'authorship controversy' was a different set of questions with which I had not yet adequately wrestled. When and why did people start doubting Shakespeare's authorship? Why has this been a mostly American phenomenon? What does it reveal about notions of genius, evidence, and the allure of conspiracy theories? And why have such notable figures as Sigmund Freud, Charlie Chaplin, Malcolm X, and Mark Twain subscribed to this myth?"

It is characteristic of Professor Shapiro that it is not enough to say there is sufficient evidence to justify thinking Will of Stratford wrote the Shakespearean plays and poems. He insists that "only William Shakespeare of Stratford could" have written them. This is a difficult position to maintain when you also insist that parts of some of the plays were written by John Fletcher. Blindness to this kind of inconsistency is a sign that we are dealing here with a statement of faith rather than an application of reason to a merely human, mortal problem.

In *Contested Will* itself Shapiro doesn't refer to his prior book tour, unless that is what he means when he writes of "audience members at popular lectures." Instead he tells the story of a fourth-grader who asked a question after he talked to the boy's class about Shakespeare's life and work: "My brother told me that Shakespeare really didn't write *Romeo and Juliet*. Is that true?" It's as if this small boy's words made Shapiro realize just how widespread the doubts about Shakespeare's identity had

become and moved him to write this book.

An odd thing about this anecdote is that, through it, Shapiro provides himself with a motive for taking up the authorship question that is similar to the one that launched Looney on his search for Shakespeare. Looney became more and more convinced that the life of the Stratford man as we know it from the records and documents does not reflect that of the author of the plays and poems. As a teacher, Looney found it increasingly difficult to present as facts statements that he could not longer believe were true. Almost a century later, Shapiro implies that he felt moved to rush to the defense of schoolchildren and protect them from the myths of the people he describes as "rejecters of Shakespeare."

Another logical fallacy that Shapiro demonstrates is what is known in freshman writing classes as "either/or thinking," and this is one of the ways in which he is very different from Looney. For instance, Shapiro gives the impression that Shakespeare wrote plays either as dramatic performances or as books to be read. He himself prefers performances—either live performances or movies. He admits to becoming bored in high school by teachers taking classes through close readings of the texts. For a time, he thought he disliked, if not actually hated, Shakespeare's plays. On the other hand, he later fell in love with Shakespeare's work when he was able to see the plays on stage, especially in London. It follows that the idea of Shakespeare as a man of the theater appeals to him, and he writes with obvious pleasure about Shakespeare's role as an actor, playwright, and shareholder in the Lord Chamberlain's Men. It also follows that the idea of Shakespeare writing entertainments for pay appeals to him. Why should he have wished to do anything else?

Fair enough. But Looney argues that the kind of man Shapiro pictures could not have written the plays of Shakespeare. Instead, Looney concluded that Shakespeare, the pen name of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, wrote plays for performance, plays that would divert the court or those who paid to see them in a theater, but he also rewrote and reworked them so that they would also satisfy those who wished to linger over them on the printed page. And in this way, Shakespeare would achieve the two purposes the ancient world assigned to literature—to delight and enlighten readers and theatergoers.

Of course it would be a good thing for the author if performances generated money (Oxford certainly needed it), but as Shapiro points out, while the publication of the plays might establish in the public mind the name William Shakespeare, the author would not derive any income from those publications directly. The "copyrights" (it's misleading to think of copyright as the term is now used) would belong to the Chamberlain's Men, not the author, whoever he was. The motive for reworking and rewriting plays so that they become not only an afternoon's pastime but also lasting literature would not be money. It is directly related to the question of the author's audience.

Shapiro gives the impression that Shakespeare must have written either for his contemporaries or for posterity. For all of his pseudo-learned labeling of Shakespeare as an "early modern writer," he pays scant attention to the influence of printing on writers of the time. Plays performed at public theaters could influence

the thought and behavior of an audience that included illiterates as well as the learned. Shakespeare clearly wrote for his contemporaries who made up an audience and would wish to have something for all of them in his plays. On the other hand, he was aware that the writers of the ancient world spoke to him, even though they had written long before the invention to the printing press. Because of the press' ability to make multiple identical copies of a text, increasing the likelihood that his own voice might reach future readers, he also wrote for them. He said as much: "Not monuments, nor the gilded palaces/Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme."

Shapiro gives the impression that Shakespeare must have written his sonnets either as autobiography ("a very modern thing to do," he says) or, in the words of Giles Fletcher, "only to try my humour." It is ridiculous to suggest that Shakespeare's sonnets are autobiographical in the sense that he wrote his entire life story in them. On the other hand, it is much more ridiculous to insist they are works of fiction—expressing feelings the author never felt, written to people who did not exist while assuming a mask, a persona, and not speaking in his own voice. It is far more reasonable to think that a poet might well use sonnets in much the same way that Montaigne in France used the essay—writing to understand himself and his situation and to relieve his feelings.

"That time of year thou may'st in me behold" is not the kind of line that was written to begin a sonnet that had no contact with the poet's life and did not have as its primary audience the 'thou' being addressed. It is not reasonable to think it was written merely to try one's humor with one eye on the possibility of selling it to Thomas Thorpe more than a decade after the fad for sonnet sequences had peaked. I also think Thorpe's use of the words "ever-living" to describe the author means—as Looney said in 1920—that the author was dead by 1609.

It is worth pointing out that Shapiro refers to Sidney 's sonnet sequence *Astrophel and Stella* without considering the question of whether it is "autobiographical." It is enough to say that Sidney did not realize that he was an early modern writer when he concluded a sonnet on how to go about writing with "'Fool,' said my Muse to me, 'look in thy heart and write.'" Peter Moore shows that the "conspiracy of silence" concerning the identification of Stella as Lady Penelope Rich was maintained until 1691, and the evidence to establish that identification was not pieced together into a persuasive argument by scholars until the mid-nineteenth century, that is, until the time when the authorship question really began.

Moore appropriately ends his piece: "The Stella cover-up offers remarkable parallels to what we infer concerning the Earl of Oxford and William Shakespeare. It should become the standard response to sneers about conspiracy theories." (See "The Stella Cover-Up" in Peter R. Moore, *The Lame Storyteller, Poor and Despised*.) It should also be noted that Sidney's sonnet sequence was not published until after his death. The sonnets had circulated in manuscript until then, a practice that separated Sidney, a knight and courtier, from poets who published their sonnet sequences in their lifetimes, but also a practice that connected Elizabethan court poets with those of the reign of Henry VIII, especially Wyatt and Surrey, the first English sonneteers and translators or adapters of Petrarch.

Shapiro's passage on the sonnets also raises the question of censorhip in Shakespeare's time. He says that Giles Fletcher took to writing sonnets for a practical, political reason: "Fletcher had hoped to write a history of Elizabeth 's reign, but shelved plans for that after Lord Burghley refused to approve such a politically sensitive project."

Shapiro does not pause here to point out that the statesman engaging in this quasi-official censorship—"Hark, a word in your ear!"—was William Cecil, Lord Burghley, the father-in-law of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and the contemporary of Shakespeare, who is widely thought to be the model for Polonius by both Stratfordians and Oxfordians. Shapiro is naturally opposed to identifying actual people as models for fictional characters in plays— according to him, early modern writers just didn't do such things and we only think they did because modern writers do and we are used to reading modern writers.

It is almost as important to remember the tendency of human nature to stay fundamentally the same as it is to be aware that the sameness expresses itself in different ways in different times and places. Printing permitted writers to deal with potential censors by the use of pen names. If the identity of Stella provides one parallel with the authorship question, the scholarship that has tried to determine the identity of Martin Mar-prelate is another. The Martin Mar-prelate pamphlets first appeared at about the time Shakespeare is traditionally thought to have turned up in London and begun his career in the theater.

While I have not kept up with the literature on the subject, I remember once being almost certain that Martin Mar-prelate was the pen name of John Penry, a Welsh priest who worked hard for the poor of Wales. Further reading made it seem more likely that Penry served as compositor and editor, and was active in hiding the press that produced the pamphlets by moving it around the countryside; the texts were written by another man who could stay put and had more leisure and whose wit and style matched that of the pamphlets. In any case, the unmasking of this Elizabethan writer continues to this day. If it is hard to reach consensus on who Martin Mar-prelate was, it is not surprising that it is difficult to reach agreement on who Shakespeare was. But the first step is to admit the possibility that the name could be a pen name.

Shapiro misrepresents Looney most when he discusses Shakespeare's attitude toward money. He says that Looney took a large, general position on the relationship between money and writing, that he believes "great authors don't write for money." Although this remains a widely held view, a commonplace, I don't recall Looney saying anything of the kind. In fact, Looney went out of his way to make the point that money deserves respect as an important social convenience.

There is nothing in Looney's "retrograde vision" that calls for a return to the barter system. Looney also points out that there are times in history when too great a concern with money and its accumulation throws society out of whack, throws the time out of joint, and that Shakespeare lived in such a time. The contempt expressed in the plays for money and those who give it too much attention is not merely an expression of aristocratic disdain, but rather a recognition that its overemphasis does

social harm, preventing the efficient flow and distribution of the good things in life. He recognized that an excessive generosity, an overt carelessness about what others worried over and clung to, was the way to counter this social harm, even if it meant others would think the spendthrift a fool. Shakespeare gives voice to the attitude with the words, "Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost."

The speech Looney focused on is Polonius's advice to Laertes with its famous phrase, "Neither a borrower nor a lender be." He chose it because it used to be taught as an expression of Shakespeare's own philosophy, not the philosophy of Polonius, a character in a play. As Looney showed, Polonius's attitude toward money was connected with individualism of a particular kind, the kind embodied in the words that high school students used to memorize: "To thine own self be true …and thou can'st not be false to any man." As Looney showed, however, if you are true only to yourself, you cannot be true to anyone who disagrees with you or differs from you.

In short, Looney used this speech to show that Shakespeare recognized that too great a concern for money and too great a concern for self did harm to society. The opposite of Polonius in the play is, of course, Hamlet. He reflects his attitude toward money when he bitterly mutters "Thrift, thrift, Horatio," as a sardonic way to tell his friend why his mother married his uncle so soon after his father's death—using the food purchased for the funeral of his father to feed the guests at their wedding. The contrast between Polonius and Hamlet on the question of the use of money is reflected in the way they would treat the players when they arrive. Hamlet urges Polonius to "see them well bestowed" and let them "be well used." Polonius counters that he "will use them according to their desert" and so gives Hamlet (and us if we are willing to learn) a chance to instruct Polonius:

> God's bodkin, man much better! Use every man after his desert and who shall scape whipping? Use them after your own honor and dignity. The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty.

Shapiro is clearly put off and misled by Looney's language. Looney uses words like "noble" and "ideal," and opposes what he calls materialism. But the materialist, Karl Marx, thought along lines similar to those of Looney so far as the question of Shakespeare on money is concerned. The early biographer of Marx Franz Mehring says that Marx did not let his sympathy for the working class prejudice him against Shakespeare's aristocratic outlook; Marx himself used speeches from *Timon of Athens* to analyze the social harm the misuse of money can do. Looney did not, like Marx, call for the abolition of money. He simply wanted to see humankind take a rational approach to the use of it as an instrument of social convenience. It was the revolutionary socialist William Morris, not Looney, who pictured a medieval utopian future that flourished without money or machinery.

We seem to be getting far afield from the Shakespeare authorship question, but that is as it should be. As Delia Bacon first argued, the question arose because the misidentification of the author kept readers and playgoers from seeing and learning fully what is in the plays. Professor Shapiro himself provides a good example.

In *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599*, Shapiro has little patience with, and in fact attacked, Edmund Spenser for his service to the Elizabethan state in Ireland:

> Where Shakespeare had purchased a house in his native Stratford, Spenser had moved into a castle on stolen Irish land. And what had it got him? It's hard not to conclude that for Shakespeare, Spenser had built on sand. Premature interment at Chaucer's feet was poor compensation for so badly misreading history. Spenser had rewritten the course of English epic and pastoral. Shakespeare would soon enough take a turn at rewriting each in *Henry the Fifth* and *As You Like It*—and would have appreciated the vote of confidence in an anonymous university play staged later this year in which a character announces: "Let this duncified world esteem of Spenser and Chaucer, I'll worship sweet Mr. Shakespeare."

It is not just that Shapiro here provides evidence that Shakespeare worship did not start in the eighteenth century and usher in a history of error of which the authorship question is a part; he establishes a false opposition between Spenser and Shakespeare and suggests we must choose one or the other. He is aware that Shakespeare paid tribute to Spenser in sonnet 106 (or at least he thought so in the bad old days when he wrote *1599*, and still thought early modern writers might express real emotions about real people). But he also insists: "Spenser …had chosen paths Shakespeare had rejected. He had pursued his poetic fortune through aristocratic—even royal—patronage…."

Shapiro's Shakespeare is the opposite of Looney's—anti-aristocratic, anti-feudal, untainted by Catholicism, and able to avoid the yoke of patronage and to flourish thanks to the capitalism that was breaking up the old establishment and offering opportunities to a clever, energetic man with a grammar school education who became an entrepreneur in a new but rapidly growing entertainment business. In Looney's time, people worried about misreading history for fear the human race would be doomed to repeat; in our time misreading history might lead an individual to miss a career opportunity. It is Shapiro's self-identification with his Shakespeare that causes him to misrepresent Looney to such an extent that it almost constitutes character assassination.

Shapiro says that Looney suggests that Shylock was modeled on William Shakspere of Stratford. I have no recollection of any such suggestion and when I briefly tried to find it I couldn't. That doesn't mean it isn't there. Whenever I reread Looney I am surprised at the things I've forgotten—although I've never thought of *Shakespeare Identified* as my bible, as Shapiro insists all Oxfordians do.

But I do recall that even though my teacher and friend, Bronson Feldman, thought it likely that Oxford had been forced to humiliate himself by borrowing money from Will Shakspere, he said and wrote that Shylock was based on Michael Lok, a merchant (Lok's father had been Henry VIII's mercer) who was ruined by

investing in Frobisher's voyages in search of a northwest passage to India and China. The Queen and Burghley contributed to Lok's ruin by refusing to pay promised amounts when the search proved futile. Lok was placed in a debtor's cell in the Fleet and his children were forced to beg in the streets. By 1596, Lok was indeed a merchant in Venice, trading with what was then called the Levant, and writing to Elizabeth to commend yet another chance to invest in an adventure that promised to produce fabulous riches. Oxford was also a big loser through investments in Frobisher's voyages; Feldman, in his *Hamlet Himself,* finds these losses reflected in Hamlet being "but mad north-north west…." In any case, it is this, along with Looney's view that Shakespeare combined Catholic leanings with skepticism, that leads Shapiro to take a pronounced interest in Looney's statements about Jews.

This explains Shapiro's devoting the first section of his chapter on Oxford to Freud. Rather than considering Sigmund Freud as an Oxfordian in the context of Looney, which follows the historical evidence, Looney's Oxfordian theory is presented in a Freudian context. Shapiro feels obliged to explain why "one of the great modern minds turned against Shakespeare." Clinging to the belief that that anyone who thinks that the name William Shakespeare may have been a pen name is "turning against Shakespeare" would be funny if it didn't cause so much harm — especially to Professor Shapiro himself, but also to anyone who is silly enough to take this accusation seriously. I quote the relevant passage from *Contested Will*:

> Looney's daughter, Mrs. Evelyn Bodell, reported that a few days before he died on 17 January 1944, her father confided, "My great aim in life has been to work for the religious and moral unity of mankind; and along with this, in later years, there has been my desire to see Edward de Vere established as the author of the Shakespearean plays—and the Jewish problem settled." This last phrase can be easily misread, especially in 1944 when it was becoming clearer what horrors the Nazis had inflicted on the Jews (among the victims were four of Freud's five sisters, who died in extermination camps). What Looney meant by this is clarified in a letter he sent to Freud in July 1938, shortly after he had fled Vienna and arrived in London. Rather than discussing the Shakespeare problem, Looney wanted to enlist Freud's support in resolving the Jewish one. He explains that he writes as a Positivist, as a nationalist, and as someone with no quarrel with dictatorship.

While highly critical of the Nazis, Looney is also impatient with the Jews' refusal to abandon their racial distinctiveness and assimilate fully into the nation-states in which they lived— the ultimate source, to Looney, of their persecution. He rejects the possibility of a Jewish homeland as impractical; the only solution, from his Positivist perspective, is their "fusion," which, sooner or later, "must come." Looney might have added that Oxford had foreseen as much in having both Shylock and Jessica "fuse" through conversion with the dominant Venetian society by the end of *The Merchant*

of Venice. Looney was consistent to the end. He had begun his authorship quest decades earlier, after equating Shakespeare of Stratford's "acquisitive disposition" and "habitual petty money transactions" with Shylock's. For Looney, the idea that a money-hungry author had written the great plays was impossible. His originality, then, was in suggesting that while Shakespeare of Stratford was portrayed in Shylock, the play's true author, the Earl of Oxford, had painted his self-portrait in Antonio. Looney's solution to the authorship problem, like the solution of the play's "Jewish problem," and indeed, "the religious and moral unity of mankind," was of a piece.

I regret that Professor Shapiro chose not to include the letter that Looney wrote to Freud in July 1938. There is no way to be sure that Looney's mind had not been changed or at least influenced by events that occurred between July 1938 and January 1944. He wrote Freud before the Kristallnacht pogrom of November 9-10, 1938, when a hundred Jews were killed and 177 synagogues were burned down and destroyed. Futhermore, whatever Looney wrote Freud, it did not seem to affect their relationship or cause Freud to change his mind about Looney's solution to the authorship question. More to the point, Shapiro does publish another statement, but separates it from his discussion of the subject and banishes it to his Bibliographical Essay. This statement of Looney's dates from June 10, 1939 and reflects his idea that politics, like money, was a social convenience that should be treated with respect but not overemphasized:

> To me, however, it does not appear to be a struggle between democracy and and dictatorship so much as between material force and spiritual interests. In the centuries that lie ahead, when the words Nazi and Hitler are remembered only with feelings of disgust and aversion and as synonyms for cruelty and bad faith, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Tennyson & Shelly [sic] will continue to be honoured as expressions of what is most enduring and characteristic of Humanity.

Shapiro's legitimate but piddling use of the bracketed "sic" here is the result of his consulting a reprinted version of the statement rather than any difficulty on Looney's part to spell Shelley's name correctly. It is also worth pointing out that Looney made this statement months before the pact between Hitler and Stalin and the start of World War II in Europe on September 1, 1939, with the Nazi invasion of Poland. Sixteen days later the Soviets invaded Poland from the east. The next year, on April 23, 1940, the Nazis staged an official birthday celebration for William Shakespeare in Weimar. Being a Stratfordian is no guarantee of an enlightened outlook.

In the end, no matter what Looney's opinions were, those who share his view on the identity of Shakespeare do not necessarily share his opinion on any other subject. But to smear indiscriminately all Oxfordians is precisely Shapiro's aim:

> Looney's Oxfordianism was a package deal. You couldn't easily accept the candidate but reject the method. You also had to accept

> a portrait of the artist concocted largely of fantasy and projection, one wildly at odds with the facts of Edward de Vere's life. Looney had concluded that the story of the plays' authorship and the feudal, antidemocratic, and deeply authoritarian values of those plays were inseparable; to accept his solution to the authorship controversy meant subscribing to this troubling assumption as well.

Shapiro substitutes this attempt to smear all present and future Oxfordians for a rational refutation of a rational case. A key to the approach is his reliance for the facts of Oxford's life on Alan Nelson's *Monstrous Adversary*. Shapiro says Nelson's description of Oxford's life is harsh and authoritative, which must be Stratfordian for malicious and untrustworthy. It is clear that Shapiro and Nelson, the good cop/bad cop of academic Shakespearean studies, represent a new phase in the history of the authorship controversy. First silence, then ridicule, and now attack—the academic Stratfordians have exhausted the three main ways that people in power use to respond to threatening ideas. What should we expect from them next?

Shapiro has already announced his next book, *The Year of Lear: 1606*, a title that brings up another way he misrepresents Looney's work. He writes:

> The greatest challenge Looney had to meet was the problem of Oxford's death in 1604, since so many of Shakespeare's great Jacobean plays were not yet written, including *Macbeth, King Lear, Coriolanus, Antony and Cleopatra, Timon of Athens, Pericles, The Winter's Tale, Cymbeline*, and *Henry the Eighth*. Looney concluded that these plays were written before Oxford died (and posthumously released one by one to the play-going public) or left incomplete and touched up by lesser writers (which explains why they contain allusions to sources or events that took place after Oxford had died). It was a canny two-part strategy, one that could refute almost any counterclaim.

The last sentence offers another reason for Shapiro's complete misunderstanding of Looney's work and character. Looney was neither a professor with a strategy for shaking grants and fellowships from the academic plum tree nor a faculty advisor to a debating team who wished to train students to win arguments whether they believed what they were saying or not. He was making a serious effort to understand questions that had made chaos of Shakespearean studies, chaos that continues to this day and supports armies of academics. Professor Shapiro states as a fact that these plays were written after Oxford's death; his adherence to the Stratford cult means that he must follow the chronology of the plays established by E.K. Chambers (or a variation of it concocted to keep the dates extending beyond Oxford's lifetime).

Looney, alas, did not live long enough to learn the revealed truth according to Chambers and so had to stumble along in the dark, relying on the authorities who had tackled the subject up to his own time and on his own good common sense

and honesty. Based on subject matter, versification, and a sense of the playwright's development, Looney argued that a number of these so-called late plays had much more in common with early ones than with those that were certainly late. *The Winter's Tale* and *Pericles*, for instance, seem more at home with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* rather than with *Macbeth*. No less an authority than the English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge had proposed a similar grouping of the plays, as Shapiro knows because he reports on it. Coleridge's view does not mean much to Shapiro, though, because he was only a poet, not a professional Shakespeare scholar.

Before Shapiro rushes into print insisting that *King Lear* was written in 1606, I hope he will read Abraham Bronson Feldman's evidence showing that Robert Armin, the clown thought to have played Lear's fool, was a servant of the Earl of Oxford. Armin wrote that he served a Lord in Hackney; Feldman argued, persuasively to my mind, that the only Lord then living in Hackney who had connections with the theater was Oxford.

In *1599* Shapiro deals effectively with the shift in the Lord Chamberlain's men that took place when William Kemp, the dancer and comedian, left the company and was replaced by Armin. He shows how this change in personnel was reflected in a shift in Shakespeare's comic roles and convincingly argues that the author had to be familiar with the actors' strengths and weaknesses to write parts that would make the most of their talents. If I'm not mistaken, Alan Nelson in his *Monstrous Adversary* showed that when Kemp was a servant of the Earl of Leicester he crossed paths with Oxford in Holland.

If Shapiro gives himself a chance, he might come to imagine that those visits of the clown to King's Place to divert his master, when his master was drawing closer to death, might make a more likely source for the relationship between Lear and his fool than anything going on in 1606. By the way, Lear's allowing the fool to enter the hut and escape the storm before he himself did, shows what Looney meant by the feudal ideal—the strong and powerful feeling duty bound to protect the weak and helpless.

Stratfordians refused to consider this kind of thing—Feldman first published his evidence in the fall 1947 *Shakespeare Fellowship Quarterly*—because they mixed it up with another quibble over names. I hate to think how much ink has been spilt to try to show either that Oxford as Lord Great Chamberlain could not have been the patron of the Lord Chamberlain's players, or that because various other courtiers held the title Lord Chamberlain, it was impossible for Oxford to have had any role or influence in it. If Burghley could keep a man from writing a book with a word, Oxford and his friends could easily have arranged for Oxford to write for and work with the players whether they wore his livery or another's. It is in this company or cry of players, that included both Robert Armin and William Shakspere and maintained its links with their Lord in Hackney, that we can start to understand the ground which might lead to a resolution of the authorship problem.

William Shakspere could buy New Place in Stratford in 1597 and go back and forth from Stratford to London while working in the theater and Edward de Vere, earl of Oxford, could reside at King's Place and write and revise plays and work with the players in much the same way that Hamlet does. But for work to progress in that

direction, it will be necessary to stop treating the authorship question as a religious quarrel, demonizing those with differing views, and instead admit that we are all ignorant despite our best efforts, but that if we work together while on this whirling mud ball, moving through infinite space, we just might leave the next generation a little less ignorant. To my mind, the hero of *Contested Will* is the fourth-grader, who asked: "My brother told me that Shakespeare really didn't write *Romeo and Juliet*. Is that true?" That youngster can serve as a model of scholarship — he cited his source, quoted him fully and accurately, and then asked the most relevant follow up question. Professor Shapiro doesn't tell us how he responded, and that might be just as well. But if he goes ahead with his *Year of Lear: 1606*, I hope he'll have the good fortune to run into a kid who will raise his hand and say, "My brother told me William Shakespeare died in 1604 and you believe he wrote a play in 1606. Is that true?"

I write this in memory of Charles Wisner Barrell, Craig Huston, Ruth Loyd Miller, and Bronson Feldman.

Othello the Moor of Venice
by William Shakespeare
Fully annotated from an Oxfordian Perspective
by Ren Draya and Richard F. Whalen
The Oxfordian Shakespeare Series
Truro MA: Horatio Editions – Llumina Press , 2010
Iv + 309 pages.. $16.95

Reviewed by Felicia Londré

The appearance of this second volume in the Oxfordian Shakespeare Series significantly advances one of the most important projects envisioned by proponents of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, as the author of the Shakespeare plays and sonnets. The stated aim of the series is to draw upon the wealth of both Oxfordian and Stratfordian scholarship to correlate evidence of Oxford's authorship with the texts of the plays "for better understanding of the author's intention and design" and of the plays themselves (1). The choice of *Othello* to follow the series' inaugural volume, *Macbeth*, is interesting not only because *Othello* is among Shakespeare's "top ten" most read and staged plays, but also because it is less obvious as a source of Oxfordian allusions than such works as *Hamlet* or *Twelfth Night*.

Each of the first two Oxfordian volumes includes a preface, a ten-page overview of the dramatist's life and the context for his work, a list of basic Oxfordian works for further reading, acknowledgments, a note on the texts, an introduction to the specific play, and the play itself with commentary. The *Macbeth* volume concludes with a reprinted essay, but the *Othello* volume offers an additional fifty pages of excellent material on dating the work, on the military and musical knowledge evident in it as well as demonstrable firsthand knowledge of the layout of the port and battlements of Famagusta on Cyprus. Most importantly, it includes an annotated bibliography of works pertaining to *Othello*.

The heart of the matter, the play with commentary, is accessibly presented with the text and line-referenced commentary on facing pages. This presentation is much easier to read with minimal interruption of the flow of the play than are those editions with bottom-of-the-page notes. Only in Act 2 does a glitch propel the notes for the last four lines of the text onto the subsequent page of notes. How good is the commentary? It definitely succeeds in enhancing the reader's understanding of "the author's intention and design" for more insightful appreciation of the play. The notes occasionally acknowledge scholarly disagreement about the meaning of a term or phrase; they explain archaic references; they recognize skillfully deployed literary or theatrical devices; they offer anecdotal context on topics ranging from historical events to Renaissance courtly manners. By my rough count, approximately 65 notes

refer to Oxford in some capacity; few of these are so compelling that they drive home the authorship point, but they add up to a well-laid foundation.

The major thematic thread from the introductory essay on influences and sources and throughout the commentary is a claim for the play's affinity with the Italian *commedia dell'arte*, the improvised comedy of stock characters that flourished in Italy circa 1550-1750. Iago functions as the equivalent of various *zanni* figures, comic servants who move the action along, helping or hindering the aristocratic *innamorati* like Othello and Desdemona. Iago notably is an improviser, whose evil goal is achieved opportunistically. Editors Draya and Whalen also designate Othello as a swaggering *Capitano*, Desdemona's father Brabantio as the talkative old Venetian merchant Pantalone, and Cassio as Pedrolino. The latter identification seems forced in that the whiteface clown Pedrolino was usually a mute character, whereas the commentary signals Cassio's florid or formal speech patterns. The importance of the play's ties to *commedia dell'arte* (referenced in approximately 25 notes) is to show comedic devices innovatively applied to tragedy, as well as to underscore Oxford's exposure to and awareness of all things Italian long before such cultural referents had become known in England. The standard approach is to see Iago as a descendant of the Vice figure in medieval morality plays, but that identification is not here taken into account. It should be noted also that the essay on influences and sources ends abruptly, as if a concluding paragraph had been inadvertently omitted.

If suggestions are in order for future volumes, mine would be to amplify the documentation. For example, note 319 in Act 1 defines "scion" and goes on to tie Iago's phrase "sect or scion" to the late 1570s Family of Love, adding details that appear in Ruth Loyd Miller's essay on that sect in Eva Turner Clark's *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays*. A scholar would want to trace that information to Miller's essay or other source. Yes, Miller's essay is listed in one of the bibliographies, but there is no way for an interested reader to make the connection. Related problems are the scattered bibliographies (pages 15, 291, 299, 304-8) and bibliographical omissions. The text of the essay on military matters, for example, refers to works by Virginia Mason Vaughn, Jorgensen, and C. F. Burgess that do not correspond to any complete citation.

The three short essays, listed as appendices, on the military, musical, and geographical knowledge that permeates *Othello* do most of the work in conveying the arguments for Oxford's authorship of the play. While still serving the goal of illuminating "the author's intention and design," this material would probably be more convincing to an authorship agnostic than some of the same points made more cursorily in the commentaries. It cannot be expected that any one volume in this series would win converts to the Oxfordian view, but this one does make its solid contribution to the larger mass of evidence.

Shakespeare and Garrick

By Vanessa Cunningham

Cambridge University Press, 2008, 250 pages, $90.00

Reviewed by Sky Gilbert

Like most satisfactory scholarly works, Vanessa Cunningham's *Shakespeare and Garrick* sets modest goals and achieves it. For instance, she introduces her book by saying: "By the end of the [18th] century alteration in the sense of rewriting had virtually ceased. How Garrick both accelerated and retarded this change will be explored below" (12). Though Cunningham succeeds in presenting an in depth exploration of Garrick's alterations to Shakespeare, her defense of Garrick is significantly flawed. However, Cunningham's extensive research on Garrick should be of special interest to Oxfordians.

The famous 18th century actor and editor of Shakespeare, David Garrick (1717-1779), is a controversial figure. *Shakespeare and Garrick* attempts not only to explore his career but to rescue him from infamy. Cunningham says, "He is today both praised for restoring the plays and condemned for presenting travesties" (7). She goes on to say, "Seeing Garrick as either rescuer or false priest – both are distorted" (10-11). It is perhaps more difficult for modern Shakespeare enthusiasts to see Garrick as a rescuer, for what are we to think today of a man who cut and added to Shakespeare's plays to the point of significantly rewriting them?

Cunningham's defense of Garrick must be seen in the context of historiography and performance theory, for she not only challenges conventional historical wisdom (i.e., the dismissal of Garrick as someone who misrepresented Shakespeare's texts), she also uses contemporary performance theory in Garrick's defense. According to Cunningham, Garrick was not merely a man of his own day; he is a man of ours. In defense of Garrick, Cunningham quotes from Stephen Orgel: "Orgel in fact, has argued that the early modern 'scripts for performance were intended to be fluid and were constantly adapted by actors, authorial authenticity in a single text only being an issue when plays were to be published'" (11). Orgel is, of course, arguing as a New Historicist, attempting to put Shakespeare's text into the sociopolitical context of his day. However, Cunningham goes on to suggest that though the differences between the many quartos and folios that have come down to us suggest that Shakespeare's original texts may have been somewhat fluid, theatrical "texts" are *by nature* fluid, as Garrick was "only doing what acting companies (including Shakespeare's) have always done, and some still continue to do."

Cunningham's definition of theater is a truly contemporary one. In the

last twenty years, performance theorists have argued that we cannot study plays without researching their performance history, and that what we read on the page is only a blueprint for what a play might be, because a play can only be realized in performance. The Oxford Shakespeare has moved in this direction; a significant portion of each of its most recent scholarly introductions has been devoted to performance history of the plays. Patrice Pavis, in his *Dictionary of Theatre* (1999), defines a play in terms of a "situation of enunciation"—in other words, a performance—suggesting a play is not merely a written or published text:

> In his reading of the text, the director seeks out a situation in which the characters' utterances, the stage directions, and the director's own commentary on the text can be given concrete expression. The director's dramaturgical analysis exists only once it is given concrete expression in the play on stage, using space, time and the materials and actors. Such is stage enunciation: bringing into play all the scenic and dramaturgical elements deemed useful for the production of meaning....
> (338)

Cunningham validates Garrick's rewriting of Shakespeare as part of the fluid process that defines theater. Though the "final text" of a novel is generally the published text, plays, on the other hand, are "rewritten" each time they are performed, by the director and actors—depending on how they interpret them for an audience. According to this definition of theater, Garrick's editorial changes become an aspect of performance.

But Cunningham points out that, although a fluid concept of theater dominated English stage from the early modern through most of the 18th century, this approach suddenly became much less popular in the period after Garrick's death, when interpretations of Shakespeare moved from the stage to the page. Cunningham traces this transformation in detail through the 18th century theatrical and literary scene of London, and points to the publication of Malone's landmark sixteen-volume edition of Shakespeare's plays in 1790 as a turning point. She is right to remind us that before Malone, Garrick's drastic editorial changes may have been received by the theatergoing public as truth, whereas after the move from "stage to page" scholars began to claim ownership of Shakespeare's texts. Cunningham's non-judgmental presentation of this important historical shift is valuable because it forces us to examine the contradictions in the modern paradigm of Shakespeare scholarship that generally go unquestioned. For although some scholars may spout performance theory, overwhelmingly they still believe that it is primarily their job—not an actor or director's job—to discover what a "real" Shakespeare text might be. Their methodology for discovering the "real" text is, of course, not to revise it in production as Garrick did, but to analyze the various contradictory quartos and folios in the study.

Is Cunningham's relativist defense of Garrick valid? Is it up to each generation to

recreate the texts through performance? Or is there a "true" Shakespeare text that is alternately subverted or misinterpreted by different generations of stage directors? On one hand, I cannot agree with contemporary scholars who see it as their vocation to police a "true" text and protect it from bastardization. The task of discovering what Shakespeare actually wrote may well be as huge a challenge as discovering who he actually was. I think scholars may ultimately have more luck with the latter than with the former. It is virtually impossible to discern what is—in any given case—Shakespeare's "true" text, because the folios and quartos are endlessly contradictory concerning certain words and phrases. More significantly, Shakespeare's poetry is fundamentally polysemous. In other words, Shakespeare wrote at a time when the English language was in flux, and meanings were fluid. He also wrote in a style that has its basis in wordplay (i.e., in shifting meanings). Thus, attempts to discover what any specific "true" Shakespeare text is, may, in fact, be running counter to the nature of the work.

Though Cunningham's justification of Garrick seems to support the essentially polysemous nature of Shakespeare's text, it contains a paradox. For she is not merely speaking of the essential fluidity of Shakespeare's texts, she believes, like Orgel (and Pavis), that plays are essentially fluid, that their meanings change with every production's interpretation. But why does Cunningham cite Garrick as one who precipitated this fluidity? On the contrary, Garrick—though he drastically revised what many now consider to be the "true" texts—was a director relentlessly devoted to fixing the meaning of Shakespeare's work. Theater's transhistorical fluidity (as claimed by Cunningham through her citing of Orgel) is a pleasant enough concept, but in actuality has little to do with the realities of playmaking. Though the meanings of plays may change from one decade to the next, actor/manager/director/dramaturges like Garrick—and modern day conceptual directors—attempt to fix the meanings of plays once each time they direct. Most performances, in contrast to confirming a text's "fluidity," constitute instead a perhaps hopeless quest to produce a definitive interpretation. Cunningham has borrowed this contradiction from Orgel and performance theory: the aspect of theater which performance theorists use to prove its fluidity—i.e., the fact that it is open to directorial interpretation—is, in actual practice, an activity deeply related to fixing the meaning of the text once and for all. Garrick's attempts to rewrite Shakespeare were attempts to congeal the meaning of Shakespeare's expansive texts. In this respect, he has more in common with 20th century scholars than Cunningham allows.

Cunningham's exhaustive research and detailed observations concerning Garrick's interpretations of the plays have interesting implications for Oxfordians, mainly because many of the misconceptions that were fostered by Garrick have found their way into present-day Stratfordian approaches to Shakespeare. For instance, the wisdom that informs many of the pronouncements made by present day Shakespeare experts like Harold Bloom may well find their seeds in Garrick's work.

Bardolatry is a good example. Garrick was one of the most famous Shakespeare enthusiasts to treat the author as God. Cunningham quotes Susan Green describing Garrick's performance of his "Ode to Shakespeare" — first performed at the Jubilee

at Stratford (to coincide with the erection of a statue to Shakespeare) in 1796: "Most scholars agree that English Bardolatry was affirmed when Garrick held his grandiose, but hilariously tawdry deification of the Bard at his jubilee" (107). Cunningham's description of the actual content of the Ode (which was a speech accompanied, recitative style, by music) is revealing:

> Shakespeare is celebrated for his 'wonder-teaming mind' and ability to 'raise other worlds and beings '(lines 66-67). He is nature's heir, admired for his control of the 'subject passions' (line 81). Shakespeare even has the god-like power to force the 'guilty lawless tribe' (line 102), like Claudius to confess concealed sins: 'Out bursts the penitential tear!/ The look appall'd the crime reveals' (lines 108-109). Shakespeare ('first of poets, best of men,' line 288) is a moral force for good.
>
> (110)

Garrick's *Macbeth* is a case in point. The new lines that Garrick wrote for Macbeth's death scene are Christian in a melodramatic and moralistic way that is found nowhere in Shakespeare's texts: "'Tis done! The scene of life will quickly close…Ambitions vain delusive dreams are fled/ And now I wake to darkness, guilt and horror…" (58). But, significantly, Garrick's emphasis on Shakespeare's ability to create moral (and moralistic) characters cannot, according to Garrick, be separated from his virtues as a man.

Another aspect of Garrick's Ode is interesting in relation to modern day bardolatry. Much of Garrick's editorial work, according to Cunningham, was focused on editing wordplay from Shakespeare's texts. In the comedies (and the humor in Shakespeare's tragedies) censorship was necessary because "what was objectionable about the old plays was not the subject matter itself—the perennial themes were sex, class and money—but the crudity of language used to refer to staple plot elements such as cuckoldry and seduction" (27). In *Romeo and Juliet*, much of the sexual joking had to be removed for "the majority of critics of the 18th century deplored Shakespeare's wordplay" (65). The problem with *Romeo and Juliet* was the "quibbles." A quibble was defined as "low conceit depending on the sound of words; a pun" (64). Thus, 830 lines were deleted. Garrick's excisions must be seen in context; the attitude to wordplay in general changed during the 18th century as wit became "kinder and gentler" and critics scorned the excoriations of Restoration comedy. Though at the time this was thought to be merely an emphasis on a different kind of wit, I would submit that it was, in effect, an attack on wit itself—and ultimately a critique of a language-centred theater. As soon as puns and sexual subtext are excised from humor, the polysemous quality of the language is fundamentally challenged.

Essentially, what Garrick did was remove the words that he found obscure or tainted by "double entendre" and replace them with poetry of his own that gave actors (particularly himself) more opportunity to portray the specific moral choices of the character being played. Because Garrick was a theatrical innovator, the new words that he gave himself to speak as Macbeth and Lear were accompanied by what

were considered realistic facial expressions and gestures that articulated the way in which the moral dilemmas of the character found concrete expression. This became his trademark as an actor.

I would suggest that Garrick's emphasis on Shakespeare's character creation and his relatively careless treatment of Shakespeare's language is similar to bardolator Harold Bloom. Bloom's favorite character is undoubtedly Falstaff. And Falstaff was (not coincidentally, I think) the only Shakespeare character to be mentioned in Garrick's Ode. Bloom controversially prefers Falstaff to Hamlet. Perhaps Bloom's choice of Falstaff (like Garrick's) had to do with the fact that Falstaff is a (arguably) kinder, gentler, less morally ambiguous character than Hamlet.

I suggest this because the hallmark of Bloom's Shakespeare criticism is not only his emphasis on Shakespeare's characters but on their moral value, which he singles out over poetry as Shakespeare's most significant contribution to theatrical art, literature, and human consciousness itself. For instance, Bloom says of Falstaff: "Many of us become machines for fulfilling responsibilities; Falstaff is the largest and best reproach we can find. I am aware that I commit the original Sin that all historicists—of all generations—decry, joined by all formalists as well. I exalt Falstaff above his plays" (13-14).

Both Garrick's and Bloom's approaches are, I would suggest, fundamentally moralistic. Both critics (the first of the "stage" and the second of the "page") focus not on Shakespeare as stylist or poet, but instead on Shakespeare as the creator of human beings who teach us about goodness (in Garrick's case) and "humanness" (in Bloom). For Oxfordians the "character obsession" that typifies both approaches is significant because attached to it are spoken or unspoken notions about Shakespeare's essential goodness and/or worthiness as a person. In addition, though we may disagree with Alan Nelson's idea that de Vere was fundamentally "monstrous," most Oxfordians would agree that the very real Edward de Vere was necessarily more complex and less "perfect" than the fantasy of the gentleman farmer and family man created by Stratfordians. Finally, this fantasy came to its first and perhaps most brilliant flowering during the era of a master bardolator named David Garrick.

Works Cited

Bloom, Harold. *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human.* New York, Riverhead Books, 1998.

Cunningham, Vanessa. *Shakespeare and Garrick*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Pavis, Patrice. *Dictionary of Theatre: Terms, Concepts, Analysis*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

The Lame Storyteller
by Peter Moore
Hamburg, Germany: Verlag Uwe Laugwitz, 2009, xvi + 345 pages
Reviewed by Warren Hope

Peter Moore's scholarly essays on Shakespeare are of two types. The first consist of what might best be described as traditional academic Shakespearean studies.

They range from brief notes to full-blown articles that do not touch at all on the authorship question or reveal Moore's view that Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, was Shakespeare. The second type do deal with the authorship question and clearly reflect Moore's position. Gary Goldstein, the book's editor, explains that Moore aimed to establish himself as a traditional Shakespeare scholar in the hope that he would then be able to find a publisher for a book-length manuscript on Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. Although that hope unfortunately went unfulfilled, we are lucky to have this book because it forces us to notice what might otherwise have been missed: Peter Moore is one of the very best Oxfordian scholars to emerge in the last twenty-five years.

Moore's essays on the sonnets show his scope and his method. For instance, these essays tend to confirm the traditional academic consensus that sonnets 1 to 126 are all addressed to the Earl of Southampton. Moore also argues in favor of the idea that the sonnets as arranged in the 1609 edition represent the order of composition of the poems if it is accepted that the poems written to the so-called Dark Lady overlap with some of the poems addressed to the so-called Fair Youth, that is, Southampton. In short, Moore establishes firm common ground with academics in general and Stratfordians in particular and in so doing no doubt does much to attract their attention. It is clear that he actually holds these positions but also that he is as it were avoiding prejudices in the hope that doing so will gain him a hearing from an academic audience.

But Moore sharply parts company with the academics when he proposes that Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, is the so-called Rival Poet of the sonnets. The reason this represents a sharp break with the academics is because part of his motive is to show a dereliction of duty on their part—an irrational unwillingness to consider the possibility that a courtier-poet might be Shakespeare's rival because of assumptions about the identity of Shakespeare. Moore's case for Essex is a relatively strong one that he sums up this way:

> Shakespeare's Sonnets describe a rival who was Southampton's friend, a poet, learned, tall, proud, probably a sailor, who had an affable familiar ghost who dealt in intelligence, who received assistance in his writing from friends whose name makes a plausible Latin pun on Bacon, who

> was associated with the word "virtue" and with cosmetics, who boosted Southampton's fame while being in his debt, and who could be said to have a sick muse. This is quite a detailed portrait, and Essex matches it perfectly.

Fault can be found with this case—Moore fails to quote a single line of Essex's verse in support of his argument—and, oddly enough, Moore is willing to weaken his relatively strong case by pointing out that one of the two poets generally thought of as the rival poet, Marlowe and Chapman, still might be involved. He suggests that Chapman might have written poems to Southampton on Essex's behalf. Moore also states in a footnote, "If the arguments offered in this article in favor of Essex as the Rival are applied one by one to Sir Walter Ralegh, it will be seen that a surprisingly strong case can be made for him as the Rival Poet."

The point, of course, is that the author of the sonnets, the addressee of the sonnets to the Fair Youth, and the Rival Poet are or at least might be all courtiers. In other words, the identification of the Rival Poet was for Moore firmly tied to the authorship question.

For readers of this book to see Moore's position on the sonnets in all of its valuable complexity requires that they connect these articles with "The Fable of the World Twice Told," an essay that deals at length with Oxford's life. In that essay Moore deals in part with Oxford's eldest daughter's marriage to William Stanley, Earl of Derby, and the reports of Stanley's jealousy caused by rumors that the Countess had been unfaithful to her husband with the Earl of Essex. These rumors, reported to Sir Robert Cecil, Oxford's brother-in-law, by spies of Cecil's in the Stanley household, are at once reminiscent of early troubles in Oxford's own marriage to Ann Cecil, the mother of the Countess of Derby, but also open up reconsiderations of some of the sonnets. Moore writes:

> Sonnets 69 and 70 are addressed to "thee," who is said to be the victim of slander, who, however, is partly at fault. Now things get a bit complicated. Shakespeare always addresses the Dark Lady as "thee," but Sonnets 1 to 126 are sometimes to "you" and sometimes to "thee." No one has ever given a good explanation for these pronoun shifts, but some of them could result from a change in the person being addressed. I have always believed that the first 126 Sonnets were to or about the same person, the Earl of Southampton, but Sonnets 69 and 70 can be plausibly explained as to Elizabeth, Countess of Derby.

In short, Moore's acceptance of the traditional academic view of the sonnets is not an unquestioning acceptance of dogma but rather an attempt to accept what seems reasonable unless documentary evidence comes along that suggests an alternative. The neat, simple, and traditional view that the first 126 sonnets are all addressed to the same person, based on a suppression of any concern about the shifting pronouns in those sonnets, is shaken when the idea that two of the sonnets

in the sequence might have been addressed by Oxford to his eldest daughter forces itself on him. The result is not only increased respect for the honesty with which Moore struggled to come to terms with the sonnets, but also increased regret that he did not publish his book-length study of Shakespeare's most personal poems.

Moore also devotes an entire essay to Surrey's writings as a source for two key speeches by Hamlet on the nature of man. Surrey's verse paraphrase of Psalm 8 and a companion poem to it which begins "The storms are past" are shown by Moore to have provided Shakespeare with ideas and words that appear in Hamlet's "quintessence of dust" speech and also the soliloquy by Hamlet beginning, "How all occasions do inform against me." This is solid work that should not only provide notes to future editions of Hamlet but also clarifies some questions concerning when Surrey's pieces were composed. Moore shows that they were written in the tower after he had been convicted of treason and awaited beheading, a position which is at variance with the views of a number of Surrey scholars and editors. And yet this solid work does not yield its full value unless we realize that Moore thinks of Shakespeare as Oxford.

Moore's work on Surrey becomes most valuable when we realize he thinks of Shakespeare as Oxford. Why would William Shaksper of Stratford take so much interest in a courtier who was convicted of treason and beheaded eighteen years before he was born? More importantly, how could William Shaksper of Stratford have gained access to Surrey's manuscripts, as Moore insists Shakespeare must have done? The answers to these questions become irrelevant when it is recognized that Surrey was Oxford's uncle by marriage. Surrey is also credited with "inventing" blank verse in his translations of Virgil and is thought to be the first English poet to have used the verse form that has come to be known as the Shakespearean sonnet. In short, when Moore's work on Surrey is placed in the Oxfordian context it yields its full meaning, value, and importance. We are reminded that J. Thomas Looney said long ago that Elsinore as presented in *Hamlet* is merely Windsor recast—and Windsor was the scene of Surrey's youthful romance with Oxford's aunt.

While it is certainly true that Moore's non-Oxfordian work is valuable in itself—how many scholars can be said to have made points worth remembering about *Hamlet, Lear, Macbeth, Troilus and Cressida*, and the *Sonnets*?—it is also true that Moore's best work is directly related to the authorship question. In part this is a matter of style. Moore is a good polemicist with a strong sense of humor and these pleasurable elements in his work are restrained almost out of existence when he writes for an academic audience. But it is also the case that Moore's Oxfordian work differs in substance as well as style because it is tied to life rather than to philosophy, theology, or verbal echoes and similarities.

The longest essay in the book deals with the chronology of Shakespeare's plays as established by E.K. Chambers long ago. Moore shows that academic, Stratfordian critics have for years lamented that Chambers's dating of the composition of the plays between 1590 and 1613 was too late by a number of years and should be pushed back into the 1580s. Moore also shows that despite these lamentations no academic critic has stopped relying on Chambers or set about replacing his structure

with a sufficiently revised version. Moore possibly thought that here was a chance to find common ground with Stratfordians by suggesting a revision of the Chambers chronology along the lines suggested by Chambers's academic critics. Moore in fact makes a strong case for dating the composition of the plays between 1584 and 1604—dates that are compatible with the authorship of the plays by Oxford and that would pose problems for adherents of the traditional attribution of the plays to William Shaksper of Stratford. In doing so, Moore establishes some probative procedures with regard to trying to settle on the dates of composition of the plays and especially urges extreme care when using topical allusions to date the plays.

Still, it must be said that Moore weakens his effort to establish a chronology for the composition of the plays by staying strictly with Stratfordian sources. For instance, he is correct to argue that Cairncross's *The Problem of Hamlet* (1936) poses severe problems for the traditional date of the composition of *Hamlet*, but he does not draw attention to the fact that J. Thomas Looney made the same point decades before him.

Most importantly, though, Moore is guilty of a fault he would have been quick to find and correct in Chambers. He argues for 1587-1588 as the years of composition for *The Comedy of Errors* based on a topical allusion—the very kind of evidence he appropriately urges others to take care with because they can be introduced in revisions of plays. In arguing for this date, he ignores the existence of a court play from a decade earlier—1576-1577—entitled the *History of Error* and thought by many traditional scholars to have been an anonymous play that Shakespeare revised. As Eva Turner Clark argued, Oxford as Shakespeare could have been the author of this play when William Shaksper was a thirteen-year-old in Stratford. For me, Moore could have strengthened this very valuable essay by being more willing to challenge the traditional attribution of the plays in it.

Moore often regrets his inability to have access to archives in England. Some of the roads of research he suggests make it seem unfortunate that he did not have an academic job with students to supervise. In his essay on the Rival Poet he expressed the thought that the papers of Anthony Bacon or Lord Henry Howard, later the Earl of Northampton, might shed light on Essex's possible connection with Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. When Moore writes about the praise of Oxford by George Chapman he expresses the wish that an Oxfordian scholar in England might locate the manuscript of Chapman's poem in praise of Sir Horace Vere entitled "Pro Vere" in the hope that gaps in the printed version might be filled. He also thought that people with access to rare reference works might be able to find support in Coxeter for J. Thomas Looney's suggestion that Oxford might have had a hand in Arthur Golding's translations of Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. The cooperation between Moore and Alan Nelson temporarily provided him with the access to archives that he had lacked.

The title essay of the volume, "The Lame Storyteller, Poor and Despised," uses Nelson's findings to show that specific phrases in the sonnets that cannot be applied to William Shaksper in any credible way actually depict Oxford's reality. It is perhaps the best piece in the book. If so, a very close second and a solid supplement is Moore's evaluation of the votes for the Order of the Garter that Oxford received over

the years. Moore explains that he had the original and valuable idea that these votes could serve as indicators of the popularity and prestige of courtiers. As a result, he urged Alan Nelson to obtain the records of the votes and grant Moore access to them. Nelson kindly did so, knowing full well that the result was likely to be interpreted as support for Oxford's identity with Shakespeare—and it was. The result was to show that when the Shakespearean plays and poems were becoming public Oxford was virtually an outcast, receiving a single vote for the Garter during the last fourteen years of his life.

It is to Moore's credit that despite his cooperative relationship with Alan Nelson, he pulled no punches when he came to review Nelson's embarrassment *Monstrous Adversary* in a piece with the wonderful title, "Demonography 101." I will not dull the pleasure that awaits Oxfordians who have not yet read this piece by discussing it here. It is enough to say that this piece alone is worth the price of the book. In addition, though, Moore's urging that Oxfordians use the identification of Sidney's Stella with Penelope Rich as a scholarly analogy for the authorship question should be taken up and publicized as much as possible. On the other hand, Moore's admonition that Oxfordian scholarship too often replaces digging in documents with wishful thinking should be heeded as a relevant warning.

Too often the work of Oxfordian scholars is hidden away in tiny periodicals with small readerships, poor production values, and little distribution. It is good that Peter Moore's work has been gathered into a book so that it might reach appreciative readers now and in the future. His work deserves to find its way onto library shelves as well as into the hands of sympathetic readers. All Oxfordians can and should take pride as well as pleasure in it.

Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom:
The True History of Shakespeare and Elizabeth.

NY: Grove Press, 2010. 430 pages.

By Charles Beauclerk

Reviewed by Michael Delahoyde
Washington State University

If conditions are just right in the Shakespeare course I teach — if, after my introduction of the authorship controversy the class discussion has turned toward an interest in royal succession issues in the plays, and we find ourselves reading *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with its chaos generating outward from the fairies' argument over possession of the changeling child — I may inform my students that some Oxfordians subscribe to what is called the Prince Tudor theory. Concerning the notion of Queen Elizabeth's perpetual virginity, I ask, similar to the way Charles Beauclerk puts it, "what if her virginity were just that, an ideal, with no basis in reality: a political front, rather than a biological fact?" (11). I then ask, do we know she never gave birth? After all, Anne Vavasour successfully kept her pregnancy a secret in the court for presumably the full nine months, even without the convenience of being able to duck out of court on progresses into the country. (And check out Gheeraerts' *Portrait of an Unknown Woman*, c. 1594, one of the sixteen pages of color plates included in Beauclerk's book). Could there have been an ultimately unacknowledged Tudor prince?

Maintaining an agnostic stance on Prince Tudor (PT), I tell my students that there are three versions or hypotheses: 1) that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, was the son of Queen Elizabeth, accounting for some of the privilege he enjoyed, the crown signature (87), the Hamlet/Gertrude relationship, etc.; 2) that the Earl of Oxford and Queen Elizabeth were the real parents of the "changeling" Earl of Southampton, which offers explanations for the Sonnets (especially the first seventeen), the motivation behind allegorical elements in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and other works, etc.; and 3) that both propositions 1 and 2 are correct. A few seconds pass as the students continue taking notes until someone looks up and says, "Wait…." Exactly, I nod. "Ew!"

Due to its Ew! factor, that third version of PT would receive little acknowledgment except for its being championed by Charles Beauclerk, who himself would be dismissed by many if he weren't so brilliant, so eloquent, and a descendant of the de Veres. After many years as a lecturer and an Oxfordian mover, shaker, and spearer, Beauclerk has published the first book of any sort since Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* that I was inspired to read through again immediately after finishing it the first time: *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom*.

Like many of us, Beauclerk recognizes the Oxfordian paradigm as the only viable explanation for "Shakespeare" and wants to get on with a deeper understanding rather than to cover the same ground yet again — even the same *kind* of ground — to establish the authorship case; thus he relegates to an introductory chapter such

matters as the visual absurdities of the Droeshout engraving in the First Folio (xi-xiii), the contextualization of Shakespeare in an "authoritarian age" as one reason "writers resort to allegory as a means of disguising and revealing the truth" (xiii), and other accountings for the secrecy surrounding the authorship: "For those at court, his identity was an open secret, which remained concealed from the public at large, rather like Roosevelt's polio during the war, which never leaked into the press but was common knowledge among White House staff.... Exposing the author would have meant exposing his satires of them and their queen" (xv). He bluntly restates the truth that "Nothing in the life of William Shakspere of Stratford illuminates the works he is supposed to have written," and adds an important implication if the works are attributed to the Stratford man: "Thus the plays themselves are reduced to works of fantasy rather than masterpieces of the imagination" (xvii). The latter assertion has grown in importance since the publication of James Shapiro's ludicrous stance in *Contested Will* (2010) that reverence for literary make-believe is tragically sacrificed in the "anti-Stratfordian" tendency to find an author's actual experience imbued in his works; Beauclerk has been addressing this absurdity in his book-tour lectures. After that introductory chapter, Beauclerk will rarely revert to scoring points in the authorship argument itself, except perhaps when the Stratfordian mismatch with the works approaches perfection: e.g., "Despite the upward mobility of Mr. Shakspere of Stratford, the Shakespearean hero finds himself through loss of status, not the reverse" (14).

In *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom*, Beauclerk's "process is to see the works as a single story" (155), and indeed this coalescence of the canon is a conceptual phenomenon experienced gradually by many if not most Shakespeareans as years of involvement and rereading allow the plays and poems to weave themselves into one larger tapestry. The "single story" that Beauclerk undertakes to read out is the one specified in what seems to have been the working title of the book: *Shakespeare's Identity Crisis*. Beauclerk articulates a kind of methodology by urging, "if we take the authorship question itself as our portal and see it as an outgrowth of the author's own identity crisis, we can enter an interpretive space that is both creative and illuminating" (xviii). And indeed, several hundred pages later we will agree with him that "The whole canon dramatizes his [Oxford's] profound sense of loss and disinheritance, and his search for a deeper source of power" (313).

Beauclerk draws a convincing illustration of the Elizabethan court, the breeding-ground, as it were, for Oxford's evolution into a dramatist. "Duplicity, disguise, illusion, double-dealing — these were the tools for survival at court, a theater in which the monarch and her entourage staged themselves to the world" (191). Such a setting makes good sense of Oxford's evolution from lyric poet to dramatist, a facet of artistic biography largely ignored by Oxfordians and about which Beauclerk has much of value to say, revealing what is ultimately a fuller, high-definition portrait of the artist.

> The court of Gloriana was a perpetual theater, the actors and actresses forever 'on' or waiting in the wings, some show or other playing night and

> day for forty-five years.... Elizabeth had always known how to play the role of queen — for her courtiers, for her people, for Europe, for posterity — moving from one mythic persona to the next with the lightning dexterity of a quick-change artist.
>
> (26-27)

In short, "Statecraft and stagecraft were virtually synonymous at the time" (26). It's a crucial realization towards undoing the disastrous work of the Cecils and of misguided posterity in the form of orthodox Shakespeare studies, for, "The effect of separating Shakespeare and Elizabeth, the poet and the queen, is to divorce the artistic life of Elizabethan England from the political, thus neutralizing Shakespeare in affairs of state — depoliticizing him, in other words" (26).

Even more impressive than the restoration of this political/artistic setting, we get in *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom* a better sense of the mind, or psyche, of de Vere than is possible even from Mark Anderson's encyclopedic matching of biographical materials and aspects of the works in *"Shakespeare" by Another Name* (2005). Instead of the literary and experiential sources and details that find their way into the works, Beauclerk emphasizes a coherence in the psychological and creative life of Oxford as (and beyond) "Shakespeare." Although focus remains on the issue of identity, here's a behavioral gem: "Like a firework, he could either light up the sky or go off in your face" (94).

Of course, these praises for Beauclerk's book are destined to be considered a procrastinator's preludes to what many readers know I must confront on-record for the first time: the PT perspective(s). Hesitancies or dreads notwithstanding, I must say that each Prince Tudor component in Beauclerk's reconstruction of "The True History of Shakespeare and Elizabeth" (as the subtitle has it) is disturbingly convincing. Indeed, "Elizabeth's subsequent refusal ever to name an heir becomes more understandable if she had a hidden child of her own, and was in a perpetual quandary over whether or not to shatter her carefully crafted image as the Virgin Queen by revealing him to the world" (39). Elizabeth's family history — "dysfunctional" being gruesomely euphemistic — compounded with several truly weird episodes in her young life make teenage pregnancy very much a possibility. With the proposition that Oxford was Elizabeth's child born in 1548, Beauclerk makes sense of Shakespeare/Oxford's obsessions with identity, name, cuckoldry, etc. "It also explains the extraordinary silence that surrounds his life, as if his very existence were somehow taboo" (224). The motifs in the works to which Shakespeare returns repeatedly

> speak volumes about his own predicament: usurpation of royal right; the fall from grace; loss of power; loss of name; exile; disinheritance; banishment; the alienated courtier; the royal bastard; the concealed heir; the court fool who tells his truth in jest; the hidden man revealed; the lost man found; the poet-prince; the philosopher king.
>
> (156)

It had not registered with me before that "There is no record of Edward's birth in the registers of the time. Instead, we owe the date of his appearance in the world to his future father-in-law, William Cecil, Lord Burghley, who made a note of it more than a quarter century later, as if he needed to remind himself of the official truth" (56). Once again, all missing paper trails lead straight to the "self-appointed historiographer" (6).

The unanswered question for me in this first PT thesis is: where is Seymour? If Oxford came to realize he was not biologically a Vere but the bastard son of Elizabeth and Thomas Seymour, shouldn't we be catching shadowy glimpses in the Shakespeare canon of his real father; shouldn't we witness more beheadings, see more Seymour wordplay? (Or is this not who Oxford thought, or was told, his biological father had been?) Nevertheless, the logic of such a scenario — Oxford as an unacknowledged Tudor prince — accounts both for the substance of many plays and the motivation, or need, for Oxford to write them:

> He cast himself as the hero of the histories in the shape of the maverick heir to the throne, who devises skits on his royal parent, yet metamorphoses into the victor at Agincourt.
> (214)

Beauclerk's perspective explains the inner drive that turned Oxford from lyric poet to playwright, the need to see his own understanding of truths made manifest beyond the page.

The Southampton-focused Prince Tudor hypothesis is a more familiar one in Oxfordian studies. That Southampton was a kind of changeling child, the hidden son of Elizabeth and Oxford from the 1570s, when Oxford was the Queen's supreme favorite, makes a great deal of sense as another component of Beauclerk's understanding of the history. I cannot cling to my agnosticism much longer on this, despite my persistent disappointment that Shakespeare himself ended up devoting his art to someone who ultimately accomplished, and amounted to, nothing. But after learning from the elder Ogburns and the Stratfordian Kristian Smidt to read the plays through the lens of redaction criticism as multi-layered revisions, it becomes difficult not to see them as works originally focused on the young Oxford's issues, later refashioned into works pleading for recognition of Southampton. Like the perspective art that intrigued Shakespeare, Hamlet can seem to represent Oxford from one angle, Southampton from another. So too,

> Prince Hal can stand for both Oxford and Southampton, according to which way one turns the lens. Falstaff is the Oxford who has given up hope of the throne for himself in order to raise up his royal son.
> (347)

Beauclerk's arguments are particularly illuminating with *Hamlet* and *Lear*, each a play that our instincts tell us is a direct *cri de coeur*.

Of course, the multiplication of Princes Tudor necessitates accepting the historical actuality of incest. Yet the Ew! factor becomes a stumbling block not for Beauclerk's analysis, but potentially for his readers. Our impulse is to grasp for alternative explanations that will de-literalize theses implications. I find myself trying to see the first aspect[2] — Elizabeth as Oxford's mother — as metaphorical rather than biological. Could not the Queen, as a 17-years-older authority figure who (if *Venus and Adonis* is any testimony) was the aggressive wooer in what became a sexual relationship, end up *seeming* like a mother figure from our side of the veil of allegorical literature? Still, Beauclerk's perspective remains tenaciously persuasive.

More crucial to the unity and illumination of the Shakespeare works than the historical and biological facets of Beauclerk's thesis is the mythological key by which he unlocks Oxford's psychology. Rather than the Oedipal complex one might expect, "The myth that pierces to the heart of Shakespeare's relationship with Elizabeth is the tale of Actaeon, the hunter who stumbled upon the virgin goddess Diana bathing nude in a woodland pond" (183). This insight alone is transformative to our reading of Shakespeare. I have studied four plays with students in class since reading *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom*, and I have found in each one partial glimpses of the Actaeon myth where I had not noticed it before. Such a result certifies *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom* as representing the very best kind of scholarship.

Elizabeth's refusal to acknowledge Oxford and/or Southampton generates repeated, not-too-hidden appeals in the Shakespeare works, but Beauclerk digs deeper:

> Thus there is no viable path for the succession to follow, no means by which the son might protest or assert his independence. This blocked paternal inheritance forced Shakespeare, like so many of his characters, into the realm of the unconscious, where language resides in its formless state. Here, through a sort of divine dyslexia, he forged for himself a mighty array of brand-new words, which he tipped with chastening fire and shot, Titus-like, into the very citadel of government.
>
> (297)

Beauclerk does not subject readers to psychological jargon, nor does he exploit pop psych notions. Nonetheless, one indication that he has gotten the psychology right is the remarkable correspondence between his perspective and independent insights from psychoanalytic criticism. *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom* supplies explanations for what psychoanalytic criticism finds when it puts Shakespeare "on the couch." Beauclerk's book prompted me finally to act on a long-delayed impulse to do some significant reading in the field. Again and again, psychoanalytic critics who are clearly not Oxfordian, but who also seem to have no interest in the biography of Shakspere to support their findings, reaffirm the centrality of incest and identity issues.

Like the Benezet challenge in which Shakespeare scholars and Oxford scoffers

had difficulty distinguishing between lines from Oxford's early "E.O." poems and lines from Shakespeare, so statements made by psychoanalytic critics of Shakespeare are virtually indistinguishable from statements by Beauclerk. Give it a try: which of the following quotations come from Beauclerk's book and which from psychoanalytic criticism?

1. "In the entire canon, the word 'family' occurs only seven times, three of them, ironically, in *Titus Andronicus*."
2. "Shakespeare's greatest lovers, Antony and Cleopatra, are adulterers; and the nearest he gets to a happy married couple are the psychopathic Macbeths."
3. "He [Shakespeare] was also curiously restrained in his depictions of what it is actually like to be the son or daughter of parents or vice versa, i.e., to live within a family structure."
4. "no one can deny that mistaken identity, concealed identity, loss of identity, and enforced anonymity are major themes in the works of this most celebrated poet-dramatist."
5. "We could say that his dilemma and his achievement, as they are seen through contemporary psychoanalysis, are that he represents his identity as the dilemma of identity itself."
6. "*Hamlet* is not so much a full-throated tragedy as an ironic stifling of a hero's identity by structures of rule that no longer have legitimacy."
7. "Macbeth's program of violence ... is designed, like Coriolanus' desperate militarism, to make him author of himself."
8. "he [Shakespeare] has still not fully worked through his oedipal past, or perhaps ... he has sublimated it too well in his art."
9. "the major tragedies show violence erupting from the pull of family ties that are too close, 'more than kin' (*Hamlet* I.ii.65). The whole heroic identity is invested in 'holy cords' (*Lear* II.ii.76) that have an incestuous content, direct or displaced."
10. "One can summarize the development [of the Romance plays] by reference to different ways of coping with the incest taboo."

The first four quotations are Beauclerk's (336, 336, 336, xviii); the rest are the psychoanalytic critics' (Schwartz xxi, Leverenz 125, Gohlke 176, Kahn 239, Barber 194, Barber 191; for more on incest in Shakespeare, see Fineman, especially 71). Thus, interdisciplinary confirmations indicate that Beauclerk's "true history," or Ew! history, is not so far-fetched as we may want to think.

When Beauclerk's book was published last spring, online conversation almost immediately included complaints about it being "a distinct turn-off," another of the PT "flighty flings at how things 'might have been'" — condemnations accompanied with a wish that talented Oxfordians such as Beauclerk would not "waste their time daydreaming about these tawdry theories." Many Oxfordians feel that we continue to have a difficult enough task just getting traction with the very question of the Shakespeare authorship, and therefore to package the basic Oxfordian thesis along

with secret pregnancies, secret deals, and incest will hobble the enterprise fatally. But Jessie Childs, in *Henry VIII's Last Victim* — a biography of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (Oxford's poetically influential uncle) — insists that "Although one should always be wary of seeing self-revelation in poetic fiction, some themes are so prevalent and so intense that they surely point to the preoccupations of the poet" (170). Charles Beauclerk's book is the most successful to date in proposing a nucleus to the Shakespeare phenomenon and accounting for the preoccupations found in the works. "Shakespeare did not wake up one morning and decide to write a play about honor because his last one had been about ambition; like all true writers, he wrote to heal the wounds to his soul, to remake the shattered world in which he found himself" (155-156). That Beauclerk's process of identification and scholarly discovery involves not merely biography but psychology, mythology, cultural history, and more, ought to guarantee that in reading the superb *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom*, one is less likely to utter a squeamish "Ew!" than again and again an appreciative and impressed "Ooo!"

Works Cited

Anderson, Mark. *"Shakespeare" By Another Name*. NY: Gotham Books / Penguin, 2005.

Barber, C.L. "The Family in Shakespeare's Development: Tragedy and Sacredness." *Representing Shakespeare*. 188-202.

Childs, Jessie. *Henry VIII's Last Victim*. NY: St. Martin's Books, 2006.

Fineman, Joel. "Fratricide and Cuckoldry: Shakespeare's Doubles." *Representing Shakespeare*. 70-109.

Gohlke, Madelon. "'I wooed thee with my sword': Shakespeare's Tragic Paradigms." *Representing Shakespeare*. 170-187.

Kahn, Coppélia. "The Providential Tempest and the Shakespearean Family." *Representing Shakespeare*. 217-243.

Leverenz, David. "The Woman in Hamlet: An Interpersonal View." *Representing Shakespeare*. 110-128.

Ogburn, Charlton Jr. *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality*. 2nd ed. McLean, VA: EPM Pub., 1992.

Ogburn, Dorothy and Charlton. *This Star of England*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, Pub., 1952.

Schwartz, Murray M. and Coppélia Kahn. *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays*. Ed. Murray M. Schwartz and CoppÈlia Kahn. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom:
The True History of Shakespeare and Elizabeth.
NY: Grove Press, 2010, 430 pp., $26.00
By Charles Beauclerk
Reviewed by Christopher Paul

After briefly reviewing William Shaksper's literary disqualifications in the preface to *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom* (*SLK*),[1] Charles Beauclerk writes that "[f]or those at court, [Oxford/Shakespeare's][2] identity was an open secret" (xv), as was his "true history." Elaborating on the reason for continued secrecy after 1623, Beauclerk drops the first hint of his central thesis: "Not only were the offspring of statesmen lampooned in Shakespeare's plays now in positions of power and influence, but the works gave notice of Tudor heirs yet living" (xv). What Beauclerk asks of his readers at the Preface's end is to "allow Shakespeare to reveal himself to us through his principal themes [e.g., obsession with royal succession, crises of identity mistaken, concealed and lost, etc.], which build up a picture of his psychology" (xviii).

The underlying theme of Beauclerk's book is based upon two separate Prince Tudor (PT) theories, over which Oxfordians are deeply divided. PT1 posits that the 3rd Earl of Southampton was a changeling begotten by the 17th Earl of Oxford and Queen Elizabeth. PT2 posits that Oxford was a changeling begotten by Princess Elizabeth and Lord Thomas Seymour and incorporates PT1, thereby postulating … well, you do the math. Some PT theorists only believe PT1, others PT2.[3] Still others are adamant that neither theory is correct, and the contention has created a rift that has alienated Oxfordians into opposing camps.

Beauclerk would seem to be more than aptly suited to tell *The True History of Shakespeare and Elizabeth*, being the Earl of Burford, heir to the dukedom of St Albans, and in particular, "[a] descendant of Edward de Vere." The latter claim, however, stated in the author's dust jacket blurb, should be qualified.[4] It is unfortunate that, knowing his history only too well, he plays it so fast and loose. Few of his readers will be deeply knowledgeable about the Tudor era, and those not repulsed with the premise of Oedipal incest are likely to be lured in, ignorant of the devils in the details, and readily possessed by the skillfully written (notwithstanding purple-patched) PT2

narrative.

No matter how many thought-provoking insights Beauclerk offers into some aspects of Shakespeare's plays and poems, his rendition of Tudor history is reckless, albeit masterfully woven together, presenting a sometimes mesmerizing tapestry—but fundamentally flawed by its inexorable bias,[5] hence always exasperating. *SLK* is a literary biography parading as a historical one, the warped interlacing of which begins to unravel upon pulling the first thread.

Although I appreciate several of Beauclerk's striking literary visions that can stand independent of PT, *SLK* is mostly his personal and highly subjective psychoanalyses of Oxford, Elizabeth and her Court, channeled through Shakespeare's works via a Prince Tudor lens. From my perspective, I grant that to some extent PT theories encompass and integrate various literary aspects of Shakespeare's works, as well as certain singular historical circumstances that challenge conventional or unsatisfactory explanations. Yet they cannot be sustained, being defied as they are by their inherently insurmountable flaws, viz., the lack of any undeviating positive evidence, too dubious circumstantial evidence, and too much prima facie counter evidence. Nevertheless, due to my conflictive viewpoints with regard to literary interpretation and the historical record, unequivocally allowing my foremost consideration to the latter, my investigation for documentary evidence remains ongoing.

Indeed, if Beauclerk expects to convince more than a handful of true believers, he must build his case on stronger evidence than suspicious circumstances and innuendo. For the record, readers are getting half a review, for comments in this critique will be restricted mainly to challenging some of Beauclerk's assertions regarding documentary evidence, no mean feat since all historical documents not serving his purpose are disregarded. Beauclerk writes, "It is not enough to study the historical records as they've been handed down to us by the Poloniuses of this world, for they represent a skewed perspective—if not of a single man, then of a powerful family or faction" (5-6). In dismissing documentary evidence inconvenient to his thesis, Beauclerk gives himself free reign to fabricate historical events upon nonexistent documentation, e.g., "The records, carefully weeded by Burghley, do not reveal what kind of intimacy existed between Oxford and Southampton" (339), or "the Cecils made it their business to destroy so many of Oxford's letters, not just to themselves, but to his literary friends" (354).

It is ultimately the Shakespeare canon itself upon which Beauclerk relies, equating literature with historical documents (although the former over and above the latter). Yet what "is not enough" is building and resting one's case upon the alleged effacement of any and all documentary evidence of Oxfordian PT theories when there is so much documentary evidence that specifically precludes the same. It's true that even historical documents are subject to various degrees of interpretation, but PT proponents (among other detracting factors) are faced with a veritable wall of documents that straightforwardly oppose their theories, to which the attempted answers have been tortuously convoluted rationalizations.

As a result of his methodology, much of Beauclerk's speculative historicizing is sensational, self-contradicting, and plainly incorrect. Various inaccuracies and debat-

able points populate nearly every page of *SLK*, although only a small portion can be reviewed here. Some representative illustrations must serve to give readers alternative points of view not offered, withheld, or distorted by Beauclerk. These illustrations of casual disregard for rigorous scholarship should wave a red flag over Beauclerk's general trustworthiness, and call into serious question whether he is a teller of truth or tall tales.[6]

Because Elizabeth's parents were an incestuous match (Anne Boleyn was Henry 8th's daughter and wife, 31, 235), and her step-parents were an incestuous match (Catherine Parr being Henry 8th's widow; Seymour his brother-in-law), Parr "was in effect marrying her brother … [i.e.,] … Seymour was marrying his sister's husband's wife"—so also, Seymour being Elizabeth's uncle and stepfather, "both Elizabeth's parents and her step-parents were incestuous, making her a child of incest twice over" (36). Dizzying as that is, Elizabeth has reverted from "a fully sexual adult" to a "child" on the same page.

Following Beauclerk's chronology, Elizabeth conceived Oxford sometime between December 1547 and January 1548 (approximately three to four months after Elizabeth's fourteenth birthday), while Parr's conception occurred in late November or early December,[7] putting Elizabeth approximately a month behind Parr in their terms.

Around May 1548, Elizabeth transferred from Chelsea to Cheshunt after Parr, six months pregnant, found Elizabeth, ostensibly five months pregnant, in Seymour's arms (37). I interject here two letters that Elizabeth wrote to Parr in June (when she was seven months along, and Elizabeth six months), and then July.

> To the queen's highness.
>
> Although I could not be plentiful in giving thanks for the manifold kindness receive[d] at your highness' hand at my departure, yet I am something to be borne withal, for truly I was replete with sorrow to depart from your highness, especially leaving you undoubtful of health. And albeit I answered little, I weighed it more deeper when you said you would warn me of all evils that you should hear of me; for if your grace had not a good opinion of me, you would not have offered friendship to me that way that all men judge the contrary. But what may I more say but thank God for providing such friends to me, desiring God to enrich me with their long life, and [give] me grace to be in heart no less thankful to receive it that I now am glad in writing to show it. And although I have plenty of matter, here I will stay for I know you are not quiet to read. From Cheston [=Cheshunt] this present Saturday.
>
> Your highness' humble daughter, Elizabeth.[8]

On July 31, 1548, Elizabeth, supposedly seven months pregnant, wrote again to Parr:

> Although your highness' letters be most joyful to me in absence, yet considering what pain it is to you to write, your grace being so great with child and so sickly, your commendation were enough in my lord's letter. I much rejoice at your health with the well-liking of the country, with my humble thanks that your grace wished me with you till I were weary of that country.[9] Your highness were like to be cumbered if I should not depart till I were weary being with you: although it were in the worst soil in the world, your presence would make it pleasant. I cannot reprove my lord for not doing your commendations in his letter, for he did it. And although he had not, yet I will not complain on him, for that he shall be diligent to give me knowledge from time to time how his busy child doth, and if I were at his birth no doubt I would see him beaten for the trouble he has put you to. Master Denny and my lady with humble thanks prayeth most entirely for your grace, praying the almighty God to send you a lucky deliverance. And my mistress[10] wisheth no less, giving your highness most humble thanks for her commendations. Written with very little leisure this last day of July.
>
> Your humble daughter, Elizabeth.[11]

The foregoing letters require studious contemplation; they are offered for you to judge whether these sentiments could or would have come from a fourteen-year-old princess three and then two months shy of delivering her own child, intended for a beloved Dowager Queen stepmother struggling through a difficult third trimester.

One month later, on August 30, 1548, Parr delivered a daughter, Mary Seymour, contracted puerperal fever, and died on September 5.[12] Beauclerk volunteers little detail of Elizabeth's delivery of Oxford, merely telling us that it most likely was in September or possibly October of 1548 (39, 57). We hear nothing more of Mary Seymour's fate until she unaccountably appears reincarnated as Mary de Vere, Oxford's "putative" sister, when Beauclerk informs us that the "two quasi-royal children had been placed cuckoo-like in [John de Vere's] ancestral nest for the purpose of concealing their true parentage. Now that he had served his purpose as surrogate father, it was clearly thought prudent to dispose of him" (72). At least something is clear to someone; otherwise, *SLK* is so dense with similarly precarious flights of unsubstantiated fancy based upon nothing more tangible than imagination, that it descends ever deeper into an interminable Grand Guignol.[13]

We're told that "Elizabeth herself had been sick from around midsummer [1548] through October, when she wrote to thank the lord protector for sending his physician Dr. Bill to tend her" (37). Beauclerk doesn't quote from the letter itself, written around September, the month she allegedly delivered Oxford, wherein Elizabeth thanked Somerset for being "careful for my health, and sending unto me … physicians as Doctor Bill, whose diligence and pain has been a great part of my recovery … who can ascertain you of mine estate of health."[14] Beauclerk does, however, cite the following from a letter written by Elizabeth to Somerset in January, 1549, after rumors were circulating she'd had a child by Seymour: "My Lord," she complained, "these are shameful slanders, for the which, besides the great desire I have to see

the king's majesty, I shall most heartily desire your Lordship that I may come to the Court after your first determination, that I may show myself there as I am" (38).

Ordinarily, one would question Dr. Bill's motive for withholding news of Elizabeth's pregnancy from Somerset, but it's a non-issue since, according to Beauclerk, Somerset was fully cognizant of the covert birth and complicit in its cover-up. Yet it seems not to have occurred to Beauclerk how that renders nonsensical Elizabeth's later indignant denials to Somerset of the rumors of her pregnancy as "shameful slanders." *SLK* abounds with glaring instances of this kind of contradiction.

Beauclerk says that "Bastard or no bastard, [Oxford] was a Protestant, who would have been seen as a possible successor to the sickly King Edward. (Somerset, in particular, would have been keen to control the destiny of this other Edward, who was, after all, his nephew.)" (39); and further along: "On April 17, 1550 … the Privy Council, under the leadership of Lord Protector Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, authorized the gift of a baptismal cup for the christening of 'our very good Lord the Earl of Oxford's son.' This is not proof of a birthdate [on] April [12,] 1550, for … an official baptism could have been arranged at any time" (56).

It's immaterial to ask why the then internally factious council would concur to foist a secret royal bastard onto the ancient House of Vere (=Truth),[15] since they were not under the leadership of Somerset, but John Dudley, then Earl of Warwick, who had assumed the title of lord president of the privy council in February 1550. The fallen Somerset had relinquished his protectorship on October 13, 1549, and was lodged in the Tower the next day. It took nearly six months to fully regain his freedom, and although he was readmitted to the council on April 10th, he didn't resume attendance until April 24.[16] Hence, the politically maimed Somerset wasn't even present in council on April 17, 1550, five days after Oxford's received date of birth, when the golden baptismal cup was "to be delyuered as the kinges maiestes guyft at the Christening of our very goode Lorde the Erle of Oxfordes Sonne."[17]

Among so many other crucial points never considered by Beauclerk, yet vitally relevant, are the dozens of legally binding documents on which rights of inheritance depended, not just of Oxford but purchasers of his lands, where he is routinely described as the 16th Earl's son, many involving the Queen herself, e.g., Oxford's license to enter on his lands,[18] which begins:

> The Queen to whom etc. greeting. Know that we, of our special grace and of our certain knowledge & mere motion, have granted & given licence, and by these presents do grant & give licence for us, our heirs & successors, by how much [+is] in us to our wellbeloved and faithful subject Edward de Vere, now Earl of Oxenford, son & next heir & elder male issue of the body of the right honourable John de Vere, late Earl of Oxenford, deceased…

Another historical document, prima facie evidence that refutes PT1, again not considered by Beauclerk, is Oxford's indenture of January 30, 1575, prior to his departure on his continental tour, in which Oxford arranges for the descent of his lands "considering that at this present he hath not any issue of his body yet born."[19]

Beauclerk bypasses all such obstacles as these, along with many other considerations. So grounded is his text in the Oedipus complex and interminably expanding and convoluted mysticism, mythology, and mythos, that no more conventional explanations for diverse phenomenon are permitted. It's probable that some form of love/hate and mother/son relationship existed between Oxford and Elizabeth, but this could be explained by the fact that she was his legal "mother" from age 12 until he was released from wardship on May 30, 1572. She literally held the purse strings, told him what he could and couldn't do, etc., not just as his sovereign, but in loco parentis.[20]

Of Oxford's historical birth mother, Beauclerk writes: "Margery [née Golding] herself had very little to do with Edward after the earl's death, and her letters to Cecil betray a deeper concern for the estate of her late husband than for the fate of her supposed son. If she did feel maternal affection toward him, it is not expressed" (72).

This claim is directly refuted in a letter that the Dowager Countess of Oxford wrote to Cecil on May 7, 1565, presciently (but futilely) desiring that part of Oxford's inheritance be set apart for his maintenance after his minority, beginning:

> [W]hereas my Lord of Oxenford my son, now the Queen's Majesty's ward, is by law entitled to have a certain portion of his inheritance from the death of my late Lord and husband, his father, and presently to his use to be received … when he shall come to his full age he shall not be able either to furnish his house with stuff or other provision meet for one of his calling, neither be able to bear the charges of the suit of his livery, which charges were foreseen and provided for by my said late Lord and husband … that his said son should thus be entitled to a portion of his inheritance during his minority. And if the same portion should remain in the hands of my Lord now in his minority, and not committed to some such persons as should be bound to answer him the same at his full age, the care which my said Lord, his father, and his counsel learned had for the aid and relief of him at his full age might come to small effect, which matter moveth me earnestly to become a suitor to you in this behalf. And in case it might please you to think me, being his natural mother, meet to be one to have the order, receipt and government of the said portion … for the true answering of the mean profits of the same to my Lord at his full age, I would willingly travail to procure such persons to join with me in it as shall be to your contentation.[21]

The foregoing sentiments earnestly looking out for Oxford's welfare hardly betray more concern for her late husband's estate than the fate of her son, and could certainly be interpreted as expressing some form of maternal affection toward him. But most importantly, here we find what should be taken as a dagger in the heart of PT2. All other phrases of familial consanguinity in the letter aside, there can be no hedging when Countess Margery refers to herself as Oxford's "natural mother," because there is only one possible definition, which is: "Of children: Actually begotten by one (in contrast to adopted, etc.), and especially in lawful wedlock; hence, freq. = legitimate… Similarly of other relationships (esp. natural father or brother) in which

there is actual consanguinity or kinship by descent."[22]

Upon segueing into the Southampton aspect of the PT theories, Beauclerk writes: "Some historians have suggested that Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Oxford, at the height of their amorous involvement, pledged themselves to each other on the most senior priest in the land, Elizabeth's old friend and mentor Archbishop Matthew Parker" (103). What he doesn't say here and elsewhere is that these "historians" were (and are) all Oxfordian PT theorists. Breaking no new ground, but sticking by his predecessors, Beauclerk unswervingly claims that little is known of the Queen's movements from Autumn 1573 to the end of her summer progress in 1574, that "some weighty causes of state" proposed for her "melancholy" during this period "are not named," and that in May/June 1574 she stayed with Oxford at Havering-atte-Bower to give birth to Southampton (104). On the contrary, Elizabeth's "movements" during this period are very well documented, but addressing them is not on Beauclerk's agenda.[23]

Regarding Southampton's birth:

> …the child was placed with the Southamptons. Mary Browne, the Countess of Southampton, had given birth to a son on October 6, 1573, but there is no record of a baptism for the baby, who may have died in infancy or been placed with another family in preparation for the adoption of the queen's son. Either way, her child was probably illegitimate and not a Wriothesley at all, for the earl, her husband, was in the Tower when the child was conceived, and she was rumored to be having an affair with 'a common person' by the name of Donesame, pretext enough in those days for the removal of the baby. Moreover, although the child was the 2nd Earl's first son, the boy who stepped into his shoes, Henry Tudor-Wriothesley, later 3rd Earl of Southampton, is frequently referred to as "the second son," again suggesting that the child born on October 1573 either died or was farmed out. (106)[24]

Beauclerk is surely aware that Sidney Lee birthed this "second son" in his 1900 *DNB* entry: "[Southampton] was born … on 6 Oct. 1573. His father died two days before his eighth birthday. The elder brother was already dead. Thus on 4 Oct. 1581 he became third earl of Southampton."[25] In all likelihood, the "elder brother" was somehow concocted from Lee confusing the Christian names of father and son, both being Henry, an odd but comprehensible mistake. Charlotte Stopes compounded Lee's error in her 1922 biography of Southampton, claiming, "[i]t has always been said he was 'the second son,' but there is no authority for that. The error must have begun in confusing the second with the first Henry."[26] There was no authority for it because Lee had none to give. Promulgating Lee's gaffe was careless, Stopes' phrasing that "[i]t has always been said" worse still. There are no contemporaneous accounts of it and one must assume that Lee did indeed confuse the second with the first Henry, for he gave no indication of a source for his claim that the "elder brother was already dead," nor has any ever been found.

Ironically, Beauclerk thrice mistakes the father's given name (Henry, 2nd Earl of Southampton) for the grandfather's (Thomas, 1st Earl): "Burghley seems to have struck a deal whereby Oxford would reconcile with his wife, Anne, and acknowledge their five-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, in return for permission to see his seven-year-old son, Henry Wriothesley, who with the death of his foster father, Thomas, 2nd Earl of Southampton, was made a royal ward of court and moved to Cecil House" (257).

Quoting Charlotte Stopes: "[Southampton] was not appointed [Knight of the Garter (KG) in 1592], but the fact of his name having been proposed was in itself an honour as great at his early age that it had never before been paid to any one not of Royal Blood" (363). Beauclerk's note 166, attached to this passage, asserts: "It is surely noteworthy, too, that in the *History of the Order of the Garter* under "Third Earl of Southampton" is written the phrase "Comme son Beau Père" (i.e., like his stepfather), referring to Thomas Wriothesley, the Second Earl of Southampton, suggesting some sort of adoptive relationship" (402). In both of the former instances, Beauclerk of course meant to write the name "Henry" rather than "Thomas" for the 2nd Earl, a mistake repeated in the Index as well. Paradoxically, the full phrase under the 396th KG—Henry, 3rd Earl of Southampton—is "Comme son Beau Pere, No. 317" i.e., like his grandfather Thomas, 1st Earl of Southampton, the 317th KG, not his father Henry, the 2nd Earl, who was never a KG.[27]

Several pages are devoted to the hypothesis that Anne Cecil's first pregnancy was the result of an incestuous liaison with Burghley after Oxford's departure on his continental tour, filtered through his interpretation of Hamlet: "Given the barrage of references to incest and unnatural conception leading up to Ophelia's suicide at the end of Act IV, and the confusion of father and lover in her 'mad' songs, it is not outrageous to suggest that she kills herself because she is pregnant with her father's child" (113). But the premise is a non-starter, beginning with the machination: "News of her delivery, however, coming as it did so long after the fact, was acknowledged but coolly by [Oxford], toward the end of his letter to Burghley dated September 24, 1575. The child Elizabeth, who was baptized at the end of September and named for the queen, had most likely been born earlier that month; if so, Oxford could not be the father—hence Burghley's fabricated birth date of July 2....The picture is made more confusing by the ramblings committed to paper by Burghley" (112).

The confusion emanates from Beauclerk, who, despite having read Alan Nelson, ignores a letter written to Burghley from Sir Walter Mildmay on July 3, 1575, the day after Elizabeth Vere was born, which begins, "my veary good Lord. I thanke God hartelie with your Lordship for the good delyvery it hath pleased hym to geve my Lady of Oxford." Additionally, Elizabeth was baptized on July 10th, not "at the end of September."[28]

Upon introducing Oxford's distinctive so-called crown signature, Beauclerk comments that it "sported a coronet or crown above the name 'Edward Oxenford' and a line with seven dashes beneath it. Moreover, the whole signature, which is unique in the annals of the Elizabethan age, was shaped like a crown .... to those who were in the know, like William Cecil, it proclaimed a royal title, that of 'King Edward VII'" (86-87). Beauclerk's claim that Oxford's signature was "unique in the annals of the

Elizabethan age" is overblown. Similarly flourished signatures among lettered men were commonplace (see Fig. 1).[29]

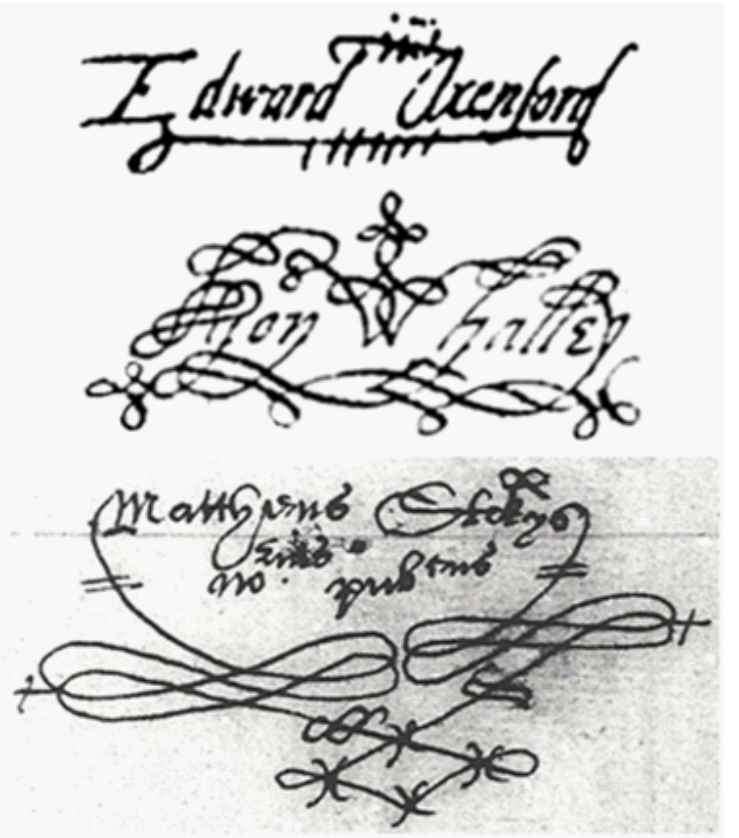


Fig. 1. Ornately embellished signatures were commonplace among lettered men. Two representative examples ranging from 1583 to 1604 are offered here for comparative purposes with Oxford's so-called "crown signature."[30]

The critical failings in *SLK* lie in Beauclerk's unreasonable methodology, of which a microcosm has been offered here. I would mostly concur with his contention that, "The official records, which are often little more than propaganda, have to be studied in conjunction with the literature of the time" (6), with the exception that Beauclerk's concept of what constitutes the "official records" is overreaching, and should certainly exclude private letters such as the one from Oxford's historical mother cited above, to name but one.

Beauclerk writes, "Whatever the truth, we are left to tie together the threads as best we can from the literature of the time, which was 'of purpose … written darkly'" (103). But this misapplied apology for poetry lies far from the truth, whatever that may be, for we are left with so much more to work with alongside the "literature of the time," evidence that Beauclerk either misrepresents or rejects out of hand, and

by deeming them unworthy of mention, he is performing his own brand of sanitizing the records. He complains, not entirely without justification, that the historical records handed down to us by the Poloniuses of this world represent a skewed perspective, yet he is every bit as accountable here as the Poloniuses preceding him.

But if there is no concrete evidence or witness for PT other than the literature of Shakespeare, is Beauclerk, and by association, PT theorists, guilty of exploitation, of special pleading, of distortion of received facts, of manipulation of contradictory evidence, of forcing square pegs through round holes? Or is "guilty" the wrong word and "visionary" the correct word? That depends on one's point of view.

In summary, Beauclerk's interpretation of the Shakespeare canon is often tantalizing but lacks credibility. It's disconcerting that he harnesses no concerted effort to refrain from twisting historical documents out of context to fit his interpretations, while simultaneously bypassing others that run counter to his course. With this work, Beauclerk is neither biographer nor historian, but mythopoeist. What he offers is not the "True History of Oxford/Shakespeare and Elizabeth," but a mythistory. Because his literary interpretations are based upon unfounded historical conclusions, Shakespeare's lost kingdom remains to be found.

Endnotes

[1] Any parenthetical initials following the introduction of a title or phrase indicates the form it will take thereafter.

[2] All text appearing in [square brackets] are my insertions.

[3] As far as I am aware there are no stand-alone PT2 theorists; PT2 always subsumes PT1. They will be thus abbreviated where differentiation is necessary. For an earlier book review examining different details of this same topic see Christopher Paul, "The 'Prince Tudor' Dilemma: Hip Thesis, Hypothesis, or Old Wives' Tale?" *The Oxfordian 5* (2002), 47-69, available online at http://shakespeare-oxford.com/wp-content/oxfordian/Paul_PT_Dilemma.pdf. Two other critical examinations of PT theories are: Diana Price, "Rough winds do shake: A Fresh Look at the Tudor Rose Theory," *The Elizabethan Review*, 4:2 (Autumn 1996), 4-23; and Roger Nyle Parisious, "Occultist Influence on the Authorship Controversy," *The Elizabethan Review,* 6:1 (Spring 1998), 9-43; both available online at http://www.elizabethanreview.com/tudor.html. See also OXMYTHS at http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/documents.html.

[4] Beauclerk is a remote collateral descendant of Oxford via the illegitimate offspring of Charles II and Nell Gwyn, whose son married Lady Diana Vere, heiress of the 20th and last Earl of Oxford (see Peter Beauclerk-Dewar and Roger Powel, *Royal Bastards: Illegitimate Children of the British Royal Family,* The History Press, Gloucestershire [2008], 75-83). However, Beauclerk has no lineal connection whatsoever with Oxford if, according to his central argument, Oxford was not really a Vere, but a Tudor. This dust jacket blurb is reiterated in Beauclerk's Acknowledgements, whose "first thanks go to [my grandfather, Charles St. Albans], for providing a link, in blood and spirit, to our exceptional forebear" (389). This contradiction in terms is not a little ironic, and reflects upon Beauclerk's claim as a "historian" in the same dust jacket blurb.

[5] Bias, as applied here, is defined by Webster's as: "systematic error introduced into sampling or testing by selecting or encouraging one outcome or answer over others."

[6] My point is not to debate whether or not the Virgin Queen was literally a virgin, whether she did or did not have lovers, or whether she did or did not have an illegitimate child or children at some or various points in her lifetime. There is undeniably extant documentary evidence of myriad rumors and a variety of circumstances indicative of her having had lovers and possibly secret bastards. The insuperable problem for PT advocates is that while many of the foregoing are unambiguous as to timeframes and identification of fathers (usually Leicester) and offspring (e.g., Arthur Dudley, Miles Fry, alias "Emanuel Plantagenet," et al), not a single one points anywhere toward Oxford or Southampton either by name or Oxfordian PT chronology. Beauclerk writes, "But why should Oxford have been so popular, unless it was at least suspected that he was the queen's

son?" (99) If such were suspected, it is not unreasonable to expect at least one documentary scrap of evidence pointing toward Oxford or Southampton when there is so much extant documentation of such pregnancies and secret royal bastards never coming within their vicinity. The argument is apparently that the Cecilians were only interested in razing all record of Elizabeth having borne Oxford and or Southampton, and didn't give a fig for any of the other claims being left to posterity.

[7] Assuming full term pregnancies.

[8] Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose, eds. *Elizabeth I, Collected Works* (Chicago: UCP, 2000), 17-19.

[9] Parr had removed to Seymour's principal estate in Sudeley, Gloucestershire, in mid-June to await confinement.

[10] Elizabeth's "mistress" refers to her long-time governess, Katherine Ashley. "Master Denny and my lady" refer to Sir Anthony Denny and his wife, Joan. Denny held several positions of considerable importance in the reigns of Henry and then Edward; among others: gentleman of the privy chamber, privy councilor, one of Edward's tutors, and one of Protector Somerset's leading associates. Serving in the capacity as Elizabeth's guardian at Cheshunt naturally begs the question why he would have withheld his charge's pregnancy from Somerset.

[11] Marcus, Mueller, and Rose, 20.

[12] Beauclerk mistakenly writes that Parr died on September 7 (Elizabeth's fifteenth birthday) (37).

[13] By turns of pages we discover how Elizabeth spent time alone with Oxford at Havering-atte-Bower during the summer of 1568 with the intention of coming clean about his parentage, only to end up seducing him instead, as that was her habitual way of controlling men she felt threatened by (Oxford was unruly and ambitious), and didn't think twice about using her sexual charms to subdue her own son out of concern that he might someday make a bid for the throne (85), a concern well founded, since one moment Oxford saw himself an outcast, debarred from the throne by his bastardy, the next as rightful king or chosen one (221), as well he might, since the queen, as was her wont, did and said just enough to feed his dreams of royal success (237), but too bad, so sad, because by the start of the 1590s Oxford realized he didn't stand a chance of inheriting his mother's throne, yet with hope eVer springing eternal, by plowing his efforts into glorifying his son/brother Southampton's claim, his dream of a new royalty—"beauty's rose"—could live on (341), thereby making the Fair Youth the refuge and glory of his art (363), but Southampton nipped that dream in the bud by turning his back on the political advice that had been urged upon him by his father/brother Oxford, which was to secure the throne by aligning himself with the Cecils by marrying (first Burghley's, now Oxford's?) daughter Elizabeth Vere, but electing instead to abjure the match because he would have been committing incest (364, 366), preferring instead to stick by his elder half brother as the only path to the throne—the Earl of Essex (369), who also turns out to be one of Elizabeth's sons and hidden heirs, with no elaboration of the circum-

stances of his birth even attempted (46, 161, 299, 374, 379), while somewhere along the way Southampton, "beauty's rose," had magically transformed from a secret royal bastard into "a legitimate heir" (299), and thus goes the shenanigans in this lost kingdom.

[14] Marcus, Mueller, and Rose, 22. Dr. Bill was court physician to Henry 8 and Edward 6.

[15] We may nowhere get a better taste of Beauclerk's prefatory reference to the Elizabethans' "love of the grotesque and paradoxical" (xi) than where he writes, "[Oxford] had been given the name of "Truth" ("Vere"), and discovering and bearing witness to the truth would be his self-appointed task in life" (68).

[16] *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* online edition.

[17] Alan H. Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary: The life of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford* (Liverpool: at the UP, 2003), 20.

[18] TNA C 66/1090, mm. 29-30. Modern spelling transcription by Nina Green. Available on her website at http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/documents.html.

[19] ERO D/DRg2/25; Green, available online.

[20] With the exception of the consanguineous reference, Beauclerk skirts this conclusion: "It is certainly to be expected that Elizabeth, who was the keeper of his identity, the wellspring of his blood, and the most powerful woman in England, should dominate his thoughts and affections" (101).

[21] TNA, PRO: SP 12/36/47; Green, available online, bold italics mine.

[22] *Oxford English Dictionary,* compact ed. (NYC: Oxford UP, 1986), 1:37/1899. Note that the term "natural," when applied to a son or daughter, could take just the opposite meaning, i.e., illegitimate, but always meant legitimate, i.e., lawfully consanguineous, when applied to either parent. There is not a single extant example of it having had any other application.

[23] For a thorough list of this documentation, see Diana Price's article available online, (referenced in endnote 3 above).

[24] It's difficult to distinguish whether Beauclerk's shift to present tense when asserting Southampton "is frequently referred to as 'the second son,'" is disingenuous or unintentional, since its source is modern and PTers are the only ones promulgating it. Beauclerk further misleads when he implies that the countess "was rumored to be having an affair with 'a common person' by the name of Donesame" prior to her husband's release from the Tower in May 1573, when this alleged infidelity was unknown to have begun earlier than 1577 (see C. P. V. Akrigg, *Shakespeare & the Earl of Southampton* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1968), 13). On the same page, Beauclerk writes: "Oxford, it seems, wanted his royal son to be brought up in his household rather than being placed with the earl of Southampton, where he would be under the control of Burghley's henchman Thomas Dymoke, who dominated the Wriothesley household." Dymoke was never Burghley's henchman; he served the Earls of Southampton from start to finish.

[25] *The Dictionary of National Biography*, 63 vols. (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1900),

63:140.

[26] Charlotte Stopes, *The Life of Henry, Third Earl of Southampton, Shakespeare's Patron* (London: Cambridge UP, 1922), 2n2.

[27] Beauclerk's source, whether at first hand or second, was most certainly Elias Ashmole's History of the Order of the Garter (1715 ed., originally published in 1672 as *The institution, laws & ceremonies of the most noble Order of the Garter*), listing for KG No. 396 under Knights elected in the Reign of King James I: "Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. Comme son Beau Pere, No. 317" (531). KG 317 harkens back to *Knights elected in the Reign of King Henry VIII*: "No. 317. Thomas Wriothesley, Lord Wriothesley, after Earl of Southampton. Azure a Cross Or between four Falcons Argent" (526). If any KG's father had also been KG, his name would be followed by "Comme son Pere" (i.e., like his father) and the referring KG number. If any former generation other than the father had been KG, he was so listed as "Comme son Beau Pere" (applied in the general sense, "like his ancestor") and the referring KG number. It was all quite precise, whereas Beauclerk's historicity leaves much to be desired.

[28] Nelson, 127, adding that "Burghley's chronology assigns Elizabeth's baptism to Sunday 10 July: Elizabeth daughter of Anne Countess of Oxford baptized at Theobalds," with the endnote citing: "CP, v, p. 70 (140/14v) eadem Elizabetha filia Anne Comitisse Oxon' baptizata apud Theobald'" (460). Beauclerk would doubtless rationalize this baptism as a fabrication, just as he did Oxford's.

[29] The historical fact that Oxford did cease using this nearly life-long signature so soon after Queen Elizabeth's death is a legitimate puzzle, no pun intended.

[30] Oxford's signature from letter to Robert Cecil, Oct. 7, 1601 (CP 88/101); Ron Halley signing himself owner of Barnabe Riche's 1604 *A Soldier's Wish* (STC 21000, sig. A4v); King's College, Cambridge official Matthew Stokys, signed 'Mattheus Stokys, No[ta]rius pub[li]cus[is],' Oct. 2, 1583 (Lansdowne 39/6).

Letters

September 5, 2010

To the Editor:

The case for Edward de Vere as author of the *Arte of English Poesie* is untenable. The traditional attributions to George Puttenham offered by Sir John Harington in 1590 and Edmund Bolton in his *Hypercritica* in 1610 remain convincing and contemporary. As Steven May asserts in his article on "George Puttenham's Lewd and Illicit Career" (2008), Harington's letter to Richard Field remains the "strongest evidence for Puttenham's authorship of the *Arte*," as he specifically requests that Field print his new translation of Ariosto "in the same print that Putnam's book ys." Puttenham himself died within two years of the publication of the *Arte* in 1589 via Richard Field, so his not claiming it as his work proves nothing either way and many of his other self-stated works remain lost. The *Arte* itself is replete with self references and self quotations to several of the works usually ascribed to Puttenham, especially his "Partheniades" which he dedicated and presented to Queen Elizabeth in 1579. The *Arte* is again written to and for Queen Elizabeth and her ladies in a highly personal manner as was the "Partheniades" quoted throughout (see May above). The author of the *Arte* tells us repeatedly that he wrote "Partheniades," so to displace Puttenham in the *Arte* is also to claim that de Vere wrote the former poem in 1579, for which there is no evidence.

De Vere obtained his pension from the Queen in 1586, while the author of the *Arte* is implicitly seeking new patronage still in 1589. May informs us that Puttenham had received two properties in reversion in 1588, evidently for his essay justifying the execution of Mary Queen of Scots which was published in 1587. It appears that Puttenham was seeking more courtly favors, as he repeatedly and extravagantly praises the Queen in the *Arte*: "your Majesty (my most gracious Soveraigne) …to all the world for this one and thirty years space of your glorious raigne)." Since Elizabeth's accession in 1558, the author emphasizes, he has been a totally loyal subject, an emphasis he repeats for her Father, Henry VIII, in several other passages which indicate that he was living during that period of Tudor rule as well. This would rule out de Vere, born in 1550 under the reign of Edward VI.

No evidence is offered for speculations that the Queen saw and encouraged an early draft of the *Arte* or that de Vere published early verse in the *Paradise of Dainty Devices* in 1575 in order to win his license to travel to Europe in that year. No evidence is offered to identify or to discuss other pseudonyms used by de Vere, or other anonymous works by de Vere. Most importantly Waugaman does not offer a fresh reading of the *Arte* or comment on its numerous self references and self

quotations, personal anecdotes, and biographical tidbits. One example is the claim of having presented to Edward VI when "we were eighteen years of age an eclogue titled 'Elpine' (p. 89)." Edward VI died in 1553, when Edward de Vere was three years old, so the reference to being "eighteen years" is to the period of his reign, 1547-1553.

As more than two thirds of the *Arte* is a catalog of classical rhetorical figures, there should be notice of the discussion of figures in other known or suspected works by De Vere—his letters, the comments and notes of E. K. to the *Shephearde's Calendar* and the mention of the figures of repetition by the annotator of Watson's *Hekatompathia* published in 1582. The verbal coinages and parallels to Shakespeare texts found in the *Arte* merely establish its contemporaneity with literary works of the 1580s and the 1590s. Uses of imagery and number patterns are a commonplace of the period, not specific to de Vere or to Shakespeare. The belated few words about methodology in any investigations of authorship are too little too late—the case for de Vere as author of the *Arte* is not made here on any basis and does not square with biographical facts as cited above. Lastly the attempts to cast doubt on the scholarship of Marcy North, Steven May, Charles W. Willis, and the recent 2007 edition of the Arte by Frank Whigham and Wayne Rebhorn are diversionary and avoid the central problem of rereading the *Arte* and connecting its text to de Vere.

None of the pages about literary deceptions, concealments and red herrings establish anything about de Vere or the *Arte*. Indeed, the most quoted passages in "Arte" mentioning de Vere as first among dramatists are pleas for the noblemen of Elizabeth's court to sign and to acknowledge their literary works. Other references to de Vere in the Arte such as the full quotation and attribution of his "Cupide" poem (p.111 in the Gutenberg online editon) are clearly third party references, and make it plain that the *Arte* is being written by another author than de Vere. Again the author is naming de Vere in order to urge him to acknowledge rather than conceal more of his evidently numerous works.

The second and somewhat disconnected section of Waugaman's article is more interesting, and begins a useful examination of the "Ignoto" or unknown god pseudonym found in twenty or more Elizabethan poems. Yes, the commendatory poem signed "Ignoto" in the prefatory material to Spenser's *Faerie Queene* may very well by by de Vere. I would be fascinated by a fuller study of the various "Ignoto" poems of the period and an accounting of the various Ignoto references. We could buttress the already promising attributions made by Looney, Hyder Rollins, and others of de Vere as the "Ignoto" of poems in *England's Helicon* (1600) and other works. However, Sir John Harington's private reference to "Putnams book" in his 1590 letter to Richard Field the printer is not superseded by his describing the author of the *Arte* as "that unknown Godfather…our Ignoto" in his 1591 public about-to-be printed preface to his "Ariosto." Harington was careful only to mention his knowledge of the authorship of the Arte by naming "Putnams book" in his private letter to Field in 1590, not in his published preface to his own book a year later in 1591.

Mike Hyde

Response from Richard Waugaman

To the Editor:

In response to Mike Hyde, four centuries of tradition tell us that a certain person is known to have been the author of a work of Elizabethan literature. This "knowledge" gradually becomes inextricably intertwined with our understanding of that work of literature, bringing the printed words to life, as we form assumptions about the literary composition and its connections with the life of the author. These connections need not be extensive or definitively validated. Nevertheless, they help anchor the text in the real world of its author. All is well. Then along comes someone who tries to upset what we know. He claims that our traditional attribution is in error. And the error is alleged to be a deliberate effort by the work's actual author to mislead contemporaries and future generations into thinking someone other than the true author wrote this work. Naturally, the forces of authority and the defenders of tradition will repudiate anyone who tries to separate us from our beliefs.

This trouble-maker in this case would be J. Thomas Looney, who infuriated the defenders of the traditional author of Shakespeare's works. In the present case, though, I have a different Elizabethan work in mind. I have been asked to respond to Michael Hyde's thoughtful comments on my contention that the *Arte of English Poesie* was written by Edward de Vere. Of course, I am no J. Thomas Looney, and I do not claim that the *Arte* rivals the Shakespearean canon in artistic importance. Nevertheless, I begin with this comparison because the issues are not only parallel, but intimately related.

Most Shakespeare scholars—and the many people who still trust the authority of those scholars—all reject Looney's attribution of the canon to de Vere. Few of them will take seriously my attribution of the *Arte* to de Vere. However, those of us who recognize the likelihood of de Vere's authorship of Shakespeare's works will be more open-minded about who wrote the *Arte*. Oxfordians (and other 'anti-Stratfordians') already accept the evidence that Shakespeare of Stratford was deliberately chosen as a front-man for the true author of the canon. So the works were not anonymous in the narrow sense of lacking the name of an ostensible author. Nor were they pseudonymous in the narrow sense of having an imaginary author's name. The people behind the publication of the First Folio of 1623, in particular, took some pains to construct a false myth about a real person who supposedly wrote these works. It is safe to assume that de Vere played a central role in this deception. I believe he practiced a similar deception with his authorship of the commentary of 'E.K.' in *The Shephearde's Calender*. The slender thread on which the traditional attribution of the Arte hangs is John Harington's 1590 letter to Richard Field. Why is it so far-fetched to imagine that de Vere played some role in a deliberate effort to falsely attribute the *Arte* to George Puttenham, just as he did with the attribution of his Shakespeare canon to the man from Stratford?

A frequent assumption about anonymous or pseudonymous authors is that they hope to be discovered and given credit for their works. Such an author would be likely to sprinkle his or her works with reliable clues as to his or her real identity. But what if de Vere wanted his authorship to remain concealed? In that case, we can reasonably expect that he planted false clues about his identity in the *Arte*. I am not certain that Hyde has fully considered this possibility, since I gather that he takes the "self references and self quotations" of the *Arte* at face value, despite the efforts of my article to question this very assumption.

There is often an insidious and unrecognized circularity in false authorship attributions. For example, traditional scholars routinely assume Shakespeare must have attended the grammar school in Stratford, and that it must have had a fine curriculum. I hope we will not emulate them as we re-examine authorship of the *Arte*. Hyde writes that, "The author of the *Arte* tells us repeatedly that he wrote *Partheniades*, so to displace Puttenham [as author of] the *Arte* is also to claim that de Vere wrote the former poem in 1579 for which there is no evidence." This reasoning seems circular, because it assumes the very point in contention—namely, authorship of the *Arte*. It is not logical to assume the authorship of *Partheniades* has been proven because the anonymous author of the *Arte* says he wrote it. As I noted in my article, I am unaware of any independent evidence that attributes these poems to Puttenham. They are anonymous. Those who challenge the traditional authorship of Shakespeare's works are held to a different standard of evidence from the traditional theory. This double standard represents an abuse of the authority of tradition. But it is so widespread because of the weakness of the traditional case. We need to avoid it.

Hyde believes that my article's "attempts to cast doubt on the scholarship of Marcy North, Steven May, Charles W. Willis, and… Frank Whigham and Wayne Rebhorn are diversionary…" I hope I will be permitted to disagree with other scholars when I feel I have grounds for doing so, and when my disagreement with them is central to the thesis of my article. As it happens, my agreement with North outweighs our differences. North has launched a cogent challenge against traditional Elizabethan authorship assumptions. Her book has not received the serious attention that it deserves. North rejects the attribution of the to Puttenham,[1] which is endorsed by May, Whigham, and Rebhorn. I assume that all of them would reject Willis's attribution of the works of Shakespeare to Puttenham. So readers should not be misled into assuming that these five scholars agree among themselves.

Hyde believes that the *Arte*'s references to de Vere prove that he could not have been the author, as these references are in the third person. But writing of himself in the third person would be an obvious ploy if de Vere wished to conceal his authorship. As with Shakespeare scholars who rest their traditional belief on the supposed authority of the First Folio, textual evidence is taken at face value, ignoring plentiful signs that Elizabethans delighted in deceit. North finds in the *Arte* a subtle and complex discussion of the courtier's art of deception. She believes we have not sufficiently appreciated the implications of deception in the anonymity of the *Arte*. As I wrote, "North shows compellingly that the author of the *Arte*, by remaining anonymous, added further layers of complexity to the contradictory advice he gave

to the reader about literary anonymity" (emphasis added). So I do not join Hyde in taking at face value the *Arte*'s advice that authors should sign their works.

Hyde writes, "No evidence is offered for speculations… that de Vere published early verse in the *Paradise of Daintie Devises*…in order to win his license to travel to Europe.'[2] Due to space limitations, I was not able to rehearse the evidence of my 2007 article, which attributes this poem to de Vere. The poem is titled, "A young Gentleman, willing to travel into forreygne partes, being intreated to staie in England: Wrote as followeth." It is published immediately after three poems signed by de Vere with his initials, "E.O." Its rhyme scheme is like the first two: ABABCC. The Arte especially favors such six-verse stanzas as being "very pleasant to the eare" (80).

After de Vere defied the Queen and tried to visit the Continent without her permission in 1574, an anonymous report said, "The desire of travel is not yet quenched in [de Vere], though he dare not make any motion unto Her Majesty that he may with her favor accomplish the said desire" (quoted in Anderson, 72). As I wrote in 2007,[3] "Even 'intreated' in the title speaks volumes. The Queen gave commands—she did not entreat" (21). I speculated that this poem was only published in 1585 because "de Vere had to choose his battles with the Queen, since he repeatedly pushed her too far by his defiance. Publishing this poem any sooner might have rubbed her face in a public reminder of his unauthorized trip to Flanders, along with his other acts of insubordination" (21). I speculated that de Vere left this poem anonymous, "suggesting a compromise between conflicting wishes to make it public, but to avoid angering the Queen. It is instructive to notice and ponder such examples of de Vere playing with anonymity, moving back and forth across the line of identifying himself to his readers" (21).

Hyde says that if de Vere wrote the *Arte*, "there should be notice of the discussion of figures [of rhetoric] in other known or suspected works by de Vere." Hyde asks, for example, why we do not find allusions to classical rhetorical figures in E.K.'s glosses on *The Shephearde's Calender.* Excessive certainty about authorship creates blind spots for contradictory evidence. I gather Hyde has not noticed the many parallels between the explicit discussion of rhetoric in the *Arte* and that in E.K.'s commentary, which uses several of the same classical rhetorical terms that are 'Englished' in the *Arte*.

In the commentary on January, E.K. refers to "Epanorthosis"[4] and "Paronomasia."[5] In February, we find "a certaine Icon or Hypotyposis"; the *Arte* speaks of "your figure of icon, or Resemblance by Imagery and Portrait"; it calls hypotyposis "the Counterfeit Representation." The glosses on March include "Periphrasis." This term was also used by the Arte, which translates it as "the Figure of Ambage,"[6] and links periphrasis with "dissimulation." It illustrates this rhetorical figure with an excerpt of a poem the author wrote. He explains that the poem indirectly means "her Majesty's person, which we would seem to hide, leaving her name unspoken, to the intent the reader should guess at it; nevertheless upon [consideration] the matter did so manifestly disclose it, as any simple judgment might easily perceive by whom it was meant." The author may be alluding indirectly to his self-concealment when he criticizes poets who "blabbed out" what they should

have dealt with more "discreetly" by ambage, so that "now there remaineth for the reader somewhat to study and guess upon."

In April, we find "Calliope, one of the nine Muses. Other[s] say, that shee is the Goddesse of Rhetorick"[7] (emphasis added). May includes "a careful Hyperbaton," which the Arte calls "the Trespasser." The *Arte* warns that this figure is often used in a "foul and intolerable" manner, which may explain why E.K. qualifies Spenser's use of it as "careful." May also explains a passage as being "an Epiphonema," which the Arte calls "the Surclose of Consenting Close." July offers "Synecdochen," called "Synecdoche, or the Figure of Quick Conceit" in the *Arte*, which says "it encumbers the mind with a certain imagination what it may be that is meant, and not expressed." Again, we may think of the self-concealment of the author. October offers "An Ironical Sarcasmus, spoken in derision," which the Arte calls "the Bitter Taunt... when we deride" (emphasis added). I hope this evidence will satisfy Hyde that E.K. shared with the author of the *Arte* a deep interest in explicating terms of rhetoric to his readers.

Hyde is silent on the earlier identification of E.K. as Spenser's friend Edmund Kirke. Most Spenser scholars now assume E.K. was probably just a fiction invented by Spenser himself. They sometimes react to any remaining doubts about the identity of E.K. with the time-honored evasion, "What difference would it make anyway?" It does make a difference if de Vere deliberately concealed his authorship behind the initials of Spenser's close college friend Edmund Kirke. It would increase the likelihood that de Vere played a role in what may have been Harington's similarly deliberate false attribution of the Arte to "Putnam." Further, it would make a world of difference to the question of who wrote Shakespeare's canon. Is there any textual evidence in *The Shephearde's Calender* that E.K. concerned himself with concealed authorship? Indeed, there is. In fact, the very first of E.K.'s glosses concerns the name Colin Cloute—"a name not greatly used, and yet have I sene a Poesie of M. Skeletons under that title. But indeede the word Colin is Frenche, and used of the French Poete Marot... Under which name this Poete (i.e., the anonymous author of *The Shephearde's Calender*) secretly shadowed (obscured, concealed) himself, as sometime did Virgil under the name of Tityrus" (emphasis added). Is this first gloss E.K.'s way of alerting careful readers to the possibility of self-concealment on E.K.'s part? Perhaps so.The self-concealment of an author also appears in E.K.'s comments on September. There, he says that Gabriel Harvey sometimes wrote "under counterfayt names."

Naturally, I am pleased that Hyde shares my excitement about further research on the Ignoto poems. I am grateful to Michael Hyde for his close reading of my essay, and for this opportunity to strengthen the case my article makes for de Vere's authorship of the *Arte of English Poesie*.

A young Gentleman willing to travell into forreygne partes,
being intreated to staie in England: Wrote
as followeth.

Who seekes the way to winne renowne,
Or flieth with winges of high desire
Who seekes to weare the Lawrell crowne,
Or hath the minde that would aspire,
Let him his native soyle eschewe
Let him goe range[8] and seeke anewe.

Eche hautie[9] heart is well contente,
With every chaunce that shall betide
No happe[10] can hinder his intent.
He steadfast standes though Fortune slide:
The Sunne saith he doth shine aswell
Abroad as earst[11] where I did dwell.

In chaunge of streames each fish can live,
Eache fowle content with every ayre:
The noble minde eache where can thrive,
And not be drownd in deepe dispayre.
Wherefore I iudge all landes alike
To hautie heartes that Fortune seeke.

To tosse the Seas some thinkes a toyle,
Some thinke it straunge abroad to rome,
Some thinke it griefe to leave their soyle
Their parentes, kinsfolkes, and their home.
Thinke so who list, I like it not,
I must abroad to trye my Lott.

Who lust at home at carte to drudge
And carcke and care[12] for worldly trashe:[13]
With buckled shooe let him goe trudge,
Instead of launce a whip to swash.
A minde thats base himselfe will showe,
A carrion sweete to feede a Crowe,

If *Iason* of that minde had binne,
Or[14] wandring Prince that came from *Greece*
The golden fleece had binne to winne,
And Pryams Troy had byn in blisse,
Though dead in deedes and clad in clay,
Their woorthie Fame will nere decay.

The worthies nyne[15] that weare[16] of mightes,[17]

By travaile wanne immortal prayse:
If they had lived like Carpet knightes,[18]
(Consuming ydely) all their dayes,
Their prayses had with them bene dead,
Where now abroad their Fame is spread.

Richard M. Waugaman, M.D.

Endnotes

[1] North made this clear in a personal communication on April 9, 2009.
[2] A clarification—I wrote about a poem first included in the *Paradise* in *1585*, speculating that de Vere wrote it in 1574 or 1575. Hyde erroneously gives the year of publication as 1575.
[3] The article on this poem is available at http://www.shakespearefellowship.org/Newsletter/NewsletterMain.htm
Since only a difficult to decipher facsimile of the poem is reprinted in that article, its full text is included here as a Table.
[4] A rhetorical figure in which a word is recalled, then replaced with a more correct one.
[5] The first use of this word recorded by EEBO; a rhetorical term for wordplay, punning.
[6] Indirect modes of speech.
[7] My subtitle is a rhetorical question, of course.
[8] Wander freely.
[9] High-minded; aspiring; lofty.
[10] Fortune; luck; chance.
[11] Formerly.
[12] To be in a troubled state of mind; "care and carkes" appears in another unsigned poem in the 1596 edition ("He renounceth all the affects of Love")
[13] One meaning is an old worn out shoe-- cf. buckled [bent up or wrinkled] shoe in the next line.
[14] Rather than.
[15] Since the 14th century, three pagans, three Jews, and three Christians who embodied the ideal of chivalry; they were a popular subject for Renaissance masques, as satirized in *Loves Labours Lost*.
[16] To display a heraldic charge on one's shield; to have as a quality; to endure over time.
[17] Mighty or virtuous works, commanding influence; "of might" occurs in *As You Like It*, III v. 82.
[18] Those who remain at court and fail to prove their valor in battle.

December 2010

To the Editor:

I would like to congratulate Christopher Paul for the extraordinary research and analysis informing his article "The 17th Earl of Oxford's 'Office' Illuminated" in Volume II of Brief Chronicles. He argues persuasively that Edward de Vere's references on July 7, 1594, to his unspecified "office" had no connection with the thousand-pound annuity that Queen Elizabeth had granted him on June 26, 1586. This connection has been a longstanding assumption by Oxfordian writers who, in addition, have linked Oxford's annuity to his dramatic writings and patronage of writers and actors.

On the other hand, I submit that it's not only still possible but even probable that Oxford's annuity served as a means of "indirectly" reimbursing him for his theatrical activities during wartime.

In the first place, it stands to reason that he privately paid for expenses during the 1570s related to the Chamberlain's Men under Lord Sussex and during the 1580s related to Oxford's Boys (plus a combination of children's companies known from 1586 as the Paul's Boys) and the Queen's Men – the latter to which Oxford apparently contributed the most important of his adult players, including the brothers John and Laurence Dutton. Presumably in addition were personal expenses in relation to the so-called University Wits, the circle of writers under Oxford's patronage during the 1580s. These included his secretary John Lyly, Anthony Munday, Thomas Watson, Robert Greene and Angel Day, all of whom dedicated books to Oxford.

The earl needed no "office" to carry out such activities; and in granting the annuity to him, Elizabeth had no need to specify reasons for his impoverishment. Furthermore, to perceive some wider context for the annuity, we need not deny that the queen herself had played a significant role in his financial downfall. Oxford himself, in his letter to Robert Cecil on February 2, 1601, referred to "my youth, time and fortune spent in [Elizabeth's] court, adding thereto Her Majesty's favors and promises, which drew me on without any mistrust, the more to presume in mine own expenses" – an elaborate way of recalling that he had made payments out of his own pocket, with the understanding and expectation that Elizabeth would reimburse him by some means.

One aspect of such a wider context is the sheer size of his annuity in relation to the amounts of other grants. In his documentary biography *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, 1550-1604: from Contemporary Documents* (1928), B. M. Ward reports: "If we omit the large grants made for political reasons to the King of Scots, it will be seen that the grant to the Earl of Oxford is larger than any of the other grants or annuities, with the exception of the sum of 1,200 pounds a year paid to Sir John Stanhope, the Master of the Posts, 'for ordinary charges.'"

Within this context the amount of Oxford's grant is extraordinary. Stanhope

was a strong ally of Robert Cecil, who appointed him Master of the Posts in 1590, the same year his 1,200-pound grant was awarded. When Cecil became Principal Secretary in 1596, he influenced the queen to make Stanhope a Knight and to appoint him as Treasurer of the Chamber. The next highest grant, after Oxford's 1,000 pounds, was the 800-pound annuity given to Cecil in 1596, a few months after he became Secretary; and this money was in fact for secret-service activities. The next-highest grant was 400 pounds.

A second aspect of a wider context is that, if the queen really wanted to help Oxford financially, she could have given him income-producing gifts of properties or even monopolies such as the farm of the sweet wines granted to Essex. That she gave him outright cash would seem yet another anomaly.

A third aspect of such a context is that, aside from Henry Lee's annuity of 400 pounds as Master of the Armoury in 1580 – a key position, given the likelihood of war – there were no other such payments from the Exchequer (except for Oxford's grant) during the rest of that decade; and after Stanhope received his grant in 1590, the next one came in 1594. Therefore Oxford's grant was the largest made to any nobleman up to the time the Queen signed the privy seal warrant; and aside from the grant to Stanhope, none were anywhere near as large for the rest of the reign.

A fourth aspect of the context is that war with Spain became official in 1584, perhaps explaining why no other such grants were made until after the victory over the armada in 1588. One might ask why the queen would agree to such a large outlay of cash to Oxford at that dangerous time (1586) when the great invasion (the "Enterprise") had become not just a probability but a certainty. What would the restoration of any nobleman's financial stability be worth if England itself were conquered?

It was Sir Francis Walsingham, head of the information network developed by William Cecil Lord Burghley, who instructed the Master of the Revels to appoint the Queen's Men in 1583 – precisely as part of his secret service activities. The formation of this new company under the special patronage of Elizabeth "should be regarded particularly in connection with the intelligence system," according to Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean in *The Queen's Men and their Plays* (1998). The reason is "not because the Queen's Men were spies, but because Walsingham used licensed travelers of various kinds to give the impression of an extensive court influence within which the actual size and constitution of the spy system could not be detected."

"Walsingham certainly made use of writers," McMillan and MacLean also report, naming among others Munday and Watson, two of those mentioned above as enjoying Oxford's patronage. It would seem no coincidence that Lord Burghley wrote a letter on June 21, 1586, to Secretary Walsingham and asked him in passing if he had been able to speak with Queen Elizabeth in Oxford's favor; and just five days later she signed the Privy Seal Warrant authorizing the earl's grant of annuity.

("The Queen's Men were formed to spread Protestant and royalist propaganda through a divided realm and to close a breach within radical Protestantism," the same writers claim, adding, "This resulted in a repertory based on English themes. The English history play came to prominence through this motive." Examples cited

are *The Famous Victories of Henry V, The True Tragedy of Richard III* and *King Leir*. "The plots of no fewer than six of Shakespeare's known plays are closely related to the plots of plays performed by the Queen's Men," McMillan and MacLean report, leading them to cautiously wonder whether Shakespeare could have been a Queen's Man in his early career.)

Conyers Read reports in *Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth* (1967) that the spymaster was "severely handicapped by the close-fisted policy of Elizabeth." Tracing the fiscal side of the secret service is not easy, Read continues, adding, "The money appears to have been paid out of the treasury to Walsingham by warrants of the Privy Seal 'for such purposes as the Queen shall appoint.' A great deal of money was drawn from the treasury under such vague warrants as these … The first record of anything like a regular allowance to Walsingham for purposes of secret service appears in July 1582, when he was granted 750 pounds a year to be paid in quarterly payments" – the same schedule of payments, from the same source, as for Oxford's grant.

The payments to Walsingham for secret service started increasing in 1585. He was granted a regular allowance in June 1588 of 2,000 pounds annually – "a large amount of money in the later sixteenth century," Read reports, adding, "The fact that Elizabeth, for all her cheese-paring, was willing to invest so much in secret service shows how important she conceived it to be. No doubt it was efficient. Elizabeth was the last person in the world to spend two thousand pounds unless she could see an adequate return."

After the armada victory, Walsingham's allowance for secret service was reduced to 1,200 pounds a year. Given that Oxford's 1,000-pound annuity would continue until his death in 1604 (altogether spanning eighteen years until the Anglo-Spanish War officially ended), it would still seem to require a much better explanation than the one left to us on the official record.

Hank Whittemore
Nyack, NY