



# The Shakespeare OXFORD Newsletter



## Henry Peacham on Oxford and Shakespeare

*Is the scholar's 1622 decision  
unimpeachable testimony for  
Oxford as Shakespeare?*

by Peter W. Dickson

In the Shakespeare authorship debate, there is a general perception among both Stratfordians and Oxfordians that after Francis Meres' famous list of great poets and dramatists in *Palladis Tamia* (1598), the awareness of Oxford as a literary figure largely disappeared until Alexander B. Grosart collected and published some of his poems in 1872.

This perception is inaccurate, because one can reconstruct a trail of interconnected historical references to him as a literary figure throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In a separate article on pages 14-15 ("Oxford's Literary Reputation") is a brief survey of references to Oxford as a literary figure spanning the two centuries after his death. This reconstruction also permits some useful comparisons with the emergence in the early 1700s of the Bardolatry associated with William Shakespeare of Stratford, a topic which goes beyond the scope of this essay, but which is a subject worthy in its own right of close analysis by students of the authorship question.

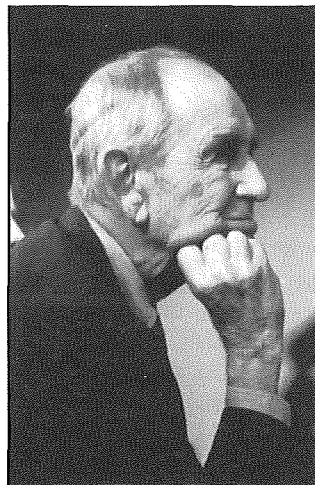
Of utmost importance among all these references, however, is the one from Henry Peacham in his list in *The Compleat Gentleman* published in 1622 when the *First Folio* project was well underway. For it is Peacham who lists Oxford first among the greatest Elizabethan poets, and yet *fails to mention Shakespeare at all*.

This essay's primary objective, therefore, is to contextualize Henry Peacham and  
*(Continued on page 8)*

## Charlton Ogburn 1911-1998

*The man who single-handedly revived  
the authorship debate for our time  
dies at 87 at his home in Beaufort, SC*

by Richard F. Whalen



Charlton Ogburn  
1911-1998

Charlton Ogburn, a prolific writer with wide-ranging interests, the author of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality*, and the preeminent champion of Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, as the true author of the works of Shakespeare, died at his home in Beaufort, South Carolina, on October 19th. He was 87 years old and had been in failing health.

Ogburn was one of five founders in 1957 of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, a U.S. organization. The British organization at the time was the Shakespeare Authorship Society, originally founded in 1922 as the Shakespeare Fellowship. Ogburn served on the American society's board of trustees for many years and was named honorary president in the mid-1970s.

His major work was his 800-page book on Shakespeare's identity, published in 1984. It is considered the most comprehensive and authoritative presentation of the case for Oxford as the author.

The book has generated wide public interest in the authorship controversy. It inspired a PBS-TV debate between Ogburn and a Stratfordian professor, a mock trial before three justices of the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, which in turn generated a major article in *The New Yorker* and a similar mock trial before three high court judges in England.

Ogburn had a leading role in the television documentary "The Shakespeare Mystery," the PBS-TV *Frontline* program that has been broadcast three times in prime time. The first broadcast brought the greatest viewer response of any *Frontline* program that year. Many members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society first heard about the authorship controversy on the program, which reached millions of viewers.

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### Research Notes

## Followup: the *First Folio* and the Spanish Marriage Crisis

In the three months since our last *Newsletter* highlighted Peter Dickson's research into the circumstances surrounding the publication of the *First Folio* much has happened.

Dickson has given presentations on his theory at the Shakespeare Authorship Roundtable Symposium and the Shakespeare Oxford Society's 22nd Annual Conference that impressed all listeners, but his 65-page paper on the subject (which goes into much greater detail about the theory than our *Newsletter* story could provide, including a separate thread of the story involving the suspected Catholicism of the Stratford man) was turned down by the Folger Institute for its 1998/99 Evening Colloquium program.

Folger Program Coordinator Carol Brobeck's letter of rejection stated that the program committee "agreed that the relationship between the publishing of the *First Folio* and the political climate at the time of its publication is a legitimate and intriguing question."

"Nevertheless," she continued, "they felt your conclusions could not be sustained on the basis of your interpretation of the evidence you supplied."

Dr. Daniel Wright of Concordia University (Director of the Edward de Vere Studies Conference and a Society trustee) attended the Roundtable Symposium in Los Angeles last October and heard Dickson's full-length teleconference presentation of his research to date on the subject.

Dr. Wright wrote to the *Newsletter* after the Roundtable event, and in regard to Dickson's work commented:

In his efforts to identify the circumstances that led to the publication of the *First*

*Folio*, Peter Dickson's research represents the best and most intelligent treatment of historical evidence and informed opinion that any scholar has yet offered in the attempt to resolve a problem that has baffled Shakespeareans for generations. His conclusions are compelling and persuasive. I'm looking forward to his continuing excavations of the archival record in this matter.

Among some other interesting letters to the *Newsletter* about the *Folio* theory came this from Robert Detobel in Germany:

I have received the last newsletter and attentively read the comments on Dickson's developments. There are many obscure points in it but if we reject theories or rather "constructs" because some points remain unclarified we'll never progress. On the whole he has hit upon an important phenomenon, important both for the authorship question and the political history of the reign of the first Stuarts.

Oxfordian researcher Peter Moore, while stating that he did not at this point feel the case had been made for a connection between the *Folio* and the marriage crisis, nonetheless wrote that "I heartily applaud [the] following up on those who lived beyond June 1604, as that is where something is likely to be found sooner or later," while also warning us (the *Newsletter*) against writing too much from an "advocacy perspective" rather than a scholarly one.

Robert Detobel, in a separate letter to Peter Dickson, also wrote about his own work, and passed on to him some telling remarks about this period in the 1620s that he had found in Andrew Gurr's *The*

*Shakespearean Playing Companies* (1996). Gurr generally comments on the increasing censorship of this period (related to the escalating crisis), and notes that the *Folio* dedication from Heminge/Condell to the Herbert brothers reveals that their political leanings must have been closer to the Protestant/nationalist sentiment of the Pembroke-Sidney circle rather than to the James-Buckingham pro-Spanish policies.

Gurr was recently in Washington, read Dickson's paper and talked with him by telephone. Dickson says that Gurr offered his opinion that the *Folio* could *still be seen* as a purely literary project, and suggested that the rush in printing it might have been to free up the presses for other works.

Dickson's response to both Gurr and to others who question the *Folio's* political context is that the project's obviously high production costs (borne by whom?) would have meant a slim profit margin in a market where the outcome of the Marriage Crisis would have a direct bearing on the demand for and sales of the "Henrican-Elizabethan, political-literary heritage and core values" embodied in Shakespeare's plays. Business men living and working in the midst of such a crisis *must have* understood this.

Dickson further states that "there is no credible way to compartmentalize the *Folio* project given the titanic vendetta between Buckingham and Oxford-Southampton in 1621 [and eventually with] Pembroke," and that this is especially so "after the dissolution of Parliament on January 9th, 1622."

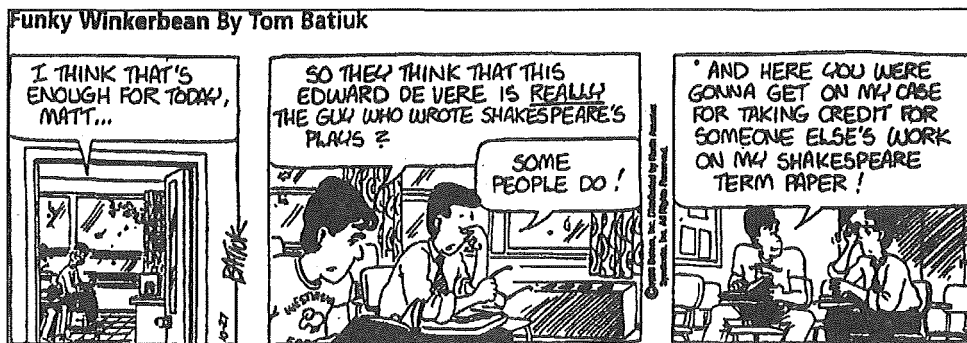
In short, Dickson says, the political context of the *Folio* publication remains a matter to be reckoned with.

W. Boyle

## Authorship in the Media

As many of our members are aware, the authorship story just keeps popping up in all sorts of different places, even as the mainstream media (i.e. *The New York Times*, et al.) continue to pretend it doesn't exist.

One of the interesting hand-outs at this year's Conference was of a recent *Funky Winkerbean* comic strip, in which (not for the first time) cartoonist Tom Batiuk makes the authorship debate part of Funky's world.



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## 22nd Annual Conference in San Francisco draws record attendance

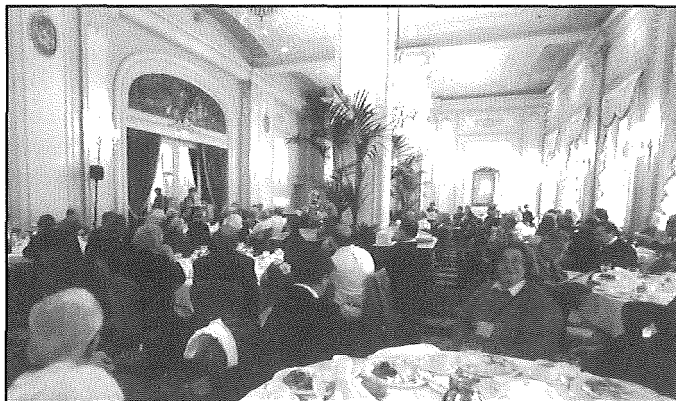
The Society's 22nd Annual Conference enjoyed a record turnout as more than 150 Oxfordians registered to attend the busy, ambitious three-day schedule put together by the local organizing committee (Randall Sherman, David Hicks, Katherine Chiljan, Ramon Jiménez, Joan Leon, Mark Alexander and Sandy Hochberg).

An Elizabethan Banquet highlighted the entertainment side of the schedule, and was indeed something to behold as the troupe of actors from the California Renaissance Faires played Elizabeth and her Court with great skill.

On the business side there were a number of interesting papers, and an interesting panel discussion on the search (the eternal search?) for a "unified position" on the authorship question.

Among those presenting papers were Peter Dickson on his *First Folio*-Spanish marriage crisis theory (an offshoot of Dickson's recent researches into the 1620s also appears on page one of this newsletter), John Rollett of England on his *Sonnets* dedication decipherment, Dr. Eric Altschuler on "Searching for Shakespeare in the Stars" (a story about this was published in the November *Science* magazine), and Roger Stritmatter with two papers (one on the famous *Eliza Triumphans* painting, and one on a commonplace book that may have originally belonged to Edward de Vere).

There will be a full conference report in the next newsletter, along with reports on all the papers presented, with at least one or two of the shorter papers published in full.



*The main Ballroom at the Clift Hotel was regularly filled to capacity during the three-day conference (top). Among the entertainers was Owain Phyfe (bottom), seen here performing as Queen Elizabeth and her Court look on. (Photos by James Liu)*

## Boston selected for 1999 Conference

The Board of Trustees has selected Boston as the site for the 1999 Conference. Boston hosted the 17th Annual Conference in 1993. Watch the next newsletter for details on the exact dates, hotels, etc.

The Board also voted to make New York City the site of the year 2000 conference, contingent upon planning during 1999 by New York area Oxfordians. Other cities under consideration for conferences in the near future are Washington, DC, and Chicago. If any local chapters in these cities (or any other locales in the US) are interested in hosting a conference, please don't hesitate to contact the Board for basic information on requirements, costs and planning.

## Announcing THE OXFORDIAN

The first edition of THE OXFORDIAN, the Society's annual journal of papers, has been published and mailed to all current Society members; it should have reached all members by now. (If you haven't received yours for some reason, let us know right away so we can send you one.\*) Your quick return of a check for the members-only price of ten dollars (\$10) will be appreciated.

Through THE OXFORDIAN, members of the Society will be able to keep up with current research and opinion. Those who attend conferences will be pleased to have the papers in a readable format, handy for reference, and those who haven't been able to attend conferences will no longer feel left out of the loop. In addition, THE OXFORDIAN will be able to present in detail complex issues that can't be fully addressed in a lecture, as well as articles that have not been presented as papers. We feel certain you will applaud this effort to increase the levels of communication on Oxfordian studies.

### THE OXFORDIAN Library Project

We regard this journal as an important factor in our efforts to reach a wider audience with information and opinion on the authorship question and related issues. To this end we have initiated THE OXFORDIAN Library Project, a campaign to place our journal in the periodical racks of libraries around the world. Included in the mailing of THE OXFORDIAN is a card to be filled out with the names and addresses of libraries that you would like to see receive a subscription to our journal at the member price of ten dollars each. Please include this gift along with the ten dollars for your own copy. With these donations we will place copies of THE OXFORDIAN in university, college, high school and public libraries. If you would like to play a greater role in this project, please contact the editor. Many thanks to those who have already donated to this effort.

THE OXFORDIAN  
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\* Some new members may have been left out of the mailing. Also, a few copies have turned up with one or two blank pages. If you should receive such a copy, please contact us and we'll get a complete one to you right away.

# The Wardship of Henry Bullock

*In 1581 the ward Edward de Vere once sought to administer a wardship*

by Katherine Chiljan

On November 11, 1581, the Earl of Oxford submitted a suit to the Lord Chancellor of England, Sir Thomas Bromley, claiming the wardship of Henry Bullock, Junior, then aged 4. This document survives in the Public Records Office at Kew (C2, ElizB22/18). It was signed “Damsell,” probably Sir William Damsell, Receiver-General for the Court of Wards.

Anyone who is familiar with Oxford’s biography knows that he was very much a victim of the wardship system—not yet a teenager, he was uprooted from his family the day after his father’s funeral to live with Sir William Cecil, his appointed guardian. By Cecil’s new authority, Oxford was probably forced to marry his daughter Anne—a match that later proved to be disastrous. And Oxford’s debt to the Court of Wards by 1590 totaled over £20,000. For these reasons, and rightly so, the word “wardship” has a nasty connotation to Oxfordians. Oxford and his forebears, however, used the system too.

Oxford’s father was the result of a wardship match. John, 15th Earl of Oxford, bought the wardship of heiress Elizabeth Trussell from Henry VII for £1,333; he then married her. And John Lucas, “being a great gamester, won of the [16th] Earl of Oxford the wardship” of Mary Roydon, “with whom he matched his youngest son” (Stone).

A “wardship” could mean two different things: the person of an underage heir or heiress, or one-third of the lands/property that the child would some day inherit. The Court of Wards was the agency where one could buy the rights of either, or both. Men invested in these commodities like any other, in the hope of financial gain or political advantage, and they were rarely disappointed (Stone). And whereas “commoner” wardships were sold to the highest bidder, the peerage was a different matter—they were granted to relatives or other aristocrats for small fees.

The wardship case of Henry Bullock Jr., was slightly different. Oxford’s position was that the child was being denied his inheritance of leases or tenancy of lands and buildings (called Dawes, alias Barons, lo-

cated in West Mersey, Essex) that Oxford owned, therefore subverting his right to the child’s wardship. According to F.G. Emmison, “when the inheriting tenant was a minor, the lord often claimed right of wardship, the custody of his land and the income from it; but the natural guardian...was generally confirmed or appointed...on payment of a fine or fee.” Oxford claimed this right as early as 1571, when he had just reached his majority, collecting a £40 fee from Giles Collard, George Collard, brickmakers, and John Dickison, carpenter, of Walthamstow, Essex, for the lands of minor William Taylefor.

Henry Bullock Sr., yeoman, had been dead two years before Oxford pressed this claim, in a lawsuit against Richard Wiseman. It could be that only then was he informed of his tenant’s death. What follows is a summary of Oxford’s case, and my very limited interpretation of its meaning.

In his opening statement, Oxford presents himself to the court “for and on the behalf of Henry Bullock, an infant of the age 4 years, as guardian unto him.” Six days before his death, Bullock Sr., by the advice of brother-in-law Wiseman and “diverse other very crafty persons,” made a “feoffment in fee” to Wiseman—i.e., Bullock transferred the lease of Oxford’s land to Wiseman. But because Bullock expressed “no other use upon the said feoffment,” Oxford, or his lawyers, believed it was intended to be held “in secret trust for the use of the said infant”—something Wiseman “utterly denieth.” With his death imminent, this was possibly a device on Bullock’s part to avoid Oxford’s right to the wardship. (The Court of Wards commissioned professional informers to seek those who concealed lands. According to Joel Hurstfield, Sir Edward Dyer was such an informer.)

Bullock also made Wiseman executor of his will, granting him profit income from some of his land, with certain limitations and express conditions of accountability to a third party (during Bullock Jr.’s minority). Oxford charged that Wiseman completely ignored these conditions, pocketed all the profits, and “hath also gotten into his hands

and possession the goods and chattels of the testator.” Thus, contrary to all right and good conscience, Wiseman not only robbed Bullock’s inheritance, but meant to “defraud and defeat the said infant of the lands so put in feoffment unto him in trust.”

Oxford’s statement ends with a request to subpoena Wiseman. Attached to this document is another entitled “The Replication of Edward, Earl of Oxford, Complainant, to the Answer of Richard Wiseman, Defendant.” Wiseman’s statement did not survive, but the replication reveals that he claimed Bullock, Sr. agreed to sell him the land leases for £160 just before his death. Oxford’s suit claims this bargain was made “fraudulently to cover and shadow the covin and deceit aforesaid,” and that it and the deed of feoffment were made to no other “end, effect, or purpose, than to defeat, defraud and avoid” Oxford of the wardship of Bullock, Jr.

The judgment of the case has not survived—or it is still sitting in a heap of uncatalogued material at the Public Records Office. Looking at the parchment, written in hard-to-decipher secretary hand, one wonders if Oxford, who had studied the law, composed the statement himself or left it to his attorneys.

Although the wardship system grievously affected his life, Oxford, probably out of necessity, used it when he could to his advantage. There’s no evidence, however, that Oxford took possession of the person of Henry Bullock, Jr. or controlled his marriage.

## Sources:

F.G. Emmison, “Elizabethan Life: Home, Work and Land” (From *Essex Wills and Sessions and Manorial Records*. Essex Record Office, 1991).

Joel Hurstfield, *The Queen’s Wards; Wardship and Marriage under Elizabeth I*. (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1958)

Public Record Office, C2 ELIZ B22/18.

Lawrence Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy (1558-1641)*. (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1965)

Charlton Ogburn (Continued from page 1)

Two of the most eminent writers in America endorsed his book, which is in its second edition and fifth printing. The foreword was written by the historian David McCullough, acclaimed author of the biography *Truman*. He called it a "brilliant and powerful book ... that fairly lights up the sky." He found the argument of the book "wholly believable." The critic and essayist Clifton Fadiman wrote, "Count me a convert... (the book's) powerful argument should persuade many rational beings who, well acquainted with the plays, have no vested interest in preserving a rickety tradition." Both McCullough and Fadiman are winners of the National Book Foundation's award for distinguished contributions to American literature.

On the tenth anniversary of his book's publication the trustees of the Shakespeare Oxford Society issued a tribute to Ogburn that concluded: "In the ten years since the book's appearance thousands of readers have been persuaded of the validity of the case for Oxford and the importance of understanding who the author really was. Oxfordians everywhere owe an incalculable debt to Charlton Ogburn for his tireless and courageous leadership in the Oxfordian cause."

With the wide-ranging interests of a renaissance man, Ogburn wrote on subjects as diverse as war, railroads, geology, foreign policy, birdwatching and the Amazon River. He published a dozen books, including two novels, and many articles in leading magazines such as the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Smithsonian*, *Harper's* and *American Heritage*. *Life* magazine once wrote that he was "by way of becoming a literary renaissance man of this generation."

His greatest publishing success was probably *The Marauders* (1959), his account of a semi-guerrilla unit operating behind the Japanese lines in Burma during World War II. The unit, commanded by Brig. Gen. Frank D. Merrill, became famous as "Merrill's Marauders" for its daring exploits. Ogburn served with Merrill as a communications platoon leader. *The New York Times* called it "one of the noblest and most sensitive books by any American about his experiences in war." It was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection and was made into a movie by Warner Brothers.

His other books included *The Adventure of Birds* and *The Winter Beach*, which are considered classics of nature writing. *The Saturday Review* called Ogburn "one of the very best writers we have on natural history today." *The Winter Beach* won the John Burroughs medal. His novel, *The Gold of the River Sea*, was based on his journey up the Amazon River. *The New York Times* called it "pure treasure."

His last book was a 94-page paperback, published in 1995, that he called "a summary

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of the case unfolded in *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality*." It was entitled *The Man Who Was Shakespeare*.

Born in Atlanta on March 15, 1911, Ogburn was the son of Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn, joint authors of *This Star of England: "William Shake-speare," Man of the Renaissance*, published in 1952. The 1,300-page book was the first extended description of Oxford as Shakespeare since J. Thomas Looney published his discovery of Oxford in 1920. Ogburn's father was a corporation lawyer and his mother a writer of mystery novels. Ogburn wrote the foreword to their book.

Ogburn graduated from Harvard College in 1932. Forty years later he succeeded in placing an article in *Harvard Magazine* on "The Man Who Shakespeare Was Not (and Who He Was)." The cover article drew an outpouring of letters to the editor and a rebuttal in a later issue by two Harvard professors who were editors of the prestigious *Riverside Shakespeare*. The experience stimulated Ogburn to write his major work on the case for Oxford, where in he took the opportunity to refute the two professors and criticize their method of argument.

After college Ogburn held several writ-

ing jobs in New York City, including book reviewing for the Book-of-the-Month Club. When World War II broke out he joined the U.S. Army, served with Merrill's Marauders and rose from private to captain in military intelligence.

He was a State Department official for eleven years after the war, working as a policy planner for Near East, South Asia and African affairs. His duties took him to Indonesia, where he met his future wife, Vera M. Weidman, who was in the U.S. consulate. They were married in 1951 and lived for thirty years in Fairfax County, Virginia. They moved to Beaufort, South Carolina, in 1982.

In his final years he maintained an active and wide ranging correspondence with friends, Oxfordians and others who sought his advice. He reviewed manuscripts of books and articles, and was generous with his praise and unstinting in his criticism when he thought it was merited. Many of his correspondents have said they will treasure his letters.

He also wrote for the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*, most recently a long letter to the editor (Fall 1997/Winter 1998) on the 1987 mock trial in Washington and his objections to the Stratfordian brief, which he called "an avalanche of falsity."

When Charlton Ogburn died on October 19th he had been battling various ailments for many years. He had undergone nine operations, and this year was in the hospital twice, once for almost three months and then for almost three weeks; and his eyesight was failing. Finally, approaching his nineties, he decided it was time to end it all and took his own life. Up to within a week or so of his death he was still carrying on a lively correspondence with the help of his wife.

Major newspapers carried his obituary, including the *Washington Post*, the *Atlanta Journal-Courier* and the *Sunday New York Times*. The *Times* headline described him as "Proponent of Earl as the 'Real' Shakespeare."

Besides his wife, Vera, he is survived by their two daughters, Nyssa Raymond of St. Petersburg, Florida, and Dr. Holly Ogburn-Martin of Kennesaw, Georgia; a son from his first marriage, Will Aldis Ogburn of Pacific Palisades, California; and three grandchildren. The funeral was private.

*Commentary*

# Losing Voice; Losing Face; Gaining Vision

*Remembering an author and thinker whose salad days have only begun*

by Mark K. Anderson

Not to sound too much like the Alan Alda character in Woody Allen's *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, but I'd like to propose an unwieldy theory about drama: Comedy is the abundance of voice; tragedy is the loss of voice.

Admittedly, this definition may have some limitations. Sometimes circumstances call for the more quotidian theory of Mel Brooks ("tragedy is *I* get a paper-cut; comedy is *you* fall into an open manhole"). But the great minds and great moments in life often call for higher ideals.

Some of the greatest tragic stories—such as King Lear, the rape of Philomela and the fall of Troy—begin their descent into the inferno through the tragic figures' silencing or utter disregard of critical, opposing and even sympathetic voices. And is there any epoch of history free of despots who don't heed this lesson—and meet their own tragic end as an ultimate consequence?

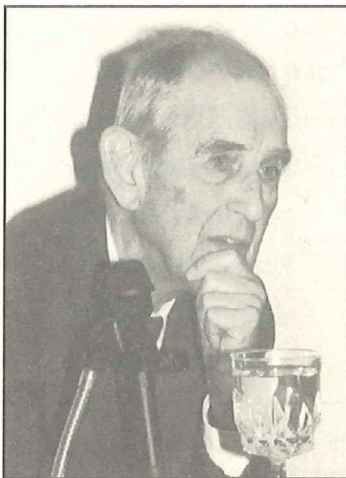
Last October witnessed the loss of an influential and important American voice, albeit one whose star is still in ascendance and whose widest public recognition may still be years away. The tragedy of his passing is great; it's only compounded by the fact that he never lived to see his day in the sun.

Charlton Ogburn was an author with a dozen books and countless articles and shorter works in his portfolio. During the four decades he devoted solely to the written word, he distinguished himself in the genres of fiction, biography, literary criticism, travel and natural history. His World War II memoir *The Marauders* was adapted for the screen in 1962—Warner Brothers retitled it *Merrill's Marauders*—while his experiences traveling up the Amazon served as the basis for his acclaimed novel *The Gold of the River Sea*.

These are not the books he will ultimately be remembered for, however. In 1984, Ogburn published a tome whose aftershocks are still rattling the flatware of literary lovers around the world—and will continue to do

so for decades to come.

The *Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth & The Reality* is, at first pass, one of a seemingly interminable series of critical



*Pictured in 1987 at the 11th Annual Shakespeare Oxford Society Conference, Ogburn listens to a question from those attending the General Meeting of the members the day after the Moot Court Trial.*

examinations of the life of the greatest writer in the history of English literature. As the subtitle suggests, though, there's a little statue-toppling that needs to be done before one can dive headlong into the breach.

This is hardly a foreign notion to anyone familiar with *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, for instance. Throughout those deeply self-revelatory poems—such as Sonnets 25, 29, 48, 66, 71, 72, 76, 85, 111, 135 and 136—the author celebrates the immortality of his own verse and yet laments the fact that his name will be forever lost to posterity.

Of course, such lamentations are antithetical to the conventional biography of the author, whose name has never been lost nor has it ever been in danger of being lost.

This is where Ogburn's writing rises from the chaff churned out by his predecessors and delivers on the ambitious promise

of his title. Western culture, he argues, has for the past four centuries been sitting on a mistaken identity of unparalleled magnitude. Not only have we placed the wrong individual at the very center of our literary canon; but the man who was actually behind the curtain—an Elizabethan courtier named Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford—led one of the most misunderstood as well as tragic, comic, romantic and adventurous lives ever to condense the air with breath.

No wonder, Ogburn argues, that Edward de Vere wrote such masterpieces. With a talent and intellect like the one he commanded combined with the incredible life he led, you'd probably catch yourself scribbling "To be or not to be," too.

Kevin Kelly of *The Boston Globe* wrote that *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* is "perhaps the single most revolutionary book in the whole of Shakespearean scholarship."

Kelly was onto something. However, Kelly's perspective may be short-sighted. Were he still alive, Ogburn would probably have read this article and fired off a postcard with a critical appraisal of my praise.

"I was not the first author to discover Edward de Vere nor will I be the last," might be the sort of Ogburnian rebuke I could expect to find scorching the walls of my mailbox.

It's true that to gain the vision he conveyed in *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, Ogburn was fortunate to have stood on the shoulders of giants. Most notably, the 19th and early 20th century Shakespeare scholars Sir George Greenwood and J. Thomas Looney each played an integral role in, respectively, demolishing the conventional Shakespeare biography and erecting the new.

But Ogburn is still the only one to date who has come close to tapping into that immortal lifeline that birthed 38 dramas, 154 sonnets, two epic poems and an infinitude of graceful epiphanies and sublime revelations.

*The Mysterious William Shakespeare* balances erudition and passion with greater dexterity than anything ever written about Edward de Vere. Ogburn readily admits that he “cannot remain unmoved” about tracing the life of perhaps the greatest writer ever. And his enthusiasm is crucial in carrying the sometimes wary and shell-shocked reader through an exhaustive 800-page account of perhaps the greatest detective story ever.

For these feats alone, Ogburn deserves all the praise a fawning Shakespearean courtier could unleash upon him.

I count myself privileged to have corresponded for several years with Charlton—as anyone to come into his self-effacing presence knew him.

He was both the most gracious and cordial of communicators and the most fastidious and exacting of readers. My last letter from him, written only eight days before his death, continued a thread from his previous missive of five days before.

When he was on a roll, Ogburn was never one to back off from spelling it all out—no matter how many “and another thing”s it took.

I had sent him a sample chapter from a book I’m now writing with Roger Stritmatter about the life and troubled times of Edward de Vere. Ogburn praised sections of it as “absolutely masterly” and then proceeded to take on several points from the chapter—involving everything from historical analysis to punctuation—with which he vehemently disagreed.

Those who communicated with him all have their own stories of encountering Ogburn’s alternately persnickety, alternately transcendent temperament—though it was always thoughtful, respectful and tempered by a Harvard-bred gentility.

Considering Ogburn’s experience with the slings and arrows of outrageous Shakespeare scholars, as spelled out in *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, one can understand how his carefully defensive approach came to be a necessary mechanism for his own emotional well-being and professional survival.

Both his parents were committed Oxfordians—having written their own comprehensive overview, the voluminous 1952 study *This Star of England*—and started the younger Charlton off on his lifelong

pursuit. In 1974, he wrote an article on the case for Edward de Vere as “Shakespeare” for his alma mater’s alumni magazine. In subsequent issues of *Harvard Magazine*, several of the University’s English professors took turns savaging both Ogburn and his arguments.

The cudgels haven’t let up since. For every new generation of readers Ogburn reaches, disempowered and embarrassed scholars have only intensified the fre-

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***“Ogburn is still the only one to date who has come close to tapping into that immortal lifeline that birthed 38 dramas, 154 Sonnets, two epic poems, and an infinitude of graceful epiphanies and sublime revelations.”***

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***“For every new generation of readers Ogburn reaches, disempowered and embarrassed scholars have only intensified the frequency and fierceness of their brickbats...”***

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quency and fierceness of their brickbats.

To this day, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* remains the definitive exposition of a profoundly compelling but much maligned historical and literary school of thought. In part because the English speaking world has such an emotional investment in the Stratford-on-Avon myth—with its Horatio Alger-like parable of upward mobility as well as its romantic reliance on nebulous notions of incomprehensible genius—Ogburn’s work continues to come up against deep-seated irrational resistance, despite the overwhelming case for Edward de Vere’s identity as

the man behind the pseudonym.

Perusing reviews of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, one can see how many readers began their journey through Ogburn’s opus with their hackles up. In 1984, for instance, author and columnist Joseph Sobran was assigned to review *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* for *The National Review*. As he now recounts the tale, Sobran was a wholehearted believer in the conventional biography of Shakespeare and was consequently armed and eager to tear the book to shreds.

The trouble was, the further he rummaged for salient counterpoints, the more he was convinced that Ogburn was right. “The candid reader will find a thousand pieces falling into place and the towering plays and poems will sound more resonantly than ever before,” Sobran finally wrote in his review.

Last year, The Free Press published Sobran’s latest book, *Alias Shakespeare*, advocating Edward de Vere’s authorship of the Shakespeare canon.

Counteracting the slow erosion Ogburn set in motion, conventional Shakespeare scholars have borrowed the zero tolerance rhetoric of the drug abolitionist movement.

“Charlton Ogburn is a very passionate writer,” admits one professional Stratford standard-bearer in a review of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* on the Internet bookstore site [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), “but ironically that makes this book all the more dangerous. This book is a cunning amalgam of distortions, half-truths and forcefully-stated opinions dressed up in the trappings of scholarship ...”

And yet sandbags can only stem a tide. The past five years alone have seen defections around the globe—scholars, directors, actors, authors, intellectuals and literary critics—that indicate the smart money is now beginning to pull the stakes up and decamp Stratford-on-Avon.

As other reviewers at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) indicate, the buyer should certainly beware.

“So be warned: If you think Eve was better off before she ate the apple, this might not be the book for you,” notes one reader. “But if you believe that knowledge and truth are worth the price of a few illusions, beloved as they are, have a bite.”

*This article first appeared in the October 29th issue of the Valley Advocate (Springfield, Mass.)*

*Dickson (Continued from page 1)*

his list of great poets in *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622) in order to show that Peacham knew Shakespeare and Oxford, and must have known that there was no difference between the two.

Peacham made this deliberate decision to exclude Shakespeare's name from his list of the greatest poets of the Elizabethan era based on a number of different factors, including the politics of the era in which he lived. This decision to exclude Shakespeare was Peacham's way of signaling—in the delicate political situation of the early 1620s—that the imprisoned 18th Earl of Oxford's father was, in fact, Shakespeare.

This calculation was not an easy decision for Peacham because, ironically, he was dedicating his work to a member of the Howard family—in fact, to a direct descendent of the Catholic cousins whom Oxford had exposed in the 1580s for political reasons. Therefore a decision even to include Oxford in any list, especially a list in which Shakespeare's name is conspicuously absent, was no trivial matter for Peacham given this past history.

Furthermore, Peacham had to be well aware of the inception of the *First Folio* project and also of the ongoing vendetta which the King and his homosexual lover (the Duke of Buckingham) were engaged in against the 3rd Earl of Southampton and the 18th Earl of Oxford (Henry de Vere) in 1621-1622.

Despite the firm nature of the evidence and conclusions presented in this essay, it should be emphasized that this is a difficult subject requiring close attention and careful evaluation. Nonetheless, the contextualization of Peacham's *The Compleat Gentleman* and its relationship to the near simultaneous *First Folio* project does provide, in this writer's estimation, a key by which the Shakespeare authorship dispute *should be seen* as having been conclusively resolved in Oxford's favor.

### Possible Sources of Peacham's List

Henry Peacham's list of the greatest Elizabethan poets published in *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622) begins with Oxford, Buckhurst, and then continues with Paget, Philip Sidney, Dyer, Spenser, and Daniel.

On the surface, it might appear that the focus we find in Peacham's list derives directly from the famous lists found in Francis Meres' *Palladis Tamia* (1598) which cites Oxford as best for comedy and Buckhurst as best for tragedy, and which also prominently mention Shakespeare for both his plays and his sonnets.

However this is not correct—at least not for Peacham—who was actually utilizing and revising to his own satisfaction an

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***“Henry Peacham, unlike Meres, was extremely well-connected in the world of art and literature in London as well as the royal court, both as an artist and as a writer, for more than three decades. Like a good courtier, he cultivated relationships across a broad terrain...”***

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earlier list from George Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589).<sup>1</sup> This fact is crucial to an analysis of Peacham's thought process as he ranked the great Elizabethan poets, and yet failed to list Shakespeare.

There is no sign that Meres' lists had any impact on Peacham. Meres, who graduated from Cambridge in 1587, eight years before Peacham, provides many different lists of poets, including those versed in Latin and other foreign languages, and offers sub-lists for eight categories or styles of poetry. However, his main list for the greatest poets in the English tongue includes: Sidney, Spenser, Daniel, Drayton, Warner, Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Chapman.

Writing three decades later, Peacham explicitly excludes from his list those Elizabethan-era poets who were still alive in 1622, which would explain the omission of Chapman and Drayton (whom Meres gave top billing). Nonetheless, it is puzzling why Peacham omits Marlowe and it is especially puzzling why he omits Shakespeare, whose famous poems such as *Venus and Adonis*, *The Rape of Lucrece* and *The Sonnets*—

plus numerous popular quarto versions of his plays—had all been published during the three decades preceding publication of *The Compleat Gentlemen* in the Summer of 1622.

This glaring omission of Shakespeare's name from Peacham's list is astounding and in all likelihood was not an oversight but, on the contrary, was a *deliberate exclusion* because Peacham knew that Oxford and Shakespeare were the same person. There are a number of factors to be considered in support of this conclusion that Peacham's decision in 1622 was clearly testimony that *there was no Shakespeare*—but, instead, only Oxford. We shall now proceed to examine more closely each of these factors.

### Who Was Henry Peacham?

First, we should look briefly at just who Henry Peacham was and what role he played in 17th-century England. Unlike Frances Meres, Henry Peacham (1578-1643?) was extremely well-connected in the world of art and literature in London as well as the royal court, both as an artist and as a writer, for more than three decades.<sup>2</sup>

Like a good courtier, he cultivated relationships across a broad terrain, both with Ben Jonson and also with Jonson's great rival Inigo Jones, a man who valued Peacham's artistic talent. Further, Peacham was associated with Prince Henry prior to his death in 1612, and then, finally, he became associated with the antipode to this fanatically Protestant prince—namely, with the Howard family which was notorious for its pro-Catholic and pro-Spanish sentiments.

Peacham was also on good terms with Daniel and Drayton who, as members of the Herbert-Pembroke-Sidney literary circle, were drawn into the cult and worship of Prince Henry as the perfect Protestant Prince whom this circle hoped would someday slay the Catholic dragon at home and abroad.

For example, Peacham (unlike Shakespeare) joined John Selden, a famous, erudite lawyer, to write many poems upon the death of Prince Henry in 1612, and then more poems a year later celebrating the marriage of his sister (the Princess Elizabeth) whom many Protestants hoped would succeed her father as the monarch rather than Prince Charles.<sup>3</sup>



In any case, the most important point to emphasize about Peacham is that he was extremely well-connected to the literary world for decades and that he had to know the true identity of Shakespeare, as did his close friends, Jonson, Drayton, and Daniel.

We can be certain of this conclusion for one other important reason. If Peacham is famous for anything among Shakespeare scholars, it is because he is the artist who drew and added his name (Henricus Peacham) and the year (1595) to a sketch of costumes designed for a performance or a rehearsal of *Titus Andronicus* (the sketch is reproduced on page 11).<sup>4</sup>

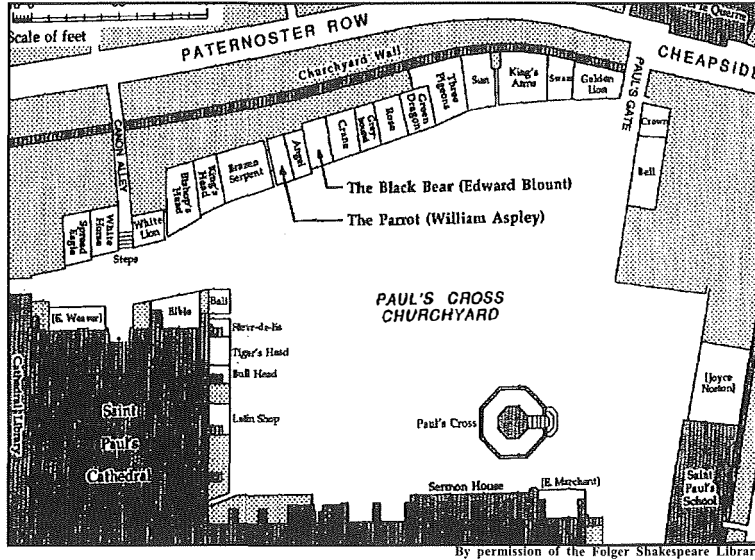
At the time, Peacham was seventeen and had just graduated with his degree from Cambridge University. This sketch is one of the most cherished documents relating to Shakespeare because it is the only drawing relating to a contemporary staging of one of his plays known to have survived. It remains in the library of the Marquis of Bath (Longleat House, Wiltshire). E. K. Chambers brought it to the public's attention only in 1925.

A few scholars have questioned the authenticity of this sketch, but Samuel Schoenbaum, who reproduced the sketch in *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life* (1975), has stated that, at best, skepticism was only justified concerning an inscription in the upper right margin, not Peacham's signature in the lower-left portion of the manuscript. In his words, this signature is "authentic enough."

This curious phraseology may convey Schoenbaum's sour grapes about a treasured document that plays right into the hands of those who wish to advance the Oxfordian theory on the authorship question. Ironically, Oxfordians have for decades overlooked the significance of this document for their claim.

### Peacham's List: Other Factors

Given what we know about Peacham's



Reproduced from Peter Blayney's *The First Folio of Shakespeare*, this map shows the layout of all the book stores in the Paul's Cross Churchyard. Frances Constable's *White Lion* is just three doors down from the stores of Edward Blount and William Aspley, both members of the folio project syndicate. It seems quite likely that Constable and/or Henry Peacham would have been aware of the folio printing project by mid-1622.

close friendship with insiders on the literary scene for three decades and his sketch relating to *Titus Andronicus*, his omission of Shakespeare's name on the list of great poets in *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622) looks more and more suspicious. One possible argument to explain Peacham's exclusion of Shakespeare—that he wished to list only those poets who wrote only non-dramatic poetry—makes no sense because Buckhurst, Daniel, and—evidently—Oxford wrote plays as well as poetry.

Also, *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (1609)—arguably the most celebrated of his poetry—had been published more than a decade earlier, to say nothing about *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594). Both these epic poems of the 1590s went through multiple printings, were quite popular, and were even referred to in other poems of the period. So there was certainly more than ample reason to include Shakespeare's name in a list of leading poets under Elizabeth. Furthermore, there are other factors why the omission of the name "Shakespeare" could not have been an oversight, but must have been a deliberate exclusion.

The first of these factors pertains to the circumstances and timing of the publication of *The Compleat Gentleman*. The publisher, Francis Constable, owned the *White Lion*, a

book store in the courtyard on the north side of St. Paul's Cathedral, the center of the book trade in London at that time. Sixty or seventy feet from the front door to *The White Lion* in the same block were *The Black Bear* and *The Parrot*, two other book stores owned, respectively, by Edward Blount and William Aspley<sup>5</sup> (see the map of the Churchyard on this page).

Along with another man named John Smethwick, Blount and Aspley were the principal members of the Syndicate behind the *First Folio* project which was printed by the Jaggard firm. Smethwick's book store was only a few blocks away on Fleet Street to the west of the Cathedral. Given the proximity of the

*White Lion* to these other book stores, the small circle of those in the book trade, and Peacham's extensive network of literary friends, it is highly improbable that he and Constable did not know that the *First Folio* project was underway in 1622.

This date—1622—is an additional factor in understanding that Shakespeare's name could not have escaped Peacham's attention as he prepared his list, for we now know that this was the year that the actual production of the Shakespeare folio got underway.

In his landmark work, *The Printing and Proof-Reading of the First Folio of Shakespeare* (1963) Charlton Hinman conclusively demonstrated that the folio syndicate and Jaggard began the printing of the folio project later than previously understood, not in 1620-21, but rather in 1622, sometime between February and August of that year.<sup>6</sup>

Obviously, the planning for the folio preceded the actual printing, though Hinman argues in his book that the decision to assemble a comprehensive folio had to have come after the October 1621 registration with the Stationers' Register for the first-time publication of *Othello* as a quarto.<sup>7</sup>

In any case, a folio project of this magnitude could not be hidden from others in the book trade for long and we know that

(Continued on page 10)

*Dickson (Continued from page 9)*

Peacham dated the dedication to his own work on May 28th, 1622 and was still making last minute alterations in the text to include material pleasing to his then patron Richard Sackville (grandson of the same Lord Buckhurst whose name follows Oxford's in Peacham's list of poets).<sup>8</sup> Peacham's publisher (Constable) finally registered *The Compleat Gentleman* with the Stationer's Register on July 3rd, 1622, and we can assume that the work appeared in book stores not long after that date.

Yet another factor that must have been an important consideration as Peacham compiled his list of the greatest Elizabethan poets was the political situation at the time. Like most persons, he was aware of the crisis over religion and foreign policy associated with the Spanish Marriage crisis in 1621-22, and the increasing repression against the freedom of thought and expression under King James and his homosexual lover, the Duke of Buckingham. He also knew that the Earls of Southampton and Oxford (Henry de Vere), along with his own good friend John Selden (the famous lawyer), had been imprisoned for a time in the spring of 1621 for challenging the King and the Duke over these issues.

Since *The Compleat Gentleman* appeared well after these imprisonments, and after King James had dissolved Parliament on January 9th, 1622, Peacham and Constable were fully aware of how rapidly the situation was deteriorating. There can be no doubt about this because Peacham wrote his dedication on May 28th, a full month after the second imprisonment of Henry de Vere, 18th Earl of Oxford (an imprisonment which lasted twenty months in all).

Thus, the decision to include in his list Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford—father of Henry de Vere, the 18th Earl of Oxford—among the greatest poets of the Elizabethan era was no light matter, regardless of whether he was Shakespeare or not. At a minimum, Oxford had to have been a substantial literary figure in Peacham's mind to justify his inclusion at all.

A final reason why Peacham's decision on whom to include in his list must have been a step taken with great deliberation relates to *The Compleat Gentleman's* dedication. The work was dedicated to William

Howard, the youngest son of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel. Peacham had been a tutor some years earlier for the three older sons and became William's tutor sometime after August 1620, which strongly suggests that the bulk of this book dedicated to the young man was drafted in 1621.<sup>9</sup>

The most important point concerning this dedication is that politically astute persons knew that Edward de Vere was held in low regard by this particular branch of the

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***“Given the revolving door to the Tower involving the release of the Somersets and the second incarceration of Henry de Vere in April 1622, Peacham's dedication has a special political edge to it ... [his] politics were much closer to the Herberts, Southampton and Henry de Vere...”***

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Howard family given that he had betrayed his Catholic cousins in the 1580s as traitors to Queen Elizabeth to save his own neck. The two individuals who suffered most from this betrayal directly or indirectly were William's grandfather (Philip), who died in prison in 1595, and especially his grandfather's uncle, Henry Howard, the First Earl of Northampton (second iteration). Northampton's bitter feud with Edward de Vere included counter-accusations that Oxford was a homosexual as well as a traitor in his own right.

Furthermore, the notorious Lady Somerset (Francis Howard) was first cousin to young William's father, Thomas. She and her own granduncle (Northampton again), who was the leader of the court faction partial to Catholicism and Spain in foreign policy, were suspected of being responsible for the murder in the Tower of Thomas Overbury, a member of the Protestant faction at Court associated with the Herbert family and Southampton. Francis Howard and her husband (Somerset) spent nearly six years in the Tower for the crime and were

released just three months prior to the second imprisonment of Henry de Vere (the 17th Earl's son) for his opposition to King James' dissolution of parliament in January 1622 and the monarch's zeal to marry Prince Charles to a sister of the Spanish King.

Given the revolving door to the Tower involving the release of the Somersets and the second incarceration of Henry de Vere in April 1622, Peacham's dedication has a special political edge to it. He had revered Prince Henry and his politics were much closer to the politics of the Herberts, Southampton and Henry de Vere in their long-standing struggle to counter the influence of the pro-Catholic, pro-Spanish Howard family.

Nevertheless, here in 1622 when Henry de Vere has been sent to the Tower for a second time—with a good chance of never coming out alive—Peacham is dedicating to a Howard family member a work that places Edward de Vere's name among the greatest English poets. The genealogical chart on page twelve helps illustrate the tricky political waters that Peacham was navigating during the explosive situation of the 1621-22 period.

#### **Peacham, Puttenham, and *Minerva Britannia***

While the above evidence clearly indicates that Peacham knew quite well the significance of, and was self-conscious about, the exclusion from his list of “Shakespeare” and the inclusion of “Oxford,” there are several more pieces of important evidence to be considered. This crucial information, coupled with the historical context surrounding the publishing of *The Compleat Gentleman*, further strengthens the case that, in Peacham's mind, these two persons—Oxford and Shakespeare—were one and the same individual.

The first piece of additional evidence is Peacham's prior identification of Oxford as an important literary figure who required concealment for some reason. In 1612, Peacham published *Minerva Britannia*, a compilation of literary emblems dedicated to Prince Henry. Minerva is the Roman equivalent for Athena, the hasti-vibrans (spear-shaking) patron Goddess of Greek theater. The title page consists of a large emblem with a pen in a hand jutting out from beneath

a curtain attached to the proscenium of a theater arch. That the image depicts the concealment of a person involved with the theater and/or with literature should be obvious to any reader. The question then is: "Who is this concealed individual?"

The hand in question has nearly completed writing on a scroll the words MENTE.VIDIBORI, with the Latin "mente vidibor" translating as, "In the mind I shall be seen."<sup>10</sup> In other words, only through this person's literary works will others come to know this writer (but never his true identity?). The other Latin inscriptions attached to the wreath surrounding the theater proscenium and curtain are:

VIVITUR IN GENIO  
[and]  
CAETERA MORTIS ERUNT.

There are several possible renditions of the entire three-part inscription, but that offered by John Astley-Cock in 1975 is as follows:

In the Mind [I] Shall be Seen  
Resurrected by the Talent,  
All Else by Death Concealed.<sup>11</sup>

The most important facet of this emblem in Peacham's work (analyzed for the first time by Eva Clark Turner in her 1937 work, *The Man Who Would be Shakespeare*) is an anagram contained in the key phrase "MENTE.VIDIBORI" with its all-important period flanked by the intriguing letters E and V. Her suggestion—later supported by Astley-Cock—for a logical and virtually unavoidable decipherment of the concealed identity in this anagram is:

TIBINOM.DEVERE,  
[or]  
Thy Name is De Vere.<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, barely a decade before publishing *The Compleat Gentleman*—at the zenith of the cult of a young Prince Henry who revered Shakespeare's works—Peacham had already hinted on the title page of his work *Minerva Britanna* that an important English writer's identity was hidden or concealed for some mysterious reason, and that this writer's name was Edward de Vere,

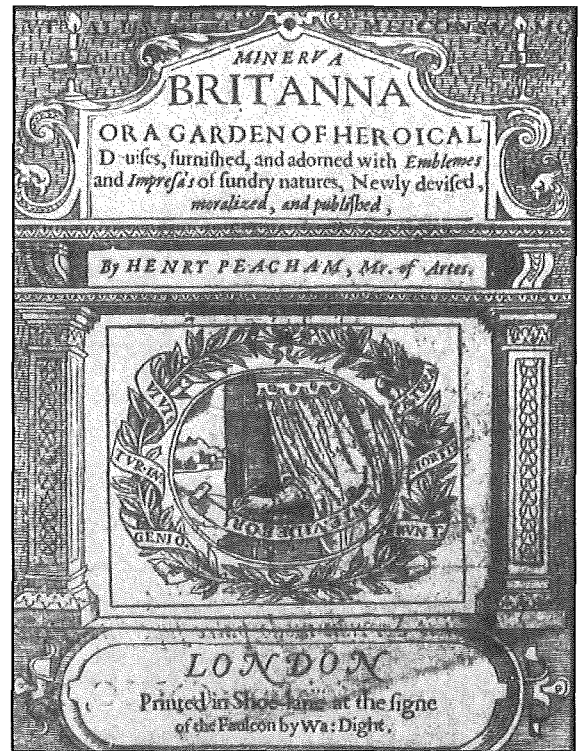


Marquess of Bath, Longleat House, Wiltshire

Henry Peacham was a man who had lived through the end of Elizabeth's reign and the first two decades of James. He knew of Shakespeare dating back to the mid-1590s, as is attested to by his famous 1595 sketch (top) of a performance of *Titus Andronicus* (accompanied by hand-written excerpts of some of the play's text).

Seventeen years later Peacham produced the well-known *Minerva Britanna* (right), with its title page message of someone who is concealed behind a stage curtain, and that someone almost certainly being identified as Edward de Vere through the anagram *Eva Turner Clark* found in the message the hidden hand is writing.

With such a long-standing and unique background, how could Peacham have "accidentally" left Shakespeare's name out of his best-selling *The Compleat Gentleman*?



the 17th Earl of Oxford.

The second additional piece of evidence that further illuminates Peacham's thought process as he sat down in 1622 to compose his list of the greatest Elizabethan poets pertains to the close parallel between his list and the list which Puttenham gave thirty-three years earlier in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589).

The crucial point to understand at this juncture is that Peacham did not use any of Meres' lists from 1598, but instead revised Puttenham's 1589 list, and in so doing he clearly reveals his deliberate, self-conscious exclusion of "Shakespeare."

First, we provide the passage from Peacham, who is very emphatic about the

importance of what he is about to say concerning the greatest Elizabethan poets:

In the time of our late Queen Elizabeth, which was truly a golden Age (for such a world of refined wits, excellent spirits it produced, whose like are hardly to be hoped for, in any succeeding age) above others, who honoured Poesie with their pennes and practice (to omit her Majestie who had a singular gift herein) were Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, the Lord Buckhurst, Henry Lord Paget, our Phoenix, the noble Sir Philip Sidney, M. Edward Dyer, M. Edmund Spenser, M. Samuel Daniel, with sundry others (together with those admirable wits, yet living, and so well known) not out of Ennuie, but to avoid tediousness, I overpass.<sup>13</sup>

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Dickson (Continued from page 11)

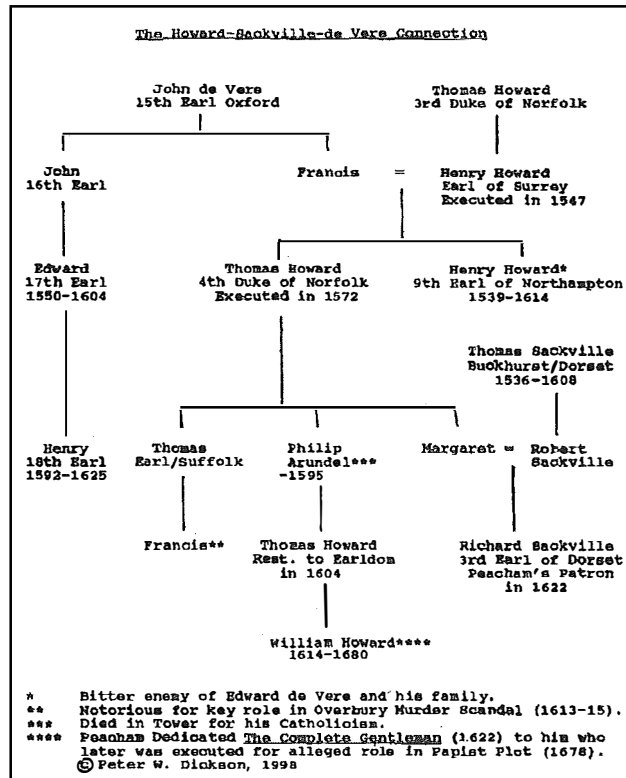
Now let us compare Peacham's 1622 passage on the great poets with that found in Puttenham's 1589 work:

And in her Majesties time that now is are sprung up an other crew of Courtlymakers Noble men and Gentlemen of her Majesties servauntes, who have written excellently well as it would appeare if their doings could be found out and made publicke with the rest, of which first is that noble Gentleman, Edward, Earl of Oxford. Thomas Lord of Buckhurst, when he was young, Henry Lord Paget, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Rawliegh, Master Edward Dyer, Master Fulke Grevell, Gascon, Britton, Turberville and a great many other learned Gentlemen, whose names I do not omit for enuie, but to avoyde tediousnesse, and who have deserved no little commendation.<sup>14</sup>

Now, it is quite obvious from the concluding parallel phraseology (ennuie/tediousnesse) in both citations, as well as the sequence of the list of poets, that Peacham did not start from scratch with a blank sheet of paper when he sat down to make up his list. He clearly is utilizing (plagiarizing?) Puttenham's list.

His revisions provide an important insight into his thought process. Even with the benefit of considerable hindsight (thirty-three years!) concerning that "truly golden age," Peacham repeats the first four poets from Puttenham's list, then drops Ralieggh, retains Dyer, and then drops the last four names. To round out his own list, Peacham then adds Spenser and Daniel, but for some reason he cannot bring himself to add "Shakespeare" despite the great fame attached to this name for non-dramatic as well as dramatic poetry.

Given that the facts about Peacham's life clearly show that he had to have known Shakespeare for nearly thirty years, that he and his publisher also had to have known that the *First Folio* project was underway in 1622, and—last but not least—that Peacham had already—in *Minerva Britanna*—fingered Edward de Vere as a literary figure who could not be identified openly with his works, there is really only one obvious, logical, and inescapable conclusion that can be drawn:



*Part of Henry Peacham's political calculations in 1622 had to take into account the long family histories that intertwined among the de Veres, the Howards, and the Sackvilles. It had been Edward de Vere who in 1580-81 turned in his Howard cousins as possible traitors.*

Peacham excluded "Shakespeare" from his list because it was Oxford's pen-name.

The only alternative to this conclusion would be to argue that the unwanted redundancy Peacham alludes to (i.e. his concluding statement he "overpass[es] ... sundry others ... not out of Ennuie, but to avoid tediousnesse [i.e. repetition]") pertained to one of the other poets on the list.

But the mountain of evidence accumulated since the 1920s favoring Oxford as the true Shakespeare—plus the *Minerva Britanna* emblem from Peacham's own hand—makes such alternative arguments unconvincing.

Further evidence that Peacham had no second thoughts about the exclusion of Shakespeare's name from his list is the fact that *The Compleat Gentleman* was a national best seller as the pre-eminent guide for those in the higher social strata or for those aspiring to such rank. It was as well known as the *First Folio*, with three other editions appearing in 1627, 1634, and 1661. Peacham, who lived until 1643, therefore

had ample opportunity to correct the obvious absence of Shakespeare's name from the list of the greatest Elizabethan poets, but he never did. This is another strong sign that the real Shakespeare's name was *already on the list*—Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford.

### Summary and conclusion

Given that Peacham is quite emphatic in *The Compleat Gentleman* about characterizing the Elizabethan era and its most famous poets as a glorious period in the nation's history, probably never to be equaled in the future, the deliberate exclusion of Shakespeare's name makes no sense unless Oxford and Shakespeare were one and the same man. The evidence presented and analyzed in this essay supports this inescapable conclusion.

Peacham's personal dilemma was that he could not really ignore the question of Shakespeare, because he knew the Bard going back to the 1590s, and both he and his own publisher had to be aware of the folio project, to say nothing of the long publication

history of the numerous quarto editions of the Bard's plays, *Venus and Adonis*, *Rape of Lucrece*, and the *Sonnets*.

If Shakespeare was, in fact, a different person from any of the other names on Peacham's list, it would have been logical and rational for Peacham to include it because he had to have known—as did other figures such as Jonson and Drayton—who Shakespeare was. Therefore, a decision to include Shakespeare's name in his list would have avoided any possible confusion in the reader's mind, and would not later raise any questions about Peacham's competence as a literary expert—a reputation which he undoubtedly valued highly.

Certainly, if Shakespeare really was a separate person and the nation's greatest poet, then the temptation for Peacham to *exclude Oxford's name instead* would have been overwhelming. There can be no doubt that to include the name of a notorious Earl ran a risk of upsetting some within the particular branch of the Howard family, given the wounds from the past. So, it would have

been quite easy and even convenient for Peacham to drop Oxford, especially if he was really more or less a minor court poet.

Logic and the evidence (i.e. Oxford's inclusion on the list) clearly indicate that Peacham's thought process came from the opposite perspective, namely, that Oxford's name absolutely *needed to be on* the new list, as it had been on the one prepared in 1589 by Puttenham. The only real issue and tough question for Peacham was whether to add the name "Shakespeare." Ultimately, he decided upon reflection to exclude the name "Shakespeare," which indicates clearly that he knew—and assumed others would know—that Shakespeare was the pen-name for Oxford.

In conclusion, Peacham's final choice represents the *least probable* among the four possibilities open to him, *if Oxford and Shakespeare were really different persons*. His choice to include Oxford and exclude Shakespeare *confirms* their shared identity and underscores Peacham's ability to finesse the awkward political situation of the early 1620s.

Peacham could not risk stating "Oxford also known as Shakespeare" because this might have irked the Howards, and would have also risked the anger of the King and Buckingham following their imprisonment of Southampton and Henry de Vere in June-July 1621 (which included Peacham's friend John Selden) and then the second imprisonment of Henry de Vere in mid-April 1622.

Peacham's solution was to honor the true Bard by omitting the pen-name "Shakespeare," trusting that most educated or sophisticated readers would read Oxford's name and make the logical connection on their own, especially given that a large Folio of his plays would be available within the next year or so.<sup>15</sup>

In contrast to Peacham's situation, those in the syndicate sponsoring the *First Folio* project faced a different dilemma. They were assembling the plays of the Bard already known by the Shakespeare pen-name, no doubt with the assistance of the Lord Chamberlain (the Earl of Pembroke) and his brother (the Earl of Montgomery—a brother-in-law to the 18th Earl of Oxford, Henry, and the son-in-law of the 17th Earl, Edward), both of whom were the *First Folio* dedication's "Incomparable Paire."

So placing the 17th Earl's name on the title page was not a viable option for Pembroke and Montgomery, both because of the still compelling pre-existing rationale for concealment (whatever it was) dating back three decades, and also because of the current awkward political situation given the King's imprisonments of the 17th Earl's son Henry and the 3rd Earl of Southampton.

Thus, the conclusion that Oxford was Shakespeare rests on the inescapable correlation of crucial, solid pieces of evidence which include: Peacham's personal knowledge of and association with the real Shakespeare dating back to the 1590s, the emblem/anagram in *Minerva Britanna* (1612) signaling Oxford's need for concealment, Peacham's determination in 1622 to list the greatest Elizabethan poets, his simultaneous awareness and that of his own publisher (Francis Constable) concerning the *First Folio* project prior to the completion of *The Compleat Gentleman*, Peacham's curious decision to list Oxford's name but not "Shakespeare," and lastly Peacham's acute awareness of the delicate situation involved in listing Oxford's name given the Howard family's sensitivities and the Court's ongoing vendetta in 1621-22 with Southampton and Henry De Vere, Oxford's son.

There is no longer any reason for anyone to have any doubt that Peacham knew that Edward de Vere and Shakespeare were one and the same man. What was true for Peacham in 1622 is also true for us today.

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#### Footnotes:

1. It was actually Puttenham (not Meres) who ranked Oxford and Buckhurst as first respectively for Comedy and Tragedy. See George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, Cambridge University Press, 1936, pages 62-63.

2. Our background information concerning the life and work of Henry Peacham was obtained from *The Dictionary of National Biography* (1895-96), volume XV, pages 578-580; Robert Ralston Cawley, *Henry Peacham - His Contribution to English Poetry* (1971); and Alan R. Young, *Henry Peacham*, (1975).

3. The poems written by Peacham and John Selden were collected in *The Period of Mourning*, published in 1613.

4. Samuel Schoenbaum reproduced this drawing on pages 123-124 of his work, *William*

*Shakespeare: A Documentary Life* (1975).

5. See the map of Paul's Cross Churchyard on page 27 of Peter Blayney's *The First Folio of Shakespeare* (1991).

6. See Hinman, *The Printing and Proof-Reading of the First Folio of Shakespeare*, 1963, pages 342-346.

7. *Ibid.*, pages 28-29.

8. Cawley, *op. cit.*, page 10; Young, *op. cit.*, pages 27, 103, and footnote 56 on page 144.

9. Young, *op. cit.*, page 70. After settling in the Norwich area in 1615 as a schoolmaster, Peacham evidently was drawn toward the family of Thomas Howard, the Earl of Suffolk, because of this Lord's interest in fine art as well as literature.

10. It has been pointed out that the inscription, as written, is not correct Latin for either the first or second person conjugation. It should read either MENTE.VIDIBOR ("...I shall be seen") or MENTE.VIDIBERIS ("...thou shall be seen). Peacham knew his Latin, and it must be assumed that the hand is writing the letter "I" after VIDIBOR *only* to complete the anagram. E.T. Clark's interpretation that the letter "S" should be assumed after the "I" is negated by the fact that the correct Latin for the second-person should then be "VIDIBERIS," not "VIDIBORIS."

11. See pages 311-314 for Astley-Cock's essay in "Oxfordian Vistas," the subtitle of a supplemental volume of essays attached to the 1975 Minos Publishing reprint of Thomas Looney's *"Shakespeare" Identified*, originally published in 1920.

12. When Looney published his work in 1920 he apparently did not have the benefit of knowing about this anagram or the emblem in Peacham's *Minerva Britanna*, nor about the inclusion of Oxford in a list of great poets in *The Compleat Gentleman*. The first person who evidently uncovered this important evidence was Eva Turner Clark sometime after 1930. She included it in her 1937 work as cited in this essay.

13. Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman*, 1622, pages 95-96.

14. Puttenham, *op. cit.*, page 61.

15. Peacham's predicament in 1621-1622 brings to mind that of Ben Jonson who felt compelled to make deletions/insertions in his famous folio for political reasons after the Overbury Murder scandal broke upon the country in late 1615. Although never really close to the pro-Catholic Howard faction, Jonson removed some material in their honor from the folio because the scandal badly damaged the Howard clique at Court and included poems in favor of the newly triumphant and staunchly Protestant faction associated with the Herbert-Pembroke-Sidney family network.

## Oxford's Literary Reputation in the 17th and 18th Centuries

*References more frequent than previously thought, even as Bardolatry starts to take hold*

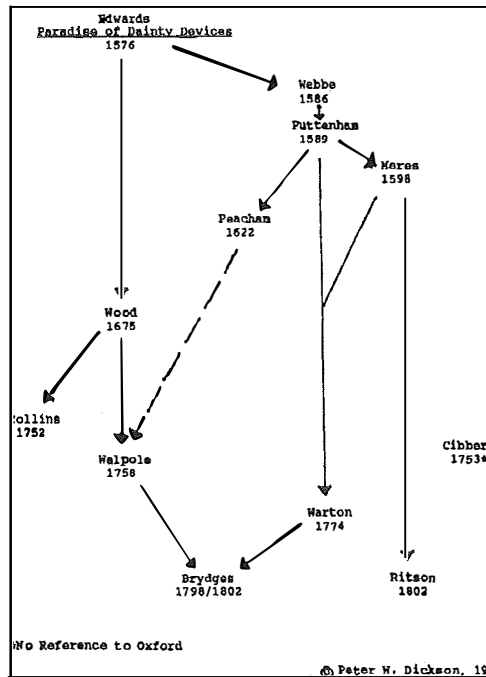
Between Peacham's list in 1622 and Grosart's publication in 1872 of some of Oxford's poems, there are at least six major commentators on him as a literary figure.

The first and only one in the seventeenth century was Anthony Wood (1632-1690) who published the *Athenae Oxonienses* and *Fasti Oxonienses* in 1675. In these two compendia listing all the great writers educated at Oxford University, Wood reveals that his knowledge of Oxford as a famous court poet comes from his poems as they appeared in Richard Edwards's *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* published in 1576, 1578, and eight more times thereafter. Wood describes Oxford as "an excellent poet and Comedian as several matters of his composition, which were made public, did shew, which I presume are now lost or worn out."<sup>1</sup>

Two genealogists in the next century repeated almost verbatim Wood's observations about Oxford's literary talent, and also that the Earl was the first to introduce embroidered gloves and certain perfumes from Italy which impressed Queen Elizabeth. These genealogical experts on the British Peerage were Arthur Collins (1682?-1760) and Samuel Egerton Brydges (1763-1837). Collins's passages concerning Oxford can be found on page 265 of his *Historical Recollection of the Noble - Families of Cavendish, Hollis, Vere, Harley and Ogle*, 1752.<sup>2</sup> A prominent publisher and expert on Elizabethan literature and poetry, Brydges in his *Memoirs of the Peers of England during the Reign of King James the First* (1802) makes four terse but emphatic references to "Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, the poet."<sup>3</sup>

In his prior work *Reflections on the late augmentation of the English Peerage* (1798), Brydges offers a detailed biographical sketch of Oxford which echoes Wood's description, stating that Oxford was "a celebrated poet, distinguished for his wit, adroitness in his exercises, and valour and zeal for his country."<sup>4</sup>

Brydges in his earlier work also revealed that in addition to Wood, he had two other sources of information about Oxford. The closest in time to Brydges was the classic



*Oxford's literary reputation was carried on right up until the end of the 18th century.*

three-volume work, *The History of English Poetry* of Thomas Warton (1726-1790). In volume one published in 1774, Warton makes passing references to the lists of famous poets, which included Oxford, that Meres published in *Palladis Tamia* in 1598 and George Puttenham published in *The Arte of English Poesie* in 1589.<sup>5</sup> William Webbe's reference to Oxford in *A Discourse of Poetrie* (1586) is not given but Warton cites this book in other places.

More important than Warton is Brydges' reference to *A Catalogue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England, with Lists of their Works* published in 1758 by Horace Walpole (1717-1797), the Fourth Earl of Oxford (second iteration). Walpole was a famous scholar of English literature who voiced only qualified praise of Shakespeare which upset others who questioned this Earl's talent as a literary critic. Nonetheless, he was famous as the publisher who established the Strawberry Hill Press and was a major expert on English literature like Warton with whom he had a great rivalry.

In a section devoted to Oxford in volume one of his work, Walpole cites *The Paradise*

of *Dainty Devices* and initially repeats almost verbatim what could be found in Wood's prior work from 1675.<sup>6</sup> Along with Oxford's reputation as a poet, Walpole confirms that he was "reckoned as the Best writer of Comedy in his time," but adds that "the very names of all his plays are lost."

Nevertheless, Walpole offers his own unique perspective concerning Oxford a few pages later in a section on another writer, Thomas Sackville, Lord of Buckhurst and Dorset, the same author whose name follows Oxford's in Peacham's list in 1622. Walpole's comments are extraordinary because he also refers to Shakespeare in the same passage on Oxford and Buckhurst. The passage question is as follows:

Tiptoft and Rivers set the example of bringing light from other countries, and patronized the art of printing, Caxton. The Earls of Oxford and Dorset struck out new lights for Drama, without making the multitude laugh or weep at ridiculous representations of Scripture. To the former we owe Printing, to the two latter Taste — what do we not owe perhaps to the last of the four our historic plays are allowed to have been found on the heroic narratives in the Mirrours for Magistrates; to that plan, and to the boldness of Lord Buckhurst's new scenes perhaps we owe Shakespeare. Such debt to these four Lords, the probability of the last obligation, as sufficient to justify a Catalogue of Noble Authors.<sup>7</sup>

Walpole has clearly identified and highlighted two distinct pairs of aristocrats for their historical contribution to English drama and literature. According to *The Dictionary of National Biography*, Tiptoft and Rivers were two Earls who introduced foreign literature and the art of printing into England in the second half of the fifteenth century. They were John Tiptoft, a Baron and also First Earl of Worcester, and Anthony Woodville, the Second Earl of Rivers.

Walpole then links Oxford and Sackville (Buckhurst-Dorset) as the fathers of English drama and he highlights the impact on Shakespeare of the latter's multi-volume work *Mirroure for Magistrates* which first

appeared in 1559. Walpole's selection and emphasis on Sackville was no doubt influenced by the fact that this Earl was famous as the co-author of the first English tragedy in blank verse, namely *Gorboduc* written in 1561.

Since Walpole, like Warton a decade or so later, refers to Shakespeare as a distinct person, we must conclude that he did not think that Oxford and Shakespeare were the same man, even though the latter is never discussed with any specificity. The main reason for this omission is that Walpole only wanted to write about authors of royal or noble blood. Some Oxfordians might try to force an interpretation of the foregoing passage by arguing that since Buckhurst-Dorset preceded Oxford by a full decade or more, then Walpole is hinting that it is Oxford as Shakespeare who owed the great literary debt to Buckhurst. This interpretation is impossible to prove and must remain debatable or problematic.

The final and extraordinary detailed literary reference concerning Oxford (long overlooked) can be found *Bibliographica Poetica: A Catalogue of English Poets* (1802) by the literary critic, Joseph Ritson (1752-1803). The passage is worth quoting in full for the record:

Vere Edward, earl of Oxford, the 14th [sic] of his surname and family, is the author of several poems printed in "The Paradise of Daintie Devices," 1576, etc. and in "Englands Helicon." One piece, by this nobleman, may be found in "The Phoenix nest," 1592, another is subjoin'd to "Astrophel & Stella," 1591, and another to "Brittons Bowre of Delights," 1597 (selected by mister Ellis). Some lines of his are, also, prefix'd to "Cardanus Comforte," 1573. All or most of his compositions are distinguished by the signature E.O. He dye'd in 1604; and was bury'd at Hackney (not as Wood says, at Earls-Colne in Essex). Webbe and Puttenham applaud his attainments in poesy: Meres ranks him with the "best for comedy." Several specimens of Oxford's poetry occur in *Englands Parnasus*, 1600, in the posthumous edition of Lord Oxford's works, Vol. 1. two poems, by the Earl of Oxford, are given from an ancient MS. miscellany: but the possessor is not pointed out. One of these is reprinted by mister Ellis.<sup>8</sup>

Ritson also reveals that Oxford's first wife (Anne Cecil) also wrote a few poems, a fact which he extracted from the last Edition of Walpole's work cited above.<sup>9</sup> Walpole obtained his information concerning Lady Oxford from an article written by the famous Shakespeare expert and editor George Steevens in the *European Magazine* (June 1788).

While Peacham (1622) and Anthony Wood (1675) are the only commentators in the seventeenth century to acknowledge Oxford's literary reputation, the Stratford man's identification as the real Shakespeare existed only in brief, scattered written accounts (Thomas Fuller in 1662, John Aubrey in 1680, and Gerard Langbein in 1691) during this same period. Prior to 1700, the name "Shakespeare" in the public mind was primarily associated with the works as found in the four folio editions of his plays. However, Irvin Matus in *Shakespeare In Fact* (1994) warns against Oxfordian claims that Bardolatry took hold only after David Garrick's sponsorship of the Jubilee in Stratford town in 1769, and points to the town's pro-active interest in its famous son as early as 1746.<sup>10</sup>

Matus is correct but unintentionally deflects attention from the Cult of Bardolatry promoted by the Drury Lane Theater under the leadership of Colley Cibber and his son, Theophilus, long before Garrick became an actor and co-manager of this theater in the 1740s. It is intriguing to observe that in his *The Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland* (1753) Theophilus Cibber (1703-1758) significantly expanded on the first serious biographical account of the Stratford man that Nicholas Rowe had attached to his critical edition of the Bard's works in 1709.<sup>11</sup>

At the same time, the younger Cibber, who had been connected with the Drury Lane Theater, makes no mention of Oxford despite his prominence in the lists of well-known poets prepared by Webbe (1586), Puttenham (1589), Meres (1598), and Peacham (1622). Cibber explores the lives of more than 25 Elizabethan poets, but not Oxford. This exclusion may have been deliberate, though the similar absence of Dyer and Paget from the list may provide a rationale for Cibber because these poets' works, like those of Oxford, had been largely lost or never published. Nonetheless, Oxford be-

comes a non-person for those reading Cibber's work, whereas contemporaries such as Collins (1752), Walpole (1758), and Warton (1774) reiterate the high praise for the Earl found in the lists from a century or more earlier.

Whatever Theophilus Cibber's motives, it is hard to avoid the impression that Bardolatry was stimulated by Rowe's biographical essay in 1709 and intensified with the reopening of the old Theater Royal (renamed The Drury Lane Theater) in 1710-11 under the leadership of Colley Cibber. Thus, when Garrick joined this theater in the 1740s, Bardolatry was well underway.

For their part, however, the people of Stratford town remained relatively passive even after the Jubilee in 1769 and did not build and dedicate a local theater to their favorite son until 1870. Meanwhile, Oxford's literary reputation never died out completely, and was finally saved for posterity when Grosart collected some of his poems in 1872.

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#### Footnotes:

1. The passages in Wood can be found in *Athenae Oxonienses*, column 152, and in *Fasti Oxonienses*, page 99, column 1.

2. Collins was the only eighteenth-century work which cited Oxford as a significant poet known to Thomas Looney (the originator of the Oxfordian theory in 1920).

3. The references can be found on pages 2, 148, 494, and also in a footnote at the bottom of page 163.

4. The biographical sketch can be found on pages 50-51 of this work.

5. Warton, *The History of English Poetry*, pages 242-244.

6. The passage concerning Oxford in Walpole's work can be found on page 144. We should note that Walpole might have cribbed this passage directly from Collins' work which had been published only six years earlier in 1752.

7. Walpole, *A Catalogue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England* (1758), page 144.

8. Ritson, *Bibliographica Poetica*, pages 381-382.

9. *Ibid.*, page 380-381.

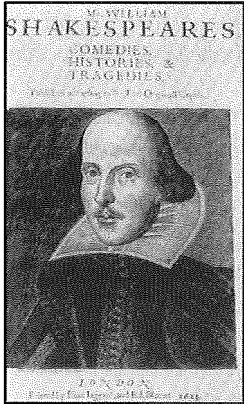
10. Matus, *Shakespeare In Fact*, 1994, page 201. Matus devotes his eighth chapter to the origins of Bardolatry.

11. Compared to Rowe's forty pages on the Stratford-man in 1709, Theophilus Cibber devotes more than twenty pages in his 1753 work.

## “Publish We This Peace...”

### *A note on the design of the Shakespeare First Folio and the Spanish Marriage Crisis*

by Roger Stritmatter



*The original smoking gun?*

For decades anti-Stratfordians have echoed the complaint of James Boswell the younger, the editor who completed Edmund Malone's *Variorum Shakespeare*, about the *Shakespeare First Folio* (1623). There was, believed

Boswell, “something fishy” about the folio. Literary historians such as George Greenwood or Gerald Rendall thought they knew the reason for the smell. If you want to hide the writer, what better way than to pin someone else's face to the cover of his work? When Sidney Lee finally threw down the gauntlet of folio editor Ben Jonson's authority as the first “Stratfordian,” Greenwood smiled and replied, without missing a beat, “we of the heretical persuasion can afford to smile. For we see no reason to suppose that Jonson might not have taken the course we attribute to him [i.e. participate in a conspiratorial hoax] and considered himself quite justified in doing so .....”

Rendall, an early Oxfordian known primarily for the influence his two books on *The Sonnets* exercised on Sigmund Freud, proposed Jonson as the “skilled and most effective agent of anonymity.” Rendall then followed suit with additional materials pointing directly to folio editor Jonson's employment by the family of de Vere's son-in-law Phillip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery, during the two year period in which the folio was under preparation. To this day a suite in Mary Sidney's Wilton estate is known as the “Jonson room.”

Perhaps for obvious reasons, then, the folio has always been on the list of the seven things one does not discuss in a Freshman Shakespeare survey. Stratfordians, as Charlton Ogburn argues in *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (1984, 1992), “have

no case if they do not take the First Folio at face value” and “grant it the claim of authenticity.”

Recently, however, the orthodox practice of backpedaling the folio's irregularities has started to change. In 1988 Leah Marcus authored an astonishing expose of the folio. Although her intentions are orthodox beyond reproach, *Puzzling Shakespeare: Local Reading And Its Discontents* (1988) is on my list of the top ten orthodox Shakespeare books Oxfordians should love to hate. Indeed, it is the first book by *anyone* to begin the job of placing the curious semiotics of the folio in a proper comparative light.

And now we have Peter Dickson's exciting new research on the political context of the 1620s period demonstrating that Henry de Vere, 18th Earl of Oxford, Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, and the Herbert brothers (William and Philip) who patronized the folio (with one, Philip, being married to Elizabeth Vere), were all at the forefront of the intense public hostility against the marriage negotiations between Prince Charles and the sister of Philip IV. These staunch English Protestants feared the worst—that the country was about to be auctioned off to the Spanish Crown, and all because the love-struck James I had already delegated a frightening degree of power to the irresponsible Duke of Buckingham George Villiers while the implacable international chess player Gondomar watched, calculated, and maneuvered. The contretemps over the marriage became the greatest domestic dispute of James's reign.

I daresay that no careful reader of the two past *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletters* will wish to admit to entertaining any serious doubts that Dickson has established a *prima facie* case for his theory. Even those who remain skeptical must admit that the circumstances seem remarkably suggestive. Let us consider some of the relevant facts.

The printing of the folio was a sloppy, rushed job; to this day a small industry—which includes the past labors of Emily Clay Folger, Charlton Hinman, Edwin Elliott

Willoughby and other luminary scholars—is devoted to establishing a documentary record of folio publication anomalies. So bad is the folio typography that each copy exists in a unique state. There are literally hundreds, if not thousands, of errors in many copies. Hinman, treading where no cypher-crunching Baconian would dare to go, actually invented a special machine to enable collation of the myriad textual variants to the giant book. Yet, the Stratfordians have no explanation for why the *First Folio* was so sloppily printed.

The folio was patronized by de Vere's sin-laws. These, like his son, were also among those spearheading the Protestant opposition to the impending Spanish marriage and resisting the rising influence of Villiers and Gondomar in the court. The dates of Henry de Vere's imprisonment (April 1622 to December 1623) match the dates of production of the folio almost exactly (February 1622 or later to November 1623).

The folio effects a nationalist character which would have served such a political cause well. It celebrates a dramatic tradition which was reputedly an inspiration to both Elizabeth and James. It places the historic deeds of the ancient Britains and their medieval and Renaissance descendents such as Henry V or the Bastard Falconbridge on a par with those of the ancients.

Are we left, then, with a case—however plausible—which must remain “speculative,” “subjective” or “unproven” in the absence of that much lamented category of thing, the “documentary evidence”? Do we need a note in the Earl of Pembroke's handwriting to the publisher William Jaggard, “hurry it up, old man, my cousin's in the tower”?

The purpose of this article is to propose that we do not. There is in fact a document, one well known, I should hope, to all readers of this *Newsletter* and now available in paperback for \$19.95 in many bookstores, which confirms the intrinsic plausibility of Dickson's thesis. I mean the *Shakespeare First Folio* itself. Before passing negative judgement on Dickson's thesis, find your-



self a copy of any one of the popular facsimiles of this “smoking gun.” Review the introductory materials, the table of contents, and the general plan of the book; you may begin to understand what Jonson and the other architects of the folio (if any) were up to.

Notice that the first play, for example, is *The Tempest*. Now, isn’t that, somehow, appropriate? *The Tempest* tells the allegory of de Vere’s life as an artist, the exiled magi Prospero. Prospero is an older and more-alienated version of the same character we saw as the Duke in *Measure for Measure*—the artist himself, comically trying to have an impact on a social order which spurns his humors and his magic. The play tells the story of how this man came to be marooned on the desert island of his own art, within the magic circle of the 1623 *Folio*. Imprisoned here, he is, as Samuel Shepherd wrote of Shakespeare in 1651, “a Shepheard cag’d in stone,” cut off from the common redemption which would be granted through the recognition of his identity could it be restored through prayer, scholarship, or any other means.

If you think that this sounds plausible but you aren’t yet convinced (after all, such an effect could be achieved, in this case, by mere coincidence), consider my second example of how the folio exhibits a structural character which appears to be intentionally designed. Editor Jonson has constructed the folio to communicate messages (particularly messages keyed to the date 1623, or more generally to the politics of the era or of de Vere’s life as the artist) which individual component plays cannot. In other words, the whole of the folio is more than the sum of its parts.

If you think I’m making this up and you can therefore safely ignore it, think again. I’m merely transposing what the best Jonson experts have already said about his careful design of his own 1616 folio. Consider Richard Dutton’s explanation:

Over the last few years there has been a growing recognition that the organization of the Epigrams—like that of *Bartholomew Fair*—is far more subtle, sophisticated and significant than at first meets the eye; behind the apparent randomness or spontaneity, there is a careful and deliberate structure. In different, though related ways we may now begin to appreciate that the same is true of the first folio as a whole ... the organization of the

first folio is surely intended to impress upon us the essential interrelatedness of the items within it, inviting us to read it as a unified volume, across generic boundaries.

Obviously, the idea that *The Tempest* was placed first in the Shakespeare folio to invoke an allegory of authorship finds ample warrant in this description of Jonson’s editorial technique when applied to his own literary corpus. But can we find further evidence for the deliberate arrangement of the component parts of the folio in order to make architectonic statements? Undoubtedly many could be proposed and at least several of these might be “correct”—whatever that means here.

But the one I have in mind is special for one very good reason: to my way of thinking, it supplies all the “documentary” proof Dickson’s theory could ever want. It also happens to make a nice complement to the example of *The Tempest*. In that case the allegory deduced is of a personal, authorial, perhaps even subjective nature. My second case, on the contrary, concerns public affairs of state and history. This is the fact—the documentary fact—that the last play in the folio is *Cymbeline*.

Now, why is that? Can anyone think of a really good reason which has escaped my notice? For Stratfordians the placement of *Cymbeline* is another unexplained anomaly. The play certainly does not belong in the concluding section of tragedies. An early Arden editor conjectured that its placement may have been “the result of late receipt of the ‘copy’ in the printinghouse.” W.W. Greg supposed that it may have been “through a misunderstanding that Jaggard placed it at the end of the volume instead of the section [containing the comedies].” Other Stratfordians may discover other excuses for the play’s placement. I think such explanations are wrong.

If, however, we instead consider the placement of *Cymbeline* from the point of view of Dickson’s theory about the Spanish marriage crisis, everything seems to fall into place with no need to impute misunderstandings to Jaggard or any other party to the folio’s production. *Cymbeline*, whatever genre we may assign it to, is conspicuously a play about the prehistoric battle for English independence from Roman rule. In it the English king Cymbeline, with the help

of Posthumous Leonatus, defeats the Roman forces and runs them out of the land. The play ends with Cymbeline offering the comic promise that Britain,

Although the victor, [submits] to Caesar  
And to the Roman empire, promising  
To pay our wonted tribute, from the which  
We were persuaded by our wicked queen.  
(5.5.460-463)

No English reader of 1623 could have considered this plot without being reminded of the parallel between Cymbeline’s war for the independence of Britain and the current counter-reformation politics of James’s reign and the Spanish marriage crisis. The play concludes on a note of British victory, but the victory is tempered by strenuous protestations of Cymbeline’s desire for peace with Rome—from the vantage of independent equality.

It is the perfect conclusion to a volume sponsored by the era’s leading faction of Protestant nobles and designed to send a forceful message to a monarch who was, they believed, flirting with disaster. Consider the play’s concluding lines:

Cym: Laud we the Gods,  
And let our crooked Smoakes climbe to their  
Noftrils  
From our bleft Altars. Publifh we this Peace  
To all our Subiects. Set we forward : Let  
A Roman, and a Britifh Enfigre woue  
Friendly together : fo through Luds-Towne  
march,  
And in the Temple of great Iupter  
Our Peace wee’l ratifie : Scale it with Feafts.  
Set on there : Neuer was a Warre did ceafe  
(Ere bloodie hands were wafh’d) with fuch  
a Peace. *Exeunt* (5.5.477-485)

Note the key phrase, from the point of view of the *Folio* conspirators,

Publifh we this Peace,  
To all our Subiects

As applied to the publication of the *First Folio*, the phrase means that Pembroke, Montgomery, de Vere, Southampton and the rest, not Buckingham and Gondomar, or even King James, were dictating the terms of an acceptable peace with Spain and international Catholicism. Their “magna carta” was the *First Folio* of “Shakespeare.”

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# “Bestow how, and when you list”

## *Susan Vere, William Jaggard and the 1623 Shakespeare Folio*

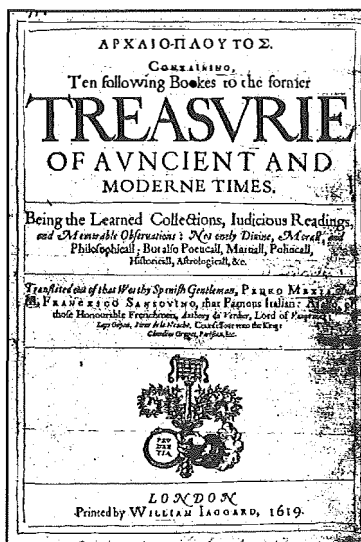
by Roger Stritmatter

Advocates of the Oxfordian view attributing the authorship of works published in the 1623 “Shakespeare” folio to Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, have naturally drawn attention to the fact that the folio was dedicated to, and apparently published under the patronage of Phillip and William Herbert, the two sons of Mary Sidney who were respectively de Vere’s son-in-law and a near son-in-law. Although this striking circumstance was not included among the elements of evidence adduced in J. Thomas Looney’s original book on the theory, by 1984 when Charlton Ogburn published *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, the Herbert brothers are pegged, very plausibly, as “engineers of the crucial artifacts.”

In 1621, when work on the folio’s production began in earnest, these two renowned arts patrons possessed the power, the political connections and, quite likely, the requisite manuscript materials, to turn the folio into a reality. Pembroke had in 1615, after several years of angling, obtained the position of Lord Chamberlain and was therefore in administrative control of the archives of the King’s Men, formerly the “Lord Chamberlain’s Men” who had acted many of the Shakespeare plays. Therefore, whether unpublished play material came from the archives of the Company or from private holdings among de Vere’s descendents and in-laws, it was Pembroke and Montgomery—and perhaps Susan Vere—who were positioned to hold final authority over any plans to publish. It was this trio, apparently, which authorized, facilitated, and subsidized the *First Folio*’s 1623 publication by the firm of Isaac and William Jaggard.

In evaluating the undoubtedly complicated process by which the folio came to be published, literary historians would do well, however, to avoid the great bugaboo of monocausal explanation and instead consider the potentially conflicting or converging motives of all the possible historical actors. Jaggard and other publishers may have had their own motives for seeking the laurels of publishing the works of “Shakespeare.” In 1619, two years before the pub-

lication of the folio began (during the summer of 1621), the Jaggard firm, working in collaboration with Thomas Pavier, published a series of seven Shakespearean and pseudo-Shakespearean quartos. This series of plays, known collectively as the Pavier quartos after the name of the printer Thomas Pavier,



*There was nothing particularly special about this anthology of readings, except that it apparently afforded Jaggard an opportunity to write an open letter to the Lady Susan Vere.*

included quartos of 2 & 3 *Henry VI*, *Henry V*, *Pericles*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Merry Wives of Windsor* and *A Midsummer Nights Dream*. For reasons not well understood, as William J. Neidig documented in a remarkable 1910 article in *Modern Philology*, three of these plays were falsely backdated to 1600 or 1608.

This venture indicates Jaggard’s apparently mounting enthusiasm for undertaking publication of the Shakespearean plays, which by 1619 must have been viewed as prize to be bestowed on some eager printer, who could hope not only for profit but lasting fame from the enterprise. By many accounts, however, Jaggard was not the most likely candidate for the job. It is not without some interest, therefore, that in the same year that the Pavier quartos were pub-

lished, the Jaggard firm dedicated a major folio volume, *ARXAIO-PLOUTOS*. *Containing, Ten following Bookes to the former TREASURIE of AVNCIENT AND MODERNE TIMES* to Phillip Montgomery and also, very pointedly, to Montgomery’s wife, the Lady Susan Vere.

The Jaggard-Vere link was brought to my attention in 1990 while working at a Northampton (Mass.) book auction at which the volume was offered for sale. Among other bibliographical links between *ARXAIO-PLOUTOS* and the folio, the book employs many of the same typographical devices which appeared four years later in the Shakespeare folio. Before that time, this concrete 1619 link between Susan Vere and the Jaggard firm was not known to students of the authorship question.

Incidentally, the fact that this discovery represented a completely new and unprecedented connection between the Jaggard firm and the de Vere family did not stop one major orthodox scholar whom I approached about the book from authoritatively pronouncing that there was “nothing new” about the find. This utterly untrue and deceptive claim was apparently made in attempt to splash cold water on any enthusiasm I might have felt about the potential implications of such an unambiguous 1619 link between Susan Vere and William Jaggard. Charlton Ogburn, for his part, was enthusiastically “flooded” by the discovery and considered it of the highest importance.

*ARXAIO-PLOUTOS* is a translation and amalgamation of several works detailing the customs and cultural traditions of the Gauls, Spaniards, and Italians, to which the English Herald Thomas Milles has added material on the heraldry and customs of England. As the reproduction on page 19 shows, the book is prominently dedicated to Susan Vere, as well as her husband, the patron of the 1623 *Folio*.

In fact, a close reading of the dedication suggests that Susan is the primary dedicatee of the volume; although the dedication initially makes appeal to the “most Noble Lord & Lady,” subsequent passages are

directed solely to the “gracious madam” Susan Vere.

The extended praise of her father, Edward de Vere, is also noteworthy, given that it ends with an “etc.” which seems to invite filling in the following blank space with some “other honors” to which he may be entitled, but which must remain unmentioned.

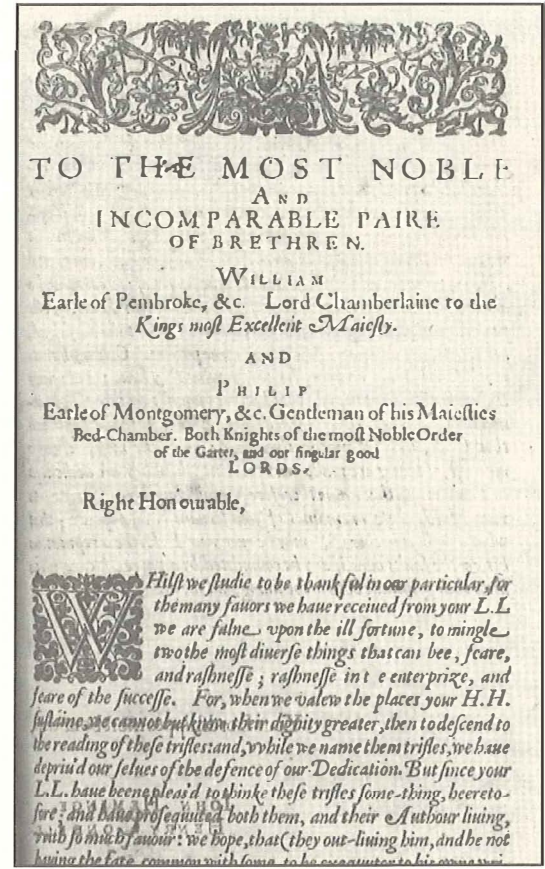
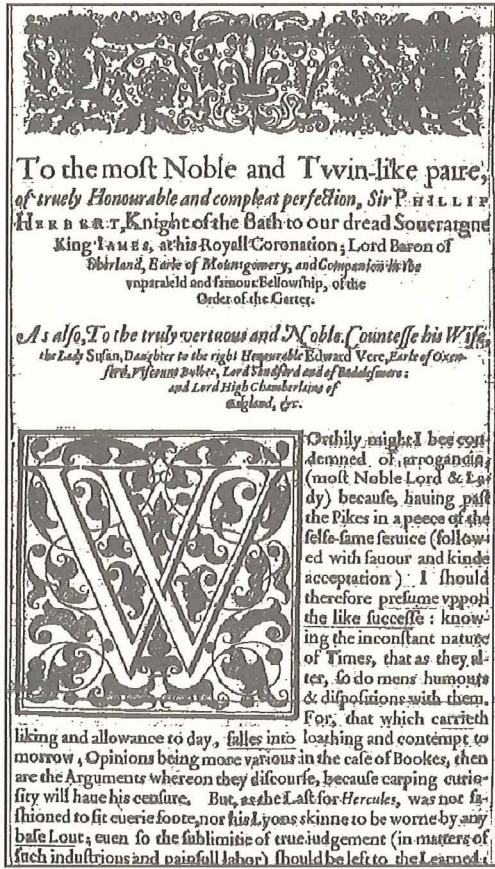
In any event, the dedication itself invites both patrons to “enter into a spacious Forrest”—evidently a metaphor for the world of historical customs embodied in *ARXAIO-PLOUTOS*—“affording all choise of pleasing Game, either for Hawking, Hunting, Fishing, Fowling, or any other Noble exercise beside.” Jaggard goes on from this to assure his patrons that

...an Orchard stands wide open to welcome you, richly abounding in the fairest Frutages: not to feed the eye only, but likewise to refresh the Heart, inviting you to plucke where, and while you please, and to bestow how, and when you list: because they are all yours, and whosoever else shall taste of them, do enjoy such freedome but by your favor.

In this garden, Jaggard assures Lady Vere,

...you may meete with a faire Bevey of Queenes and Ladies, at diverse turnings as you walke, and everie one will tell you the Historie of her life and fortune (rare examples of Vertue and Honor) as themselves can best, truly & plainly discourse unto you. Some other also you shall see, sadly sitting under Eughe & Cipresse tress, with Garlands of those leaves wreathed about their heads, sighing out their divers disasters: whom your noble nature cannot choose but commiserate; as greeving to see a scratch in a cleare skin, and a bodie beautified by Nature, to be blemished by unkinde Destiny.

Is Jaggard, in this final passage, referring to the bounteous literary exploration of female subjectivity embodied in the “Shakespeare” canon? Certainly, his language calls to mind characters such as Ophelia, Desdemona, Cleopatra, Lucrece or Imogen—who all are made to tell “the history” of



The similarity between the 1619 dedication “To the Most Noble and Twin-like paire...” (left) and the 1623 Folio dedication “To the Most Noble and Incomparable Paire...” (right) is striking. It is difficult to believe that Jaggard did not have the 1619 version in mind when he designed the 1623 Folio dedication. But more importantly, it is also difficult to believe, when he wrote the 1619 dedication to the Lady Susan Vere, extolling both her and her illustrious father, that he wasn’t thinking ahead to a day in the future when there would be a Shakespeare Folio.

their “lives and fortunes” in a manner quite unprecedented for early 17th century England and undoubtedly quite capable of stirring considerable emotional response in a cultivated arts patron such as Lady Vere. She was one who could commiserate with the “divers disasters” of such characters, not only from literary precedent, but out of secret sympathy with her own father and other relatives who had survived the hurricane of his life.

If so, the entire address to Montgomery and his wife assumes an awesome consistency. Jaggard’s patrons are credited with being stewards of the orchard. The fruits “are all yours, and whosoever else shall taste of them, do enjoy such freedome but by your favor.” These stewards are therefore urged to “...bestow how, and when you list [i.e., please].”

Have we here a public appeal to the

“grand possessors”—who are in the 1609 preface to the second state of *Troilus and Cressida* also referred to as the “grand censors”—ultimately responsible for the inhibition of plays such as *T&C*? Is Jaggard signaling his flattering enthusiasm for proceeding with the folio project and requesting the approval and patronage of Montgomery and his wife, the daughter of Edward de Vere?

Whether or not the reader accepts this interpretation of Jaggard’s dedication, *ARXAIO-PLOUTOS* establishes a tangible and telling political link between Phillip Montgomery, his wife Susan Vere, Edward de Vere’s youngest daughter, and the folio publisher, during the period in which the political decisions leading to the 1623 *First Folio* publication were being made.

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## Oxfordian News

# Authorship Roundtable Symposium convenes in Los Angeles; CAES Conference at Ball State invites authorship papers

### California

The Shakespeare Authorship Roundtable began its 13th season of exploration of the Shakespeare Authorship Mystery with a special two-day symposium held at the **Los Angeles Hilton** on October 10th and 11th.

About fifty persons appeared to hear several presenters, among whom were Jerry Downs, Diana Price, Dr. David Kathman (of Shakespeare Authorship Page fame), Roger Paris, Dr. Pat Buckridge, and Charles Champlin of the *Los Angeles Times*. Peter Dickson presented a speech by long-distance telephone connection on his continuing investigation of the circumstances behind the *First Folio's* production. His talk expanded on the story in the last *Newsletter* (Summer 1998) on this topic.

In a comfortable setting which included shared meals in an adjacent hotel dining room, participants heard positions on the Authorship Question which argued for the authorship of Shakespeare by William Shakespeare of Stratford-Upon-Avon, Edward de Vere, and Edward Dyer. Marlovians and Baconians were also represented among audience participants.

The multi-author advocacy forum by the Roundtable was a one-time event, according to Roundtable director, Carole Sue Lipman, but enthusiasm for a varied exploration of authorship questions by Stratfordians, Derbyites, Marlovians, Oxfordians, Baconians, and other candidates' partisans may suggest the occasion for a similar event or symposium at some future date.

The Roundtable's regular schedule of bi-monthly lectures began on December 5th, when Dr. Steve Sohmer spoke on "Luther at Elsinore" at the Beverly Hills Public Library. Lectures in 1998 are scheduled for February 5th, April 10th and June 5th.

Persons who are interested in joining the Roundtable may write to either Carole Sue Lipman or Alisa Beston at: Shakespeare Authorship Roundtable, P.O. Box 1887, Santa Monica, California, 90406. Or email Carole Sue Lipman at: [carolesu@jeffnet.org](mailto:carolesu@jeffnet.org).

### Indiana

Dr. Daniel Wright spoke on the Oxfordian Authorship Thesis at the October 18-19 convocation of the 29th Annual CAES (Committee for Ancient and Early Studies) Conference at **Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana**. The title of his paper was "'For further I could say this man's untrue': Deconstructing the Myth of the Stratford Man as the Author of the Shakespeare Canon."

Approximately sixty academicians and graduate students listened to Dr. Wright's extensive presentation, and several, in comments and questions following the presentation, expressed interest in continuing their introduction to a thesis that is afforded little circulation in the academic community. While the questions to Professor Wright sometimes bristled with Stratfordian contempt, several academicians expressed high interest in Dr. Wright's presentation of the issue, and one—the Director of the Conference, Dr. Bruce Hozeski—announced that he personally was now persuaded that the 17th Earl of Oxford was, indeed, the author of the works we know as "Shakespeare."

Students and faculty members within academia who wish to discuss the authorship question among colleagues will henceforth be welcome to submit proposals to the CAES Conference for consideration for inclusion in the annual agenda of papers presented each fall on the Ball State University campus. Another major breach in the walls of the Establishment has been achieved!

Papers offered as proposals for presentation may be directed to Dr. Bruce Hozeski, Convener; The CAES Conference; Department of English; Ball State University; 2000 W. University Avenue; Muncie, IN 47306.

### Massachusetts

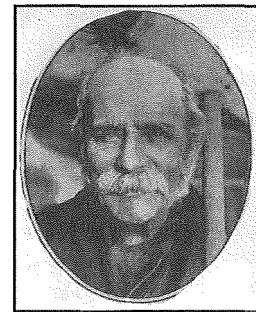
Trustee Elliott Stone organized a class on the authorship question that was held at the Harvard Academy Club in downtown **Boston** this past fall. The six sessions were

devoted to surveying the case for Edward de Vere and against the Stratford attribution. A dozen club members enrolled in the class, and several local society members were also in attendance to talk on specific topics at each of the classes: Bill Boyle, Richard Desper, Betty Sears, Donald Wexler and Richard Whalen.

While, inevitably, several of the original class members found the authorship story more than they could believe, the remaining members fully enjoyed each of the sessions,

and enthusiastically agreed to continue with more sessions in the spring.

One of the those attending, Emily Scott, shared some books she had inherited from her mother, one of which had pasted in a clipping



A "Shakespeare" descendant?

and photograph from a 1932 issue of the *Public Ledger* describing "a genuine" descendant of the Stratford man still residing in Stratford. The photograph's caption proudly proclaims his lineage had been confirmed by the Stratford Town Council, "which employs him to clean the street where the immortal bard was born."

Clearly, then, tradition lived on in Stratford-on-Avon, the home of tradition.

### Canada

Author Lynne Kositsky, an Oxfordian living in Toronto, Canada, will have her children's novel, *A Question of Will*, published early next year by Roussan Publishers of Montreal. Kositsky has won several writing awards in her career, including the prestigious E.J. Pratt Award for Poetry.

*A Question of Will* is a mystery novel which deals with the authorship question and comes down firmly on the side of de Vere.

## England

Dr. Daniel Wright, Professor of English at Concordia University in Portland, Oregon, and Director of the Edward de Vere Studies Conference at Concordia University, lectured on and discussed the Shakespeare Authorship Question to a student-and-faculty-filled auditorium at **Barton-Peveril College in Southampton**, England this summer. In a presentation that rocked the audience's interest and sent the scheduled presentation into lengthy overtime, Dr. Wright took the audience through the case for Edward de Vere as author of the Shakespeare canon and won the interest of many students and faculty theretofore assumptive of the Stratford man's authorship of the Shakespeare works.

Dr. Wright, who will be moving to England for a period of time in 1999 to teach for a term at Oak Hill College in north London, promised to make a return visit to Southampton to continue the dialogue among interested students and faculty at Barton Peveril College.

Ms. E.M. Jolly wrote to the *Newsletter* to share with us and our readers the College's students' and faculty's great appreciation and enthusiasm for both Dr. Wright's talk and for the authorship question. "Interest is too mild a word," she wrote, "for the buzz the talk generated in the staff room and the classrooms and corridors for the three remaining days of the term."

Dr. Wright—along with SOS member Victoria Kramer—also presented a paper at the De Vere Society's summer meeting at **Otley Hall in Ipswich**. Dr. Wright lectured on "Of No Truant Disposition He: Shakespeare the Classical Scholar," and Ms. Kramer, a recent graduate of Concordia University, lectured on "Eliminating the Stratford Man as a Candidate for 'Shakespeare': A Report on the Essentials for Literary Creativity."

Society members were greeted by DVS President Christopher Dams, and were also treated to an address by Charles Burford, and an outdoor performance of *As You Like It* by players from Durham University; much amusement was generated by the creative improvisation of the players who made occasional digressions to comment, in quasi-Shakespearean form, on the state of the weather (rainy, of course!). Members also received a tour of the DVS's facilities at Otley Hall by proprietor Nicholas Haggard.

## Column

### The Paradigm Shift

Mark K. Anderson

# Sex, Lies and Psalm 51

"I don't think there is a fancy way to say that I have sinned."

Earlier this fall, these words cascaded through millions of TV sets, radios and newspaper reports, demonstrating that a repentant President Clinton had begun to own up to his sexual improprieties. His admission came at the National Prayer Breakfast on Sept. 11 and was reprinted in its entirety in *The New York Times*.

The President, ever the shrewd tactician, picked as his speech's biblical touchstone an Old Testament story involving a great Israelite leader's adulterous affair. It is, as it happens, a story that Edward de Vere, a.k.a. "William Shake-speare," also took note of in his personal copy of the Bible.

The story is of David and Bathsheba, and the particulars of its plot are enlightening not only for the current headline-grabbing political scandal but also for the now-famous annotator who apparently found the story germane four centuries ago.

Here's what the President said:

"[T]o be forgiven, more than sorrow is required, at least two more things. First, genuine repentance: a determination to change and to repair breaches of my own making. I have repented.

"Second, what my Bible calls a 'broken spirit': an understanding that I must have God's help to be the person that I want to be..."

The reference is to Psalm 51.17, where it is noted that God does not absolve sinful deeds simply because a few ewes are slaughtered. Rather, in the words of the King James version, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

Tradition holds that Psalm 51 was written by King David after he had gotten himself into a boatload of trouble: He had improperly used his power to seduce a young woman (Bathsheba); he had impregnated her; knowing she was pregnant, David had tried to cover it up by calling her Hittite husband (Uriah) back from the battlefield in

hopes that the husband would sleep with his wife and thereby conceal the adultery; when Uriah refused, David sent him to "the forefront of the hottest battle," knowing that would mean Uriah's certain death.

David's subsequent repentance has been called "one of the most famous penitential psalms in the Bible." It's an eloquent confession of wrongdoing and a plea for forgiveness in the face of grave adulterous offenses.

In the metrical edition of the psalms appended to his 1570 Geneva Bible, Edward de Vere drew a pointing hand next to Psalm 51. Further indicating de Vere's interest in the great Davidian tale of sex and political corruption, the actual narrative of David's transgressions — in II Samuel chapters 11 and 12 — contains several underlined verses and footnotes.

In verse 11.11, de Vere takes note of Uriah's refusal to stay with Bathsheba upon being summoned by the King. The footnote, inferring God's torturing of David's conscience, is also underlined.

Uriah points out that "The Ark of Israel and Judah dwell in tents and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord abide in the open fields: shall I then go into mine house to eat and drink and lie with my wife?"

This plea appears to have struck a chord with de Vere — the same man who would later in his life dramatize so movingly the humility of Henry V as he wandered through the common soldiers' camp on the eve of his great battle.

In the underlined verse 12.11, God rebukes David for his spiteful surreptitious murder of Uriah. In retribution, God says he will "raise up evil against thee out of thine own house and will take thy wives before thine eyes and give them unto thy neighbor and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of [the] sun."

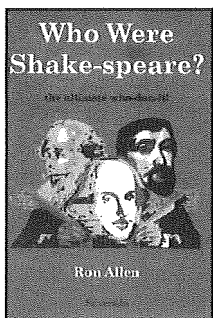
Here, as Roger Stritmatter has found in his study of the de Vere Bible, the thunderous peal of God's words — and the unseemly notion that rebellious political acts begot the open ravishing of men's wives —

(Continued on page 27)

## Book Reviews:

**Who Were Shakespeare? The ultimate who-dun-it.** By Ron Allen. (Silverado Press, 1998)

by Charles Boyle



A new book by Ron Allen called *Who Were Shakespeare?* will satisfy neither Stratfordian nor Oxfordian interpretations of the authorship question. At first it might seem to be the most logical explanation for

this particular situation and it seems to solve many problems about the works of William Shakespeare. It makes the whole authorship problem much more simple than most people (except Stratfordians) want to believe by putting forward the idea that two people—Oxford and Shaksper—got together to produce something that neither of them could produce on their own: the Shakespeare Canon.

Allen says that both men working together created the Shakespeare Canon. I must disagree and note that such an agreement creates many more problems than it solves. Further, Allen's theory allows for no deep, dark secrets that would put the state or the author at risk—the entire authorship cover-up is strictly personal. But the fact is—as most would agree—that the works of Shakespeare need only one author.

The basic problem is that such an agreement between Oxford and Shaksper need not to be covered up in the first place. Nor does it need to be carried on so long. Nowhere in this book does Allen look upon Oxford as a threat to anyone. And if that were in fact the case then his authorship of the Canon would have been known a long time ago. After all, many men have been known to work on plays together. Something more had to have been at stake in the matter of the Shakespeare plays and their true authorship.

In Allen's scenario for this collabora-

tion, for example, he has them working together on the *Sonnets* published in 1609. That would explain, he says, why the first seventeen poems are *all* about marriage—the two poets (Oxford and Shaksper) were “vying with each other to produce a ‘winner.’” This illustrates the basic problem with Allen's theory about a joint effort—it all gets just too involved once you get into the particulars.

On the other hand, if the author was just Oxford alone, then the first seventeen poems are written by him to the 3rd Earl of Southampton—i.e. two people talking to each other about *their own* marriage arrangements (prospective father-in-law to prospective son-in-law) through these poems. And that scenario is much closer to how people actually are, and much closer to the more likely concept of one man working alone to create great poetry.

In the opinion of many Oxfordians, Shaksper is presented to us at least twice in the plays—in the Induction scene of *The Taming of the Shrew*, and in Act V, scene I of *As You Like It*. We should look briefly at the time they encounter each other in *As You Like It*. Such a direct encounter happens just once, but it speaks volumes about their true relationship.

In this play Oxford is played by Touchstone and William Shaksper is played by a fellow called William. They are in love with the same person, Audrey. She is the other person in this scene and represents the plays and poetry of Shakespeare. Although the scene is between the two men, Touchstone does most of the talking.

Touchstone asks, “Art thou learned?” William replies, “No, sir.”

To which Touchstone replies:

Then learn this of me: to have is to have; for it is a figure of 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.

“Which he, sir?” William replies.

“He, sir, that must marry this woman,” Touchstone says back to him.

In this scene Touchstone/Oxford/Shakespeare is basically saying that Audrey is *his and nobody else's*. At the end of the scene William leaves empty-handed. And that is, I believe, the true nature of the relationship between Edward de Vere and William Shaksper.

That said, there is still much to be learned in this book about Edward de Vere for anyone who has not read much about the many authorship theories that dot the landscape. Allen shows that Francis Bacon, Christopher Marlowe, Roger Manners and William Stanley cannot possibly have been the author. He also shows that de Vere is far and away the most interesting person in all of Britain, and that his involvement in both the theatre and the arts was considerable.

Allen does get into why the true Shakespeare had to be hidden, but in this reviewer's opinion much more was involved than he seems to be aware of, or at least is willing to talk about in this book.

He does a good job of giving an overview of Edward de Vere's life and times, and he includes some very interesting material that readers may not have seen anywhere else (e.g. a listing of all the actors/sharers in the Lord Chamberlain's men with brief annotations about them, considerations of such apocryphal works as *Spanish Tragedy*, *Romeus and Juliet*, commentary on Ben Jonson's role in all this, etc.).

There are 47 illustrations in all, either reproductions of title pages and such, or sometimes extensive, annotated lists such as one of all the major Elizabethan Theatre Companies, or another of all the major Elizabethan actors of the era, which companies they were associated with, and the years of their association.

There are also such lists as books about Shakespeare's knowledge, or a list of all the “authorship claimants” that have come to us over the years.

On balance, while this reviewer must disagree with the central premise about the possible collaboration between Shaksper and Oxford to produce the Shakespeare Canon, Allen's book is entertaining and informative.

**The Genius of Shakespeare.** By Jonathan Bate. (London, Oxford University Press, 1998)

by Richard F. Whalen

Professor Jonathan Bate, a stalwart Stratfordian, is no newcomer to the authorship controversy. He was only fourteen years old when “a brilliant but eccentric Greek master” tried to persuade him that Shakespeare’s plays were written by Edward de Vere, the 17th earl of Oxford. The schoolmaster even changed his name to Edward.

Bate was not seduced. What dissuaded him, he says, is that the first Oxfordian had a funny name, J. Thomas Looney, and that *Macbeth* and *The Tempest* must have been written after Oxford died in 1604. *Macbeth*, he says, is “a Gunpowder play through and through,” reflecting the Gunpowder Plot of 1605; and *The Tempest* required knowledge of Strachey’s letter about his voyage to Bermuda in 1609. Oxfordians, however, have long known that both arguments are totally specious.

To try to show the futility of questioning Shakespeare’s identity, Bate notes that in his city of Liverpool four anti-Stratfordians have come up with four candidates. His neighbor is writing a book to prove that John Florio was the author. A friend finds cryptic allusions to Gilbert Talbot, seventh earl of Shrewsbury, as the author. Bate lectures in a building named for Canon Gerald H. Rendall, a published Oxfordian; and a dean of science on the same campus was A.W. Titherly, who argued in four books for William Stanley, sixth earl of Derby.

Despite the scholarly credentials of three distinguished professors who rejected “the Bard of Avon,” Bate still finds it impossible to allow the slightest doubt about the man from Stratford as the author. Later on he betrays a bit of panic when he says he finds it “boring and infuriating” to read anti-Stratfordian works. He wishes it would all go away but feels compelled to counterattack.

Bate devotes the first quarter of his book to a rambling attack on anti-Stratfordians. Oxfordians will see it as the usual arguments but with a few ingenious twists. As usual he assumes that Will Shakspeare got an outstanding classical education in Stratford. He calls Ben Jonson’s “sweet swan of Avon”

the “decisive link” to Stratford. Groatworth proves Shakspeare was a playwright.

The rest of the book looks like a linking of various papers or studies on the nature of genius, on how Shakespeare became the national poet, and on “aspectuality and performativity” as ways of thinking about Shakespeare. Bate says he imagines “the Genius of Shakespeare as a field of forces in space-time.” Many biographies of Will Shakspeare cannot find the great poet/dramatist in his mundane life and fall into making him an abstraction. Bate goes even farther. He wants to reduce Shakespeare to an equation.

His ingenuity produces some provocative arguments. The William of *As You Like It* is for Oxfordians a satirical portrait of Will Shakspeare. Bate sees the opposite; it is Shakespeare’s (Shakspeare’s) “wittily self-deprecatory portrait of himself as a tonguetied country bumpkin.” He does not, however, explain why Touchstone in the “ipse” scene is saying that he, Touchstone, is the master, not William. Bate’s interpretation is incomplete, as it often is in his arguments.

He argues that Leonard Digges came from a town near Stratford so that a note to himself referring to “our Will Shakespeare” is, once again, a “firm link” between the hometown and the author. Digges, however, spent most of his life in London. His note, which is on the flyleaf of a book by Lope de Vega, simply notes the excellence of the two poets. Bate inflates this into evidence that Shakespeare the poet came from Stratford.

Surprisingly, he takes a chance and states that the inscription on Shakspeare’s monument in Trinity Church “gives the highest imaginable praise to Shakespeare’s writing.” Few Stratfordians dare even mention the inscription or the effigy in the original monument, both embarrassments to Stratfordian scholarship. The inscription is banal and the effigy is a man holding a sack. Bate, of course, does not provide the inscription or the effigy. His readers must trust him that the praise is “the highest imaginable.” Their trust is misplaced.

Sweeping superlatives also apply to Bate himself. The jacket of his book says that “Jonathan Bate has been described as ‘our finest Shakespeare scholar.’” Bate is a professor of English literature at the University of Liverpool, but whether unnamed critics

calling him “our finest” are referring to the world (not just the Liverpoolian campus) must be taken on faith.

One of his main themes will certainly repel Oxfordians. He calls the forger William Henry Ireland “the father of all Anti-Stratfordians.” His reasoning? “The Oxfordian attempt to find the life and character of their Earl hidden in the works of Shakespeare is no different in kind from the Ireland attempt to flesh out the life and character of Shakespeare by fabricating letters from him to Queen Elizabeth and Anne Hathaway.” Equating forgery with biographical investigation is little short of outrageous. Literary biographers will consider his allegation a slur on their profession. Most readers should see through his attempt to imply guilt by association, a strained and remote association at that.

In his critique of the anti-Stratfordians Bate misrepresents many of the Oxfordian arguments and along the way he commits several howlers. He cites Shakespeare’s dedications to Southampton in *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* to refute what he calls anti-Stratfordian claims that “none of William Shakespeare’s letters survive.” He thus strains to make out the dedications as “letters” when obviously letters mean correspondence. No correspondence written by or received by Shakspeare has been found. Bate is either being dense or trying to fool the general reader.

He says the authorship controversy is “premissed on the proposition that since there are no play manuscripts in William Shakespeare’s hand, William Shakespeare could not have written the plays.” But no one argues that the lack of manuscripts proves anything about authorship, much less that it is a “premise.”

He also says hyphenation of authors’ names “was a frequent printer’s vagary of the period.” Not true, of course, and he gives no evidence or citation. “Shakespeare’s” name was hyphenated about half the time, as were made-up names in Elizabethan times.

Another of Bate’s misrepresentations is his statement that the plays must have been written by an actor because “no major actor has ever been attracted to Anti-Stratfordianism.” Wrong again, and doubtful logic anyway. He should know that among the anti-Stratfordians are Sir John Gielgud,

(Continued on page 28)

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## From the Editor:

### “The oldest hath borne the most”

With the passing of Charlton Ogburn from the authorship scene we have undoubtedly lost a man who was a major voice in our cause, and who was also a significant figure in late 20th century. Many of us in the Oxfordian movement know all about Charlton's 1984 masterwork *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* and his tireless years of involvement in the cause, but few—especially our newer members—may be aware of the full scope of the exciting and interesting life that he led. The articles by Richard Whalen and Mark Anderson elsewhere in this issue speak about this remarkable man and his story.

In my space “From the Editor” in this issue I just wish to add a few words of my own about Charlton, especially about these past three years during which I have assumed a position of responsibility in the Society he had co-founded forty years ago, and over which he kept a keen—and sometimes quite critical—eye on his successors.

My first conversation with Charlton after assuming the editorship involved his request to have his name removed from the masthead as an “honorary trustee,” because he explained—since he had no say over how the *Newsletter* was edited—he didn't wish to be associated with it. That was, of course, a distressing note on which to embark on our new enterprise.

However, just a few months later, following one of his memorable letters, I called him to ask about the issue of the moment in 1996—leading up to the Minneapolis Con-

ference—which involved, of course, one of the key points of contention within the authorship debate—who was the Earl of Southampton and what was his relationship with Oxford/Shakespeare all about?

That began a productive two years of regular contact with him, and his contributing several articles and letters to the *Newsletter*, including his long response to our article on the 1987 Moot Court Trial in Washington, a response he told me he “had to write” to set the record straight since we had chosen not to be as hard on our Stratfordian opponents as he felt they merited.

This past summer, even as his health continued to deteriorate, Charlton spoke and exchanged letters regularly with many Oxfordians, including Peter Dickson and myself as we worked on the *Folio* article for the last *Newsletter*. It was gratifying to see his mind actively engaged in this latest turn of events in the authorship debate, and it was particularly gratifying to find that a quote from the “First Folio” chapter in *Mysterious* so aptly set the stage for the theory about the *Folio*'s political context.

Among the several comments I have seen and heard these past several weeks since his passing, perhaps none is so fitting as the famous, memorable lines spoken by Edgar to conclude *King Lear*:

“The weight of this sad time we must obey, / Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say. / The oldest hath borne the most; we that are young / Shall never see so much, nor live so long.”

## Correction

In the Summer *Newsletter* one of the major stories appeared under the headline “Justice Stevens casts deciding vote for Oxford in D.C. authorship trial.”

This reporting of the May 14th, 1998 Mock Trial was, unfortunately, inaccurate and we wish to set the record straight.

When asked to entertain a motion involving “Rule 50,” under the “Rules of The Interpleader,” Justice Stevens went on to speak about his own involvement in the authorship debate and left little doubt as to where he stood by the time he finished. Technically, his comments could be con-

strued as a “ruling” on the matter, which is how Aaron Tatum worded it in his original article. However, we went one step further close to our printing deadline, and changed the language from “ruling” to “cast a vote” without checking back with Tatum, who was then on vacation in England.

So while Justice Stevens made what was to our knowledge his most forceful and unambiguous public statement to date on his authorship views at this event (“...Mortimer Adler who joins me and others ... who are frequently referred to as looks...”), he did not, in fact, cast a vote for Oxford.



## Letters:

To the Editor:

The strongest claim in the Oxfordian case is that de Vere wrote *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. Sigmund Freud showed this to be the most plausible theory on psychological grounds, and it is hinted at in the Sonneteer's wordplay on the name Vere—"every word," "ever the same," and so on. The most convincing and concrete evidence (which I discovered some years ago and displayed in my book, *Who Wrote Shakespeare?*) is the anagram which the *Sonnets'* publisher, T. Thorpe, deliberately inserted into his Dedication. We can be sure that it was deliberate, because the phrase that contains it is the only phrase that refers to the Author, and it is a phrase which is so obviously strange in its context that Shakespeare scholars have always been puzzled by it. Thorpe called the Author "our ever-living poet." These words imply that the writer of the *Sonnets* was already dead when they were published in 1609. This rules out William Shakspeare, who was then still living, whereas the Earl of Oxford had been dead for five years.

The mystery of "ourever-living" is easily solved. It is an anagram, a device commonly used at the time to conceal unmentionable facts. And it conforms to another convention, that of referring to a person by his family motto. Oxford's motto was "Nil Vero Verius," meaning that nothing is more true than Truth itself. Apart from one false letter (the last letter in each phrase), NIL

VERO VERIUS is an anagram of OUR EVER LIVING. There is evidence that Thorpe, a pirate publisher, obtained his manuscript of the *Sonnets* from Oxford's house in Hackney after the Earl's death. For those who seek, his acknowledgement of the true author is clearly exhibited in his dedication, "Nil Vero Verius, poet."

In the Spring 1998 issue of the *Newsletter*, on page 3, RFW is critical of this conclusion. His main objection is that an anagram, to be significant, must be of 25 letters or more. This comes from his mis-reading of that valuable book, *The Shakespeare Ciphers Examined* by W.F and E.S. Friedman. The fact is, of course, that the more letters there are in a phrase, the greater is the number of chance anagrams that can derived from it. The Baconians have made this plain by the great number of alternative anagrams they have drawn from the famous "long word," "honorificabilitudinitatibus" in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

In contrast, the Oxfordian anagram in Thorpe's dedication is short, simple and to the point. I think it clinches the already strong case for Oxford as actual writer of the *Sonnets*.

The only other objection raised by RFW is that in Oxford's motto the word "Nil" is often written "Nihil." So it is, and the reason for that is simply that these are two versions of the same word, interchangeable and both meaning "Nothing."

John Michell  
London, England  
20 July 1998

RFWreplies:

*John Michell is correct. The Friedmans suggest numerical parameters for cryptograms but not for anagrams. Although his solution is not "perfect," as the Friedmans would say, because a "G" is dropped and an "S" added, it is still very close and thus an astonishing discovery.*

*Equally astonishing is the possibility that "T.T." was able to encode in the short dedication not one but two ciphers identifying EVER as the author, plus a third for Henry Wr...ioth...esley. And, further, to incorporate "ever-living" in the text as a clue that the author was dead.*

To the Editor:

In "The Queen's Worm" (*Newsletter*, summer 1998) Richard Whalen makes a strong case for the perception of the "worm" in *Antony & Cleopatra* as representing de Vere in the bilingual pun on "ver," the French "worm." At the same time, Shakespeare never shrank from bawdry, with *A&C* perhaps the most lambently sensual of his plays.

Therefore it would not appear an instance of special pleading to profess to recognize a sexual underlayment in the boxed passages on page 13 that turns the worm phallic as well. An obsolete synonym for orgasm is "the little death." "Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there," Cleopatra asks the Clown, "that kills and pains not?" The sexual element is unmistakable. (In "The Indian Serenade" of Shelley, in the famous ejaculation, "I die! I faint! I fail!," the Poet has been criticized for getting his psychophysical states in the wrong order. But did he?)

I suggest that the reader re-examining the boxed passages will discover that the double entendre for the greater and lesser forms of "death" works smoothly throughout in these lines. Cleopatra (Elizabeth?) is the unreflecting sensualist and the Clown (Oxford?) the agnostic of venery. Certainly the Clown's mocking irony for the pleasures of the flesh is consistent with Shakespeare's in the *Sonnets*, where such joy is presented as a baneful alloy debased with pain and with shame.

(Continued on page 26)

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The purpose of the Shakespeare Oxford Society is to establish Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604) as the true author of the Shakespeare works, to encourage a high level of scholarly research and publication, and to foster an enhanced appreciation and enjoyment of the poems and plays.

The Society was founded and incorporated in 1957 in the State of New York and was chartered under the membership corporation laws of that state as a non-profit, educational organization.

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Letters (Continued from page 25)

When he causes the Clown to say, "for his [the worm's] biting is immortal; those that do die from it do seldom or never recover," Shakespeare may be sending a dual message. Whalen suggests that to suffer the "immortality" of the worm's "bite" may allude to the everlasting life one may achieve by appearing as a character in Shakespeare, a fair construction in the context of his argument. But does the Clown, as he claims, truly "mis-speak," as "people die of it," if death also represents the consummation of love, a state from which one may "seldom or never recover?"

The Latin prefix "in-" is a can of worms with several meanings. Two are actually opposed in sense, with context alone supplying the distinction: "in-" the privative meaning "not," as in "immortal," "not mortal," and "in-" the intensifier, as in "inflammable," "very flammable." (This is why fuel tanker-trucks no longer read either "flammable" or "inflammable.") If Shakespeare through his mouthpiece the Clown is craftily doubling up on the intensifier sense that may be inferred into "immortal," he is once more giving expression to his much-recurred-to theme of the fell essence of love.

James Fitzgerald  
Natick, Massachusetts  
31 August 1998

To the Editor:

I have only just today read Richard Whalen's article "The Queen's Worm" in the Summer 1998 *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*, or I would have written to you earlier. The article is a confirmation that Oxfordians are beginning to catch up with the basic premise of my book *De Vere is Shakespeare*, which was published in England in March 1997 by The Oleander Press..

All of the Shakespeare plays contain linked episodes that were constructed around hidden puns on de Vere's name, with many of the episodes being constructed from several different hidden word puns, each of which is repeated. The "worm" episode from *Antony and Cleopatra* contains more than fifty hidden puns on de Vere's name. For example, the Latin "vernaculus" means a buffoon or jester and therefore includes a fool or clown. Other

words in this episode which can be translated into hidden "ver" words are: truly, ay, yes, very, farewell, desire, wish, report, indeed (which is the Latin "vere"), and even man (which is the Latin "vir").

When these hidden "ver" words are combined with the word nothing (Latin "nihil") it produces a pun on Oxford's motto of "Vero nihil verius." The "worm" episode is

therefore a pun on de Vere's motto. There is an average of 26 hidden puns on de Vere's motto in each and everyone of the Shakespeare plays.

Dennis Barron  
Low Moor, Clitheroe,  
Lancs, England  
14 October 1998

## The Blue Boar

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To the Editor:

In the little village of Stratford St. Mary, on the border of Essex and Suffolk, there is a long two-story early 16th century half-timbered building known as The Weaver's House. It sits close to the road with a low wall and flourishing rosemary bushes under little leadpaned casement windows.

One day 12 years ago, on the way to Hedingham Castle, I crossed the road from the Black Horse pub to smell the rosemary. A window was promptly opened and a brightly curious voice asked what I was doing. When I explained to the interesting looking elderly owner of the voice that I was smelling her rosemary and admiring her house, she commanded: "Come in, then." I was told to go around to the back kitchen door.

Once inside, the 20th century dropped away; the atmosphere was of hundred of years ago. Ida Hughes-Standon, I discovered, is a poet, an artist skilled in fine needlework and has been an ardent Shakespeare-Oxfordian ever since the 1920s. She lay on her Recamier chaise by her great fireplace that was warmed by a little electric heater. I sat very near the floor with the cat. On every subsequent visit to England I trained, bused and walked to Stratford-St. Mary to sit, have a mug of tea and talk with Ida and Don, her

consort, a musician who shares the house.

Six years ago a new book of Ida's poems, *The Good Husband*, was published, and another collection—*The Calf Bearer*—is to come out in May 1999. Ida's first book of poems was published in the 1920s by the Hogarth press as one of six young poets selected by Virginia Woolf.

Through the years I have known her, Ida has sent me Shakespeare cuttings from the newspapers—always pointing out in brisk disdain the idiocy of the Shaxper point of view. Though she's now 96 and tied down by arthritis, Ida's fresh spirit and Oxfordian conviction are truly inspiring.

Isabel Holden  
Northampton, Massachusetts  
14 October 1998

**Edward III / Eduard der Dritte**

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Translated by Ludwig Tieck  
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*Anderson (Continued from page 21)*

appears to have taken up residence in the Shakespeare canon in at least two places. First, the rebel Jack Cade scolds a crowd of onlookers for blindly following the nobility in *2 Henry VI*. "Let them break your backs with burthens, take your houses over your heads, ravish your wives and daughters before your faces," he shouts. "For me, I will make shift for one and so God's curse light upon you all!"

Second, the Roman general Cominus sounds ill tidings upon learning that his former colleague-in-arms Coriolanus leads an army against Rome. "You have help to ravish your own daughters," Cominus tells his fellow Romans. "To melt the city leads against your pates, To see your wives dishonor'd to your noses."

Given the gravity of David's offense and the extremity of his contrition, it's easy to see how the tale of David and Bathsheba can inspire political leaders in moments of crisis.

But is there really, as the current Commander-in-Chief claims, no "fancy way to say that I have sinned"?

Actually, Mr. President, you might be surprised.

## Join the Shakespeare Oxford Society

If this newsletter has found its way into your hands, and you're not already a member of our Society, why not consider joining us in this intriguing, exciting adventure in search of the true story behind the Shakespeare mystery? While the Shakespeare Oxford Society is certainly committed to the proposition that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, is the true Shakespeare, there is much that remains to be learned about the whole secretive world of Elizabethan politics and about how the Shakespeare authorship ruse came into being, and even more importantly, what it means for us today in the 20th Century as we complete our fourth century of living in a Western World that was created during the Elizabethan era.

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*Whalen (Continued from page 23)*

Sir Derek Jacobi, Michael York and Mark Rylance, who is artistic director of the Globe theater in London, plus Charles Champlin and Tyrone Guthrie. Gielgud, Jacobi, York and Guthrie have all voted for Oxford.

He says Shakspeare knew about Italy because he knew the Anglo-Italian scholar John Florio in the earl of Southampton's household. This is, of course, pure conjecture unsupported by any evidence.

He says "topicality in Shakespeare is rare, enigmatic and incidental," but then he uses topicality to try to prove post-1604 composition. *Macbeth*, "a Gunpowder play through and through," and *The Tempest*, supposedly inspired by Strachey's letter of 1609, were thus in his view written after Oxford died. But he can't have it both ways. If topicality in two major plays is pertinent for his contention, it cannot be dismissed as rare, etc. in the others.

His rather randomly presented arguments, most of which are familiar to Oxfordians, may puzzle the general reader, for whom this book seems to be intended. Many of the arguments are quite recondite. Bate overcomes this by presenting them with a blunt assertiveness that implies his authority on

the issue. At times he begins to sound like the Elizabethan historian A.L. Rowse at his testiest.

The time and effort that Bate has devoted to the authorship controversy is impressive. He does not dismiss it out of hand, even though he finds it "boring and infuriating." He takes the controversy seriously, despite his disclaimers, and he constructs a long list of counterarguments. Missing, however, is the sense that he has studied the Oxfordian literature. His citations of it are very sparse, and he generally ignores the basic thrust of the Oxfordian proposition, namely, the many direct, specific correspondences between Oxford's life and Shakespeare's works.

Or he gets the argument wrong. For example, he says that "it is absurd to suppose that any Elizabethan play might contain satiric references to particular aristocrats of the day. Polonius cannot be a satirical portrait of Lord Burghley for the simple reason that if he were, the author of the portrait would have found himself in prison before he could turn around."

He's right—if the dramatist was Will Shakspeare, the bit-part actor from Stratford-on-Avon, he would have been jailed or

executed. But the satirical references are undeniably there: Stratfordian scholars have identified them for more than a century. Oxfordians have the only valid explanation—the dramatist was a highly placed nobleman and the only one who could get away with such satire.

On the one hand Oxfordians may be encouraged that a leading academic Shakespearean (if not "our finest") feels it necessary to devote so much space in his book to the authorship controversy. It shows that academia is not able to ignore the problem.

On the other hand Oxfordians will be dismayed to find more than three dozen factual errors and flagrant misrepresentations in a book from the prestigious Oxford University Press. These may be the result of Bate's testy irritation with a problem that he can't handle and which won't go away. A serious, thoughtful rebuttal of the Oxfordian proposition has yet to be published. Maybe there isn't one.

**Look for our full conference report in the next *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* (Winter 1999) ... to be mailed to our members in February 1999.**

## ***Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter***

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