



The Shakespeare OXFORD Newsletter



Vol.35: no.1

"Let me study so, to know the thing I am forbid to know"

Spring 1999

Shakespeare's King John

*A story of rightful
identity and eyes to see*
by Dr. Ren Draya

The Elizabethan passion for history and politics is well reflected in the sheer number of history plays and their popularity during the Renaissance. We note works such as *Mirror for Magistrates*, Castiglione's *The Courtier*, compendia of documents, chronicles such as those by Hall and Holinshed—it was an age fascinated by the dynamics of power, the rise and fall of rulers, the question of rightful identity. In building the case for Edward de Vere as Shakespeare, many Oxfordians have pointed to the accurate depiction of pageantry and court practices in the history plays—details that would scarcely have been familiar to anyone un-versed in the ways of the nobility.

I wish here to recommend a closer look at *The Life and Death of King John*. It is "the unique history" because it is unattached to the series of plays, from *Richard II* to *Richard III* (and, perhaps, to *Henry VIII*) which examine the turbulent Wars of the Roses and ascendancy of the Tudors. *King John* stands apart. It is set in the early thirteenth century, not the fifteenth century. It never mentions the Magna Carta—for many Americans, our only association with King John. It does not wrestle with the ups and downs of the Lancaster and York families. It deals evenhandedly with the power of the Catholic Church. And foremost, it is a play about rightful identity.

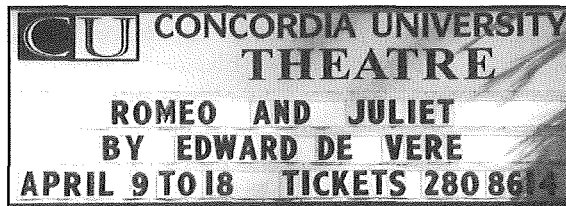
We can see de Vere's insistence on that theme in so many of his plays: who is the "correct" duke, who the usurper? which daughter is the true, loving daughter? Con-

(Continued on page 13)

Column
The Paradigm Shift
Mark K. Anderson

Moment of truth...

*Harper's Magazine folio articles expose the
hollow center of the Stratfordian paradigm*



Pictured is the sign at Concordia University advertising their production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Dr. Daniel Wright reports that, yes, the sign did attract some attention, with several passers-by even stopping in to demand an explanation. The play kicked off the 3rd Annual Edward de Vere Studies Conference at Concordia earlier this spring. Story on page 6.

As readers of this publication undoubtedly know by now, five Oxfordians had a little to-do a few months back. It was a 28-page dispatch from the Shakespeare authorship wars in the April issue of *Harper's Magazine*. Back and forth five times on five different questions pertaining to Oxford, Stratford and the price of malt. Real he-said-she-said sort of stuff.

It was fun to participate in (see Richard Whalen's summary of the *Harper's* fray on page four of this issue) and from the high newsstand sales it reportedly generated, the April issue inspired an uncharacteristically large number of *Harper's* readers (the total circulation of the magazine is 216,000) to take the Earl of Oxford for a spin.

However, I've found that it's been especially fun to gauge the reactions the whole undertaking inspired. At last count (in early June), the magazine had received shy of 150 letters, faxes and emails responding to one or more correspondents in the *Harper's* folio. This was, according to the editors I spoke with, far beyond what most cover stories generate. Possibly even a new record—

(Continued on page 4)

Inside:

**Shakespeare's invention:
the royal story of *The Sonnets***
Page 2

**Are modern British historians
re-writing Jacobean history?**
Page 8

***Palamon and Arcite* -
an early Oxford play?**
Page 10

Updates on Society, Conference
Page 19

***Minerva Britannia* - mottoes translated**
Page 21

Shakespeare's invention: the royal story of *The Sonnets*

*Hank Whittemore makes his case that most are post-Essex Rebellion
"written ambassages" to the Earl of Southampton and Queen Elizabeth*

Author and Oxfordian researcher Hank Whittemore gave the first formal presentation of his new interpretation of *Shakespeare's Sonnets* at the Shakespeare Authorship Roundtable on June 5th in Los Angeles. Whittemore reads the sonnets from the perspective of his acceptance of the "Southampton as royal heir" theory. Thirty-five Oxfordians attended the concluding lecture of the Roundtable's 1998-1999 season.

Several weeks before his talk he distributed a 75-page synopsis of his work to all members of the Phaeton Internet discussion group. He is also presently putting his thesis into a full-length book format, and hopes to see it published in the near future.

The word from those in attendance in LA is that Whittemore's presentation made quite an impression, even on those who had been skeptical of the Southampton theory. In fact, several attendees have since written to Whittemore saying that while they had in the past had serious reservations about the royal heir theory, they were now re-thinking their position in light of his presentation.

Overall, his work on the sonnets has so far met with a broad range of reaction, from "You've done it!" to "Oh, no, not Southampton as the royal heir...not again!"

Our readers may wonder why another book on the sonnets should be any big deal, or why an interpretation of the sonnets that embraces the "Southampton as royal heir" theory should even be given the time of day. Such books have been done before, most recently Betty Sears' *Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose* (1991), and controversy always stalks these royal heir theories. Critics' key counter-argument to such theories is that interpretation of the Shakespeare works is not—and cannot be—evidence in the authorship debate, and that controversial theories derived from such interpretation may actually hinder rather than help us.

So then, is Whittemore's contribution to this corner of the Shakespeare authorship universe really any different from previous efforts? In the opinion of many, including those who attended the June 5th session in LA, the answer is: yes.

Whittemore's overall thesis is, simply,

that the vast majority of the so-called Fair Youth sonnets (1-126)—as published in 1609—were written (or re-worked and/or re-written, "dressing old words new" (76)) following the failed Essex Rebellion in 1601, and that the author followed a carefully crafted scheme of arranging them chronologically to reflect Southampton's birthdays (e.g. 1-26), and then, starting with 27, to record in multi-level "written ambassages" (26) day by day and month by month the emotional turmoil the author and his beloved were in following the Essex Rebellion, with Southampton first doomed to death, then doomed to life in prison, then suddenly released, and culminating in sonnet 125 as a commemoration of Elizabeth's funeral on April 28th, 1603, with 126 being a final farewell.

Elizabeth as The Dark Lady

The second sequence (127 to 154), popularly known to most Shakespeare readers as the Dark Lady sonnets, repeats some of the same chronological ground, but they are now all addressed to Elizabeth, whose darkness is in her duplicity and complexity, not her complexion.

Whittemore makes a persuasive case that the recurring images of dark and black are metaphors for the bastard shame she has consigned on both father and son with her refusal to acknowledge him (127) or to honor promises made (152), and finally ends with the same dark metaphor describing the author's own self-loathing that he has "sworn thee fair and called thee bright, who art as black as hell and dark as night." (152)

As Whittemore sardonically notes in his discussion of the Dark Lady sequence, the great author's greatest poetry is—in his view—obsessed with such great issues as truth and honor, right and wrong, promises and betrayals—not hair color.

It is, in Whittemore's estimation, the love-hate relationship between the author and his Queen—compounded by the fate of their unacknowledged son Southampton—that is the driving force that begat these brilliant poems. His unique contribution to the scholarship of *The Sonnets* is the thesis

that the sonnets' greatness was forged in the brief, intense heat of the Essex Rebellion crisis, with Southampton's life on the line, and when both the author and his Queen were themselves close to death (or, as Shakespeare also wrote during this same period, "For these dead birds sigh a prayer"—*Phoenix and Turtle*).

Sonnets as letters to a man in—and then out—of prison

It is the reading of individual sonnets from this point of view that lends the most credence to Whittemore's approach. In particular, certain sonnets that have not fit any particular theory before now fairly fly off the page when read from this new perspective.

For example, Sonnet 63's "For such a time do I now fortify / Against confounding age's cruel knife..." has never—to our knowledge—been interpreted as a reference to Southampton's imminent execution by beheading (which would also firmly date it to the first half of March 1601). When this sonnet is then juxtaposed with Sonnet 87 and its "misprision" reference (which is a reference to a treasonable offense that falls *short of capital punishment*, therefore placing it in the period *after* Southampton's fate goes from death to life in prison), a pattern begins to emerge.

Add then Sonnet 107 (the so-called "Dating" Sonnet), which many critics link to April 1603 and Southampton's release from the Tower upon Elizabeth's death, and finally go on to Sonnet 125 as Elizabeth's funeral on April 28th, 1603...well, one can start to see how such individual interpretations both make sense of key words, images and references in each sonnet and lend themselves to a chronological sequence for at least these four aforementioned poems.

The question then becomes, can each and every sonnet be fit into this pattern? Whittemore believes, "yes," and he is now ready to try to convince the world of it.

Our next newsletter will feature a major essay from Whittemore on his thesis. He will also be giving a paper at the 23rd Annual Conference this fall on his work.

—W. Boyle

Media Notes

Harper's story generates commentary, coverage; *Chronicle of Higher Education* weighs in

With the *Harper's Magazine* articles following close on the heels of *The Washington Post* and *Time* stories, media coverage of the authorship continued on the upswing well into the spring.

One of the key recent highlights was an op-ed piece in *The Washington Post* on March 21st in which columnist David Ignatius, responding to the *Harper's* articles, said he had seen enough.

"After reading this month's *Harper's* magazine... I am convinced," he wrote, "that the answer [to the question, 'Who in fact was the Bard?'] is de Vere."

Ignatius was one of a number of columnists around the country who picked up on the story and wrote about their views. Results ranged from those such as Ignatius switching sides, to columnists such as David Sarasohn (*The Oregonian*, Portland) defending—more or less—the status quo, even to a mention on *60 minutes* in which Andy Rooney held up the *Harper's* issue, but only to complain that he wanted answers from magazines, not questions. "Didn't they watch the Oscars before they wrote this?" he griped.

A mention of the debate was also heard on National Public Radio during an interview with Martin Goldsmith about his book on classical music based on Shakespeare's plays. At one point Goldsmith remarked, "Well, whoever wrote the works ... we'll let the Oxfordians and Stratfordians wrestle that one out."

The Oregonian, in addition to such commentary as columnist Sarasohn's, also ran a front page feature story (March 21st) on Concordia's Edward de Vere Studies Conference and Dr. Daniel Wright.

The July issue of *Harper's* is now out, and it contains 20 letters in response to the April issue's Shakespeare authorship folio. The letters are roughly divided by thirds among Stratfordians, Oxfordians, and middle-of-the-road and/or "Who cares?" responses. Mark Anderson's page one story draws on both these letters and some of the unpublished letters received by *Harper's*. The magazine's New York office has told us that the overall response—nearly 150 let-

ters—was one of the largest they've ever received for a feature story.

Canadian coverage

In anticipation of the *Harper's* articles, the Society sent out a number of press releases in early to mid-March to media outlets throughout the US and Canada. Interestingly, it was only the Canadian media that responded to this story with any significant national coverage.

Through contacts with our home office in Massachusetts, arrangements were made for live radio and TV interviews conducted on the April 23rd traditional birthday. Featured were Dr. Daniel Wright (on CBC radio) and the De Vere Society's Christopher Dams (on CBC-TV's Midday program), both debating academic counterparts in broadcasts heard and seen throughout Canada.

The Globe and Mail in Toronto also responded to the press releases, and featured several stories this spring, including a short column on April 22nd giving five possible messages Shakespeare might have received on his telephone answering machine if he were alive today. Message number three was:

"Mr. Shakespeare. My name is Jack Cade, and I represent the descendants of the 17th Earl of Oxford. It has come to my attention that you have been passing off their ancestor's work as your own ... since you have ignored our request to cease and desist from these claims ... I will be forced to seek a restraining order."

Chronicle of Higher Education

Probably the biggest news story generated by all the recent authorship coverage appeared in the June 4th issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, which carried a feature story by *Chronicle* staffer Scott Heller on the Oxfordian movement. Heller interviewed a number of Oxfordians and Stratfordians in preparing this story, and was in attendance at the April 23rd Oxford Day Banquet in Cambridge, Massachusetts (story page 17).

The story overall clearly leans towards

defending the status quo of Stratford, and is sprinkled throughout with such asides as the Banquet being held in the "basement" of the Harvard Faculty Club, Society President Aaron Tatum being a "Newt Gingrich look-alike (to which Tatum has responded, "yes"), or the sign at Concordia for *Romeo and Juliet* (see page one) being a "cheeky gesture."

Stratfordian "authorship" regular Prof. Alan Nelson is quoted, and Heller also interviewed several members of the committee overseeing Roger Stritmatter's Ph.D. thesis at UMass-Amherst.

Dr. Daniel Wright and Roger Stritmatter are prominently featured—in fact the story begins by mentioning them both in the context that they are scholars who are finding comfort in the company of friends at the Oxford Day Banquet, since within the academy they are, "looked on skeptically, if not laughed out of the room."

This opening is the benchmark for Heller's take on the whole authorship debate—namely that it is taking place outside of the academy. And it is this stance that therefore results in the strongest critique that both Wright and Stritmatter have about the article, i.e. that where Heller *could have* highlighted both department head Wright and Ph.D. candidate Stritmatter—not to mention others such as department head Dr. Jack Shuttleworth at the Air Force Academy—as representing a new cutting edge in academic acceptance of the authorship debate, he instead takes a stance of viewing the whole matter as still peripheral, and only at the conclusion of his piece notes—quoting Stritmatter—that big changes "may" be occurring in academe.

Still, on the whole, the article is mostly fair about the debate, and the coverage of the issue in such a major publication as *The Chronicle*—read on virtually every campus in America—is priceless.

One important issue of fact that Stritmatter has taken exception to is Heller's reporting on why one of his Ph.D. advisory committee members (David Barrington) resigned from the committee. It was, Roger tells us, because he (Roger) had requested it, not (as the article implies) because Barrington had already passed judgement on the validity of Stritmatter's work.

Anderson (Continued from page one)

certainly an unprecedented show of hands for a literary story. (Arthur Miller's insightful nine-page essay on the state of the American theater in the previous month's issue, for instance, generated comparatively little response.)

As a participant in the fray, I've had the opportunity to read through all those responses firsthand. And, for starters, let me say one thing: Enough with the UFO jokes already!

I'm probably not the most patient audience when it comes to cheap shots (e.g. Abraham Lincoln as a favorite real-life "bumpkin" cited as a precedent against the Oxfordians), but after a few airings of the familiar red herrings, the strutting of Stratford's most cocksure defenders was enough to make me yearn for Harold Bloom's tweed-elbowed wit. At least his chalky fab-

rications and groundless assertions were entertaining.

One Canadian philosophy professor castigated the magazine for airing a debate that "could not be more depressing." He assured his assumed readership that with the Looney theory, "Here we see the frenzied thought patterns of the conspiracy theorist—much is made of small things—and, where nothing can be found, so much the deeper must the conspiracy be." He went on to put forward the stereotypical anti-Oxfordian slander that "Once you drop the idea that only aristocrats are smart and well-educated enough to do important work, the whole motivation for the Oxford hypothesis disappears. Good riddance."

The rhetoric of disbelief permeates most of the Stratfordian responses. Where some readers wrote in to express their surprise in learning the true author's identity, dogmatic

Stratfordians characteristically refused to grant that the heresy is even worth pondering. "If anyone is convinced by their desperate rationalizations, that is certainly their right," stated one Texan, "but that is certainly no justification for imposing their fantasies on the rest of us."

"The argument for the Earl of Oxford is a work of tortured, melodramatic plotting," an assured Angelino claimed. "It's a lot of fun, but let's be honest: It would have been laughed off the stage at the Globe."

Curiously, some anti-Oxfordian diatribes sagaciously call for evidence that is already available but wasn't included in the forum. While Peter Dickson's work on the heated politics of the *First Folio*'s publication provide an Oxfordian trump card, they also had to be cut from the *Harper's folio* for space reasons. Nevertheless, one Seattle Stratfordian chewed his own foot in anticipation:

Harper's Shakespeare Folio articles: A summary

Five Oxfordian scholars went one-on-one with leading Stratfordians in the April issue of *Harper's Magazine*, and even the most cautious, conservative Oxfordians would agree that for the general reader the 17th earl of Oxford came out ahead. Harvard Professor Marjorie Garber's contribution on the Stratfordian side was the most surprising.

In his own essay the editor Lewis Lapham tells how Charlton Ogburn, author of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality*, introduced him to the authorship issue. Lapham says he cannot find Shakespeare in the biography of the man from Stratford and he does find "congenial" Ogburn's arguments for Oxford as the true author of Shakespeare's works.

Harper's paired the Oxfordians with five Stratfordians and gave each 1,500-2,000 words to state their positions in five areas: Life, Mystery (the pseudonym), Drama, Love (the sonnets) and Death. No one saw their adversary's article before publication, so the pairings did not result in a one-to-one debate.

Oxfordian Tom Bethell, Washington correspondent of *The American Spectator*, opens the magazine's special section by showing how unlikely Will Shakspeare was as an author in contrast to Oxford's life. For her part Professor Gail Kern Paster of Georgetown University elevates the Stratford man's status and concludes that Shakespeare's "main purpose in undertaking the business of writing plays was personal and familial advancement in Stratford-upon-

Avon." Which even Stratfordians may find incredible.

Professor Daniel Wright of Concordia University, a trustee of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, argues the case for author anonymity in Elizabethan times and why and how Oxford took the pen name William Shakespeare. His "partner," Professor Garber of Harvard University, adopts a position of closet agnostic, if not skeptical of the Stratfordian position. She outlines the "investment" that each side has in its position, calling the controversy a "cultural symptom." (Her latest book, *Symptoms of Culture*, is reviewed in this issue.) She ends her ostensibly Stratfordian article with the Dickens quote that is a favorite with Oxfordians: "The life of Shakespeare is a fine mystery and I tremble every day lest something should turn up."

Mark Anderson, *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* columnist, summarizes the research that Roger Stritmatter has done on parallels between marked passages in Oxford's Bible and passages in Shakespeare. He also sketches the parallels between five Shakespeare characters and Oxford's life. Stratfordian Irvin Matus, author of *Shakespeare, in Fact*, critiques a variety of Oxfordian arguments, sometimes even without much rebuttal.

Joseph Sobran draws on his book *Alias Shakespeare: Solving the Greatest Literary Mystery of All Time* to summarize the case for Oxford as the author of the sonnets. Professor Harold

Bloom of Yale, true to form, chose to ignore the authorship issue so he could celebrate the "poetic power" of the sonnets.

The paired contributors who come closest to debate are Richard F. Whalen, author of *Shakespeare: Who Was He?*, and Professor Jonathan Bate of Liverpool University, author of *The Genius of Shakespeare* (reviewed by Whalen in the Winter 1999 of this newsletter).

The two had corresponded on Bate's book and so knew each other's arguments for the "Death" segment in *Harper's*. These included Will Shakspeare's burial, his will, the Stratford monument, the evidence of the *First Folio*, dating the so-called "post-1604" plays and even the background and role of Leonard Digges. Whalen found more than a dozen factual errors in Bate's detailed article and is continuing the correspondence with him in what he says is a firm but non-confrontational manner.

Placed throughout the magazine's special section are boxed quotations on the authorship controversy by eminent writers who thought there was something to it: Walt Whitman (twice), Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry James, Mark Twain, Charles Chaplin and Sigmund Freud. With a circulation of about 200,000 *Harper's* certainly brought the authorship controversy and the case for Oxford to the attention of a significant audience, one that is especially interested in literature and intellectual pursuits. The editor says the issue sold out.

—Richard F. Whalen

"Another problem that the anti-Stratfordians love to put forth is the inexplicable seven year span between Shakespeare's death and the publication of the *Folio* in 1623. But isn't this an even larger problem for Oxfordians? Why on earth would his friends wait nineteen years to set the record straight, yet still rob him of the credit by supporting his alleged pen name? Why the need for secrecy two decades later? This is a question for which the Oxfordians will never have a credible answer."

The lectures were abundant, too. One Ivy League English graduate student admitted that he didn't tread past Gail Kern Paster's pliant lamentations. But he wrote in all the same to inform us that the Oxfordians' arguments—or what he assumed the Oxfordian arguments would be—were "the same old commonplaces."

"And this is just the impression I get from a cursory glance," he chirped. "I foresaw my fury steadily rising, in equal proportions with by boredom, were I to slog through the remaining columns."

Good thing he got out when he did.

However, some not only finished the reading but even entertained a new position after the experience. "I long ago dismissed the [Oxfordians] as loopy lemmings," one Chicago annoter. "After reading the 'folio,' could be I was a bit hasty."

Another Canadian academic went further: "With my limited knowledge of the bard's history, I had no reason to doubt that William of Stratford was the true author," he states. "To my shock, however, having read the final line of the fifth 'act,' it seemed clear to me that the Oxfordians had clearly and convincingly won this battle in the authorship war. The Stratfordians failed miserably. Whereas I expected them to be the aggressors, and the Oxfordians the underdogs, the former were back on their heels for all five depositions. At each turn, the Oxfordians presented fact after fact, and supported their argument with more evidence than I could ever imagine existed, while the Stratfordians garnished their essays with ineffective sentimental jargon and completely lacked any substance. By the time I got to Harold Bloom's piece, I was desperate for any of William's supporters to provide me with any plausible piece of evidence that might rekindle my faith in the poor grain

hoarder. Once again, I was disappointed. Bloom, much like the three who preceded him, chose to point out a few of the shortcomings of an otherwise solid case for de Vere, and did absolutely nothing for Shakespeare's case, and his weak attempt at sarcasm by declaring Lucy Negro as the author fell just short of waving the white flag."

One Oxfordian writes that the folio showcases all "the old Stratfordian tactics: *Ad*

***"Irvin Matus was
the only one to
honestly attempt to
address the evidence ...
ironically, he is also
the only non-professional
scholar..."***

***"Why is it that
those who subscribe
to this viable author
[Oxford] do not need to
resort to self-revealing
psychobabble or coded
academic stretch-words?"***

hominem attacks... unsupported statements expected to be taken at face value ... backpedaling when their own evidence is found to support Oxford."

"Among Stratfordians," he continues, "Irvin Matus was the only one to honestly attempt to address the evidence ... ironically, he is also the only nonprofessional scholar ... and he causes cracks of doubt in my Oxfordian belief. For this I respect him.

However, those cracks compare little to the chasms of doubt that Oxfordian evidence has put in my former Stratfordian faith."

The wittiest reply of the packet comes from an Oxfordian who takes on each defender of the Stratford faith in turn, and with a few Twain-like slices of his rapier, tatters their entire assortment of robes and vestments.

"The easiest target is Harold Bloom, but because he keeps his tail firmly gripping his academic hobbit-hole, he is hard to flush," he writes. "If one has done nothing in life but write books about the books one's read, it would help to read the right books. Nowhere in the *Harper's* piece, nor in his latest book [*Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*, 1998], does he admit that these plays were ever touched by mortal hands. In condemning the Oxfordian movement, along with academic feminism, Marxism, Lacanianism, Foucaultianism and Derridaianism, he should have included Mathematics. His thoughts, ideas, concepts, observations and prejudices, strung out above and below the line cancel out in a brilliant flash of total miscomprehension."

"*Harper's* has shown the authorship issue in change," he concludes. "The discourse is now between those who want to continue with lexicographically challenged, if learned, expeditions into this brain-forest of words without having to deal with any author and those who find it is easier to do justice to the Canon knowing that 1) somebody had to write it, and 2) that whoever did wrote better than those who write about it. And why is it that those who subscribe to this viable author do not need to resort to self-revealing psychobabble or coded academic stretch-words?"

Some correspondents note their indecision in weighing orthodox versus heretical arguments. "Could you hear me clear into the cushy depths of your New York offices as I read the April folio?" a North Carolinian asks. "I must have sounded like a dripping faucet or a fish on land: flip, flop, flip, flop, each section skillfully producing its author's intended effect, until I wound up where I started, though much more appraised of the Shakespeare controversy's details."

Furthermore, after poring over so many sweaty Strat-speak manifestos, it was a relief to come across the simple and elegant

(Continued on page 23)

***Harper's April
issue still available***

To obtain a copy of the April 1999
issue of *Harper's* send a check for
\$6.00 to:

Lori Wagner
Harper's Magazine
666 Broadway
New York, NY 10012

3rd Annual Edward de Vere Studies Conference

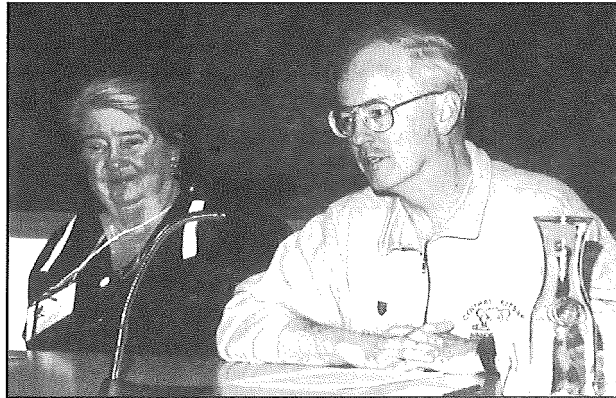
Concordia's academic venue continues to exert its influence

The annual Portland conference convened the first weekend in April at Concordia University on the crest of a wave of national interest in the authorship issue generated by the recent articles in *Harper's Magazine* and *Time*. In addition, a spate of articles about the conference in local magazines and newspapers resulted in a substantial turnout of local people.

Further evidence of increased interest was demonstrated by the record-breaking turnout for Richard Whalen at Powell's City of Books, a Portland landmark institution, where he and conference director Dr. Daniel Wright spoke to an enthusiastic capacity crowd on the authorship issue, and Whalen signed many copies of his book, *Shakespeare: Who Was He?* The Powell's event was organized by Steffen Silvis.

The papers were all received with enthusiasm as well, particularly Richard Paul Roe's revelations of some of the fruits of his years of travel and study in Italy whereby he demonstrated—through a number of maps and slides—the many locations in Italy that are still to be seen where events depicted in Shakespeare's plays occurred, among them the little church in Padua where Petruchio married Katherine in *Taming of the Shrew*.

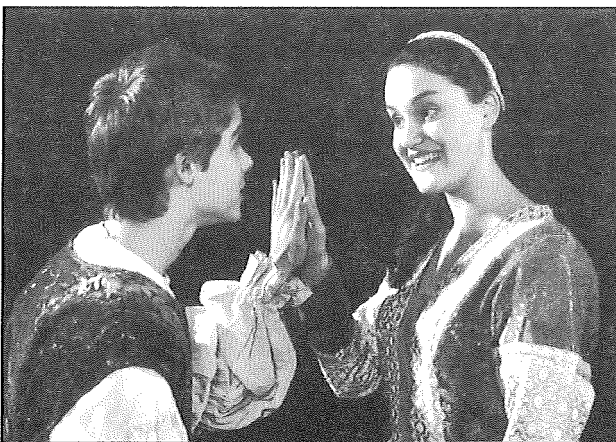
Stephanie Hopkins Hughes, Editor of THE OXFORDIAN, continued the discussion of *Shrew* with her possible scenario for dating *Taming of the Shrew*, from its first incarnation as Gascoigne's translation of *I Suppositi* in 1566, through its subsequent evolution, first as a "roast" for the 1579 wedding of Ferdinando, Lord Strange, to Alice Spencer and finally to its final version in the early 1590s as another thrust at Lord Strange and his playwright, Christopher Marlowe, the Christopher Sly of the induction scene.



English teacher Robert Barrett, featured in the last newsletter, participated in the panel discussion on introducing the authorship debate into the classroom. On the left is Prof. Frances M. Rippy of Ball State University.



Sally Mosher gave a harpsichord recital Sunday afternoon, preceded by a Q&A session with the audience on the instrument and on Oxford's talent and interest in music.



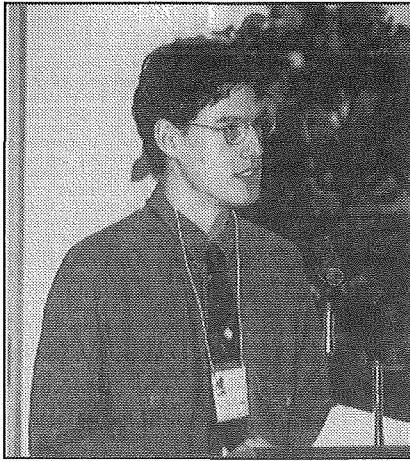
The Concordia University Players presented Romeo and Juliet, with 13-year-old Haley Sales playing Juliet and 15-year-old James Cody Birkey playing Romeo.

Eddi Jolly, a lecturer in English from Barton-Peveril College in Southampton, England, kept listeners riveted with the important work she is doing on the provenance of *Hamlet*. Eric Altschuler, a physicist at the University of California at San Diego, showed how Shakespeare's awareness of current scientific developments ended abruptly after 1604, the year of Oxford's death.

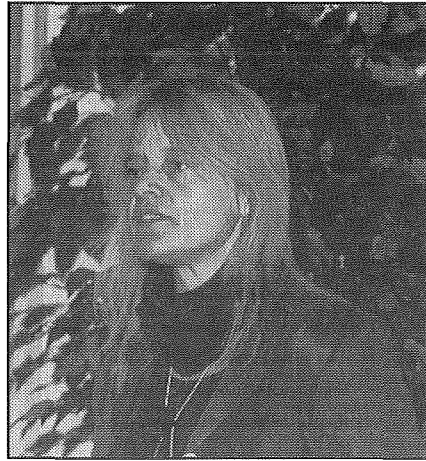
Dr. Jack Shuttleworth, Chair of the English Department at the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, was entertaining as well as informative with his paper on the British scholar, Sir George Greenwood. Dr. John Rollett, retired physicist for British Telecom, demonstrated the incontrovertible evidence that the names of Edward de Vere and Henry Wriothesley are buried in the peculiar wording and typesetting of the 1609 dedication to *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, while Roger Parisious, long-time independent scholar and Oxfordian, held everyone's interest with his discourse on three parodies of *Venus and Adonis*.

Dr. Daniel Wright, conference organizer and director and Professor of English at Concordia, impressed the audience with the significance of the absence of the kind of theatre director at the Court of Elizabeth I that is to be found at the Court of every other monarch of the period; while Andrew Werth, a recent Concordia graduate, gave a moving explanation of the importance of knowing the life history of a writer. An enthusiastic question and answer period followed Werth's talk, as a number of those in the audience said it was as good a presentation on the importance of knowing an author's life as they had ever heard. His paper will be published in the 1999 issue of *The Oxfordian*.

Dr. Ren Draya, Professor of English at Blackburn College in Illinois,



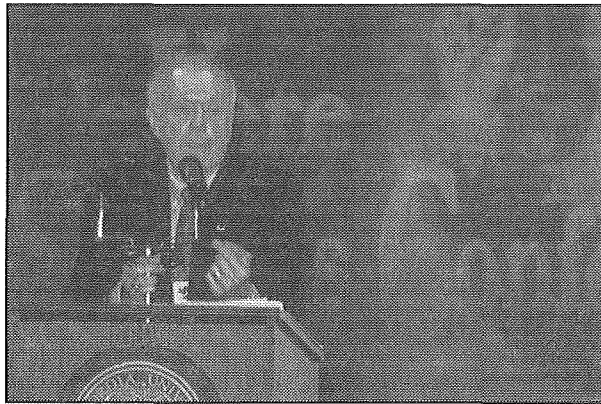
Recent Concordia graduate Andrew Werth was a big hit with his eloquent presentation on why knowing about an author's life and beliefs does matter.



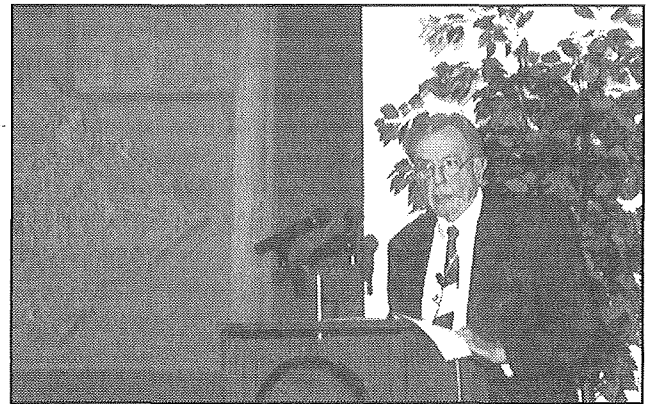
English lecturer Eddi Jolly gave a fascinating presentation on how Shakespeare's Hamlet is clearly anchored in the 1580s.



Dee Hartman's conducted a "Mystery Writer's Workshop" on Sunday and delighted the audience with her wit and style.



Prof. Jack Shuttleworth, a member of the Conference's advisory board, lectured on the recent Shakespeare Quarterly article on Sir George Greenwood and Mark Twain.



Richard Roe gave attendees a preview of his research on Shakespeare/Oxford in Italy, and how such research could clinch the Oxfordian claim in the authorship debate.

discussed the Oxfordian implications to be found in *King John* (Draya's paper is published on page one of this issue of the newsletter); while Richard Whalen, author and long-time Oxfordian scholar, pointed to the Oxfordian implications to be found in the work of the Stratfordian scholar, Dr. Samuel Tannenbaum.

Elizabeth Appleton van Dreunen, author of *Edward de Vere and the War of Words*, again discussed Oxford's role in the Martin Marprelate controversy; and Dr. Frances Rippey, Professor of English at Ball State University in Indiana, lectured on the evidence that Webster's *Duchess of Malfi* was based on Aristotle's *Poetics*.

Dr. Timothy Dost, Adjunct Professor of History at Concordia, showed the humanistic connections between Oxford and Martin Luther and John Foelster, English Major at the University of Richmond in Virginia, lec-

tured on the financial decline of the de Veres.

Those who arrived on Thursday were treated to a marvelous production of *Romeo and Juliet*, performed by the Concordia Drama Department under the direction of Professor Carmela Lanza-Weil. The production was highlighted by the fact that the 13-year-old Juliet was played by 13-year-old Haley Sales and the 15-year-old Romeo by 15-year-old James Cody Birkey, a casting decision that brought a deeply moving realism to the performance (see the photo on page six).

Sunday afternoon, the conference was entertained with a recital on the harpsichord by Sally Mosher, keyboard musician and longtime independent Oxford scholar, of William Byrd's "The March Before the Battle," preceded by her thoughts on Oxford's friendship and musical partner-

ship with the famous composer.

In addition, the assembly was entertained by an extemporaneous after-dinner speech by Elliott Stone, a Boston attorney and long-time Oxford scholar, at the banquet on Saturday night, and also by the closing "Mystery writer's workshop" in which Dee Hartman, a former instructor at Purdue University, had everyone in stitches as she solicited suggestions from the audience for helping her to create a mystery story that would tell the authorship story.

As the response from the media and the public clearly shows, this conference, the only academic conference devoted entirely to the authorship question, continues to grow in size and importance every year. Those who haven't had a chance to make it to Portland for this important annual event must put it on their agendas for next year.

Are British scholars erasing two heroic earls from Jacobean history to protect the Shakespeare industry?

A case study in how history is written

by Peter W. Dickson

Although most Oxfordians have been slow to recognize the implications of the Oxford-Southampton imprisonments in 1621-22 for the *First Folio* project and the Shakespeare authorship debate, British historians seem well aware and quite nervous about those facts which they ironically brought to light not long before Charlton Ogburn's work, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (1984).

Circumstantial evidence strongly suggests that the revival of the Oxfordian challenge in the 1980s has caused these British historians to make a deliberate effort in the 1990s to obscure these basic facts, and even to sanitize their more recent works to avoid any collateral damage to the Shakespeare industry.

The two British historians most sus-

pect in this regard are S.J. Houston and Roger Lockyer, who made major contributions in rediscovering the vendetta between the Oxford-Southampton-led Patriot coalition against the proposed Spanish marriage policy (i.e. a marriage between England's Prince Charles and a sister of the Spanish King) and the policy's chief promoters: King James, his homosexual lover (Buckingham) and the notorious Spanish Ambassador Count Gondomar.

Houston and Lockyer are major figures within Revisionist School of historiography which since the 1970s has sought to re-evaluate the reign of King James with the benefit of more in depth archival research. Prior to Houston's biography of *James* (1973) and Lockyer's on *Buckingham* (1981), one had to look much harder to find data about

the pivotal roles which the two Earls played in the Spanish Marriage crisis.

Although James and the Stuarts were never popular with the so-called Whig school of British history which focused intensely on the rise of parliament, this mainstream tradition never made much effort to unearth the rich history surrounding the Patriot Coalition's struggle to resist the King's plan for a dynastic union with Spain. The Whig historians probably saw little need to tell this story in detail because the marriage negotiations collapsed in 1623; and because Oxford and Southampton died soon thereafter on the battlefield in the Lowlands.

So Henry de Vere and Southampton slipped through the cracks and it was not until about 1970 when under the leadership of Conrad Russell, British historians began

The "Two Most Noble Henriess"



(From *Catalogue raisonné...* (London : P. Allan & Co., 1927))

This rarely-seen engraving by Thomas Jenner was part of a set of three engravings depicting six heroes of the Protestant Cause in the 1620s. It helps to bring into sharper focus the significant roles the 3rd Earl of Southampton (right) and the 18th Earl of Oxford (left) played in English history during the 1620s

Arthur Wilson, on pages 161-162 of his history book entitled *The History of Great Britain being the Life and Reign of James the First* (London, 1653), lists the leaders of the Patriot Coalition following the successful impeachment of Sir Francis Bacon in May 1621. Wilson lists the six principal aristocratic leaders in the following order: Oxford, Southampton, Essex, Warwick, Lord Say, and Lord Spencer. Then Wilson makes the following memorable observation:

There were many other noble Patriots concerned to entricue with these, which like Jewels should he preserved and kept in the Cabinet of everyman's memorie, being ornaments for Posterity to put on; but their characters would make the line too long, and the Bracelet too big to adorne this story.

The caption in the upper left (partly cut off) reads: "Right honourable Lords / two most noble Henriess / revived the Earles of / Oxford and Southampton." The key word in this caption is, of course, "revived," a reference which most likely refers to the fact that both earls were dead by 1625.

to reconstruct in more detail the court politics, especially the struggle of the Herbert-de Vere-Southampton faction against the King and Buckingham.

To appreciate the post-Ogburn sanitization in the 1990s, we should consider the following. In the 1973 edition of his James biography, Houston devotes two passages to the initial round of imprisonments of the Patriot leaders in the spring of 1621. They are as follows:

The effect of these attempts to meet the wishes of parliament was spoilt when the Earl of Southampton and Sir Edwin Sandys were arrested for meeting secretly to discuss parliamentary business. Lord Oxford was detained for criticizing the King's plan for a Spanish marriage. These men were soon released, but at a time when the government wanted a generous supply, the arrests made the Commons very sensitive about its privileges. (page 81)

This and the arrest of Southampton and Oxford during the summer recess underscored the seriousness of the King's statement. (page 85)

Houston makes no mention of the second, more ominous imprisonment of Oxford in the Tower from April 1622 to December 1623 or the reconciliation between Southampton and Buckingham which led to his release. In the early 1970s, more archival research was necessary to illuminate this end-game in the vendetta just before the *First Folio* hit the London bookstores.

Yet, once Houston had the benefit of such research as reflected in the American Professor Thomas Cogswell's work, *The Blessed Revolution* (1989), this British historian chose to remove any previous references to the 18th Earl of Oxford (Henry de Vere) from his second edition of his James biography in 1995. In the revised passage, Oxford simply disappears:

The good effect of these efforts to meet the wishes of parliament was spoilt when the Earl of Southampton was arrested for being party to a practice to hinder the King's ends at the next meeting. He had promoted an attack on Buckingham, working closely with the Commons in the proceedings against monopolists and the Lord Chancellor (Bacon). Both the Earl and Sir Edwin Sandys, who was also arrested, favored a more anti-Spanish foreign policy and were rumored to have been "active to cross the general proceedings and to asperse and infame the present government." Both men were soon released, but the arrests cast a shadow across the second session and made the Commons sensitive about their privileges. (pages 80-81)

Nevertheless, a few pages later Houston betrays his new knowledge of Cogswell's research with the following one sentence insertion:

The Earls of Southampton and Oxford, who had been so militantly anti-Spanish in the previous parliament, were restored to favor, as was William Fiennes, Lord of Say and
(Continued on page 24)

So many biographies, so few Henries

There have been eleven biographies of King James I since 1988 (with all except Dwyer's published in England), ten of which come after Thomas Cogswell's *The Blessed Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 1989)

Author	Year	Mention the Spanish Marriage?	Mention The Two Earls?
Frank Dwyer	1988	Yes	Nothing
Maurice Lee	1990	Not Much	Nothing
Chris. Darston	1993	Draws on Cogswell	Nothing
Antonia Fraser	1994 (2nd)	More than 1st Ed.	Nothing
S.J. Houston	1995 (2nd)	Draws on Cogswell	Sanitized
Stephen Coston	1996	Yes	Nothing
W.B. Patterson	1997	Yes/Great Detail	Nothing
Curtis Perry	1997	Yes	Nothing
Lori Ferrell	1998	Barely Mentions	Nothing
Irene Carrier	1998	Yes	Nothing
Roger Lockyer	1998	Yes	Nothing

Previous to 1988, there has been no other period in which so many biographies or histories have been published concerning King James since the first appeared in the 1650s during Cromwell's rule. The landmark work in this century appeared in 1956 when David Willson published a biography which did not have the advantage of the surge in archival research that came only in the 1970s. His book is quite dated and his brief treatment of the Spanish marriage crisis is rambling and unfocused, and ignores Oxford and Southampton.

The same was true of the next eight works until Houston's *James I* (1973) gave rich detail on the early 1620s, including the first imprisonment of Oxford and Southampton in June 1621. Between Houston's work and Dwyer's in 1988, there were only a few noteworthy books: Otto Scott's biography in 1976, which mentions the imprisonment of Southampton but not those of Oxford, Roger Lockyer's great biography *Buckingham* (1981) which gives rich detail on just about everything, and G.V.P. Akrigg's compilation of the letters of King James where one can find one crucial letter relating to the long second imprisonment of Oxford.

The two-fold bottom line in all this appears to be:

1. Despite a flood of King James biographies beginning in 1988, British historians have selectively ignored Thomas Cogswell's highly-regarded *The Blessed Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), a history of the Patriot Coalition's struggle against King James during the dramatic finale to his reign in the early 1620s.

2. This shunning of Cogswell's work—an in-depth study giving valuable details on the two Earls (Oxford and Southampton) as beleaguered leaders of the Patriot Coalition against King James in the early 1620s—can only be a deliberate action.

Houston, in the process of sanitizing his second edition (1995), betrays his close reading of Cogswell's landmark work in other respects, as do Carrier, Patterson and others. Despite his own close attention to the two Earls in his 1981 work, Lockyer totally ignores them in 1998.

These sudden oversights can not all be accidents or coincidences. Some must be deliberate, and probably influenced by the post-1984 revival of the Oxfordian claim in the Shakespeare authorship debate.

—PWD

Oxford and *Palamon and Arcite*

Could this 1566 play actually be an early work by Edward de Vere?

by Katherine Chiljan

During the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, three plays were produced based on Chaucer's "The Knights Tale." *Palamon and Arcite*, the main characters, are royal cousins whose close friendship is tested when they fall in love with the same woman. Military honor, symbolized by Arcite, and true love and passion, symbolized by Palamon, are also put to the test when the cousins duel for the hand of Emilia. The gods decide the outcome. This is the essential plot of the story, which has origins in Boccaccio's *La Teseida* and the epic poem *Thebaid* by Statius (d. 90 AD).

The first play, *Palamon and Arcite*, debuted at Oxford University in honor of Queen Elizabeth's visit of 1566, and has the distinction of being the first dramatization of *The Canterbury Tales*. In 1594 a play of the same title had four performances at the Rose theater, according to Henslowe's diary. In 1634, a third play about the royal cousins is printed, titled *The Two Noble Kinsmen* by John Fletcher and William Shakespeare—a first for Shakespeare to share billing on a title page. Both authors had been dead for several years. The "Stratford Shakespeare's" vital statistics of 1564-1616 has rendered it unthinkable that these three plays were related, but if the Earl of Oxford's pen name was "Shakespeare," evidence suggests that they were essentially the same play by Oxford with later additions by Fletcher.¹

The problems of *Two Noble Kinsmen*

After years of controversy, most scholars agree that *TNK*'s main plot (Acts I & V) was composed by Shakespeare, and that the subplot—the play's majority—was written by Fletcher, explaining why his name topped Shakespeare's on the title page. By assuming the two collaborated, scholars conclude that *TNK* was Shakespeare's very last effort, yet they're puzzled why the play lacks the quality of his late works. Shakespeare's abandonment of his art, wrote Harold Bloom of this play, is virtually unique in the annals of Western literature.

There's no evidence, however, that the two collaborated. According to Paul Bertram, the prologue and epilogue is where dual authorship would be acknowledged; in *TNK* it is not. In fact the prologue explicitly makes reference to a single writer:

Chaucer of all admired, the story gives...
If the first sound this child hear be a hiss,
How will it shake the bones of that good man
And make him cry from underground, Oh fan
me
From the witless chaff of such a writer
That blasts my bays and my fam'd works
makes lighter
Than Robin Hood

Bertram's argument is further supported by Leonard Digges' commendatory poem to Shakespeare (1640):

Nor begs he from each witty friend a scene
To piece his acts with, all that he doth write
Is pure his own; plot, language exquisite.

It's most unlikely that Fletcher's subplot about the daughter of Palamon and Arcite's jailer—a poor imitation of Ophelia—was part of the original play, as it had almost no relation to the main plot. One can only conjecture that the first and last acts of Shakespeare's original version had survived, and that later Fletcher filled in the rest. Fletcher rode on the coattails of Shakespeare before—as late as 1611 he wrote a sequel to *Taming of the Shrew* called *The Woman's Prize, or the Tamer Tamed*.

Scholars are unsure about the dating of *TNK*, but place it no earlier than 1613 because the morris dance in Fletcher's subplot was virtually copied from a masque by Francis Beaumont acted before King James in the same year. That composition date may be true about Fletcher's portion of the play, but there's evidence that Shakespeare's portion was written earlier. In 1606, Barnabe Barnes in his *Four Books of Offices* wrote that war "is the noble corrector of all prodigal states, a skillful bloodletter against all dangerous obstructions and pleuriasies of

peace"—a clear echo of Arcite's prayer to Mars in Act V, scene 1 of *TNK*:

Oh great corrector of enormous times;
Shaker of o'er-rank states; thou grand
decider
Of dusty and old titles, that heal'st with
blood
The earth when it is sick and cur'st the world
O'th' pleurisy of people

In 1605, Palamon was the main character in Samuel Daniel's *The Queen's Arcadia*, which, if this is another allusion to the play, pushes *TNK*'s date back a year more, and into a period when Fletcher was not known to be writing. The way then is cleared to link *TNK* with performances of *Palamon and Arcite* by the Admiral's Men in 1594 at the Rose Theater.

Now here's a true connection of the 1566 play to *TNK*. In *TNK* when Palamon is called down from the scaffold, no longer condemned to die as the loser of the duel, he says in disbelief, "Can that be, / When Venus, *I have said*, is false?" (V, iv, 44).

In *TNK*, Palamon never berates the goddess, but he did in the 1566 play, according to the summary by spectator John Bereblock, fellow of Exeter College. Palamon, "having failed of every hope...casts reproaches upon Venus, saying that he had served her from infancy and that now she had neither desire nor power to help him." The absence of this important detail indicates that *TNK* was not a coherently written play and that original material had probably been lost or censored. An even more convincing link of *TNK* to the 1566 play occurs in the last lines of the prologue:

If this play do not keep,
A little dull time from us, we perceive
Our losses fall so thick, we must
Needs leave.

The reference to "our losses," says Bertram, was probably

an allusion to some public misfortune

that befell the acting company. It is unlikely that a dramatist would go out of his way to be unintelligible in a prologue designed to court the favor of his audience, and the “losses” would presumably have been well enough known for the audience to recognize the reference and respond to it.

There are various interpretations for our losses but critics are far from consensus on this mysterious reference.

Earlier play answers the questions

Let’s turn to Oxford University in 1566. The biggest event is the play, *Palamon and Arcite*, to be acted by students.² Rehearsal previews are outstanding, spectacular scenery and effects are eagerly anticipated, as is the Queen’s attendance. After the Queen and her train are seated, a crowd throngs into Christ Church hall by way of a staircase, which, from the pressure, rips out of the wall, killing three people and injuring more. (John Elliott, Jr. discovered that for aesthetic reasons, a new coat of lead had been laid on the steps.) Remarkably, after the rubble had been cleared, the show went on! Bereblock wrote,

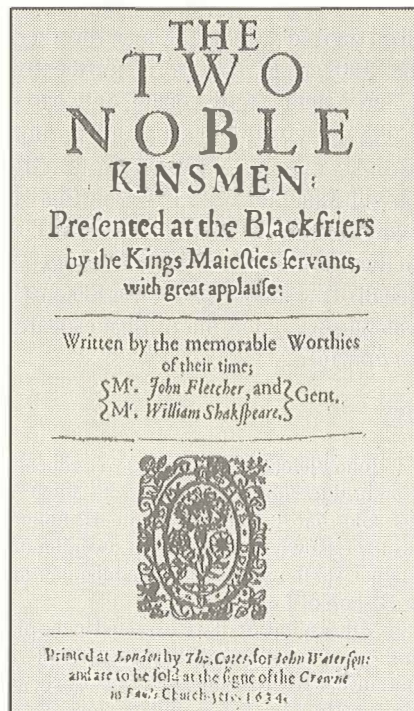
This untoward happening, although touching everyone with sadness, could by no means destroy the enjoyment of the occasion. Accordingly, taught by the misfortune of the others to be more careful, all turn again to the play.

The reference to our losses from the staircase disaster would have been clearly understood by the audience—a somewhat necessary insertion considering that three deaths weren’t enough to halt the entertainment. These two examples present in my opinion strong evidence that *TNK* is comprised of parts of the 1566 play.

What hasn’t been explained is that the authorship of the 1566 play in contemporary accounts was attributed to Master Richard Edwards.³ Two months before the Queen’s visit to Oxford, Edwards was preparing the entertainment at the university. It’s recorded that he rehearsed and directed three plays, trained actors, and supervised the construction of stage and scenery in Christ Church hall. Edwards’ biographer, Leicester Bradner, believed he—alone—would have been un-

able to write a play of two long parts in two months with that workload. Of course, he may have written it earlier, but there are other considerations to be looked at.

Edwards’ previous play was *Damon and Pithias*. Is it likely that an author would write two consecutive plays on the similar theme



The 1634 quarto of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was the only Shakespeare play published with a second author named on the title page. It is clearly an anomaly among the accepted Shakespeare works.

of friendship between two young gentlemen from ancient Greece? Both plays were compared by spectators, who agreed that *Palamon and Arcite* far surpassed *Damon and Pithias*; yet scholars have noted with surprise that in 1568 the students at Merton College, Oxford, chose to put on a revival performance of *Damon and Pithias* instead of Edwards’ more celebrated play. The same is true for printed editions: there were two editions of *Damon and Pithias* (1571, 1582), and several of Edwards’ poems were printed, but no effort was made to print *Palamon and Arcite*—resulting in the lost manuscript of the superior play.

TNK’s prologue, besides expressing insecurity about the worthiness of the play, metaphorically implies it was the author’s first effort: “New plays and maidenheads are

near akin.” Edwards had been writing plays for at least 5 years—but what about the 16-year-old Earl of Oxford, who later was recognized as a top playwright?

Oxford as author?

It is indisputable that Oxford was present at the university during the Queen’s visit, as he received his master’s degree the day following the performance of *Palamon and Arcite*. We know that from his earliest years Oxford was deeply involved in literature. Arthur Golding (in his translation of Justin’s *Histories of Trogus Pompeius*, the first of many books Oxford patronized) attested to the earl’s “earnest desire...to read, peruse and communicate with others as well the histories of ancient times, and things done long ago... and that not without a certain pregnancy of wit and ripeness of understanding.” Oxford was only 14. At 16 Oxford was writing polished poetry, and Edwards was collecting it (seven pieces were in his personal collection, later published as *Paradise of Dainty Devices*).

One portion of the 1566 play—Emilia’s song⁴—has survived, and it very closely echoes Oxford’s early poetry:

Come follow me you nymphs,
whose eyes are never dry,
Augment your wailing number
now with me poor Emelie.

Give place ye to my plaints,
whose joys are pinched with pain:
My love, alas, through foul mishap,
most cruel death hath slain.

What wight can will, alas,
my sorrows now indict?
I wail and want my new desire,
I lack my new delight.

Gush out my trickling tears,
like mighty floods of rain:
My knight, alas, through foul mishap
most cruel death hath slain.

Oh hap, alas, most hard,
oh death why didst thou so?
Why could not I embrace my joy,
for me that bid such woe?

False fortune out, alas,
woe worth thy subtle train:

(Continued on page 12)

Chiljan (Continued from page 11)

Whereby my love through foul mishap,
most cruel death hath slain.

Rock me asleep in woe,
you woeful Sisters three,
Oh cut you of my fatal thread,
dispatch poor Emelie.

Why should I live, alas,
and linger thus in pain?
Farewell my life, sith that my love
most cruel death hath slain.

Oxford's early poems reveal a fondness for the words *wail, plaint, wight, foul, hap, cruel, woe, pain and linger*. Two poems contain the phrase "trickling tears," and compare also Oxford's "Patience perforce is a pinching pain" with the above "Whose joys are pinched with pain."

An excerpt from Oxford's "A crown of bays" encompasses much of the above word usage:

Melpomene, alas, with doleful tunes help
then,
And sing his woe worth on me, forsaken man.
Then Daphne's bays shall that man wear,
that triumphs over me,
For black and tawny will I wear, which
mourning colors be.
Drown me you trickling tears, you wailful
wights of woe,
Come help these hands to rend my hairs, my
rueful haps to show.

Perhaps it was no accident that in *The Arte of English Poesie* "Th' Earl of Oxford and Master Edwards of Her Majesty's Chapel" were named together as deserving "the highest prize...for Comedy and Interlude." (John Stow used the word comedy to describe the 1566 play *Palamon and Arcite*.) It could suggest that they collaborated, perhaps as writer and director respectively. Richard Edwards may have been Oxford-Shakespeare's playwriting mentor, and as convention prevented nobility from publicly associating with the theater, perhaps Oxford allowed the Edwards attribution of *Palamon and Arcite*. But it appears that Oxford, whose family name was de Vere, implanted his signature in line 7 of *TNK*'s first act: Primrose, first-born child of Ver—a most uncommon word for spring.

In conclusion then, given what is known about the 1566 play *Palamon and Arcite*

and its connections to *TNK*, it is reasonable to postulate that it was written by Oxford, probably his very first play, as the prologue suggests. His source may have been the new 1561 edition of *The Canterbury Tales*, which had long been out of print. The play's success, with royal approbation, undoubtedly encouraged the young playwright. Oxford revised the play (along with others) in the 1590s and it was performed at the Rose Theater. After Oxford's death, only part of the play survived, or censored portions were lost. Fletcher replaced the missing parts with a subplot, circa 1613, and this was the version that was finally printed in 1634, with the new title, *Two Noble Kinsmen*. As over half of the surviving play was Fletcher's, it was purposely left out of Shakespeare's *First Folio* (1623).

Notes

1. John Fletcher (1579-1625) was educated at Cambridge University. He wrote about 16 plays solo, and collaborated with Beaumont, Massinger, Rowley and others on several more. His father was the Queen's personal chaplain and later Bishop of London.

2. Miles Windsor (d. 1624) acted in the play (Perithous, according to Elliott) and wrote an important historical account of it. Windsor began study at Oxford in 1556/7, and was awarded an M.A. in 1566. He was the first cousin of Edward, 3rd Lord Windsor—Oxford's brother-in-law. Unfortunately, Miles Windsor made no mention of Oxford in his account—perhaps he was reluctant to mention nobility in association with theater. The day after the Queen left Oxford, Lord Windsor (1537-1575) entertained her at his estate in Bradenham, Buckinghamshire.

A fascinating note is that the Queen allowed royal garments to be used as costumes for this production. Windsor mentioned King Edward's cloak, presumably that of Edward VI, and according to the logbook of the Queen's Wardrobe, there was occupied and worn at Oxford in a play before Her Majesty certain of the apparel that was late Queen Mary's. The forequarter of a gown without sleeves of purple velvet with satin ground was lost.

3. Richard Edwards (1523?-1566) died two months after the performance of *Palamon and Arcite* at about age 40. The circumstance of his death is unknown. He was master of the Children of the Chapel (choirboys that entertained the Queen with plays and concerts) from 1561 to his death. His acquaintance with Oxford may have begun at the wedding of Lady Anne Russell and the Earl of Warwick in August, 1565, where Oxford was a page and Edwards took part in the entertainments. Possible mis-attributions of Oxford's work to Edwards are two songs: (1) "In

Commendation of Music," part of which was featured in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (IV,v,155); and (2), a song from Edwards' *Damon and Pithias*, probably first performed during Christmas, 1564. Both pieces are reproduced below (following footnote 4).

4. *Arbor of Amorous Devices*, registered Jan. 7, 1594 (unsigned), and British Museum Additional MS 26,737, fol. 106, signed "The song of Emelye per Edwardes."

In Commendation of Music

Where gripping griefs the heart would wound
And doleful dumps the mind oppress,
Then music with her silver sound,
Is wont with speed to give redress.
Of troubled mind for every sore,
Sweet music hath a salve therefore.

In joy it makes our mirth abound,
In grief it cheers our heavy sprites,
The careful head release hath found,
By music's pleasant sweet delights.
Our senses, what should I say more,
Are subject unto music's lore.

The gods by music hath their prey,
The foul therein doth joy,
For as the Roman poets say,
In seas whom pirates would destroy,
A dolphin saved from death most sharp,
Arion playing on his harp.

A heavenly gift, that turns the mind,
Like as the stern doth rule the ship,
Music whom the gods assigned
To comfort man, whom cares would nip.
Sith thou man and beast dost move,
What wise man then will thee reprove?

Song from Edwards' *Damon and Pithias* (line 588+)

Awake ye woeful wights,
That long have wept in woe:
Resign to me your plaints and tears,
My hapless hap to show.

My woe no tongue can tell,
Ne pen can well descry.
Oh, what a death is this to hear:
Damon my friend must die.

The loss of worldly wealth,
Man's wisdom may restore,
And physic hath provided too,
A salve for every sore:

But my true friend once lost,
No art can well supply,
Then what a death is this to hear:
Damon my friend must die.

My mouth refuse the food,

That should my limbs sustain.
Let sorrow sink into my breast,
And ransack every vein.

You Furies all at once,
On me your torments try:
Why should I live, since that I hear:
Damon my friend should die.

Grip me you greedy griefs,
And present pangs of death,
You Sisters Three, with cruel hands,
With speed now stop my breath.

Shrine me in clay alive,
Some good man stop mine eye:
Oh death come now, seeing I hear,
Damon my friend must die.

Bibliography

- Adams, Joseph Q. *Chief Pre-Shakespearean Dramas*, 1924.
- Arnold, Janet. *Lost from Her Majesties Back*, The Costume Society Extra Series, no. 7, 1980.
- The Arte of English Poesie*, 1589.
- Bertram, Paul. *Shakespeare and the Two Noble Kinsmen*, 1965.
- Bloom, Harold. *Shakespeare: Invention of the Human*, 1998.
- Boas, Frederick. *University Drama in the Tudor Age*, Oxford, 1914.
- Bradner, Leicester. "The Life & Poems of Richard Edwards" *Yale Studies in English* 74 (ed. Albert S. Cook), 1927.
- Brandes, George. *William Shakespeare: A Critical Study*, vol. 2, 1898.
- Chiljan, Katherine. *Letters and Poems of Edward, Earl of Oxford* (private printing, 1998).
- Dictionary of National Biography*
- Durand, W. Y. "Palamon and Arcyte, Progne." *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, ed. Charles H. Grandgent, vol. 20, 1905.
- Durand, W. Y. "Notes on Richard Edwards." *Journal of Germanic Philology*, ed. Gustaf E. Karsten, vol. IV, 1902.
- Edwards, Richard. *Paradise of Dainty Devices*, 1575.
- Elliott, Jr., John R. "Queen Elizabeth at Oxford: New Light on the Royal Plays of 1566," *English Literary Renaissance*, vol. 18, 1988.
- Ogburn, Charlton. *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, Dodd, Mead and Co, New York, 1984.
- Oxford Companion to English Literature*, ed. Sir Paul Harvey, 1967.
- Poems Written by Wil. Shakespeare*, Gent., 1640.
- Rollins, H. E. "A Note on Richard Edwards," *Review of English Studies*, vol. 4, 1928.
- Stowe, John. *The Annals or General Chronicle of England*, 1614.
- The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Arden Shakespeare, 3rd edition, ed. Lois Potter, Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd., Walton-on-Thames, 1997.

Draya (Continued from page 1)

consider the lyrical mix-up of lovers in *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*, the merry confusion of twins in *A Comedy of Errors*, the troubling ambiguities of *Measure for Measure*—we could go on and on, listing plays in which questions of identity dominate. But in the histories, where claims and conflicts are invariably based on the argument of rightful inheritance, the stakes are much higher: thrones are toppled, kingdoms are won or lost, heads roll.

In *King John*, the theme of rightful identity has several manifestations: the suit brought by the Bastard, who wishes his paternity to be known, provides the play with a rich character and moments of comic bravado; the struggle between John and his young nephew, Arthur, forms the central and more serious conflict.

Let's break it down. "Who am I?" "Who is the rightful monarch?" Do we see the plays of Christopher Marlowe or John Webster or any of the other early modern dramatists constantly asking these questions? No. This is, then, additional evidence—yes, strongly circumstantial—that a writer who must conceal his identity is also one who would include the theme of recognition so often, so prominently. And that writer is Edward de Vere.

To strengthen this point, I would also cite the scholarship done by Roger Stritmatter on the annotations found in de Vere's Geneva Bible. Among the five major themes he identifies from the annotations is the distinction between inward truth and outward deception—in short, the theme of rightful identity. I am grateful, also, to George Anderson for his musings on *Richard II* and the questions of identity therein.

In an extended consideration of *King John*, there are four things I would wish to do: 1) consider more deeply both the philosophical and practical implications of this theme of rightful identity, showing it to be properly assigned as a hallmark of de Vere; 2) talk about the stage-worthiness of this play, with an emphasis on the roles of women and an analysis of its dramatic contrasts; 3) look at both the child (Arthur) and the engaging Bastard as, in part, alter egos for de Vere; 4) focus on the unusual tears in the play.

Perhaps I can whet your appetite to look

into those first three ideas on your own, but for now I shall examine just the final one—the watery element of tears. It happens to everyone in this play—a repeating motif that seems to leap out at you.

In studying and teaching *King John*, I was struck with the frequent mention of tears—of males who cry. The first weeping is that of a nine-year-old boy, Arthur, the rightful heir to England's throne (II,i,165). And throughout the play, there's a deluge of male tears. I then re-read the sonnets: there are dozens of lines, images, and conceits based on eyes, tears, the act of seeing! (see the endnotes for a complete list.) As just one example, here is Sonnet 137:

Thou blind fool, Love, what dost thou to
mine eyes
That they behold and see not what they see?
They know what beauty is, see where it lies,
Yet what the best is take the worst to be.
If eyes corrupt by over-partial looks
Be anchored in the bay where all men ride,
Why of eyes' falsehood hast thou forged
hooks,
Whereto the judgment of my heart is tied?
Why should my heart think that a several
plot
Which my heart knows the wide world's
common place?
Or mine eyes seeing this, say this is not,
To put fair truth upon so foul a face?
In things right true my heart and eyes have
erred
And to this false plague are they now
transferred.

"Eyes' falsehood"—the sonnets repeatedly warn us not to trust to our eyes alone, repeatedly suggest that true identity is often disguised. I have made note of those sonnets which I believe to be most helpful in pursuing this line of investigation: why the frequency of tears and the metaphors connected with vision/sight/eyes do point to the authorship of Edward de Vere.

In medieval and Renaissance physiology, tears were considered a means of ridding the body of excess melancholic humors (Frey 6). Edward de Vere understood that both men and women could—and would—cry in the face of overwhelming emotion. When Brutus seeks to explain the death of Julius Caesar to the unruly plebians, he states, "As Caesar loved me, I weep for him" (*Julius Caesar*, III,ii,24-5), and Marc Antony

(Continued on page 14)

Draya (Continued from page 13)

advises the crowd, "If you have tears, prepare to shed them now" (170). Still, for Renaissance theatergoers, tears were primarily "a woman's gift" (*The Taming of the Shrew*, First Induction, 123); as Celia tells Rosalind, "tears do not become a man." (*As You Like It*, III, iv, 3) Richard III woos Lady Ann by admitting that his eyes, "which never shed remorseful tear" (I, ii, 158) are willing to cry "repentant tears" (218) if she will accept his hand. In *King John*, I believe that the usual tearful associations are overturned.

A quick summary: Acts I and II delineate the main players and their conflicts. John is the king, but, as his mother Eleanor reminds him, he rules more by might than by right. The rightful heir is his young nephew, Arthur. Arthur's mother is the wonderfully dramatic Constance, widow of John's brother. She does all she can to protect her son and call attention to his claim. Originally from Brittany, Constance has gained the support of the Kings of France and Austria to oppose John. But the kings, behind her back, arrange a treaty with England; further, a niece of John's is offered in marriage to the prince of France.

The motif of tears

Let's look closely at this point of the play and the motif of tears. An English earl, Salisbury, has been sent to apprise Constance of these important decisions. Constance's reaction opens Act I—her response to the news that Blanche and the French prince are to be married is spirited. She is frightened, upset, repeats four times that she is "full of fears"—labeling herself "a widow, husbandless, a woman, naturally born to fears..." (13-15). Nonetheless, it is a man who weeps: the man to whom she speaks, Salisbury. Here is the play's second mention of crying, and it is a man (a nobleman) whose eye holds "that lamentable rheum, Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds" (22-23).

Constance is stunned by the news that her son's claim has been denied and tries to dismiss Salisbury: "Fellow, begone! I can-

not brook thy sight. This news hath made thee a most ugly man" (36-37). The sight of a man crying is ugly—by implication, unnatural. Although Salisbury insists she come with him to the kings, Constance refuses and sits on the ground: "I will instruct my sorrows to be proud, For grief is proud and makes his owner stoop" (68-69). It is a stub-



"Hubert, if you will, cut out my tongue so I may keep mine eyes."

born action and a strong visual statement on stage: "Here I and sorrows sit. Here is my throne; bid kings come bow to it" (73-74).

As in *Richard II*, when the king—similarly frustrated and thwarted—laments, "Let us sit on the ground and tell sad stories..." (III, ii, 155-56), Constance, too, feels helpless, caught up in machinations beyond her control. Yet the cause she pleads is utterly just: her son, Arthur, is indeed the rightful king.

The two kings do come to her. Walking arm in arm, surrounded by attendants and symbols of military power, accompanied by Queen Eleanor and the affianced Blanche, they must somehow contend with this woman who sits. Picture Constance's despair see-

ing arm in arm King John of England (whom she considers the usurper) and King Philip of France (whom she has, up until this moment, considered her ally). During her passionate protest she objects to the "counterfeit resembling majesty" (99-100); I would imagine the actress throws up her arms to the heavens: "A widow cries" (108). But I interpret her to mean "a widow cries out to you," not that she sheds any tears.

Until the Papal legate's entrance, neither Eleanor nor Blanche speak, and tensions are heightened. The Legate (Pandulph) seeks to persuade King Philip that his "truce" with England is with a heretic. Constance is quick to call Eleanor "devil" (196) and, at the climactic moment, King Philip lets go of King John's hand. The three women contribute to the scene: Blanche desperately wondering if the prince's love for her is a charade, Eleanor accusing the French of inconstancy, Constance speaking for the honorable course of action.

When young Arthur is captured by the English, Constance displays classic signs of grief for her son. She is described as entering "with hair about her ears" (IV, iv, 16) and she is inconsolable. When Philip offers comfort, she sobs out, "No, no, I will not, having breath to cry" (37), and she tears at her hair. In a lyrical image, Philip notes "a silver drop" (63), a teardrop on her hair, and she makes an attempt to pin up her hair. Constance's single teardrop is the

only time in this play that a woman cries. The other men chide Constance for holding "too heinous a respect of grief" (90). Defiantly, she unpins her hair, explaining:

I will not keep this form upon my head
When there is such disorder in my wit.
(101-2)

For the audience, Constance offers strong images of sorrow: a woman who sits resolutely, a woman who carries on with tearing of hair and ranting—but not someone who cries copiously. Shakespeare gives us the image of this grieving woman juxtaposed against the images of unruffled masculine deal-making. The Legate, for example,

dissuades the naive French Dauphin (Lewis). Their matter-of-fact dialogue—the practical realist informing the young idealist—prefaces one of the most tear-jerking moments in all Shakespeare's works: Hubert (King John's hapless henchman) giving instructions to the executioners before the captured prince is led in:

Heat me these irons hot, and thou stand
Within the arras. When I strike my foot
Upon the bosom of the ground, rush forth
And bind the boy..... (IV,i,1-4)

Victorian melodrama can scarcely top the pathos here—a scared boy facing these burly men (I can't imagine them being lean), thick cords to bind him, irons being heated to burn out his eyes before he is killed. Arthur—either from instinct or despair—recognizes the distress on Hubert's face.

Hubert gives the boy the official paper to read, and Hubert then turns away, weeping. His aside, "How now foolish rheum?" (33) is poignant—"foolish" meaning fond; he is ashamed, not that he weeps but that he has agreed to his King's cruel orders. Arthur pleads for his life, offering the image of the iron "heat red-hot, approaching near those eyes," the iron "drinking" (61-62) his tears. The repetitions are telling—eyes, tears: "Hubert, if you will, cut out my tongue, so I may keep mine eyes" (100-101).

The eyes know friends from enemies

On the dramatic level, Arthur's insistence surely springs from fear of terrible pain—and the prospect, if he survives, of blindness. But I believe that the playwright, as importantly, uses tears/eyes metaphorically: eyes give us our knowledge of the world—to see is to know our friends and enemies. It is the same point made again and again in the sonnets. Arthur argues that if Hubert takes his eyes, he won't be able to look on Hubert. And, in the end, Hubert cannot hurt the child: "Well, see to live. I will not touch thine eyes" (121).

Next, a marvelous shift to King John on his throne. Believing Arthur dead, he smugly pronounces, "Here once again we sit, once again crowned, And looked upon, I hope, with cheerful eyes" (IV,ii,1-2). But John's world is about to collapse. Both Eleanor and Constance have died, and this news rattles

the king. Further, the French have landed and are advancing. Then, King John learns that the nobles wish to avenge Arthur's "death." Two lords are on their way "with eyes as red as new-kindled fire" (163), and Hubert reports that the common people, too, mourn the child "with wrinkled brows, with nods, with rolling eyes" (193). The King's behavior at this point is especially despicable: he turns on Hubert and blames him for looking like a killer! John tries to deny his own guilt, criticizing Hubert:

Hadst thou but shook thy head or made a
pause
When I spake darkly of what I purposed,
Or turned an eye of doubt upon my face ...
(232-34)

This is the same John who, when directing Hubert to do the killing, used the phrase "throw thine eye on yon young boy—He is a very serpent..." (III,iii,58-62).

Ironically, Arthur did not die at the hands of Hubert and the burly executioners—Hubert showed the boy a way to escape. But Arthur does die, accidentally, in leaping from a wall. When the nobles find his crumpled body, Salisbury voices their outrage:

... This is the bloodiest shame,
The wildest savagery, the vilest stroke
That ever wall-eyed wrath or staring rage
Presented to the tears of soft remorse.
(IV,ii,47-50)

Wall-eyed, staring, tears—throughout this play, references to eyes and tears call our attention to moments of heightened intensity. When Hubert defends himself to the nobles, he uses the simplest of terms: "I honored him, I loved him and will weep..." (105).

Finally, in the pageantry of Act V, with a formal pact about to be signed between the French and the English, Salisbury reacts to the possibility of the nobles turning against their monarch: ...

O my grieved friends,
That we, the sons and children of this isle,
Were born to see so sad an hour as this,
Wherein we step after a stranger, march
Upon her gentle bosom, and fill up
Her enemies' ranks—I must withdraw and
weep ... (V,ii,24-9)

Interestingly, the French Dauphin acknowledges both Salisbury's "noble temper" and his tears; the Dauphin wipes away the English man's "manly drops" (49).

As it turns out the pact between England and France is a dishonorable one—the French would have killed all the Englishmen. King John, poisoned by a monk, lies dying. His nine-year-old son (Prince Henry) cries—of course, cries—"O that there were some virtue in my tears that might relieve you!" (V,vii,44-5).

And at the close of the play, with all the nobles kneeling in loyalty to him, the boy says:

I have a kind soul that would give you thanks
And knows not how to do it but with tears.
(108-109)

England's new king, Henry III—he too is a male who weeps.

Notes:

Sonnets referring to eyes: 5, 7, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 33, 43, 46, 47, 49, 56, 61, 62, 69, 78, 81, 83, 88, 93, 95, 104, 106, 113, 114, 119, 121, 127, 130, 137, 139, 141, 142, 148, 152, 153.

To tears: 9, 30, 31, 34, 42 (wailing), 44, 64, 119

To seeing: 3, 12, 18, 27, 33, 61, 64, 68, 73, 75, 83, 96, 103, 104, 106, 116, 121, 127, 132, 137, 139, 148, 149, 150, 152.

Underlining indicates sonnets with extended use of the motif.

Bibliography:

Best, C.H. and N.B. Taylor, ed. *The Human Body: Its Anatomy and Physiology*. 4th edition. New York: Holt Rinehart, 1963.

Farrell, William. *The Liberated Man Beyond Masculinity: Freeing Men and Their Relationship with Women*. New York: Random House, 1974.

Frey, William H. U. *Crying The Mystery of Tears*. Winston, 1985.

Nichols, Jack. *Men's Liberation: A New Definition of Masculinity*. New York: Penguin, 1975.

Rochlin, Gregory. *Man's Aggression: The Defense of Self*. Boston: Gambit, 1973.

Shakespeare, William. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. 4th ed. Edited by David Bevington. New York: Harper Collins, 1992.

Shaver, Philip and Clyde Hendrick, ed. *Sex and Gender*. Newbury Park: Sage, 1987.

Oxfordian News

Prof. Felicia Londre introduced as a "lecturer on Oxford" at SAA; 12th Annual Oxford Day Banquet in Massachusetts

California

Felicia Londre, professor of theater history at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, is the first Oxfordian to deliver a paper at a plenary session of the annual meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America (SAA), the organization of the Stratfordian establishment professors, in **San Francisco** in April (earlier in the 1990s Oxfordians such as Charles Boyle, Charles Burford and Andrew Hannas had participated in seminar panels, which include presentation of papers on the seminar topic).

Londre was introduced not only as an accomplished and widely published scholar, but as a lecturer who often speaks on the 17th Earl of Oxford as the true

author of the works of Shakespeare. She was warmly received by the overwhelmingly academic audience.

Professor Londre's presentation came during one of two paper sessions on the first day of the conference, held in early April in San Francisco. The session was on "Shakespeare into Music." Her paper, "Where the Words Go: Shakespeare into Verdi, Gounod, et al." exposed how opera librettists did violence to Shakespeare's story and characters. She even managed to work Al Jolson into her provocative presentation. (You had to be there.)

She was scheduled to deliver another paper at the de Vere Studies Conference in Portland, Oregon, the following week but was unable to do so because of illness.

As usual, the plays and the playwright were mostly missing from the SAA conference, which drew about seven hundred professors. Out of more than fifty sessions and seminars only two had Shakespeare plays for the main topic of discussion. One was on *Pericles*, the other on *Hamlet*, *Troilus and Cressida* and *Measure for Measure*. Neither the *Sonnets* nor any other Shakespeare poetry was addressed at the conference.

Seminar topics ranged from "Jonson, and Jonson and Shakespeare" (sic) to "Reconsidering Rape: Sexual Violence on the



Enjoying themselves at the 12th Annual Oxford Day Banquet are (left to right), Tom Wentworth, Laura Wilson, Jane Latman, Patrick Prentice, Lisa Wilson, and Charles Boyle. Prentice, Latman and Wentworth were in town to meet and interview Oxfordians for their proposed cable documentary on the authorship and Edward de Vere, which they plan to premier on the Bravo channel sometime in 2000. (Photo by George Anderson)

Renaissance Stage."

Shakespeare may be going into partial eclipse at the SAA. The speaker at the annual luncheon, Professor James D. Bulman of Allegheny College, suggested that since there are so many editions of Shakespeare—more than a dozen—Shakespeare scholars should switch their attention to other dramatists of the time. As if Shakespeare could ever be exhausted.

In the book exhibit publishers were selling six editions of Shakespeare in paperback volumes. Five had no biography at all; the sixth had a short, pro forma biography. Absent was the new Signet edition (1998) that has added almost four pages on the authorship controversy in the general introduction by Sylvan Barnet, retired Tufts University professor. Unfortunately, his account contains about a dozen serious errors and misrepresentations. They have been called to his attention.

Besides Felicia Londre Oxfordians at the conference included society past presidents Richard Whalen and John Price and Professor Stephen Ratcliffe of Mills College. They found that with careful selection of sessions and a little luck the SAA conference could be an instructive experience, if only to observe the Stratfordian professors wrestle with various issues when they've got the wrong author.

Among the most entertaining sessions were those on Shakespeare in the movies. One speaker discussed Ernst Lubitsch's *To Be or Not to Be*, a black comedy on the Nazis made and released at the start of World War II. She showed excerpts to illustrate the controversy generated by the film, not the least of which was Hamlet as portrayed by the comedian Jack Benny.

The next SAA conference will be in Montreal April 6-8, 2000. For information write to the SAA at the University of Maryland, 1000 Hilltop Circle, Baltimore MD 21250 or email saa@umbc.edu.

The Carmel Shakespeare Festival, dedicated to the proposition that the Shakespeare plays were written by the 17th Earl of Oxford, will stage two of the Bard's plays this year: *The Merry Wives of Windsor* from September 11th to October 16th, and *King Lear* from October 1st to October 17th.

Stephen Moorer is the founder and producing artistic director of the Pacific Repertory Theatre, parent of the festival. An Oxfordian (along with his cast and staff), Moorer was the host of the 1994 conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society.

The festival also offers lectures and discussions on Oxford as the true author of Shakespeare's works. For further information: P.O. Box 222035, Carmel CA 93922, 408-649-0340, PRDEBBY@aol.com.

Massachusetts

The 12th Annual Oxford Day Banquet was held in **Cambridge** on April 23rd. Sixty Oxfordians and their guests attended, one of the larger turnouts in recent years. Among the guests were the producers of a proposed cable TV documentary on the authorship. Also on hand were George Anderson, Lisa and Laura Wilson from Minnesota and Society trustees from around the country.

For the second year Dr. Daniel Wright was the featured speaker, and once again he

delivered a wonderful talk on the importance of the authorship debate, this time emphasizing the high stakes in getting the Shakespeare authorship right by comparing the situation with other academic disciplines ("Which other departments would embrace such weak standards of 'evidence'?" Wright asked). He also emphasized the undoubtedly pernicious effects that having the wrong author has had on all literature studies over the past centuries.

Among other guests this year were the producers of a documentary on Edward de Vere and the authorship debate. Patrick Prentice has been a Society member for several years, and in the past has produced documentaries for the National Geographic Society. Also on hand were the project's executive producers Tom Wentworth and Jane Latman. Wentworth video-taped throughout the evening, gathering material and ideas for the project. The full production team is expected to be on hand at the 23rd Annual Conference this fall, shooting film to be used in the final version, which will be broadcast on the Bravo cable channel.

Scott Heller, a reporter for the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, was present as he prepared his story on the authorship for the *Chronicle* (the story appeared in the June 4th issue, and is discussed on page three of this issue of the newsletter).

A number of guests spoke during the open-microphone session, including Mr. James Hardigg, Society President Aaron Tatum, and Banquet founder—and Society trustee—Charles Boyle.

One of the extemporaneous speakers was 90-year-old Victor King, who had traveled from New Jersey accompanied by his grandchildren to be on hand. He delighted the audience with his presence and his story telling, especially when he told of the moment during the train ride from New Jersey when he turned to someone sitting next to him and mentioned the authorship debate. His seat companion gave him the cold shoulder for the remainder of the trip.

In Amherst, the Hampshire Shakespeare Company, under the guidance of Society trustee Tim Holcomb, will be adding an exciting authorship dimension to its summer schedule.

In addition to the usual Shakespeare fare (this year *Comedy of Errors*), the company will also be putting on *Thomas of Woodstock*, a significant apocryphal play from the Elizabethan era that some think may be by Oxford. The play will run from July 15th to July 31st.

Thomas of Woodstock has been de-

scribed as "Richard II, Part I" by some, and is described in the Hampshire promotional brochure as a "searing satirization of Richard's ascendancy to power and the struggle between the entrenched old guard and the new generation."

As part of the publicity campaign this spring, the company invited all comers to write their own ending to the work (which has come down to us in a sole surviving copy that is missing the title page—and along with it the author's name?—and the final page of the playtext). To date, eleven new endings have been submitted, five from Oxfordians.

To see this play and its new ending, call the Hampshire Shakespeare Company at (413)548-8118, or visit their website at: www.hampshireshakespeare.org

OXFORDIAN editor Stephanie Hopkins Hughes is spending the summer with family on the east coast before leaving for England to join Dr. Daniel Wright and other Concordia students for a semester's study at Oak Hill College in London. Hughes will speak on the authorship question on August 3rd, at Featherstone for the Arts (Barnes Road) in Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard, starting at 7:30. For further information, phone (508) 693-1850 or send email to her Society work address: editor@oxfordian.com.

Even though on the road she continues to work on the 1999 OXFORDIAN, to be published this fall.

New York

Such was the stature of the late Charlton Ogburn, the dean of Oxfordians, that he has been memorialized in *The Shakespeare Newsletter*, the Stratfordian quarterly published by the English department of Iona College in New Rochelle.

The newsletter, which printed a brief obituary in its previous issue, has more than 2,000 subscribers, most of them university English professors.

The current issue carries a 950-word excerpt from an unpublished paper that Ogburn wrote about two years ago, an essay that he said would probably be his final statement on the authorship issue. The co-editors graciously found it "appropriate to honor a man who loved Shakespeare and labored long and hard, even if in the wrong vineyard." They allowed him "the last word without rebuttal."

Preceding the excerpt is a lengthy appreciation of Ogburn by Richard F. Whalen, author, society past president and regular contributor to this newsletter. Whalen noted

that Ogburn, while impatient with unfair or uniformed criticism, was able to maintain amicable relations with a number of leading Stratfordian scholars. These included O.B. Hardison, former director of the Folger Shakespeare Library; author E.A.J. Honigmann; Louis Marder, founder of *The Shakespeare Newsletter*; and even—late in their lives—Sam Schoenbaum, the scholar of Stratfordian biography.

Canada

King Lear starring Burgess Meredith, Molly Ringwald, Woody Allen, Norman Mailer and Peter Sellers, directed by Jean Luc Goddard. Jack Benny playing Hamlet. *A Comedy of Errors* starring Bette Midler, Lily Tomlin and Fred Ward in a rough adaptation called *Big Business*. These and other old, odd and classic films that may never have made it to your neighborhood theater are offered by Poor Yorick (Stratford, Ontario) in their new video and CD catalog.

Also available is the 1992 satellite broadcast of the Shakespeare authorship issue, *Uncovering Shakespeare: An Update*, moderated by William F. Buckley Jr. and featuring a large cast of Oxfordians. It goes for a hundred dollars but most of the video prices range from \$8 to \$20, with a few much higher. Poor Yorick is at 89A Downie St., Stratford, Ontario, Canada N5A 1W8; 519-272-1999.

England

Filming for the long-awaited authorship documentary by Austrian Michael Peer will begin this July. De Vere Society patron Sir Derek Jacobi and Lord Charles Burford will be among those participating in the project, which is tentatively scheduled to be broadcast sometime in 2000.

The De Vere Society continues to research an Oxfordian chronology of the Shakespeare Canon, with plans to publish sometime in the not too distant future. This is something that has long been needed by all Oxfordians. Christopher Dams, who will attend the Society Conference in November, plans to present a preliminary overview of the project and how it is being put together by Oxfordians in England.

Among the Society's spring activities was a talk by Verily Anderson on June 13th at Templewood, and this summer (July 27th) the Society's annual summer meeting will be held at Montacute House near Yeovil, which is the home of the National Portrait Gallery's collection of Elizabethan court portraits, including the Welbeck portrait of Oxford.

Book Reviews:

Shakespeare's Sonnets and the Court of Navarre. By David Honneyman (Lewiston, NY : Edwin Mellen, 1997).

by Ramon L. Jimenez

Oxfordians will be intrigued by the title of David Honneyman's book because any demonstrable connection between the *Sonnets* and the Court of Navarre suggests an even greater distance between Shaksper of Stratford and the Shakespearean canon. But even with the title as a tip-off, the reader is likely to be startled by this sentence in Honneyman's Preface: "The Sonnet people are not to be found in England . . ."

Otherwise an orthodox Stratfordian, Honneyman acknowledges that the experiences, personality, attitude, and style of the writer of the Sonnets were totally at odds with anything we know of Shaksper of Stratford. Although plainly autobiographical, the *Sonnets* reflect someone other than the down-to-earth and hardworking playmaker envisioned by orthodox scholars. How can this be? Honneyman's answer is that Shakespeare did not write them, he translated or "recomposed" them.

By a series of leaps of faith, and several "must haves" and "most likelys," Honneyman connects the writer and the three "characters" in the Sonnets (Fair Friend, Dark Lady, and Rival Poet) to four actual people in French royal circles and to a series of historical events that took place at Nerac—the site of the Court of Navarre, an independent state dominated by France.

Honneyman's Navarre Hypothesis is that the sonnets we know as Shakespeare's were originally written in French during the 1570s by the scholar/soldier/poet, Agrippa d'Aubigné, who had a close relationship with Henry de Bourbon, Prince and then King of Navarre, who is himself identified as the Fair Friend. The Dark Lady and the Rival Poet are Henry's Queen, Margaret of Valois, and Guillaume Du Bartas, the leading poet at the Court. Never mind that d'Aubigné, the supposed sonneteer, was only two years older than Henry, and that he is supposed to have written nearly all the sonnets while in

his twenties. Never mind that the only evidence for his supposed relationship with Dark Lady Margaret (Fair Friend Henry's wife) is his affair with her cousin, Diane Salviati. (According to Honneyman they were "very similar in appearance.")

The rest of the argument proceeds in a similar fashion. The frequent characterizations of the Fair Friend as "crowned" (Sonnets 37 and 114), "sovereign" (57), "king" (63, 87), etc. reveal that he is of royal blood. The "sun" and "lilies" metaphors point to Henry of Navarre because the sun was the main feature of his mother's coat of arms and the lily was the emblem of the Bourbons, his father's family. The Fair Friend's "errors" in Sonnet 96 refer to Henry's reputation as a womanizer.

Margaret of Valois was known for dark and seductive eyes, loose morals, unreliability, and "intransigent Catholicism," and thus meets Honneyman's requirements for the Dark Lady. On the basis of other references in French poetry of the time, she is also identified with the "pearl" of Sonnet 34 and the "mortal moon" of 107.

Nailing down the Rival Poet is a little harder, but since Guillaume du Bartas was an "official Court poet" at Nerac, and was older and more renowned than d'Aubigné, Honneyman identifies him with the "worthierpen" and "better spirit," of Sonnets 79 and 80. Du Bartas was of such value to the crown that he was given a pension of 440 livres a year in 1580.

On top of this shaky structure Honneyman places his final supposition—that Shakespeare somehow gained access to a manuscript copy of d'Aubigné's "Ur-Sonnets," and recomposed them as a literary exercise. This manuscript is unfortunately now lost, and Honneyman admits was most likely never published. The last two Sonnets, 153 and 154, which have been shown to be direct adaptations of a Greek epigram, are explained by the fact that d'Aubigné was "a considerable Greek scholar" and as a student resided in Geneva, where an edition of the Greek Anthology was published. As for the "Will" Sonnets, 134 and 136, these must have been original with Shakespeare, or "much adapted."

Along the way, Honneyman provides

us with a new solution to the "W.H." initials in the dedication. By a tortuous process involving a diagonal misreading of a calligraphic doodle, the initials "N.H." (Henry of Navarre) somehow became "W.H."

According to Honneyman, it was his investigation of *Love's Labour's Lost* and its stylistic associations with the Sonnets that led him to develop his Navarre Hypothesis for the "Sonnet people." The same reasoning that conjured up the "Ur-Sonnets" imagined a French predecessor to *LLL* that featured the same Henry and Margaret, and a cast of characters from the French court. This play is also lost. The Hypothesis extends to "A Lover's Complaint" and "The Phoenix and Turtle," which Honneyman also explains as translations of poems by d'Aubigné about Henry and Margaret.

Although Honneyman's Navarre Hypothesis is woefully short on evidence, Oxfordians might find it provocative because it trades on the obvious familiarity with French royal circles and the Court of Navarre displayed by the writer of the Shakespeare plays. While Honneyman dismisses the Oxford argument (in an earlier book, *Closer to Shakespeare*, 1990), one wonders if his research into the Navarre connection led him to the facts that Edward de Vere was well acquainted with the leading figures of contemporary France, and had even visited the Court of Navarre.

Shakespeare's Sonnets and the Court of Navarre is another example of the tunnel vision of orthodox scholars who try to account for the hidden meaning of the *Sonnets* and their total remoteness from the man they think wrote the plays. If the two cannot be reconciled, what better way to account for the *Sonnets*' obvious autobiographical content than to acknowledge it, and then attribute it to someone else? But in strange way the Navarre Hypothesis tends to support the Oxford argument. Edward de Vere's interest in and debt to French poetry is well known. And if, in a fantasy world, *Shakespeare's Sonnets* were, indeed, written in French about figures in a French court, who but Edward de Vere would have been most likely to have had access to them, have known the principals, and have translated or "recomposed" them for an English reader?

Symptoms of Culture, by Marjorie Garber (New York: Routledge, 1998).

By Richard F. Whalen

Sigmund Freud's decision to get into bed with Oxford masquerading as Shakespeare comes under analysis in the latest book by Professor Marjorie Garber of Harvard University.

Garber, a professor of literary and cultural studies, is no stranger to the Oxfordian proposition. In *Shakespeare's Ghost Writers* (1987) she declared that she takes the authorship question seriously. She does so, however, not so much to answer the question as to explore the significance of the debate. She has read widely in Oxfordian literature, defines the issue fairly and rarely makes a mistake. Her contribution to the April *Harper's Magazine* section (reviewed on page four in this newsletter) can be accepted by Oxfordians, even though she is ranked on the Stratfordian side.

In her latest book she uses the probes and scalpels of modern literary criticism to dissect contemporary cultural phenomena. She deconstructs texts, spots over-determined Freudian symbols, discloses unintended ironies and diagnoses cultural anxieties. Baseball, Jell-O, Anita Hill, Madeleine Albright, and various movies figure in her analyses. A Shakespeare lecturer at Harvard, she often refers to his work in her writings.

At one point she astutely observes how Shakespeare has been "fetishized" by politicians and others who quote him out of context to support their views without realizing he was exposing the hypocrisy of the sentiment. She cites Polonius's advice to his son, "Neither a borrower nor a lender be..." Iago's "Who steals my purse..." and "What's past is prologue..." from *The Tempest*.

One of her chapters is entitled simply "Second-Best Bed," and everyone knows whose bed that is. Garber, however, finds links with Lincoln's bed in the White House twin beds in Hollywood movies, Plato's ideal bed, and inevitably Hamlet's mother's bed and Freud's couch. The operative line is the Ghost-King's in *Hamlet*: "Let not the royal bed of Denmark be/A couch for luxury and damned incest." Bed and couch.

Garber suggests a clever parallel and reversal. Just as Freud revised his theory of the incestuous seduction of a child by a parent, he revised his opinion about the identity of Shakespeare. The parental se-

(Continued on page 23)

Updates on Society, Conference

In our last newsletter we reported briefly on the serious financial situation that came out of the 22nd Annual Conference held in San Francisco last November. We had hoped that by the publication of the Spring issue we would have further news to report on this matter, but unfortunately we do not.

The \$20,000 debt remains, and efforts are continuing to find a solution. Other Society news that would normally have been reported in the last issue, including our annual financial report, were also deferred in the hopes of having this situation resolved.

The results of the Board election on November 14th were the re-election of Charles Boyle, William Boyle, Randall Sherman and Elliott Stone to new 3-year terms. Elisabeth Sears was nominated from the floor and finished fifth in the voting.

Since the election, however, there have been several major changes on the Board. In addition to Randall Sherman's resignation last December, trustees Charles Burford and Grant Gifford have also resigned their Board seats.

At its April 23rd, 1999 meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the Board decided against appointing any new interim Board members and instead charged Nominations Committee Chairman Daniel Wright to search out the best possible slate of new Board candidates possible—looking especially for those who have never served before, and for a broad range of experience, gender and residences around the country.

The complete 1999 slate is:

New Board Candidates:

Dr. Jack Shuttleworth (Colorado)
Dr. Ren Draya (Illinois)
Mr. Robert Barrett (Washington)
Ms. Susan Sybersma (Canada)
Ms. Gerit Quealy (New York)

For re-election to another 3-year term:

Mr. Timothy Holcomb (Massachusetts)
Mr. Aaron Tatum (Tennessee)

Ballots, proxies and candidate biographies will be mailed to all current members this summer.

One other significant event that took place at the Board's April meeting was the establishment of a committee to review how

Board members are nominated and elected. This action is the first step in the Board's commitment to institute major changes in how the Society is governed. There will be more on this in our next issue, and at the conference this fall.

On the other matter of most interest to us all—the budget—we are pleased to report that, leaving aside last year's conference debt, the Society experienced a reasonably good financial year, with a slight surplus (\$314.00) in its 1998 operating budget.

While member dues for the year were \$18,216, down 4.4% from 1997's \$19,071, it was the third year in a row that dues have exceeded \$18,000. So far in 1999 we are running about 10-12% ahead of last year in dues revenues and new members, due in large part to the *Harper's Magazine* publicity and greatly increased traffic on our Internet Home Page.

Conference schedule takes shape

Plans for the 23rd Annual Conference are proceeding apace. One of the major events now firmly in place will be a panel discussion on "Shakespeare and Religion," to be held Thursday evening, November 11th, at Boston College, in cooperation with Father Ronald Tacelli and the St. Thomas More Society at BC.

Several BC faculty members who have recently written on the topic of Shakespeare's religion and on his religion as it relates to Elizabethan politics have been invited to participate on the panel. As of late June participation by those invited had not yet been confirmed.

Representing the Oxfordian side will be Dr. Daniel Wright (author of *The Anglican Shakespeare*), Peter Dickson (whose recent newsletter articles have focused on the Anglican-Puritan-Catholic political issues surrounding the *First Folio* publication), and Roger Stritmatter (expert on Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible and how its marked passages correspond with Shakespeare's writing in his plays and poems).

Those interested in presenting papers this year should contact Dr. Charles Berney at (617) 926-4552.

The conference hotel is the Boston Newton Marriott. Room rates for Thursday through Saturday evening (November 11th to 13th) are \$119/night, single or double. Phone 617-969-1000 to make reservations.

Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

Published quarterly by the
Shakespeare Oxford Society
P.O. Box 263
Somerville, MA. 02143

ISSN 1525-6863

Editor: William Boyle

Editorial Board:

Mark Anderson, Charles Boyle,
Stephanie Hughes, Elisabeth Sears

Phone: (617) 628-3411

Phone/Fax: (617) 628-4258

email: everreader@aol.com

All contents copyright ©1999
Shakespeare Oxford Society

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

Board of Trustees Shakespeare Oxford Society

Lifetime Honorary Trustees:

Dr. Gordon Cyr

1998-1999 Board of Trustees

President
Aaron Tatum

First Vice-President
Charles Boyle

Recording Secretary
Katherine Chiljan

Membership/Treasurer
William Boyle

Dr. Lydia Bronte
Timothy Holcomb
Walter Hurst
Michael Forster Pisapia
Elliott Stone
Dr. Daniel L. Wright

From the Editor:

The Invisible Men

There is a moment in *Twelfth Night* when Feste remarks to Viola, "I would it would make you invisible." (III,i)

When Charles Boyle was directing several different productions of this play in the early 1990s in Boston he was struck by this line, and several times struggled with actors playing Feste to get them to give the reading that he considered to be just right, i.e. that Feste (a.k.a. the author Shakespeare/Oxford) was perhaps commenting sardonically on his role as an "invisible" playwright.

Therefore, Charles would carefully explain to the actor, the line should be read with an emphasis on "you," (i.e. "...make *you* invisible"—as opposed to me, Feste, the invisible playwright). It's the sort of moment and reading of Shakespeare that only an Oxfordian could appreciate, or even conceive of.

And now, thanks to the further efforts of researcher Peter Dickson, it seems safe to say that invisibility was not just a problem for the play-writing 17th Earl of Oxford in the late 16th century.

As reported on pages eight and nine in this issue Dickson has uncovered some significant historical facts about the 18th Earl of Oxford (Henry de Vere) and his close companion the 3rd Earl of Southampton (Henry Wriothesley) and the crucial roles they played in Jacobean history, especially in the major political showdown during the final years of the reign of King James.

Yet perhaps the most significant fact he has encountered is how selectively late 20th century British historians have been treating this period. It seems that invisibility can be a way of life when it comes to the historical record of anything that touches upon the Shakespeare authorship story. Clearly the authorship story has become even more of a taboo subject than ever before, with the historical record about the "two most noble Henries"—Oxford and Southampton—now having fallen under that region cloud of "official" history.

As Dickson reports in his article, two books that had been crucial to his earlier

research—S.J. Houston's *James I* (1973) and Roger Lockyer's *Buckingham* (1981)—had either been reissued (a 1995 second edition of Houston's book), or the author has written a related book (Lockyer's 1996 biography on James) in the 1990s.

So he eagerly turned to them to see what new facts and insights may have been added. What he found, however, was that certain critical facts and names—namely Oxford and Southampton—had actually disappeared! In his subsequent research into the spate of recent biographies of James (a total of eleven since 1988), the same pattern emerged: no Oxford, no Southampton.

We originally had this story in our last issue, but only as a brief news note. We decided at the last moment, in consultation with Dickson, that it merited much more attention—and Dickson also felt he needed more time to continue to review the historical record, especially how all the recent biographies of King James were treating the early 1620s, the Marriage Crisis, the two Earls and the *First Folio*.

As Dickson emphasizes in his article, the clear pattern of "no Oxford, no Southampton" that he found is incredible, and the more one thinks on it, the more incredible it becomes. "Disappearing" these two Earls from this critical period of Jacobean history reeks of a deliberate plan of action, and one can only conclude from it that our history lesson for the day is "out of sight, out of mind."

There are many Oxfordians who have argued for years that the authorship story is a political story above all else, and has great repercussions in the power centers of England. It is undoubtedly regarded as an extremely sensitive issue within the Establishment because it affects not only the nation's premier cultural icon, but also because it has serious political implications for the Crown. And now, Oxfordians—and the world at large—have clear evidence of the suppression of evidence to protect those interests.

One can't help but think that this obscure but undeniable pattern discovered by Dickson will add more fuel to the political fire already surrounding the authorship debate.

Letters:

To the Editor:

Henry Peacham's works have recently (*Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*, no.3, Fall 1998 and no.4, Winter 1999, and *The Washington Post*, Sunday, January 24, 1999) been taken into consideration as evidence of the fact that at the end of the 16th and in the first decades of the 17th century William Shakespeare (or Shaksper) from Stratford was not known as a poet or playwright. Actually, Peacham does not even mention him.

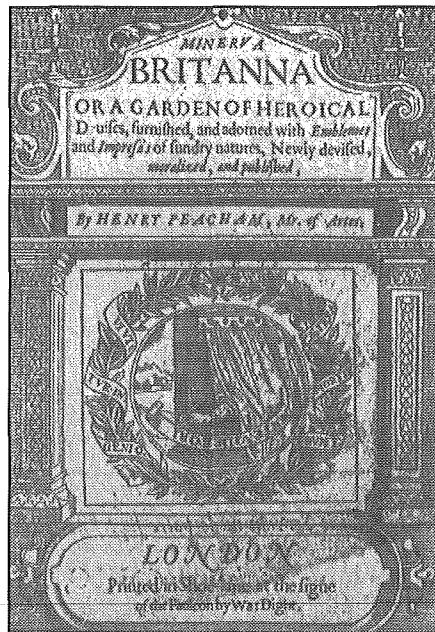
In particular [these stories have featured] the front-page of *Minerva Britanna* (1612) with its peculiar picture—a hand stretching out from behind a theatre curtain—and with its Latin mottoes—the latter still being a source of misinterpretation—[seeming] to refer to a dramatist's concealed identity. This is an allusion which some Oxfordians—not without reason—[believe] refers to Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. My purpose in writing is to give the reading and the translation [of these mottoes] so as to clarify their meanings.

On the top of the *Minerva Britanna* front-page, between two burning candles—one on the left corner, the other on the right corner—reads the following inscription:

UT ALIJS ME CONSUMO

The literal translation is: "I consume myself for the others in a similar way" (with *ut* translated as "likewise" and *alijs* (plural dative case) translated as "for the others").

In other words, "In the same way as these candles burn out giving light to others I do burn myself out giving other people the light of my knowledge and learning." This may fit de Vere's liberality in sharing his



knowledge with, and lavishing his fortunes on, fellow dramatists and writers.

Further down on the page two scrolls are wound around a wreath. The one on the left reads as follows:

VIVITUR INGENIO

The two words are separated by an interpunct as used in Latin inscriptions from Roman throughout Renaissance time and onwards. The double hyphen shows that

vivitur is one word, and so is *ingenio*.

Literally, they translate as: "One lives by means of his genius." That is, "One remains alive in the memory of posterity by means of what his genius has produced; only genius, i.e. one's works, remains [after death]."

Vivitur is a passive verb form, third person singular of the present tense indicative of *vivere* "live"; it takes no subject because it has impersonal meaning. *Ingenio* is instrumental ablative case, implying "by means of," also "because of."

The concept of immortality acquired through the greatness of the works is completed by the inscription on the right scroll:

CAETERA MORTIS ERUNT

Literally, these words translate together as: "The rest will be Death's."

Caetera, "all the other things, all the rest," is neuter plural nominative case. *Mortis* is genitive case, expressing possession: "of Death." *Erunt*, "will be," is the future simple indicative of the verb *esse* "be," third person plural.

In other words: "all the rest will belong to Death; everything else will be destroyed by Death, except genius; only the great works will survive, will be immortal."

This concept is reinforced by the motto written by the hand on the scroll in the oval picture of the theatre curtain:

MENTE VIDEBOR

Literally, this is: "I will be seen in the mind," that is, "I will be seen only in the mind's eyes, with the use of imagination, with the power of thought."

This is said by, or referred to, someone who wants to remain in concealment. *Mente* is instrumental ablative case: "by means of the mind." *Videbor* is the passive verb form of the verb *videre* "see," future simple indicative, first person singular.

Closer inspection of the word *videbor* [as written on the title page] clearly shows that what seems to be an 'I' written by the hand at the end of the word is nothing but the quill's point. The hand is simply placing an interpunct at the end of the motto. The verb *videbor* is complete in itself: no letter is missing. (A motto, in spite of its conciseness and possible obscurity, always ex-

(*Letters continued* • on page 22)

Subscriptions to the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* are included in membership dues in the Shakespeare Oxford Society, which are \$35 a year, or \$50 a year for a sustaining membership. Dues are \$15 a year for students and teachers. Dues and requests for membership should be sent to:

Shakespeare Oxford Society
P.O. Box 263
Somerville, MA 02143
Phone: (617)628-3411
Phone/Fax: (617)628-4258

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. Dues, grants and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

IRS No. 13-6103314; New York 07182

Letters (Continued from page 21)
 presses a concept or sentiment or rule of conduct which must be understood at least by its bearer or its addressee; therefore it must be complete in itself. If its meaning should be worked out through the addition of words or part of a word, there follows that it might vary according to not only the reader's imagination but also the various historical, social, literary situations of the time. If it were so, the use of a motto would be pointless and lose its own significance.)

In conclusion, on the semantic basis the Latin mottoes with their corroborating visual representation of the theatre curtain might lead to the identification of Lord Oxford. Moreover, the concepts expressed in the inscriptions can rightly be applied to his life: the forbiddance to publish his works under his own name, the concealed identity, immortality reached through the works, the destructive power of Death: these are themes present in all the works of Shakespeare.

Noemi Magri
 Mantova, Italy
 15 May 1999

To the Editor:

Thank you for Charles Boyle's review of my book *Who Were Shakespeare?* in the Fall 1998 issue of the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*.

In *Who Were Shakespeare?* I have tried to document Stratford Will's literacy, early theatrical experience with Oxford's Men (the leading London theatre company when Will arrived in London), Will's theatrical tutelage by Edward de Vere and his circle, and Will's functions as prompter, artistic director and play re-writer at the "Chamberlain's Men" and "King's Men." To denigrate or not carefully consider Stratford Will's place in the "Shakespeare" play-poetry puzzle may hamper efforts to recognize the genius of Edward de Vere. Stratford's Will Shaksper, in London for over 20 years during the presentation of virtually all the "Shakespeare" plays in the *First Folio*, contributed his name to the title pages of the "Shakespeare" plays, and was a sharer/member of the "Chamberlain's Men"/"King's Men," the premier London theatre companies.

The Renaissance (including Elizabethan

England) was a different time for artists and writers. Collaborative effort reigned, "schools of" flourished and freer attitudes toward plagiarism prevailed. "Sir Thomas More," one of the few surviving 16th century playtexts in authorial hand, features the handwriting of six playwright collaborators.

That Edward de Vere was the master, most involved and greatest influence on the "Shakespeare" writings in no way precludes the assistance of those with whom he

surrounded himself, like Lily, Munday and Shaksper. The fact that Edward de Vere chose to conceal his authorship [should] in no way conflict with the premise of the collaborative way in which the "Shakespeare" works were developed.

Ron Allen
 San Diego, California
 18 February 1999

The Blue Boar

Books and Publications

Alias Shakespeare: Solving the Greatest Literary Mystery of All Time. By Joseph Sobran. Item SP7. \$25.00

The Anglican Shakespeare: Elizabethan Orthodoxy in the Great Histories. By Prof. Daniel L. Wright. Item SP11 \$19.95

The De Veres of Castle Hedingham. By Verily Anderson. Item 122. \$35.00

The Elizabethan Review. A Scholarly Oxfordian Journal. Editor: Gary Goldstein. Two issues per year. Item 125 \$35.00 (individuals); \$45.00 (institutional, US); \$55 (overseas).

Freeing Shakespeare's Voice. The Actor's Guide to Talking the Text. By Kristen Linklater. Of special interest is the last chapter, "Whose Voice?", in which Linklater acknowledges her Oxfordian beliefs. Item SP8 \$12.50

A Hawk from a Handsaw. A Student's Guide to the Authorship Debate. By Rollin De Vere. Item SP13 \$12.00

Letters and Poems of Edward, Earl of Oxford. Edited by Katherine Chiljan. A new edition that brings together the poems and the letters with updated notes about original sources, provenance, etc. Item SP22. \$24.00

The Man Who Was Shakespeare. By Charlton

Ogburn, Jr. (94-pp summary of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*) Item SP5 \$5.95

The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality. Revised 2nd Edition. By Charlton Ogburn, Jr. Item 121 \$37.50

Oxford and Byron. By Stephanie Hopkins Hughes. Item SP20. \$8.00

The Relevance of Robert Greene to the Oxfordian Thesis. By Stephanie Hopkins Hughes. Item SP21. \$10.00

"Shakespeare" Identified in Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. By J. Thomas Looney. Paperback facsimile reprint of the 1920 edition. Item SP4. \$20.00

Shakespeare: Who Was He? The Oxford Challenge to the Bard of Avon. By Richard Whalen. Item 123 \$19.95

To Catch the Conscience of the King. Leslie Howard and the 17th Earl of Oxford. By Charles Boyle. Item SP16 \$5.00

Who Were Shakespeare? The ultimate who-dun-it. By Ron Allen. Item SP15 \$14.95

Compact Disc

Her Infinite Variety. Irene Worth and the Women of Shakespeare. Readings of Selected Passages (with music by Arif Mardin). 70 minutes. Item SP10 \$10.00

Name: _____	Item	Price
Address: _____	_____	_____
City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____	_____	_____
Check enclosed: _____ Credit Card: MC _____ Visa _____	Subtotal:	_____
Card number: _____	10% member discount:	_____
Exp. date: _____	Subtotal:	_____
Signature: _____	P&H, books (\$1.00 each):	_____
	P&H (per order):	\$ 2.50
	Grand Total:	_____

Mail to:
Shakespeare Oxford Society, Blue Boar,
PO Box 263, Somerville MA 02143

Anderson (continued from page 5)

responses now and again, even if I disagreed with them.

One two-paragraph missive expresses the author's frustration in cutting through the careerism and to the substance of the matter: "This feud, which has fueled professional hatreds and alliances, given birth to committees and feathered CVs, has precious little to do with the study of 'Shakespeare's' body of work," she asserts. "Both camps take on annoying tones ... the Stratfordian arguments sound like defensive snits, while the Oxfordians invariably come across as smug killjoys. The debate becomes one of personality, and I can't say that I would want to be at a dinner party with any of them."

Another reader points out, "I am convinced the arrangement and inclusion of the papers went a long way to clarifying what at first glance are sufficiently dubious waters. I am wholly delighted to suddenly have a biography and know something of the character of Oxford, who now becomes a very interesting Great Man."

Still another asks for our nominative indulgence: "In contrast to the Stratfordians' circumlocution and dearth of data for the authorial candidacy of William Shak-

speare of Stratford, the evidence put forward in the Oxfordians' articles points to a factually grounded, logically valid theory for the authorship of the Shakespearean canon. But even so, let us never replace 'William Shakespeare' with 'Edward de Vere'; let us duly respect the author's choice of a funky *nom de plume*."

And here, in closing, are three final prophetic salvos from three frustrated readers:

"After reading all the essays it seems as though [Gail Kern] Paster is leading a lost cause, almost as if she were standing alone holding up a crumbling stone wall, yelling 'Hold the fort! Hold the fort!' whilst the remains of this defeated bastion of scholarship lie strewn about her, having fallen long ago."

"The supporters of Oxford offered a mountain of facts; the supporters of Shaksper mostly offered social theory, pseudo psychoanalysis, mischaracterization and bombast. In the long run, facts win. Stratfordians should switch sides in time to survive the harsh judgment of history."

"I gather from your authors that mainline academics are on the whole Stratfordians while journalists and independent writers tend to be Oxfordians. Are we witnessing an actual paradigm shift here?"

Whalen (Continued from page 19)

duction, he had realized, was not always real but more likely a fantasy, a false memory. He decided "in favor of fantasy over history," says Garber.

Freud changed his mind about Shakespeare's identity after reading J. Thomas Looney's book nominating Oxford. He then performed "a very similar act of disavowal," says Garber, "though apparently in the opposite direction (seeming, that is, to choose 'history' over 'fantasy')"—choosing, in fact, the Earl of Oxford over Will Shaksper. And in a summing-up of this subtle thinking she writes: "The family romance of Oxford as the better Shakespeare reverses the pattern of fantasy as the better seduction."

So what does Garber think would happen if some hard evidence were to prove in fact that Oxford wrote Shakespeare? In another chapter, "Shakespeare as Fetish," she implies that she would expect "a massive campaign of disavowal." Coming from one of the leading Shakespeare scholars and one who understands the case for Oxford, that is a dismaying prospect. Meanwhile, to her credit Professor Garber takes the evidence for Oxford seriously, and in this book she recognizes that Freud, himself a literary genius, found Oxford the better Shakespeare.

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.

Memberships in the US and Canada are: Students (\$15/\$25 overseas); Regular (\$35/\$45 overseas); Family/Sustaining (\$50/\$60 overseas). Members receive the quarterly *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* and discounts on books and other merchandise sold through The Blue Boar. Members can also subscribe to our annual journal of research papers, *The Oxfordian*, for just \$10/year (\$20/year overseas). Non-member subscriptions to *The Oxfordian* are \$20/year (\$30/year overseas). Our Home Page on the World Wide Web is located at: <http://www.shakespeare-oxford.com>

We can accept payment by MasterCard or Visa in addition to checks. The Society is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization. Donations and memberships are tax-deductible (IRS no. 13-6105314; New York no. 07182). Clip or xerox this form and mail to: The Shakespeare Oxford Society, PO Box 263, Somerville MA 02143 Phone: (617)628-3411 Fax: (617)628-4258

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Check enclosed _____ or: Credit Card: American Express _____ MasterCard _____ Visa _____

Name exactly as it appears on card: _____

Card No.: _____ Exp. date: _____

Signature _____

Membership:	New _____	Renewal _____
Category:		
Student (\$15/\$25 overseas)	_____	_____
(School: _____)		
Regular (\$35/\$45 overseas)	_____	_____
Sustaining (\$50/\$60 overseas)	_____	_____
Family (\$50/\$60 overseas)	_____	_____
	Subtotal:	_____
	The Oxfordian (\$10/\$20 overseas)	_____
	Total:	_____

Dickson (Continued from page 9)

Sele, who had offended James by resisting the benevolence in 1622. (page 90)

However, Houston in his 1995 edition never gives the reader any sense that Oxford had been imprisoned twice, the second time for twenty months in the Tower.

Lockyer's sanitization of both Oxford and Southampton is harder to detect because it is so total. In his landmark biography, *Buckingham* (1981), he devotes many passages to describing in rich detail the Buckingham versus Oxford-Southampton rivalry and devotes one long passage to describing how King James regarded Oxford as a grave threat to the Crown:

When the Earl of Oxford was imprisoned in the spring of 1622—allegedly for saying, in a drunken moment that he wished the King were dead—it was widely believed that his real offense was crossing the favorite. It was in his house that Elizabeth Norris [Ed. note: Oxford's niece] had taken refuge after escaping the attention of Kit Villiers [Ed. note: Buckingham's brother!], and Oxford refused to hand her over. Worse than this, he was also reported to have told Buckingham that he "hoped there would come a time when justice should be free and would

not pass through his hands only." The imprisonment of Oxford suggested that the King regarded opposition to his favorite as opposition to himself. (page 121)

Yet, when Longman's commissioned Lockyer to prepare a biography for its series called *Profiles in Power* in 1998, Lockyer never once mentions either Oxford or Southampton. The book's index shows only one citation under Southampton, and that's for the Port of Southampton! That's it.

Lockyer (an Emeritus Reader at the University of London) might respond that his James biography was only permitted a little more than 200 pages, and therefore he had to be selective. But this lacks credibility given his exhaustive, detailed discussion of how the King and Buckingham regarded the two Earls as their primary enemies during the Spanish Marriage crisis in his earlier work from 1981.

Furthermore, any awareness of the revival of the Shakespeare authorship dispute in the late 1980s would have made Lockyer quite sensitive to the close timing between the imprisonment of the two Earls and the *First Folio* project. Certainly, unlike many political historians, Lockyer has shown an interest in literature because he collabo-

rated in 1989 to produce an anthology of original source material entitled *Shakespeare's World, Background Readings in the English Renaissance*.

Lockyer and Houston are not alone in their sudden aversion to any extensive discussion of these two Earls, especially Oxford, and their challenge to King James. Nine other biographies of James have appeared since 1988 (see the box on page nine), and while all mention the Spanish marriage crisis, *none* make any mention whatsoever of the roles of Oxford-Southampton in this powerful political drama.

It seems reasonable to conclude that following the revival of the Oxfordian claim in the Shakespeare dispute in late 1984, British historians became quite sensitive to any discussion of the imprisonments of these two Earls in the same time frame when the *First Folio* project got underway. The sudden shift in attitude concerning the two Earls gives strong reason to believe that there is in effect a *de facto* policy of self-censorship to make it more difficult for others to sense the possible negative implications for the Stratfordian position in the ongoing Shakespeare authorship dispute.

©1999, Peter W. Dickson
All Rights Reserved

Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

P. O. Box 263
Somerville MA 02143

Address correction requested

U.S. Postage
PAID
Boston MA
Permit No. 53235
Bulk Rate

Moment of Truth...: pages 1, 4-5

Shakespeare's King John: pages 1, 13-15

Shakespeare's invention—the royal story of The Sonnets: page 2

3rd Annual Edward de Vere Studies Conference: pages 6-7

Are British historians re-writing Jacobean history?: pages 8-9

Oxford and the play Palamon and Arcite: pages 10-13

Oxfordian News: pages 16-17

Book Reviews: pages 18-19

Minerva Britannia - mottoes translated: page 21