



# The Shakespeare OXFORD Newsletter



Vol. 41: No. 4 "At Christmas I no more desire a rose / Than wish a snow in May's new-fangled shows" *Love's Labour's Lost* I, i.

Fall 2005

## Shakespeare Authorship Conference in Ashland, Oregon

### Oregon Shakespeare Festival Welcomes Oxfordians

Members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society and the Shakespeare Fellowship gathered at the Ashland Springs Hotel in Ashland, Oregon from September 29 through October 2 for their first joint conference, and their first meeting in conjunction with the world-renowned Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Over ninety members and guests of both organizations attended Shakespeare plays and toured the backstage rooms of the OSF complex, while Festival actors and staff attended and participated in conference presentations.

Besides superb performances of *Richard III* and *Twelfth Night*, conference attendees were treated to more than two dozen scholarly papers, several performances of Renaissance music, two panel discussions with OSF actors, a book-signing, a visit from Charles Dickens, and a stimulating round of "Oxfordian Jeopardy."

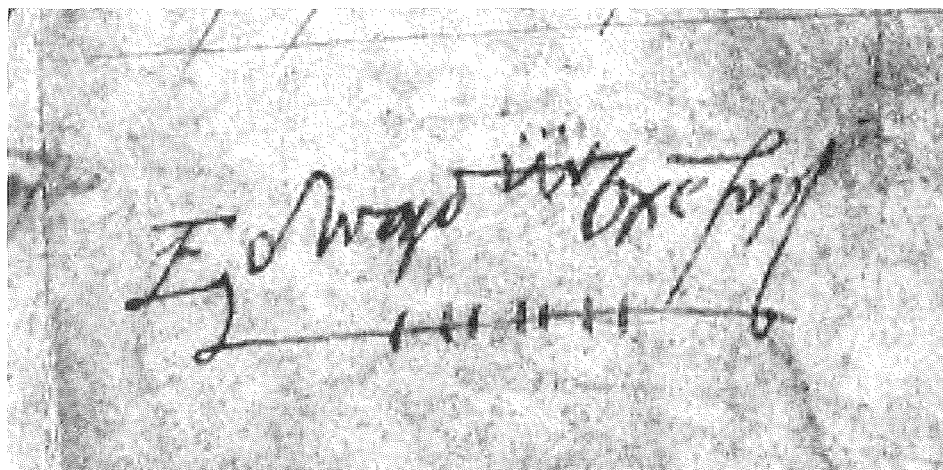
(cont'd on p. 14)

## The Earl of Oxford's Annuity to Robert Hales Queen's Favored Musician First Patronized by Oxford

By Katherine Chiljan

A document signed by Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, has recently surfaced that adds even more credit to him as a patron of the arts, and augments the biography of one of Queen Elizabeth's favorite musicians. The sixteenth century document was part of a collection of over four hundred autograph manuscripts auctioned in 2004, including those of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, Henry VIII, Lord Burghley, Napoleon, Darwin,

is identified as a gentleman and Oxford's servant. The document also specifies that if the tenant did not pay his rent on time, Hales could occupy the property until it was paid.<sup>2</sup> The auction catalogue provided no information about Robert Hales, but in it Oxford is described as "a pathologically extravagant and violent character" and is said to have plotted the murder of Philip Sidney. Oxford is also mentioned as a candidate for the Shakespeare authorship.



The Earl of Oxford's signature on Hales annuity document

and Charles Dickens. Started in the early nineteenth century by Davies Giddy, the collection "seems to have reached its final form by about 1900," and remained intact until last year.<sup>1</sup>

The document comprises three hundred Latin words and records a £20 annuity granted by Oxford to Robert Hales. Dated March 10, 1579 (1580 new style), the text says that Oxford affixed his seal to the document, but it has not survived. (See full text on p. 3) In the second sentence, Oxford assigns the annual rent from one of his Essex properties (unnamed) to Hales, who

For what service was the annuity granted? Robert Hales has no other known association with Oxford. According to the document, Hales was Oxford's servant before the annuity was granted, for "the good and faithful service to me before this given by Robert Hales." The wording implies that this service was rendered for at least a year before March 1580. Hales was not named in Oxford's extensive list of creditors and annuity holders compiled immediately before his grand tour of Europe,<sup>3</sup> implying that he served Oxford after April 1576, when Oxford returned.

(cont'd on p. 5)

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## Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

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

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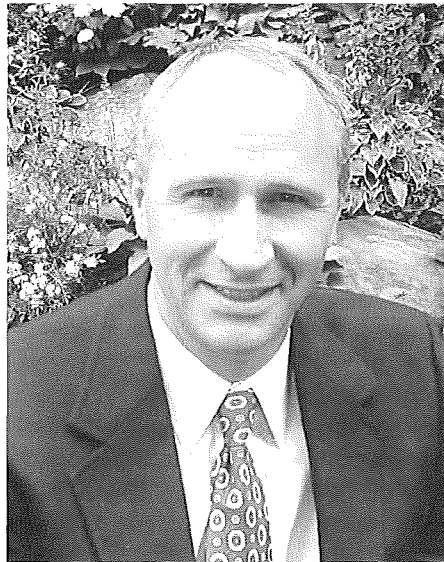
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## President's Page



*Matthew Cossolotto*

This is my first message to you as president of the Society. I first want to thank my friend and immediate predecessor, James "Jaz" Sherwood, for his strong leadership over the course of the past year. Jaz's vision provided the impetus for us to join forces with the Shakespeare Fellowship in sponsoring the successful joint conference in Ashland, Oregon, in 2005. Jaz will continue serving on the Board and I look forward to receiving the benefit of his advice and guidance during my term in office.

I also want to take a moment to thank the SF leaders who served on the Ashland conference committee—Lynne Kositsky, former president of the SF, Roger Stritmatter, and especially Earl Showerman (dubbed the "First Earl of Ashland")—for making the joint conference such a success for both societies. Although it is still early in the planning process, we hope and expect that 2006 will see another joint conference between the SOS and the SF. Stay tuned for more news about the 2006 conference in the next several months.

Several important developments are now underway within your society. I want to share some news about specific projects your Board is now undertaking to revitalize the society. I also want to share some preliminary ideas about possible new directions—proposals could have far-reaching implications both for the society itself and on the authorship debate more generally. I encourage all SOS members to share your

thoughts, ideas and concerns with me and other Board members. We want to hear from you about ways to enhance the society's effectiveness in awakening key audiences to the authorship issue generally and the case for Oxford specifically. I invite all members to contact me personally by phone (914-245-9721) or via email ([matthew@ovations.com](mailto:matthew@ovations.com)).

While I'm on the topic of email, I'd like to ask all members who use email to send me their email address. Now and then, we may want to send out timely information about breaking news developments. With faster communications, perhaps members could be mobilized in their local communities to write letters to the editor, speak to local schools, or even be interviewed on local TV and talk radio programs. There is a great deal that members can do locally to spread the society's message, but we need better communications for that to happen.

## Specific Projects Now Underway or Being Considered

- Pursuant to the resolution passed at our general meeting in Ashland, the Board has created a Library Task Force to explore what to do with the SOS Library now being housed at our main office in Silver Spring, Maryland. The Task Force is currently exploring options and will present recommendations to the Board in the coming months. I'll keep the membership apprised of developments with regard to the library.

- We are reviewing options for upgrading the design and functionality of our website. One goal is to include additional features that will benefit members directly, such as a Members Only section containing electronic versions of articles, a discussion board, and even contact information so members will know who else belongs to the society. As a general rule, we'd like to see interactive features added so members can exchange ideas with the Board and with one another. The website project is a work-in-progress at the moment. More news will be forthcoming on this topic in the first part of 2006.

- We're exploring the possibility for establishing an organizational presence in

*(cont'd on p. 29)*

# Who Was *Emaricdulfe*'s "E. C. Esquire"?

By Derran Charlton

The following initial report on the results of my recent research offers new indications that Edward de Vere is the author of the *Emaricdulfe* sonnets published in 1595 under the cryptic pseudonym "E. C. Esquire."

Others have advanced the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford as the author of the *Emaricdulfe* sonnets. Joseph Sobran discussed in detail these sonnets, noting their strong resemblance to various passages in the Shakespeare's works. Professors Michael Brame and Galina Popova have also analyzed the sonnets in *Shakespeare's Fingerprints* where they say:

There can be little doubt that *Emaricdulfe* was written by the same genius that created Shakespeare's sonnets, and whatever doubt remains is dispelled by the patterned syntactic congruence found in the *Emaricdulfe* sonnets. (282)

I must partly disagree with the above authors' claims, as well expressed as they are. Several of the lines of *Emaricdulfe* are, to me, quite un-Shakespearean. For example, double endings, repetitive wording, pedestrian language, rusty imagery, clumsy rhythm appear in these lines:

Why I do plead for mercy unto thee,  
When from offense my life and soul are clear?  
For in my heart I ne'er offended thee,  
Unless the high pitch of his flight it were.

Other instances could be given. Similar brief examples, however, appear in the works of Shakespeare as well.

During recent Oxfordian research at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, I read what is apparently the only extant copy of *Pasquils Fooles-cap*, *Sent to Such (to keepe their weake braines warme) as are not able to conceive aright of his Mad-cap*, With *Pasquils Passion for the worlds waywardnesse*, Begun by himselfe, and finished by his Friend MORPHORIUS. Imprinted at London, for Thomas Iohnes, dwelling neer Holborne Conduit. 1600.

Most remarkably, *Pasquils Fooles-cap* was dedicated by "N.B." to:

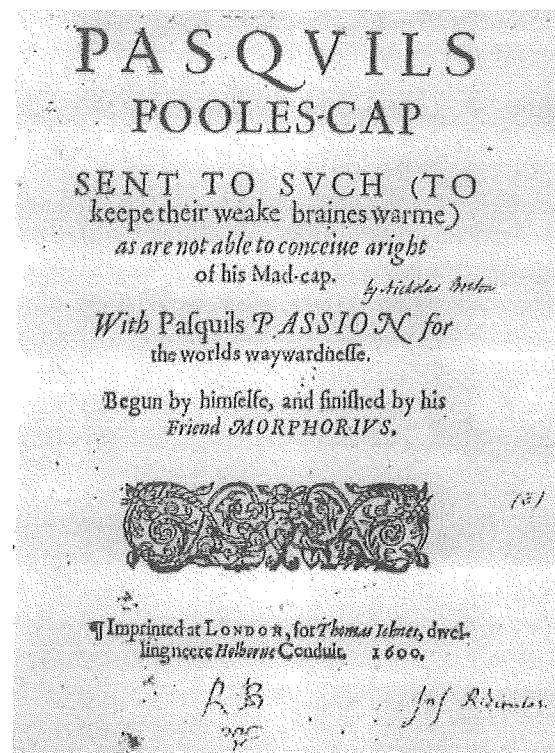
TO MY VERY GOOD  
friende, Master Edward Conquest,  
as much happinesse from Hea-  
uen, as his worthy heart can wish.

Sir, to forget your undeserved kindnesse, were a note out of my nature: & yet how kindly to requite it, is many notes about my ability. But as a lame man, that strives to goe, shewes hee would runne, if hee had legges; so, in the humour of my good will, imagin a Desire of a greater matter. But leaving these complements, and to come to my purpose; as I haue found you a kinde Spectator of my Labours, so let mee entreat you, at my hands to accept this treatise, with a follish title.

Where, if Wit had plaid the Wagge, let him not haue his name for nothing: and where you finde a head fit for this Cappe, either bestowe it upon him in charity, or send him where he may haue them for his money. I know you are acquainted with many that well deserue it: whome, least they should be mistaken for better men, I pray you giue them the Cappe for their Cognisaunce. And so, hoping that your discretion will beare with my imperfection, to finde no better worke, to giue notice of my good will; I rest, with much thankfulness, in more Affection than Protestation.

(signed): Yours assured, to command  
N.B.

Also, while at the Bodleian, I noted that the dedicatory epistle of *Pasquil's Mistresse, or the Worthie and Unworthie Woman*, with his description *Passion of that Furie, Jealousie* (1600), was signed "Salocin Treboun" which is a nearly exact anagram of Nicholas Breton—"Nicholas" spelled backwards, with a play on Breton. Likewise, the dedication to *Pasquils Passe and Passeth Not, set downe in three pees, his Passe, Precession, and Prognostication*, London, 1600, was initialed "N.B." I have been unable to find any written references to these epistles, and Elizabeth Appleton does not refer to them.



Nicholas Breton's *Pasquil's Fooles-Cap*  
was dedicated to "Edward Conquest"

(cont'd on p. 4)

"E.C. Esquire" (cont'd from p. 3)

Who are "Pasquil," "Morphorius," and "Edward Conquest"? Pasquil has been associated with Oxford in the so-called "war of words" in the Marprelate controversy that occurred in England in 1588-96. He has also been referred to, elsewhere, as "Gentle Master William," "William Monox," "Eduardo Donati," "Pierce Pennillesse," "Master Apis Lapis," and "Don Christo Vary." Elizabeth Appleton, in her book, *Edward de Vere and the War of Words*, stated that "Pasquil of England," "Cavaliero," "Don Richardo Barbarossa de Caesario," and "Old Dick of Litchfield" were all most probably pseudonyms of, or references to, Edward de Vere (7, 9, 11, 31, 36). Appleton describes Marprelate:

As for Pasquil's opponent, Martin Marprelate, this writer's identity has been much conjectured. He was variously held to be Cartwright, Penry, Wiggenton, Udall, Paget (all Puritans) among several others. In 1966 a good case was made for Penry being Martin Marprelate. However, his opponents may now be seen to have secretly identified him. He is found to have been no other than that extraordinary and ubiquitous scholar, one Dr. Gabriel Harvey, the former companion of Lyly and Oxford. (9)

Morphorius is also connected to the Pasquil anti-Marprelate pamphlets. Elizabeth Appleton identifies Morphorius as Thomas Nashe (1567-1601), the dramatist and satirist (9).

Nashe's first published work was a preface to *Menaphon* (1589) by Robert Greene. The preface, in the form of a letter "to the Gentlemen Students of both Universities," criticized actors and illiterate dramatists, such as Kyd, while praising Peele. Nashe lived through his writing, serving various patrons including Lord Strange, Sir George Carey (Lord Hunsdon) and Archbishop Whitgift. He wrote such satirical pamphlets as *Pierce Pennillesse* (1592) and was employed by Whitgift to write tracts against Martin Marprelate. In this activity he was associated with Lyly (of Edward de Vere's household), and as a result, he quarreled with Gabriel Harvey, answering Harvey's charge of plagiarism in *Have With You to Saf-fion Walden* (1596). The pamphlet war between Nashe and Harvey became so scurrilous that in 1599 they were banned from writing further polemics. Nashe's prose works include one of the early English novels of adventure, *The Unfortunate Traveller* of 1594. He wrote a comedy, *Summer's Last Will and Testament* (1592), which mixes allegory, topical satire, and clowning. It also contains his two famous poems, "Spring, the sweet Spring" and "Adieu, farewell earth's bliss." Nashe's only other extant dramatic work is his share (whatever it may be) in Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage* published in 1594. In 1597 he and Ben Jonson collaborated on the now lost satirical comedy, *Isle of Dogs*. This appears to have had attacks on Russia and Poland that were reckoned bad for trade (Palmer and Palmer 174).

Turning now to Edward Conquest, the dedicatee of *Pasquil's Fooles-cap*, I note (see illustration, page 3) that someone has written "by Nicholas Breton" just below the title on the frontispiece. Independently of whether or not Breton had anything to do with writing the pamphlet, this annotation combined with the anagram of his name and his initials on the other two Pasquil pamphlets of 1600 I examined, we can be reasonably certain that Breton wrote

the dedication to *Pasquil's Fooles-cap*.

The poet and essayist, Nicholas Breton (1545-1626), was from an old Essex family and was related to Edward de Vere. The chain of relationships is somewhat complicated, running through the poet George Gascoigne. Ruth Loyd Miller describes the relationship of George Gascoigne to Oxford: "Thus by the time *A Hundreth Sundrie Floweres* was published in 1573, Gascoigne and Oxford themselves were in-laws as Oxford had married Anne Cecil in 1571" (39). Anne's father, Sir William Cecil, was the brother-in-law of Sir Nicholas Bacon. In 1568 Gascoigne married Elizabeth Bacon, the grand-sister-in-law of Nicholas Bacon and widow of William Breton (Nicholas Breton's father), who had died in 1559. Thus, Nicholas Breton was a stepson of George Gascoigne.

Nicholas Breton became one of the writers patronized by Mary Herbert, the Countess of Pembroke. His best known lyrics are in *England's Helicon* (1600), and he was the first writer after Sir Thomas Overby to produce essays on characters, a type of work which became very popular. Shared literary interests and family connections suggest it is reasonable to conclude that de Vere and Breton may well have known each other and been friends.

I wish to stress that the dedicatee addressed by the martial name "Edward Conquest" could have been anyone enjoying the not uncommon name of Edward. But, appreciating that the respectful and subservient address was likely written by Nicholas Breton, a very good friend and relation of Edward de Vere, I propose that it was addressed to the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. The Bodleian authorities have confirmed to me that this is the only reference to "Edward Conquest" of which they are aware.

What could have prompted the martial pseudonym, "Conquest?" I suggest that it might have been prompted by Pasquil himself. R.B. McKerrow cites excerpts from other *Pasquil* tracts in which Pasquil discusses "a battle of writings against the Puritans" from which he plans to emerge with his men (Nashe and company) as 'CONQUERORS' in the service of God and the Crown of England (1: 135, 2: 31-36).

I suggest that the previously unrecognized "Edward Conquest" likely was the unknown "E.C. Esquire" whom professors Brame and Popova along with Sobran proposed as being "Shakespeare" and that, in turn, was likely a pseudonym of Edward de Vere. I believe that *Pasquil's Fooles-cap* deserves more careful attention.

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*Annuity to Robert Hales (cont'd from p. 1)*

I propose that the Robert Hales of Oxford's annuity was Robert Hales, the esteemed Elizabethan singer and lute player. It is well-known that Oxford employed musicians. Two existing documents dated 1584-85 were payments to the "Earl of Oxford's musicians" by the cities of Oxford and Barnstaple (Nelson 248). Oxford certainly patronized the great Elizabethan composer and organist, William Byrd. One of Byrd's compositions is titled, "The Earl of Oxford's March," and Oxford's poem, "If women could be fair," was set to music in Byrd's book, *Psalms, Sonnets, and Songs of Sadness and Piety* (1588). Byrd was appointed Gentleman of the Chapel Royal in 1570, and by 1574 was leasing Oxford's property, Battles Hall, so we can assume that by 1574 he had already obtained Oxford's patronage.<sup>4</sup> Oxford brought back with him from Europe (1576) a young Italian singer, Orazio Cagno, who sang for Queen Elizabeth (Nelson 157), and the madrigalist, Henry Lichfield, was described as "one of the Earl of Oxford's men" in a December 1576 document (Nelson 165).

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*... a gentleman in that art  
excellent, and for his  
voice both commendable  
and admirable.*

---

Another madrigalist who served Oxford was John Farmer, who dedicated two collections of musical compositions to him. In the 1591 book, when he was about twenty-one, he wrote: "... all that is in me is dedicated to your Lordship's service." In a second book, *The First Set of English Madrigals* (1599), he wrote:

I have presumed to tender these madrigals only as remembrances of my service and witnesses of your lordship's liberal hand, by which I have so long lived.

Farmer lived in Ireland from 1595 to 1599, so his service to Oxford ended by 1595. It seems unlikely that his "so long" service only comprised four years (1591-95), implying that Oxford's patronage of Farmer began well before 1591. In the 1599 dedication Farmer also confirmed Oxford's love of and proficiency in music when he wrote, "For without flattery be it spoke ... that using this science as a recreation, your lordship has overgone most of them that make it a profession."

Only one month after the Hales annuity, in April 1580, Oxford took over the Earl of Warwick's players at the same time he was sponsoring another acting company consisting of nine boys (Nelson 247). So at the time of the Hales annuity, Oxford was patronizing two acting troupes and soon after, or concurrently (we don't know), a company of musicians. Earlier he had been a patron of Byrd and Lichfield, so an annuity to a musician in 1580 comports with Oxford's activities at the time. For supporting evidence, Queen Elizabeth hired two lutenists in 1580, John Johnson and Matthias

## The Robert Hales Annuity Document

TO ALL THE CHRISTIAN faithful to whom this present writing shall come Edward de Veer Earl of Oxford, Viscount Bulbeck, Lord of Badlesmere and Scales and Lord Great Chamberlain of England Greeting. In the Lord everlasting Know I, the aforesaid Earl, for and in consideration of the good and faithful service to me before this given by Robert Hales, gentleman, my servant, have given granted and by this present my writing confirmed to the same Robert Hales a certain annuity or annual rent of twenty pounds legal money of England every year from the issues and profits of and from all and singular the lands tenements and hereditaments of me and whatsoever with the appurtenances in the county of Essex,

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, to enjoy the use of, and every year to receive and to perceive the said annuity or annual rent of twenty pounds to the aforesaid Robert Hales and his assigns during the natural life of the said Robert, To be paid every year to the said Robert or his assigns during the term aforesaid at the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Michael the Archangel by equal portions.

AND IF IT SHALL COME TO PASS the said annuity or annual rent of twenty pounds to be in arrears not paid in part or in the whole after any feast of the feast aforesaid in which as mentioned previously it ought to have been paid, That thereafter as often and next rightly let it be lawful, and it shall be lawful, the aforesaid Robert and his assigns in the aforesaid lands tenements and hereditaments to enter and to distrain and to distress so the same taken and had lawfully, to carry off, to remove, to drive off, impound, and in respect of himself to retain as long as the aforesaid annuity or annual rent and of all arrears in respect thereof until that payment was in full to him and was satisfied, of which certain annuity or annual rent of twenty pounds, I, the aforesaid Earl, appoint to the aforesaid Robert in full possession and estate by the payment of six pence in the name of seisin. In testimony of which thing, I, the aforesaid Earl, have to this my present writing affixed my seal. Given the tenth day of March in the twenty second year of the reign of our Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God of England, France, and Ireland, Queen, defender of the faith, and so forth, 1579.

*Signature:* Edward Oxenford

Acknowledged before John Gybon in our chancery the twenty eighth day of March in the twenty second year of the reign above written

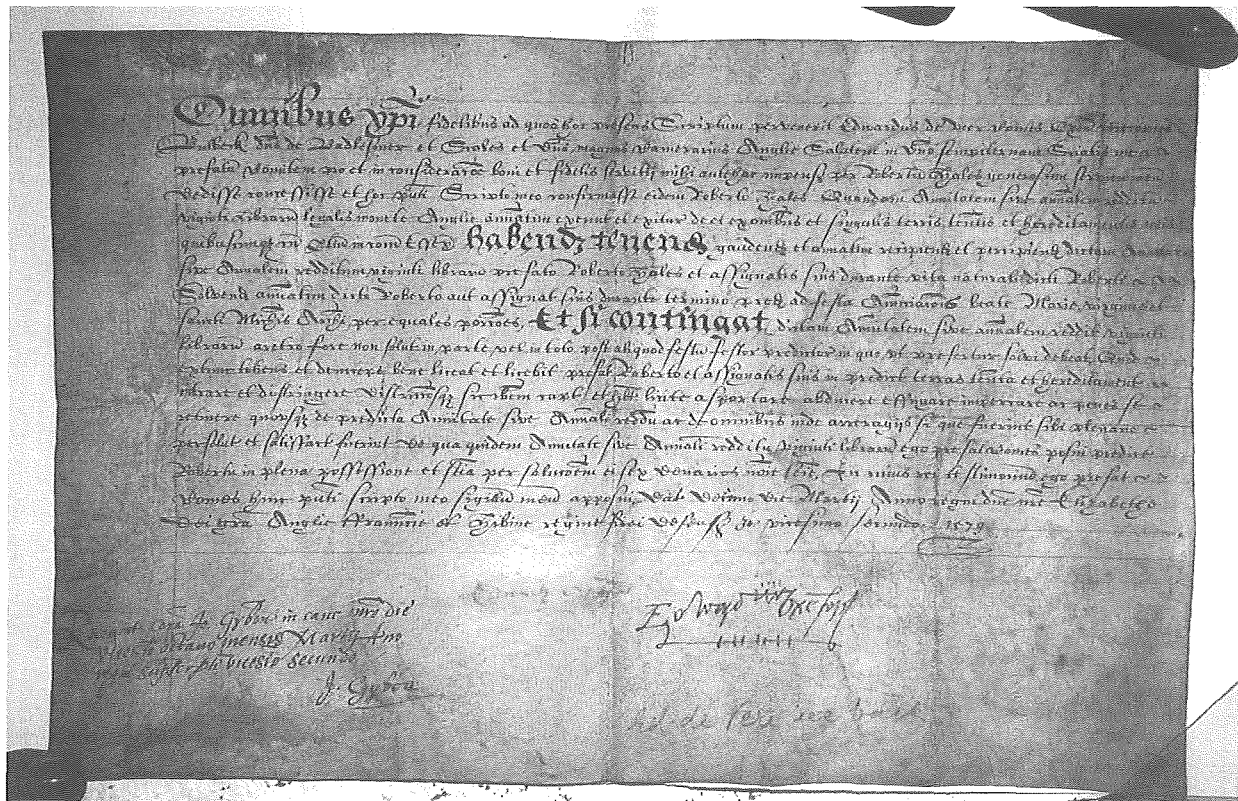
*Signature:* J. Gybon

*translated from the Latin by Duncan Harrington*

*(cont'd on p. 6)*



Annuity to Robert Hales (cont'd from p. 5)



The newly-discovered document recording Oxford's annuity to Robert Hales.

Mason, at £20 per year, the same amount that Oxford paid Hales (Stokes, v. 1, 249).

Moreover, the Robert Hales in the Oxford document is called "gentleman," as was Robert Hales the musician. Sir William Segar wrote of "*Mr Hales*, her majesty's servant, a gentleman in that art excellent, and for his voice both commendable and admirable" (*The Book of Honor and Arms*, 1590; qtd. in Pouton 24-5). "Master" and "gentleman" were status terms not used lightly during this era. Based on the evidence above, one can safely conclude that Oxford's annuity was to this musician.

Before the discovery of this Oxford annuity document, nothing was known of Robert Hales before July 1583, when the Queen hired him as a lute player, with a £40 annuity! (Stokes, v. 1, 251) So only three years after Oxford's £20 annuity to Hales, the Queen apparently snatched him away and doubled his salary. (It is interesting to note that Oxford was banned from the court from June 1581, until June 1583.)

One can infer that the Queen first saw or heard Hales at entertainments provided by the Earl of Oxford. It may have been at the January 1581 jousting tournament in which Oxford competed. Before the tournament "show" was a "pre-show" before the Queen, with music and a speech by one of Oxford's servants about the Knight of the Tree of the Sun, who was Oxford:

From forth this tent came the noble Earl of Oxenford in right gilt armor, and sat down under a great high bay tree, the whole

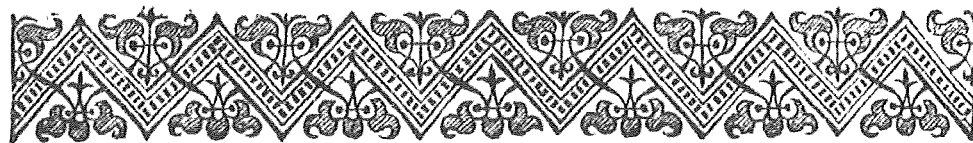
stock, branches and leaves whereof, were all gilded over, that nothing but gold could be discerned. . . . *After a solemn sound of most sweet music*, he mounted on his courser, very richly caparisoned, when his page ascending the stairs *where her Highness stood in the window*, delivered to her by speech this oration following.<sup>5</sup> (Italics added)

We have evidence that Hales sang "My Golden Locks" before the Queen at the retirement of her champion, Sir Henry Lee, at the tilt yard on November 17, 1590 (Ashbee and Lasocki 532).

When the Queen hired Hales, he was the highest paid of her thirty-six musicians. Most of them were paid twelve to sixteen deniers per day (a denier was less than one penny) and only a select few had annuities of £16 and £20. Hales started at £40. It was six years after Hales was hired that the annuity of his fellow lutenist, Matthias Mason, was increased from £20 to £40 (Stokes v. 2, 53). Hales played the lute at the Queen's funeral, and the new King James renewed his annuity until Hales' death in late 1615. Robert Hales was also a songwriter, but his only surviving piece is "O Eyes Leave Off Your Weeping," printed in Robert Dowland's *A Musical Banquet* (1610). Hales also composed music for verses written by courtiers, including the Earl of Essex and Sir Robert Cecil, which were then, according to Sir Henry Wotton, "sung before the Queen . . . by one Hales, in whose voice she took some pleasure" (Poulton 26-7).

(cont'd on p. 7)

Annuity to Robert Hales (cont'd from p. 6)



# Twelfth Night, Or what you will.

## Actus Primus, Scena Prima.

Enter Orsino Duke of Illyria, Curio, and other Lords.

Duke.

**U**F Musicke be the food of Loue, play on,  
Giue me excess of it: that surferetting,  
The appetite may sicken, and so dye.  
That straine agen, it had a dying fall:

O, it came ore my eare, like the sweet sound  
That breathes vpon a banke of Violets;  
Stealing, and giuing Odour. Enough, no more,  
'Tis not so sweet now, as it was before.  
O spirit of Loue, how quicke and fresh art thou,  
That notwithstanding thy capacitie,  
Receiuerth as the Sea. Nought enters there,  
Of what validity, and pitch so ere,  
But falles into abatement, and low price  
Euen in a minute; so full of shap'es is fancie,  
That it alone, is high fantasticall.

Cur. Will you go hunt my Lord?

Du. What Curio?

Cur. The Hart.

Du. Why so I do, the Noblest that I haue:  
O when mine eyes did see *Julia* first,

## Scena Secunda.

Enter Viola, a Captaine, and Sailors.

Vio. What Country (Friends) is this?

Cap. This is Illyria Ladie.

Vio. And what should I do in illyria?

My brother he is in Elizium,  
Perchance he is not drown'd: What thinke you saylors?

Cap. It is perchance that you your selfe were saved.

Vio. O my poore brother, and so perchance may he be.

Cap. True Madam, and to comfort you with chance,  
Assure your selfe, after our ship did split,  
When you, and those poore number saved with you,  
Hung on our driuing boate: I saw your brother  
Most prouident in perill, binde himselfe,  
(Courage and hope both teaching him the practise)  
To a strong Mast, that liu'd vpon the sea:  
Where like *Orion* on the Dolphines backe,  
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waues,  
So long as I could see.

Vio. For saying so, there's Gold:

*The only printed edition of Twelfth Night, from the First Folio (1623), features a double title.*

## Oxford, Hales and Twelfth Night

For Oxfordians, the question naturally arises: did Robert Hales write songs or music for a Shakespeare play, or perform in one? A very good possibility exists that Hales performed in *Twelfth Night*, as there appears to be a connection between this play, Oxford and Hales.

In 1954, Leslie Hotson discovered two manuscripts in the Duke of Northumberland's library, one of which was Lord Chamberlain George Carey's memorandum detailing the preparations for the events of January 6, 1601—Twelfth Day and Night (the twelfth day after Christmas). The Queen had ordered nobility and gentlemen to attend in their finest clothing to impress a visiting Russian ambassador and an Italian duke. A great banquet and dancing were

planned, and the halls sumptuously decorated. After supper, there was a play. According to the manuscript, it should be a

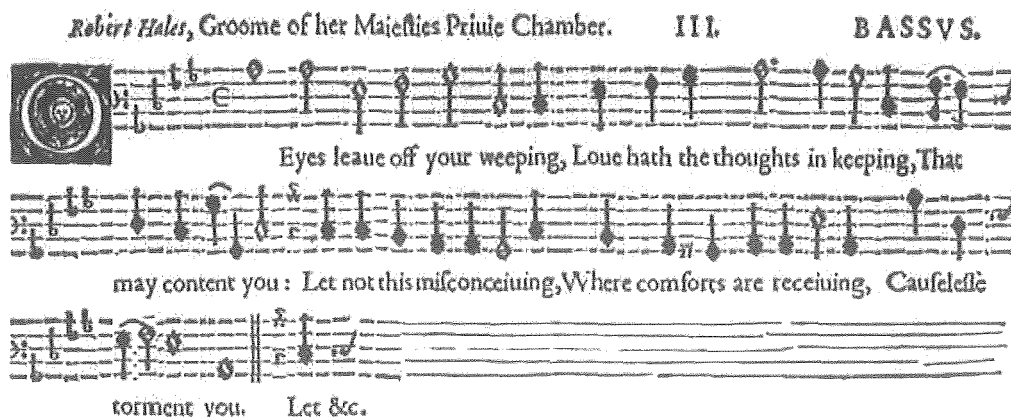
*play that shall be best furnished with rich apparel, have great variety and change of music and dances, and of a subject that may be most pleasing to her Majesty. ... To appoint music severally for the Queen and some for the play in the hall. And Hales to have one place expressly to shew his own voice.*<sup>6</sup> (Italics added)

Hotson concluded that "the play in the hall" was Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and that Robert Hales sang in it (142-3).

The following facts link the Twelfth Night, 1601, performance at court with Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*:

(cont'd on p. 8)

Annuity to Robert Hales (cont'd from p. 7)



The only song attributed to Robert Hales, "O Eyes Leave Off Your Weeping," appeared in Robert Dowland's *A Musical Banquet* (1610).

- Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* features a character named Orsino, Duke of Illyria, and Queen Elizabeth's Italian guest of honor on Twelfth Night was Virginio Orsino, Duke of Bracciano;
- The memorandum requiring a "pleasing play" with "great variety and change of music" fits Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, a comedy that includes no less than five songs. The opening line is about music—"If music be the food of love, play on."
- In a letter to his wife, the Duke of Bracciano confirmed that the Twelfth Night play was a comedy: "there was acted a mingled comedy, with pieces of music and dances." Unfortunately, he neglected to include the comedy's title (Hotson 202).
- *The Shakespeare play makes no reference to Twelfth Night*, nor has it any relevance to Twelfth Night, implying that the title derived from the day it was performed. This would explain why it is the only Shakespeare play with two titles, *Twelfth Night*, or *What You Will*, the latter title probably the earlier one. Samuel Pepys noted this in his diary: "... it be but a silly play, and not related at all to the name or day" (January 6, 1663).

In most Oxfordian timelines, *Twelfth Night* was written c. 1580, coincidentally the time of Oxford's annuity to Hales. In 1732, the antiquary Francis Peck proposed publishing (but apparently never did) "a pleasant conceit of Vere, Earl of Oxford, discontented at the rising of a mean gentleman in the English court circa 1580" (Peck v. 1, 50). The "rising of a mean gentleman" might allude to Christopher Hatton and his knighthood, granted in 1578. Hatton, in love with Queen Elizabeth, was apparently lampooned in *Twelfth Night* as Malvolio, a steward who receives a letter causing him to think his employer, a lady of high status, was in love with him. The letter was signed, "If fortunate unhappy," which was Hatton's poetical signature. Such parodies usually arise at the time the subject is current or relevant; Hatton died in 1591.

It is outside the scope of this paper to prove the true date of *Twelfth Night*,<sup>7</sup> but the play performed on Twelfth Night, 1601, was certainly written well before the Duke of Bracciano's arrival at court because he gave less than two weeks notice that he was coming. If the play were a revised *Twelfth Night*, two weeks was probably just enough time for the playwright to make changes for the occasion, which were obviously added to flatter the visiting Duke.

The awkwardness of Act 2 scene 4 of *Twelfth Night* supports the idea of a hasty revision, and is frequently noted by scholars. Feste is summoned from Olivia's house to sing a certain song for the Duke at his own house. It is awkward because Viola, in disguise as the Duke's "male" servant, had bragged about her excellent singing in the first act (I.ii.57-58), and she was present when the Duke wanted to hear the song in the second act. Yet, in the only version we have of the play, Viola never sings. Presumably, it was her character that

*All the elements are present to support a claim that Oxford attended the Twelfth Night event, that Shakespeare's Twelfth Night was the play performed, that it was an old play altered for the occasion, and that Robert Hales, in a specially assigned place, sang "Come Away, Come Away, Death."*

originally sang the Duke's request for "Come Away, Come Away, Death." But the scene was changed to accommodate the voice of an adult male player (Feste) instead of a boy player in the female role (Viola). Did the Queen request that Hales sing this song? Or did Hales originally play Viola while in Oxford's employ, and in higher voice, and did the character have to change to a man because of his now lower voice?

(cont'd on p. 9)



*Annuity to Robert Hales (cont'd from p. 8)*

We may never know the answer, but the evidence is compelling that Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* was the featured play. Stratfordians frequently note Hotson's find, but still date the play to its first recorded performance at Middle Temple on February 2, 1602, rather than 1601 or earlier. Is this because Shakespeare's presence was not recorded at the Twelfth Night event?

But what about Oxford—was he present? The Lord Chamberlain's memorandum lists those attending the event, but according to Hotson, the page was damaged by fire. Included were: Oxford's countess (Elizabeth Trentham); Oxford's daughter, Elizabeth, Countess of Derby, and her husband, the Earl of Derby; and Oxford's sister, Mary, Baroness Willoughby. Finally, Oxford's nephew, Henry, Baron Windsor, was in attendance, and assisted the Lord Chamberlain, George Carey, with the Russian ambassador, Grigori Mikulin (Hotson 188).

The Earl of Oxford was not named, but neither was the Queen's chief secretary, Sir Robert Cecil, whom the Duke of Bracciano met the day of the event, as he also noted in his letter to his wife (Hotson 198). So evidently the document's list was incomplete. It is a fact that Oxford attended important court events at this time. Two months before the Twelfth Night event, on October 14, 1600, Oxford was present at the first meeting of Mikulin and the Queen on October 14, 1600, less than three months before the Twelfth Night event.<sup>8</sup>

All the elements are present to support a claim that Oxford attended the Twelfth Night event, that Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* was the play performed, that it was an old play altered for the occasion, and that Robert Hales, in a specially assigned place, sang "Come Away, Come Away, Death." Was this performance actually a revival, and a reunion of master playwright with one of his star musicians? Whether the answer is yes or no, the discovery of the Hales annuity document is a big boost to both Oxford's and Hales' prestige—Hales, for being in the service of the Earl of Oxford, and Oxford, as his "discoverer" and first patron.

## Endnotes

1. *The Enys Collection of Autograph Manuscripts*, Bonhams, London, Sept. 28, 2004. Davies Giddy, who later changed his surname to Gilbert, was president of the Royal Society from 1827-29 and died in 1839. His daughter married John Samuel Enys of Enys in Cornwall. It is believed that many of the manuscripts were purchased at auction in the 1890s.
2. John Gybon, master in chancery court, signed off on this document, as he had with at least two other Oxford documents (PRO C 147/187, dated July 20, 1576 and Harvard Law School Deeds 739, dated April 10, 1580). Gybon also witnessed the marriage contract between Edward de Vere and one of the Earl of Huntingdon's daughters (1562), which was never fulfilled (Nelson 29).
3. Essex Records Office, D/DRg2/25, dated Jan. 30, 1575.
4. In 1574, William Byrd took out a 31-year lease on Oxford's property, Battles Hall. Later Byrd agreed to sell the lease to Anthony Luther, but he reneged. A lawsuit followed, and Byrd lost. In what may have been a sign of Oxford's favor, Oxford sold Battles Hall after the judgment to Byrd's brother, John (*The Victoria History of the County of Essex*, London, vol. 4).
5. *Plato, Axiochus* (1592), quoted in Nelson, 262.
6. Hotson 180-1. The Twelfth Night gala has been overshadowed

historically, perhaps because it occurred only a few weeks before the Essex Rebellion.

7. See articles in *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* by Frank Davis (Fall 2002) and William Farina (Winter 2003). Stratfordians cite Barnaby Riche's *Farewell to Military Profession* (1581) as a source for *Twelfth Night*, but it was probably the other way around, dating the play before 1581.

8. Russian ambassador Mikulin's letter to the Tsar mentioned "Earl Oxshard" in the receiving line, among others. Rima Greenhill recently discovered this letter in *Sbornik Imperatorskago Russkago Istoricheskago Obshchestva; the Collections of the Imperial Russian Historical Society*, vol. 38 (1581-1604), ed. K.N. Bestuzhev-Riumin. Liechtenstein 1883. Kraus reprint 1971, p. 328.

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## THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER

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# Music in Shakespeare

By Ron Andrico

Music was integral to theater in Tudor/Stuart England, with many plays containing clear references to well-known ballads and topical songs that the audience would have instantly recognized. Yet identifying music for songs in Shakespeare plays presents an academic challenge, fraught with pitfalls and plentiful opportunities for speculation and misattribution. Most modern theatrical productions of Shakespeare plays use inauthentic music, choosing instead a style that fits with the staging. But passing familiarity with the music of Shakespeare's time and a minor amount of research into original sources can go a long way toward more accurately representing the *effect* of Shakespeare's song texts.

My perspective on the music of Shakespeare plays is both that of a professional musician having had an unplanned concentration in music for the theater, and also as a musicologist seeking contextual validity for music I perform. Since my chosen instrument is the lute, I offer some insights on how the instrument was and was not used in the theater of Shakespeare's time.

This article will touch on the following questions:

- *Who played the music in Shakespeare's plays?*
- *How did the musician approach functional music?*
- *How was music used in the plays?*

Shakespeare's plays were current during one of the most rewarding musical periods for lutenists: the Elizabethan 'Golden Age'. English music circa 1580-1620 reached a stage of refinement equal to that of the best of contemporary literature. It is no wonder, since poetry and music were in fact considered, as Richard Barnfield wrote, the "sister and the brother" (Poem VIII, *The Passionate Pilgrim*, 1599).

At the time, musicians in England had somehow synthesized the best of continental polyphonic vocal and instrumental music and added new dance rhythms from France, as well as embracing the new declamatory vocal style from Italy. The result was evident in the sacred polyphony of William Byrd, the madrigals of Thomas Weelkes, and the ayres and lute solos of John Dowland, known as the English Orpheus.

Music was used abundantly in Elizabethan theatre, with stage directions in the surviving playscripts as the primary documentary evidence. I would like to reluctantly point out that, although its symbolism and aesthetic pervades Elizabethan literature and drama, the lute was most likely used sparingly on stage at outdoor theatres such as the Globe. Notable exceptions (*The Taming of the Shrew*, *Julius Caesar*) but, in such cases, the lute was probably more of a prop than an audible instrument.

## *Who played the music in Shakespeare's plays?*

Music in Tudor England was a functional art and musicians were no more than servants. The Renaissance in Europe occurred

mainly in cities, where artists and musicians were able to foster their art as independent agents. In England, the Renaissance occurred in the household, where artists were dependent, and the arts were more functional and utilitarian. The great lutenist, Philip van Wilder, who enjoyed a continental reputation as a composer of vocal polyphony, was no more than a servant to Henry VIII, whose duties included replacing Henry's broken lute strings and tutoring the royal children, including Elizabeth I (Haigh 188).

Elson (74-76) points out that most musicians in Shakespeare plays appear as lowly sorts, and itinerant musicians were the norm, even though they were discouraged, partly through the efforts of the guilds. Laws were enacted to constrain "minstrels and fiddlers" who played for tips at taverns.

The best musicians were recognized for their talent at an early age and pressed into service, either as choirboys or in a noble household, or both. Choirboys were treated as servants and as such had daily duties, but training in instrumental music was part of the advantage of this otherwise hapless condition. Although musical accomplishment was considered an indispensable characteristic of good breeding, that it was demeaning to a person of noble rank to display his or her skill in music before others is well-documented (Castiglione 146). There was a clear difference between the practitioner and the one educated in the science of music. While Queen Elizabeth was said to be skilled on the lute, the subject of a Hilliard miniature, she is not known to have ever played before others. Sir Philip Sidney was said to have been skilled in music, but left not a note behind. We can therefore only presume that the most talented Elizabethan "career musicians" sprang from humble roots.

A musician required patronage in order to indulge in his craft. For example, a lutenist-composer needed valuable commodities such as music paper, ink, quills, lutes (which came in many sizes), lute strings (Robert Johnson was allocated £20 per annum for lute strings alone), and many hours of leisure just to keep the lute in tune. He needed the basic necessities—food, shelter and clothing. But not just any clothing: a composer needed to rub elbows with the elite to ply his trade, so he had to dress accordingly. He needed to read and hear the best of the current literary output for inspiration and material.

An aspect of patronage involved the musician/servant wearing the livery of his patron—not unlike today's sports stars conspicuously wearing name-brand clothing. This would supposedly bring honor to the patron, even at times when the musician was out moonlighting, which was necessary because most patrons were a little slow to meet their financial obligations to those under their protection. But there was not much time for extracurricular activities. The musician was required to be on hand to instruct the patron and his children in the skill of music. He had to keep and repair instruments, sing for private entertainments or devotional services, and be on hand to play the patron's "theme song," typically a dance piece, whenever he or she made an appearance at court. Incidentally, this is how

(cont'd on p. 11)

*Music (cont'd from p. 10)*

it came to pass that there are so many pieces of music bearing the name of a noble person. It is very unlikely that a person of noble rank would have stooped to write his own entrance music, even if he were capable. That was the province of the musician/servant, and a higher measure of honor was to be obtained by the patron who employed the likes of John Dowland.

codified with an elaborate set of rules. Since there were six tones in the scale, the system was called the hexachord. The range of most music exceeds six tones, so there was a need to overlap the scales, just as we do with our modern tonal scale. Since the lowest tone was called the GAMMA UT, the entire range was called the GAMUT.

Chapter. Is. 49.

A **U**ditē insulae, et attendite pōpu- | vocāvit me, \* de ventre matris meae  
li de longe : † Dōminus ab ūtero | recordātus est nōminis mei.

Hymn. 2. **U** T qué-ant lāxis re-sonā-re fībris Mī-ra gestó-  
rum fāmu-li tu-ó-rum, Sól-ve pollú-ti lābi-i re-á-tum,  
Sāncte Jo-ānes. **U** T re Mī fá Sól lá

*Hymn to St. John the Baptist, from Liber Usualis (p. 1504), the primary source of Catholic liturgy*

Composers, unless in the service of a noble household, had neither the time nor the leisure to pursue a career composing music for Art's sake. Again, music was a functional art. Profits for published music did not benefit the composer. The publisher/printer always bought the work outright from the composer. But a composer would produce works of music and dedicate the work to a potential patron of noble rank, with the intent of advancing his career. It is important for historians to evaluate the language of overweening praise aimed at the potential patron in such speculative dedications.

### ***How did the musician approach functional music?***

Musician/servants were initially trained in liturgical music. The basis for such training, since c. 1100, was the memorization of liturgical chant. Guido d'Arezzo devised a system for his students to recognize intervals (the difference between notes) based on a particular chant to St. John the Baptist. It turns out that each phrase of the chant begins one step higher than the last, so Guido taught his students to associate the rising tones with the first syllable of each line (see figure).

By the latter half of the sixteenth century, the system had been

Much was written in the Renaissance about the ability of music to move the passions of the listener. In his well-known lyric, Richard Barnfield remarked on composer and lutenist John Dowland's "heavenly touch upon the lute doth ravish human sense" (Poem VIII, *The Passionate Pilgrim*, 1599). But it is likely that the delicate and nuanced approach to music on such an intimate instrument as the lute would have been lost on an outdoor stage before an unruly audience of more than 1,000. Most likely, the stringed instrument used onstage was not the lute but rather its twangy cousin, the cittern.

We can only surmise how the Elizabethan theatre musician responded to providing music for the stage, but the conditions and demands must not have been much different from those today. There is anecdotal evidence of musical performances of stage jigs by the noted comedians Richard Tarleton and Will Kemp, who accompanied themselves with the traditional pipe and tabor. Certainly, stage musicians had a large stock of ballad tunes, ground basses and current popular favorites in their repertoire, which was all most likely played from memory.

*(cont'd on p. 12)*

Music (cont'd from p. 11)

### How was music used in the plays?

Indications for music appear in three different forms in Shakespeare's plays.

- *Songs that appear in the text of plays*

Texts for many songs appear in the scripts of plays as part of the dramatic action. Typically, there is no indication that there was accompaniment other than the stage direction for "Music," or a command from a character for the musicians to play.

A good example is the song, "O mistress mine," sung by Feste in *Twelfth Night* (II, iii). The text of the song appears in the script but there is no indication of written music for it. There are instrumental settings with the same name, but the words and music both need editorial massaging in order to fit together. An alternative example is also from *Twelfth Night* (I, iii). The song, "Farewell dear love," appeared in a published book of ayres by Robert Jones in 1600.

- *Stage directions for music*

Stage directions for music, on or off-stage, abound in Shakespeare plays. Usually the directions call for instrumental fanfares or dance tunes, probably played on loud instruments such as trumpets, horns, etc. Dances and stage jigs utilized the traditional combination of pipe and tabor, typically played by one person.

Occasionally there are directions for consort music, or music played by a group of four to six like instruments. Such directions occur in *King Lear*, when calming music is prescribed to ease Lear's confused state of mind. Consorts may have been sets of viols or, more likely, sets of bright sounding wind instruments, which would project well onstage.

- *Song fragments and allusions*

The texts of Shakespeare's plays are filled with snatches of lyrics from what were once well-known popular songs and ballads. Ross Duffin's *Shakespeare's Songbook* includes a fairly large compilation of such references, and includes known and speculative settings of the music to identifiable lyrics. Inclusion of well-known ballads and current popular music in plays was an effective dramatic device since the audience is very likely to have identified with the intended sentiment just by understanding the humorous or moralizing context of a particular song. This is only a guess, but I believe that Shakespeare peppered his plays with such references to give the actors opportunity to sing or generally to "ham it up" *ex tempore*.

*Hamlet* contains a virtual compendium of ballad references by Ophelia (IV, v), almost every one of them signifying lost love or encroaching madness. An example of easily identifiable ballad lyrics appearing casually in the script is in *Twelfth Night* (IV, ii), when Feste begins to sing "Hey, Robin, jolly Robin". He then seemingly intentionally misquotes the lyrics of a round supposedly by William Cornish and found in what is known as the Henry VIII manuscript (c. 1513, British Library Additional Manuscript 31, 922).

### Conclusion

When examining the music found in the plays of Shakespeare, it is important to apply the tenets of what performers of Early Music call "historically-informed performance." Functional music in plays should be viewed, not as precious works of art emerging from a tortured genius in the nineteenth century mold of Richard Wagner, but rather as music performed for a particular purpose.

Likewise, when we analyze sixteenth century music according to modern tonal principles, we usually raise more questions than arrive at clear solutions. There was no conscious effort on the part of Elizabethan composers to create a new musical language. Rather, composers attempted to say something unique, personal and compelling, using the received vocabulary.

Lastly, there is an enormous surviving corpus of sixteenth century music for lute alone and for lute and voice. Manuscript attributions to composers are rare and, when they appear, are often incomplete, misleading, and sometimes wrong. Many pieces bear the name of a person of noble rank. Most likely, such pieces were dedicated to the noble by a professional musician for payment. Musicologists often find that the task of identifying composers tends to parallel that of scholars unraveling the authorship of works of literature. □

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## Ruth Loyd Miller 1922 - 2005

Family, friends, and fans of Ruth Loyd Miller mourned her death this past September 15 at age 83 in Jennings, Louisiana.

Miller's editions of early Oxfordian works, and her own extensive research, made her one of the country's most influential Oxfordian scholars. She also had a successful career as an attorney and as a member of the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors for fourteen years, the last four as its Chairwoman.

Miller graduated from LSU in 1942 and attended the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. In 1957 she was admitted to the Louisiana State Bar Association, and in 1967 was admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court. She was the first woman to serve on the Louisiana Mineral Board, and was a delegate and first vice-chairman at the Louisiana Constitutional Convention in 1973. The Delta Zeta Sorority named her National Woman of the Year for 1983-84, and LSU admitted her to its Alumni Hall of Distinction in 1995.

Miller published her own editions of J. T. Looney's *Shakespeare Identified in Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford* (1974), and B. M. Ward's 1926 edition of *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1975). She also edited major portions of three books by another early Oxfordian scholar, Eva Turner Clark, and published them in 1974 under the title *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays*. In another volume, *Oxfordian Vistas* (1974), described as "a complete reference library to Edward De Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, as 'Shakespeare,'" she published her own essays and those of another early Oxfordian, Charles Wisner Barrell. In the 1970s, she and her husband, Judge Minos D. Miller, acquired the "Gheeraedts" or "St. Albans" portrait—said to be of Edward de Vere in his early forties. In 1987 at age 65, Miller earned a Master of Arts degree in English from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Miller first became interested in the Shakespeare authorship question after reading an article by Richard Bentley in the February 1959 *American Bar Association Journal* titled "Elizabethan Whodunit: Who Was 'William Shake-Speare'?" Sometime afterward, she was

given a copy of Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn's 1952 biography of Oxford, *This Star of England*. She later remarked, "Our lives have never been the same."

In one of her last appearances before an Oxfordian group, she was an honored guest and featured speaker at the 1994 Shakespeare Oxford Society Annual Conference in Carmel, California. In her Saturday luncheon talk, "Prospero-O's Key of Officer and Office," she analyzed Prospero's name and identified numerous references in his speech to Miranda in Act I of *The Tempest* to Oxford's personal, financial, and familial relationship with his father-in-law, William Cecil, Lord Burghley.

Miller was noted for her keen analytical mind, perhaps attributable to her legal training, and her willingness to share her thoughts with others. Numerous scholars, Oxfordian and otherwise, recall edifying and encouraging conversations and correspondence with her. Roger Nyle Parisious recently wrote: "She could always refresh any of my youthful memoirs with three more telling ones of her own—and delighted to do so. Despite the awe-inspiring range of her printed studies, her memoirs and unpublished researches were even more extensive. In our final conversation she estimated that she had accumulated about one third more documents than held by Capt. Ward. With her death we have lost our last full link with the second generation of Oxfordians." □

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Conference (cont'd from p. 1)

## Music in Shakespeare

Following a welcome of members and guests by OSF Production Stage Manager Kimberley Jean Berry on Thursday afternoon, Elizabeth Sears addressed the subject of music in Shakespeare's plays, and traditional attitudes towards it. She was assisted by lutenist Ron Andrico and mezzo-soprano Donna Stewart, who performed examples of Renaissance music. The countless references to musical matters and profound knowledge of music evident in Shakespeare's works comport with Edward de Vere's interest in music and patronage of musicians, notably John Farmer and William Byrd.

Mr. Andrico, a specialist in historical music for stringed instruments, continued the discussion by posing and answering questions about how music was used in Shakespeare's plays and who played it. (See article on p. 10.) To answer a final question, What did the music sound like?, he accompanied Stewart on the lute as she sang two songs from *Twelfth Night*, one from *The Tempest*, and one possibly from *Lucrece*.

During the late afternoon Reception, conference attendees enjoyed Renaissance music performed by Andrico and Stewart and other members of the ensemble Mignarda, a group dedicated to sixteenth-century music for the lute and voice.

The final event on Thursday's program took place in the hotel ballroom where author Mark Anderson read passages from, and signed copies of, his new biography of Edward de Vere, *Shakespeare by Another Name*.

## Edward de Vere in Shakespeare's Plays

Referring to the educational environment in the home of William Cecil, Dr. Peter Austin-Zacharias described two opposing views of the self, each based on classical models, that must have created a major conflict in the mind of the teen-aged Edward de Vere.

The ideal of manly duty to the state, the society, and the family, as espoused by Cicero, conflicted with the urge to create and to use language for pleasure, a role exemplified by Ovid. Austin-Zacharias suggested that de Vere was able to resolve this difficulty "by fusing the conflicting emotions into an archetype of the prodigal son," a pattern that appears in many of his plays.

In his paper "Orestes, *Horestes*, *Hamlet*: Myth to Masterpiece," Dr. Earl Showerman cited numerous details from the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus and other Greek and Roman tragedies that appeared in the plot, characters, rhetoric, and allusions in *Hamlet*, although many of these sources

apparent preoccupation with bastardy and rightful succession in many of his history plays reflects the personal attitude and circumstances of Edward de Vere.

Dr. Michael Hays, an Ashland resident and author of *Shakespearean Tragedy as Chivalric Romance*, explained how the four great tragedies, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *King Lear*, can be interpreted as chivalric romances that continue the tradition of medieval romances, such as *Morte D'Arthur*, *Guy of Warwick*, and *Bevis of Hampton*. As part of a resurgence of such romances in the decades before and after Elizabeth's death, Shakespeare explored and treated themes of governance, legitimacy and succession.

## The Tempest

In their analysis of the sources of *The Tempest*, Lynne Kositsky and Dr. Roger Stritmatter demonstrated convincingly that orthodox scholars have wrongly claimed that the travel narratives of Sylvester Jourdain and William Strachey were the basis for the storm and shipwreck material in the play. The so-called "Strachey Letter" could not have been written and carried to London in time to be used as a source for the play, which was first performed no later than 1611. The precise details and language of the storm and

shipwreck scenes appear to have as their sources the play *Nauffragium* by Erasmus, published in 1518, and a collection of travel narratives, *The Decades of the New Worlde*, translated by Richard Eden and published in 1555. Significantly, both books were in the library of Sir Thomas Smith, one of Edward de Vere's boyhood tutors.

Dr. Paul Altrocchi reviewed the evidence for the meaning of the line "fetch dew from the still-vexed Bermoothes" spoken by Ariel in Act I, Scene ii of *The Tempest*. He cited Richard Roe as the first to suggest, in a 1989 article, that the phrase referred to whiskey obtained from a disreputable suburb of Westminster, the "Bermoothes," where stills were common. Ben Jonson referred several

(cont'd on p. 15)



Outgoing Shakespeare Fellowship President, Lynne Kositsky, and Shakespeare Matters Editor, Roger Stritmatter

had not been translated into English at the time Shakespeare's play was published. *Hamlet*, in turn, shares numerous allusions and details of plot and language with the revenge play *Horestes*, allegedly by John Pickering, which was performed in 1567 at Gray's Inn, the same year that Edward de Vere matriculated there.

Shakespeare's strange substitution of a fictional bastard for a historical one in *King John* was the subject of Professor Dan Wright's paper "King John and the Bastard Prince." The fictional bastard Philip Falconbridge is the hero of the play, while the Earl of Salisbury, the actual bastard son of Henry II and potential contender for King John's throne, is relegated to a minor role. Wright suggested that Shakespeare's



*Conference (cont'd from p. 14)*

times to this district as "the Bermudas," and there is evidence that the words "dew" and "still" were used with these meanings before the Elizabethan era.

*. . . the lost anonymous play  
The Spanish Maze,  
performed on Shrove Sunday  
in February 1605,  
was actually Shakespeare's  
The Tempest . . .*

Citing a suggestion by Richard Malim in the anthology *Great Oxford* (2004), Dr. Stritmatter and Lynne Kositsky supplied intriguing evidence that the lost anonymous play *The Spanish Maze*, performed on Shrove Sunday in February 1605, was actually Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, a play that contains a "maze" or "tangle" theme, as well as characters from Naples and Milan, both controlled by Spain during Elizabeth's reign. They speculated that the play was several years old in 1605, and pointed out characters, passages, and scenes in Jonson's *Eastward Ho* (1605), Jacob Ayer's *Die Schone Sidea* (before 1605), and William Alexander's *Darius* (1603) that appear to be based on those in *The Tempest*, which is dated 1611 by orthodox scholars. *The Spanish Maze* is listed without an author in the Revels Accounts for 1604/5 between two performances of *The Merchant of Venice*, both attributed to "Shaxberd."

Professor Ernest Rehder examined the relationship between the tale of Cardenio in Part One of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1605; English tr. 1612) and three plays that may have made use of it—the lost *Cardenio* (1613?), the anonymous *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (c1611), and Lewis Theobald's *Double Falsehood* (1727). He concluded that the Cardenio material in *Don Quixote* was indeed the source of the story in *Double Falsehood*, but that it has "little or nothing in common with the plot and characters of *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*."

The vast gaps between the few scattered facts about Shakespeare's family

and personal life were the starting point of "Preference Model for a Second-Best Bed," a whimsical talk by Professor Marilyn Loveless, artistic director of the theater program at Walla Walla College. Suggesting that this lack of information created a space for speculation and inference about questions such as why he left only his second-best bed to his wife Anne Hathaway, Loveless described how various scholars and writers have explained this enigmatic bequest.

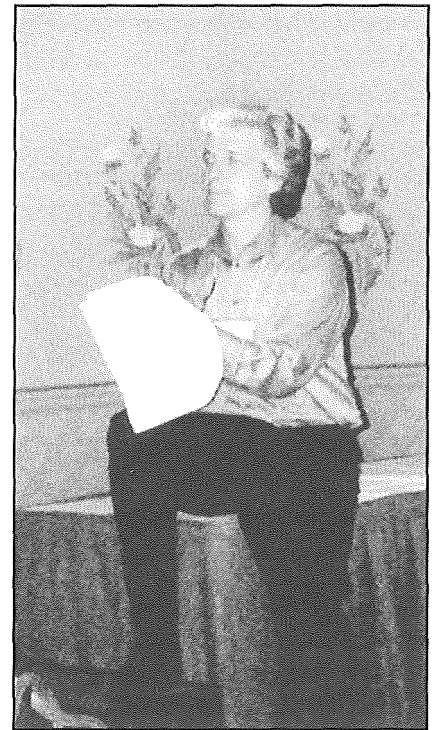
Oxfordian researcher Katherine Chiljan described and displayed two previously unknown documents pertaining to the Earl of Oxford, the first being a record of the sale of his considerable property at Wivenhoe to Roger Townshend in 1584. The second document, dated March 1579, records an annuity of £20 to "Robert Hales, gentleman." Chiljan provided evidence that this Robert Hales was the famous lutenist and singer employed by Queen Elizabeth in 1583. (See article on p. 1.)

At scheduled times during the conference, attendees took advantage of two additional and unusual experiences offered by the Festival. A two-hour backstage tour allowed small groups to visit the two main theaters while sets were being broken down or set up for performances. Actor-guides explained backstage activities, the role of understudies, prop handling, and the history of the individual theaters. Tours included visits to property rooms and the traditional "Green Room." OSF benefactor Paul J. Allen's copy of Shakespeare's First Folio was also on display during the conference.

### Richard the Third

The remainder of Friday afternoon and evening were given over to two papers on Richard III, the man and the play, and

*. . . the historical Richard III  
abused the law of treason  
in away that was unusual  
even for kings . . .*



*Michael Dunn delivers a passage from The True Tragedy of Richard the Third*

finally, the play itself, performed by the OSF cast in the Angus Bowmer Theater. "*Richard III* and the Law of Treason" was the subject of Miami attorney Thomas Regnier's well-received paper. His discussion ranged from the origin of the law of treason to the accuracy of Shakespeare's depiction of Richard III. In the late Middle Ages and into Elizabethan times treason was considered a more serious crime than murder, and mutilation before death was its customary punishment. Betrayal and treason are recurring themes in Shakespeare's plays, especially the English history plays. Regnier quoted a British legal scholar to the effect that the historical Richard III abused the law of treason in a way that was unusual even for kings when he summarily ordered the execution for treason of William, Lord Hastings in 1483.

The anonymous history play *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third* (1594) was the young Shakespeare's first attempt to dramatize the rise and downfall of the Yorkist king, according to Oxfordian researcher Ramon Jiménez. He delineated numerous similarities of character, plot, language, and detail between it and Shakespeare's

*(cont'd on p. 16)*

*Conference (cont'd from p. 15)*

*Richard III*, which was published in 1597, also anonymously. His thesis was greatly enhanced by actor Michael Dunn's stirring delivery of five of Richard's monologues from the anonymous play, including the passage in which he orders the death of Lord Hastings, as well as his final desperate call for a horse.

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*with Richard III the first  
question is  
the 'hump question'*

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At the end of the afternoon, the Terra Nova Consort performed music by Bach in the courtyard between the OSF theaters. An hour later conference-goers joined hundreds of others to watch a stunning performance of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, with James Newcomb in the title role. The play concluded a nine-month run at the end of October.

Saturday's conference program began with a discussion of OSF's production of *Richard III* by a panel consisting of James Newcomb, Professor Ren Draya, Dr. Earl Showerman, and Robin Goodrin-Nordli, who played Queen Margaret, the widow of Henry VI. Newcomb referred to Margaret as Richard's "kindred spirit," and Goodrin-Nordli pointed out that although Margaret appeared only twice in the text of the play, Director Libby Appel added her silent presence whenever the others spoke of her. Draya called attention to the poignancy of the dialog between Richard and Queen Margaret in the third scene of the play. Showerman remarked that Shakespeare's particular portrait of Richard was tantamount to superimposing a Greek-style tragedy on English history—a repeat of the story of the curse on the House of Atreus, in which an uncle exiles a brother, then kills his nephews. When questioned about their interest in the authorship ques-

tion, Goodrin-Nordli replied that she was "primarily interested in the language," but Newcomb declared that the authorship was important to him, and that he was a convinced Oxfordian. He suggested that once de Vere is acknowledged as the author, "we will see much darker productions."

Later in the day, James Newcomb opened his remarks on "My Process in Approaching Richard" with the statement that "with *Richard III* the first question is the 'hump question,'" referring to decisions to be made about Richard's appearance, his posture, and his gait. He said that both he and the Director wanted the defects in Richard's body to be "physically pronounced," but also wanted a person who was "extremely agile." The result was a hump-backed Richard moving

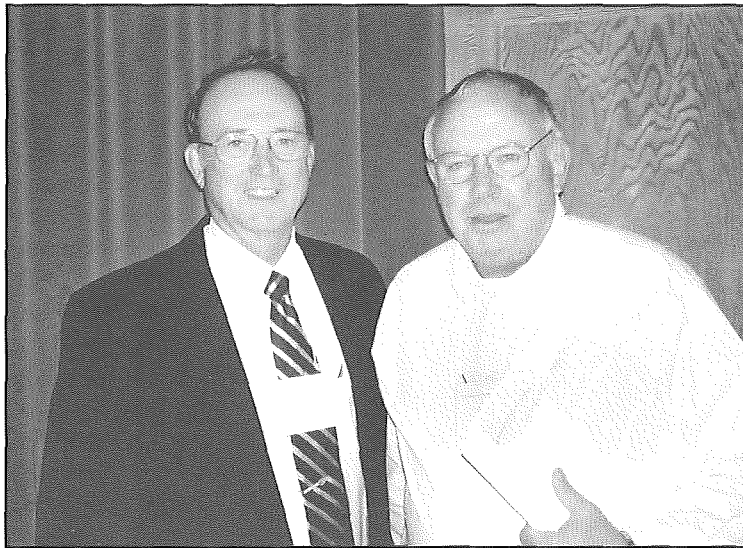
of the canon.

Oxfordian Mary Berkowitz overcame an unfortunate breakdown of the projector, and presented the proposition that the dedication on Shakespeare's Stratford monument was written by Ben Jonson and that it was his runic metaphor for the true author of

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*... once de Vere is  
acknowledged as the author,  
"we will see much darker  
productions."*

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*Dr. Frank Davis and Prof. Lew Tate of Savannah, Georgia*

swiftly about on two hand crutches with one leg dangling and unusable. Newcomb spoke about the difficulties of learning to use the crutches, and of maintaining the bent posture, which eventually led him to a chiropractor. He also revealed that his own approach to the character is informed by his knowledge that Richard's "relationships and experiences echo those in de Vere's life." Speaking of the mid-life deaths of both men's fathers, Newcomb said "It is grief that is the core cause of Richard's nihilism." Acknowledging that Ashland is "a bastion of orthodoxy," he said that the SOS/SF Conference at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival was a milestone on the road to the acknowledgement of Oxford as the author

of the Shakespeare canon. Its language suggests that he might have been Christopher Marlowe.

In her thoughtful talk on "Oxford's Outsiders," long-time Oxfordian, Professor Ren Draya, pointed out that many of Shakespeare's strongest characters are outsiders—men and women different, or seen to be different, from those around them. Suggesting possible links to Edward de Vere's life, she discussed the psychological and dramatic implications of such outsiders in *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Othello*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Dr. Frank Davis offered an overview of Elizabethan medicine as an introduction to his topic, "Shakespeare's Knowledge of Medicine: A Factor in the Authorship Question?" Hundreds of medical images and references to medical conditions and treatments have been identified in the Shakespeare canon. In a survey of fourteen plays by ten Elizabethan authors, Davis found more such images and references in Shakespeare's plays (an average of twelve per play) than in those of any other Elizabethan playwright. Furthermore, they are keenly observed, appropriate, and accurate according to the standards of the day. Shakespeare's portrayal of Dr.

*(cont'd on p. 17)*

*Conference (cont'd from p. 16)*

Caius in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* reflects the real Dr. Caius, who was teaching at Cambridge in 1558, a year in which Edward de Vere attended the same university.

Professor Lew Tate of Savannah reported on a confluence of streams of information and communication that occurred in 1598, several of them with relevance to the Shakespeare authorship question. A specific connection between Oxford and the Shakespeare canon is suggested by the use of the name Oldcastle in both parts of *Henry IV* because of the enmity between Oxford and Lord Cobham, a descendant of the historical Oldcastle, over letters about the alleged adultery of Oxford's daughter, Lady Stanley. Important publications during the year included Mere's *Pallis Tamia*, Love's *Labour's Lost*, and the first Parnassus Play. Also published in 1598 was Ben Jonson's first important play, *Every Man in his Humor*, in which, Jonson later claimed, William Shakespeare appeared as an actor.

Saturday's program ended with an uproarious session of "Oxfordian Jeopardy," hosted by attorney Alex McNeil, who not only devised the questions and answers, but supplied the pushbutton-and-light bulb Jeopardy machine. After picking their categories, three contestants struggled to come up with appropriate questions for answers proposed to them on Shakespearean topics. Author Mark Anderson was the clear winner with more than 2000 points.

## *Twelfth Night*

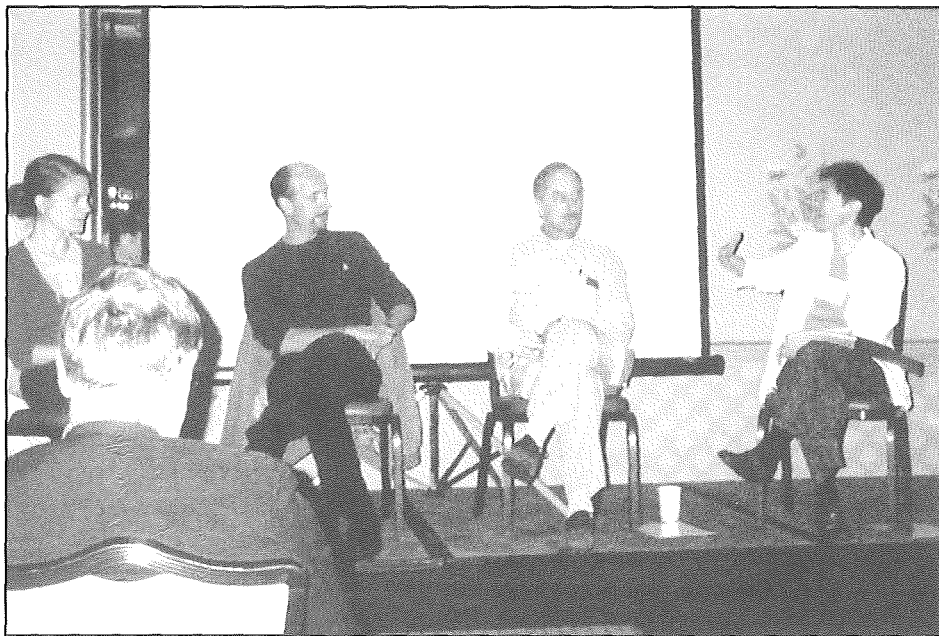
After a day of intermittent rain, the weather was clear and cool at the outdoor Elizabethan Stage for Saturday evening's colorful and fast-moving production of *Twelfth Night*, the play that the Oregon Shakespeare Festival performed on its open-

ing night in 1935. Conference attendees not only enjoyed a stellar performance of one of Shakespeare's most popular plays, but were also privileged to hear on Sunday morning's panel two of the play's stars—Linda K. Morris, who played Viola/Cesario, and Michael Elich, who played Orsino, Duke of Illyria. Joining them for a discussion of the play and the performance were Professor Ren Draya and Dr. Michael Hays.

Commenting on Viola's unusual change from women's into men's clothes on-stage in the first scene, which is not part of the text, Morris suggested, and the other panel members agreed, that the device "got the audience on her [Viola's] side." The notion that

"Allusions to Edmund Campion in *Twelfth Night*" was the title of Dr. Richard Desper's discussion of certain allusions found in the "darker passages" of the play. Phrases in Act IV, sc. ii seem to refer to three well-known Elizabethans—"the old hermit of Prague" to Edmund Campion, who was a professor at the University of Prague; "a niece of King Gorboduc" to Queen Elizabeth, who was related to Lord Buckhurst, a co-author of the 1562 play *Gorboduc*; and "I, being Master Parson" to Robert Persons (pronounced "Parsons"), Campion's Jesuit colleague and superior during his short mission in England.

Sunday's banquet audience was entertained by a visit from his "Victorian Valhalla" by Charles Dickens, in the person of actor Michael Dunn, who deplored the near-divine status of Shakespeare of Stratford and revealed his conversation with Edward de Vere about the authorship question. Describing himself as "the only other author in the English language whose name has become an adjective," Dickens remarked that the "Stratford cipher" had become more than a mere blank



Two performers in *Twelfth Night*, Linda K. Morris and Michael Elich, at left, discuss the play with Dr. Michael Hays and Professor Ren Draya.

*Twelfth Night* is a "dark comedy" brought confirming remarks from Hays and Elich, who agreed that "the characters cannot relate to each other," and from Draya, who observed that they were certainly "capable of cruelty." Since both actors had appeared in a second play—Elich as Buckingham in *Richard III* two nights earlier and Morris as Hilda in *Room Service* three nights earlier—questions came from the audience about how they were able to play such different characters within so short a time. Both agreed that the advantage of working for a multi-play company like OSF was the opportunity to play different characters, and Elich quipped, "It's all in the hair."

page. He had become an "unpainted Sistine Chapel ceiling," and a "vast and sublimely empty canvas upon which to project the image of one's god." This has led to numerous theories about his identity, the Stratfordian sect showing "an astonishing degree of longevity." Nevertheless, Dickens predicted, the Oxfordian argument will eventually prevail, and the Royal Shakespeare Company will move to Hedingham Castle.

In his keynote address, OSF Executive Director Paul Nicholson recounted the phenomenal growth of the Festival from its two-play opening season in 1935 (*Twelfth Night* and *The Merchant of Venice*)

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*Conference (cont'd from p. 17)*

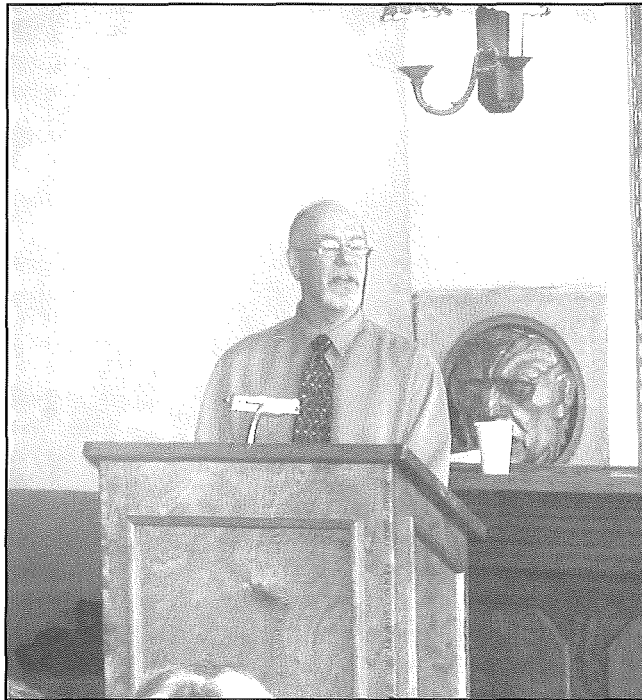
to its current season, in which nearly eight hundred performances of eleven different plays were mounted over nine months. In terms of the number of plays, actors, and playgoers (120,000), today's OSF is among the largest rotating repertory theater companies in the United States. Acknowledging that "Shakespeare is our standard and our inspiration," Nicholson said that the Festival's goal is "to create new interpretations of Shakespeare, classic, and contemporary plays." Now that the entire OSF community has been introduced to the authorship issue in a compelling and engaging way, some of those interpretations are bound to be Oxfordian ones. Revealing his own Oxfordian sentiments, Nicholson expressed his pleasure that the two Oxfordian organizations had met in conjunction with the OSF in Ashland, and looked forward to regular repeat visits.

Dr. Paul Altrocchi returned to the podium to explore the evidence that it was Edward de Vere, not Arthur Brooke, who wrote *The Tragical Historye of Romeus and Juliet*, the narrative poem that is widely considered to be the source of *Romeo and Juliet*. The only other literary work ascribed to Brooke, who died in 1563 at age twenty, is a translation from the French of a catalog of Biblical extracts. Altrocchi concluded that Shakespeare's play is based so closely on *The Tragical Historye* that if he didn't write it himself, he was guilty of flagrant plagiarism.

### ***Shake-Speare's Sonnets and Edward de Vere***

Yorkshireman Derran Charlton proposed an identification of the mysterious "E. C. Esquire," author of the *Emaricdulfe* sonnet sequence that several Oxfordian researchers have asserted was written by the author of the Shakespeare canon. Charlton bases his identification on his examination of the only extant copy of the pamphlet *Pasquils Fooles-cap* (1600) at the Bodleian Library. An annotation on the title page reads, "by Nicholas Breton," an Essex poet and essayist. According to Charlton, Breton was a

relation and friend of Edward de Vere. The dedication of the pamphlet, which is signed "N. B.," is "To my very good friend, Master



*Paul Nicholson, Oregon Shakespeare Festival Executive Director*

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*The sexual triangle described in the Sonnets suggests that Trentham and the young Henry Wriothesley, third Earl of Southampton, were the actual parents of Henry de Vere, born in 1593.*

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Edward Conquest." Charlton also noted that the martial figure Pasquil of England, Cavaliero, has previously been advanced as a pseudonym of de Vere. "Pasquil" appears on the title page of a series of pamphlets published during the Marprelate controversy that raged in England in 1588-1596. (See article on p. 3.)

Hank Whittemore recounted his personal experience of discovering a complete and

coherent explanation of the language, structure, and historical context of Shakespeare's Sonnets. He was able to arrive at a comprehensive solution to the puzzle they present by a process of identifying the problem, gathering observations, and then proposing a hypothesis that accounted for the opaque language and turbulent emotions revealed in the text. His findings are presented in his book on the Sonnets, *The Monument*, published last year.

A different solution to the puzzle of the Sonnets was proposed by John Hamill in his paper "The Dark Lady and Her Bastard: An Alternative Scenario." An analysis of the characters and language in the anonymous poem *Willobie his Avisa* (1594) provides the basis for his identification of Elizabeth Trentham, Edward de Vere's second wife, as the Dark Lady of the Sonnets. The sexual triangle described in the Sonnets suggests that Trentham and the young Henry Wriothesley, third Earl of Southampton, were the actual parents of Henry de Vere, born in 1593. The full text of Hamill's paper appeared in the Summer issue of the Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter.

At the conclusion of Sunday's banquet, the individual organizations presented gifts to their outgoing Presidents—James Sherwood of the Shakespeare Oxford Society and Lynne Kositsky of the Shakespeare Fellowship. Author Mark Anderson was recognized as "Oxfordian of the Year." Dr. Earl Showerman received a special gift of a silver plate engraved "to the First Earl of Ashland" for his outstanding planning and organizing of the first combined conference by the two Oxfordian groups—and the first to be joined by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. When asked if such joint affairs should continue, the audience responded with cheers and applause. □

*The Editors*

# Might Edward de Vere Have Suffered from Alcoholism?

By Robert R. Prechter, Jr

Among the symptoms of alcoholism are secretive consumption, an inability to self-diagnose and an unwillingness to admit having the disease, all of which make detection and treatment difficult. Recent literature describes how one may diagnose probable alcoholism by observing a subject's patterns of behavior following the onset of addiction. Did Edward de Vere exhibit behaviors suggesting alcoholism?

My answer draws upon the modern medical understanding of alcoholism—as distinguished from popular but inaccurate perceptions of it—and upon what we know of de Vere's life history, augmented by passages of self-reference in his writings, including those under the Shakespeare pseudonym.

## Intelligence and Achievement

In the last issue of *The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*, the reviewer of *Shakespeare by Another Name* called Mark Anderson's conclusion that de Vere drank "absurd" because "no drunkard ever achieved what Shakespeare achieved" (Hughes 14). According to at least one expert on alcoholism, the widespread belief behind this statement is not just false, but backward. As Doug Thorburn explains in several books—most recently *Alcoholism Myths and Realities* (2005)—one of the behavioral signs of early and middle-stage alcoholism is a drive for extreme achievement. Thorburn's "Myth #49" is, "She's too successful to be an alcoholic" (*Alcoholism* 62). Not only can most alcoholics function, but many of them, in some ways, perform better than the rest of us. For example, the three greatest hitters in the history of baseball—Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth and Mickey Mantle—were alcoholics. Mozart, who can be compared to de Vere in creative achievement, was a poly-drug addict. An autopsy showed Beethoven's liver to have been ravaged. John Lennon was a raging alcoholic who left behind one of the most beloved catalogs of pop music.

Says Thorburn, "[M]any believe that the average alcoholic has higher innate intelligence than does the typical non-alcoholic. Future studies, however, may show that *developed* intelligence is connected to alcoholism, due to the drive in the early-stage alcoholic to overachieve" (*Alcoholism* 65). De Vere was a genius, and we know that he studied intently, perhaps more so than virtually anyone who has lived. Reports testify that he was the best at tilt, the best dancer at court, and a better musician than most professionals.

More directly to our subject, "certain occupations or professions ... seem to have a greater probability of attracting addicts. [Author] Lucy Barry Robe, psychiatrist Donald Goodwin and other researchers report that "a far higher proportion of famous actors, actresses, and writers are alcoholic-addicts than would be expected by chance" (Thorburn, *Drunks* 124). De Vere was an actor and a writer. Famous actors today are continually entering (and re-entering) rehab. Of writers in particular, Thorburn notes, "Donald Goodwin, M.D., identified five of eight Nobel Prize winning authors from the United States during the twentieth century as alcoholics: William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, Eugene

O'Neill and John Steinbeck" (*Alcoholism* 65), a ratio well out of proportion to the incidence of alcoholism in the general population. Furthermore, writers Edgar Allan Poe, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Stephen King, E.E. Cummings, James Thurber, Dorothy Parker, Jack London, Lillian Hellman, Dorothy Kilgallen, Truman Capote, Jack Kerouac, John Cheever and O. Henry suffered from alcoholism or other drug addiction. Many of these authors composed landmark works, and some were prolific.

The over-achieving alcoholic's performance in his chosen field often maintains until the late stages of the disease, and if one lives only to age 54, its debilitating effects in that regard may not even be apparent. One may certainly wish to argue against de Vere's having alcoholism, but his prodigious achievement in the arts is not good evidence to the contrary.

## Charm and Persuasiveness

Ability can be expressed in any field, but functional alcoholics are especially adroit in social settings. In business, Ted Turner, who has admitted having problems with alcohol, built the biggest news organization in the world from nearly nothing. In politics, our two most recent presidents are alcoholics/addicts: Clinton, who sported W.C. Fields's ruddy nose and reportedly used cocaine, and Bush is an admitted alcoholic, presumably in recovery.

Thorburn's Myth #51 is "He's too charming to be an alcoholic" (*Alcoholism* 66). "[A]ddicts," says Thorburn, "are often the most charming people on the planet" (*Alcoholism* 142). Early-stage alcoholics can be exceptionally attractive to others because they take risks and boldly do and say things that the average person does not, and thereby fascinate people. This is why so many of them become successful actors, musicians, writers and politicians. De Vere charmed the Queen of England (for a while at least), two wives, at least one mistress, and countless readers and theatergoers. His personal charm early in life and its apparent waning later is consistent with alcoholism.

Alcoholics and other drug addicts make popular entertainers and charismatic leaders because of their ability to mesmerize throngs. Thorburn postulates that alcohol facilitates access to the primitive areas of the brain, thus unconsciously putting alcoholics better in touch with people's primal motivations, which they manipulate to their advantage. The charm of some alcoholics and the persuasive ability of others suggest a visceral understanding of human nature that is less available to the rest of us. Shakespeare's celebrated insight into human nature could stem from this source.

## Financial Woes, Domestic Strife, Blame, Obsession

Three major tip-offs to alcoholism are "Pattern of Financial Difficulties," "Serious Problems at Home," and "Blames Others for Problems" (Thorburn, *Drunks* 67). De Vere exhibited all these

(cont'd on p. 20)

*Alcoholism (cont'd from p. 19)*

symptoms. Although we may blame Burghley and Leicester for the loss of some of de Vere's estates and land holdings, he nevertheless created chronic money problems for himself despite beginning life immensely wealthy. He traveled expensively, gambled heavily on a shipping venture, borrowed huge sums, supported actors and writers, financed theater productions and dissipated a tremendous fortune in less than thirty years. He ended up living on a (well-deserved) stipend from the state and the inheritance of his wealthy second wife. Thorburn's description of the reckless behavior behind the typical alcoholic's money troubles is a small version of the grand style in which de Vere operated:

Consider the egotistical drinker who insists on being the "big man," picking up everyone's tab at the bar, even though it's something he can ill afford. He borrows to the hilt to spend on toys and extravagances, figuring he'll have no problem paying it back with the next big raise, commission or bonus. Such grandiose behavior is, by itself, an excellent clue to addiction, often creating the financial difficulties. (*Drunks* 101)

As for "serious problems at home," de Vere's was hardly a life of domestic bliss. He had difficult relationships with his father-in-law,

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*Alcoholics can become obsessive,  
focusing on the negative. The dark,  
obsessive quality of the Sonnets  
is one of their primary features.*

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with whom he continually fought; his wife, whom he temporarily abandoned; and relatives of his mistress, whom he battled in the street. His problems extended to non-domestic relationships; he seemed to have a facility for making enemies and was banned from court twice for significant periods.

Thorburn asks, "Does he regularly blame others or 'circumstances' for his problems, or incessantly cry, 'Poor me'?" (*Drunks* 114) In April and May 1575, Lord Burghley made two lists of "Cavillations by the Erle of Oxford Contra Lord Burghley," listing a dozen and half a dozen complaints, respectively, that de Vere had expressed in a meeting. Shakespeare often refers to the impersonal force of "Fortune," as when Romeo cries, "O, I am Fortune's fool!" after killing Tybalt. Shakespeare's sonnets to the Dark Lady are relentlessly bitter and complaining, and everything is her fault. If the complaints are fully justified, as some believe, then they provide no evidence of alcoholism; but if they are hyperbolically blaming and self-pitying, an interpretation that the language fully supports, they do. Alcoholics can also become obsessive, focusing on the negative. The dark, obsessive quality of the Sonnets is one of their primary features.

## Bad Behavior and Enablers

Alcoholics often behave badly. "Terrible behaviors," says Thorburn, "rarely occur in non-alcoholics" (*Alcoholism* 77). He demonstrates that most mass murderers and tyrants (including Stalin, Hitler and Mao) have been addicted to drugs or alcohol or both; shockingly in fact, there may be no exceptions among those whose lives we know intimately enough to make a determination. Experts estimate that 85% to 90% of the U.S. prison population comprises alcoholics and other drug addicts. If we are to believe recent biographers, de Vere exhibited little more than atrocious behavior throughout his life. While we Oxfordians believe many of these claims are overblown if not outright wrong, to the extent that they are true, they point to alcoholism.

An alcoholic in a position of power has many enablers of his bad behavior because their livelihoods depend upon his. Thorburn explains:

*Do not think that because someone holds a high office in private or public life, we would know he's an alcoholic or other drug addict. We would be less likely to know this, since those near him, having more to lose, will do everything possible to protect his secret. (Drunks 103; emphases in the original)*

Nelson observes this dynamic in de Vere's life numerous times, commenting, "For Burghley, as always, the fault lay not with Oxford, but with certain other 'lewd Persons'...Even [Sir Thomas] Smith blames 'counsellores & persuaders' rather than Oxford himself (141, 145). Few people cause the violent death of others, but a servant died at the point of de Vere's foil, a death later ruled a suicide. Because he was a nobleman with many enablers, he suffered little consequence. Had he been a commoner, he might have joined the prison population.

Alcoholics often choose professions that "allow for ego-gratification beyond norms," (*Drunks* 131) in which they can exercise inordinate power over other people. The power that Shakespeare exerted over those he wished to humiliate was nearly unparalleled. In his portrayal of Richard III he re-wrote history to his purpose. Alcoholics also tend to "... 'push buttons,' especially in a mean-spirited way [or] engage in extreme sarcasm [or] belittling others" (*Drunks* 126, 132). Who among us would want to be lampooned as was Malvolio in front of our eyes and those of everyone in town? Shakespeare trashes the Dark Lady as *covetous, cruel, cunning, false, foul, black as hell, and the bay where all men ride*. How many non-alcoholics craft such detailed humiliations of others? On the other hand, some alcoholics, such as Tennessee Williams, Truman Capote and Hunter Thompson, were expert at doing so.

## Trouble Sleeping, Depression, Bipolarity, Emotional Adolescence, Unidentified Illness

Thorburn says, "The alcoholic will almost never blame his drug for tossing and turning all night. Instead, it's his spouse, the dogs howling, the workaday worries, the boss ticking him off all day and the kids annoying him all evening" (*Drunks* 71). Shakespeare refers to sleeplessness in at least three sonnets:

*(cont'd on p. 21)*



*Alcoholism (cont'd from p. 20)*

27

Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,  
The dear repose for limbs with travel tir'd;  
But then begins a journey in my head,  
To work my mind, when body's work's expir'd:  
For then my thoughts...keep my drooping eyelids wide...  
For thee and for myself no quiet find.

28

How can I, then, return in happy plight,  
That am debarr'd the benefit of rest?  
[Day and night] shake hands to torture me...  
And night doth nightly make grief's strength seem stronger.

61

Is it thy will thy image should keep open  
My heavy eyelids to the weary night?  
...It is my love that keeps mine eye awake;  
Mine own true love that doth my rest defeat,  
To play the watchman ever for thy sake:

Alcoholism can mimic many psychological disorders. According to studies, "[W]hen the tests are repeated after three months of sobriety, 70% to 80% of these problem pathologies disappear" (*Alcoholism* 82). "Alcoholism," says Thorburn, "is often mistaken for Depressive Personality Disorder." Citing "Myth#18," Thorburn says that the causality implied in the statement, "She drinks because she's unhappy," is backward; instead, it should be "she's unhappy because she drinks excessively" (*Alcoholism* 26, 27). De Vere in his poetry and writings as Shakespeare describes "melancholy" as if he knew the feeling first hand. Hamlet, Shakespeare's most autobiographical character, suffers from depression to the point of contemplating suicide. The Sonnets describe the author weeping and wailing in isolation, as in the following two examples about sleeplessness:

29

I all alone beweepe my outcast state,  
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries

30

[I] with old woes new wail my dear time's waste;  
Then can I drown an eye...And weep afresh...  
And moan...I grieve...  
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er  
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan

Alcoholism can trigger "intense mood swings" (*Drunks* 131) mimicking bipolar disorder. The Sonnets exhibit intense mood swings. Romeo, another autobiographical character, is depressed one minute and giddy the next. Many Oxfordians see de Vere's personality in *As You Like It* split between the robust Touchstone and the gloomy Jacques. Thorburn estimates that most diagnoses of bipolar disorder are inaccurate because too few psychologists understand the symptoms of alcoholism, and patients almost uni-

formly hide their addictions from therapists. Articles continually miss the connection. A recent one on an ex-Oakland Raider contains this statement: "Barret Robbins suffers from bipolar disorder, which is intensified by his alcohol and drug abuse" (Saraceno 1C). Such diagnoses are common, but alcoholism is likely the cause, not just an adjunct, of the mental state described, as it may have been for de Vere.

Many alcoholics are narcissistic, which includes a "preoccupation with 'fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty or ideal love'" (*Alcoholism* 87). Some Oxfordian theorists

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*Judging from the Henry IV plays  
and Twelfth Night, we may also  
conclude that the author was right  
at home in the company of drunkards.*

---

believe de Vere saw himself as the rightful King of England. If they are correct, perhaps de Vere's hope was justifiable, but by any measure it is a lofty one. De Vere certainly expressed fantasies of beauty and ideal love. His early works are wonderfully awash in exactly those themes, exemplified also in *Romeo and Juliet*. ("Juliet is the sun!")

Moreover, he carried these ideas of ideal love and beauty into middle age, a persistence that further argues in favor of alcoholism. Though alcoholics can be intellectual giants, they typically remain adolescents emotionally throughout life. "According to those in recovery, the emotional age of the addict is frozen from the first moment of addictive use (usually when very young)" (*Drunks* 297). Thorburn adds that on average, this moment occurs at age 13. John Lennon's alcoholism began at age 11. Oxford was 12 when he published his passionate narrative poem, *The Tragicall Historie of Romeus and Juliet*, and he seems to have maintained a vaunted view of love through the years.

A 1595 letter from de Vere to Burghley cited by Sobran refers to "my health, which is not good" (136). Of course, his health problems could have stemmed from anything, but de Vere's illness is never explained, and his complaint is very general. Age 45 is a reasonable time for the physical damages wreaked by alcoholism to become manifest. Alcoholics, moreover, often "die...of their disease or the secondary diseases that alcohol spawned" (*Drunks* 85). While other well-to-do Englishmen of the time lived to ripe ages, Oxford died comparatively young, a fate of many alcoholics.

### Shakespeare Knew the Tavern Intimately

Aside from wine connoisseurs, non-alcoholics rarely praise alcoholic beverages in exalted terms, but there are several Shakespearean references to the positive qualities of drink. Judging from the *Henry IV* plays and *Twelfth Night*, we may also conclude that the

(cont'd on p. 22)

*Alcoholism (cont'd from p. 21)*

author was right at home in the company of drunkards. Shakespeare finds drunks amusing; and they are either honorable (Prince Hal), loveable (Sir Toby) or cleverly subversive (Falstaff). He even casts Prince Hal, the obvious de Vere figure in the *Henry IV* plays, as a smart, affable carouser who will rise heroically to the occasion when the time comes for him to reign. I recall no evil drunkards in Shakespeare. Elizabethan England had its share of Puritans and teetotalers, but de Vere was of the opposite mind.

### Contrary Indications

To my mind, the primary contrary indication of alcoholism in de Vere is Shakespeare's positive view of human nature and his utter lack of fundamental negativity. Shakespeare's heroes are noble, strong, smart, merciful, passionate and tender. The literature of alcoholics tends towards misery, cynicism, blame, nihilism and displeasure. Think Sartre or Hunter Thompson for gonzo versions of such an orientation. On the other hand, some alcoholics fit the opposite mold. Thomas Paine was the most widely read political and religious philosopher of his age, and his lines ring with the adroit marriage of passion and reason. De Vere's writing is so noble, so insightful, so passionate, that he stirs us to the zenith of our emotions. But then again, that's what peak-performing alcoholics do best: they win people over and make us love them. Although their personal lives exasperate us, we excuse their behavior because we are infatuated. We love Marilyn. We love Sinatra. We love Lennon. We love Elvis. We love Shakespeare. Non-alcoholics do not generally inspire idolization, but alcoholics do, all the time.

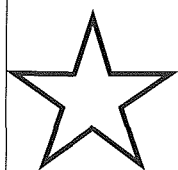
The lives of many alcoholics project a sense of grand tragedy. While we may idolize the famous ones as public figures, we ache for them as well. This is certainly the case with de Vere.

### Not All Tragedy

Why do we love de Vere and nevertheless cringe when considering some of his personality traits and personal foibles? Why do we adore his genius, yet pity his tragic fate? One answer might be that he suffered from alcoholism. If true, it is not entirely a bad thing, at least for us. Without it, he may never have given us the intense delights of Shakespeare. □

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## Oxfordian News

### Peter Dawkins discusses his book *The Shakespeare Enigma* at the University of Minnesota

At the University of Minnesota on the evening of November 3, Peter Dawkins delivered a lecture and responded to questions about his book *The Shakespeare Enigma*. Dawkins was introduced as the founder and director of The Francis Bacon Research Trust.

An earnest yet reserved British scholar, Dawkins spoke enthusiastically about Shakespeare authorship studies while omitting any mention of who he believes actually wrote the plays and poems. It was not until the question-and-answer session that a student raised the question, and Dawkins asserted that Francis Bacon was the central figure behind the works of Shakespeare. He also believes that a much wider "group" of writers figured in the grand design of the plays, which were intended to use the medium of live theatre to "illuminate" Elizabethan/Jacobean audiences into the foundations of modern science and the wisdom of the ages.

Dawkins' interpretation of the Shakespearean canon extends to Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, and even the founding of America, all of which he believes are implicit in the Shakespearean canon. In his book, Dawkins lists a staggering figure of 36 authors who he believes were either direct collaborators with Bacon (9), influences (9), or had other associations (18) in the plays we now attribute to Shakespeare. In responding to a student's question about the implications of concealing the identity of so many authors, Dawkins replied that it was not a "conspiracy," but a "secret."

Dawkins believes that there exists a "treasure trail" of evidence pointing to Francis Bacon and his younger brother Anthony as the principal authors. The book is lavishly illustrated with drawings and frontispiece materials from Tudor and Stuart texts. For essential evidence in supporting his claims for Bacon, however, Dawkins relies on the ciphers that have been used by Baconians for over a century. He also draws upon the closing couplet of Sonnet 83 as evidence for the two Bacon brothers as the primary

authors: "There lives more life in one of your fair eyes/Than both your poets can in praise devise." (p. 22)

When asked by a student present at the lecture about his thoughts on the Earl of Oxford, Dawkins indicated that he believes Oxford was on the fringe of the group of writers surrounding Bacon. (In Dawkins' book, the name of Oxford is listed in the third tier of those writers associated with Shakespeare, as described above.) But Dawkins categorically rejected Oxford as the principal author, citing two reasons: (1) the life of Oxford, which he does not believe is a match with the plays and (2) the dating of such plays as *The Tempest*, which, according to Dawkins, scholars have conclusively demonstrated to be written after the death of Oxford in 1604.

But in Dawkins' book, he offers this intriguing commentary on *All's Well That Ends Well*:

Much of 'All's Well That Ends Well', which scholars surmise was first written c. 1597-8 and revised c. 1603-1604, appears to be largely based upon Oxford's marriage to Anne. The play's title was first recorded in Francis Bacon's private notebook in 1594. (159-60)

Thus, for Dawkins, because the phrase "all's well that ends well" appears in one of Bacon's notebooks in 1594, he concludes that Bacon is the author of a play about the Oxford-Anne Cecil marriage of 1571. He does not explain why Bacon or his "group" would be interested in writing a play about the circumstances of a courtly marriage that occurred twenty-five years earlier.

While passionate about the study of Shakespeare and the authorship question, Dawkins' work nonetheless reveals scholarly limitations. This includes the absence of close textual analysis of the plays and poems to support his claims. His research and his book reveal the weaknesses of the Baconian theory of authorship that have been apparent since the nineteenth century.

Nonetheless, Peter Dawkins' book is a refreshing alternative to the recent crop of Stratfordian biographies. Its usefulness is underscored in a thoughtful introduction to

the book by Mark Rylance, who indicates that the points he gleaned from Dawkins have been instructive in his acting and directing of Shakespeare's plays. That is more than may be said for those vapid conventional books written by Greenblatt, Ackroyd, and Shapiro, who purport to offer biographies of a man of the theater.

-- James Norwood  
Humanities Program  
University of Minnesota

### Wooden O Symposium held in Cedar City, Utah

Dr. Richard Desper attended the "Wooden O Symposium", held August 1-3, 2005, as part of the Utah Shakespeare Festival at Southern Utah University in Cedar City, Utah, where he delivered a paper with Oxfordian overtones. The most significant detail of the event is neither the Symposium nor the Festival has any particularly Oxfordian leanings; in fact, Dr. Desper's paper was the first Oxfordian paper presented at the Symposium in its history. Of necessity the presentation began with a brief exposition of the Oxfordian authorship position. A lively question-and-answer period followed, with most of the dialogue focusing on authorship. Happily, the interchange was congenial, focusing on the arguments and the facts rather than on personalities.

The Festival offered five plays in repertory, three of Shakespeare and two others, shown in either their open-air "Wooden O," a replica of the original Globe Theater in London, or in one of two closed stages. This year's plays featured *Romeo and Juliet*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Love's Labour's Lost*. The venue is not without distinction: the Utah Shakespeare Festival won a Tony in the year 2000 for "Best Regional Theater", and a number of the players are members of Actor's Equity.

The organizers of the event were most gracious hosts throughout. Information about the event may be found online at <http://www.li.suu.edu/woodeno/>.

-- Dick Desper

(cont'd on p. 29)

## Book Review

By Derran Charlton

*Shakespeare: The Biography*. By Peter Ackroyd. Chatto & Windus, 2005 (560 pages).

Peter Ackroyd's lavishly illustrated book represents the author's detailed study of the remarkably few ascertained facts of Shakespeare's (William Shakspeare's) life. Supplementing these facts with a mass of data on the Elizabethan era, the book's leaden description covers ninety-one prolonged chapters. Virtually nothing new is added to our knowledge of the man himself. Surely Shakespeare's life cannot have been so boring—or could it?

Only the barest of facts about his life are known, and the few documents that survive are of minimal interest regarding any literary pursuits. They only confirm that Shakspeare (the Stratford fellow) assiduously pursued small debtors through the courts, that he bought land but failed to pay his taxes, that he failed to teach his wife and children literacy, that he is not known to have owned a library—not even a single book (even a Bible), that none of his neighbors (nor any of his family) are known to have ever referred to him as being a writer or an actor, nor that he traveled no further than the muddy banks of the river Thames—least of all overseas. No amount of ingenuity in word-spinning can hide these cold naked facts.

Ackroyd's biography is no exception. A biographer of poet and dramatist Shakespeare must either extend his imagination or opt for indecision. Ackroyd mostly does the latter. Was Shakespeare's father a crypto-Catholic? More so, was Shakespeare himself? Did he work, after leaving school, as a tutor to a Catholic family in Lancashire? Was he ever a lawyer's clerk? Or a school-teacher? Did he join the army, or the navy, or study law? Was his marriage to Anne Hathaway a happy one? No one knows. In each case, after pondering the conflicting theories, Ackroyd decides possibly "yes," possibly "no."

Sifting through the plays for possible clues to the author's personality proves equally frustrating. An alternative to writing about Shakespeare is to supply back-

ground information on subjects that must have affected him. Ackroyd indefatigably embraces this option, offering lengthy excursions on the curriculum at Stratford Grammar School, the construction of Elizabethan playhouses, the histories and touring itineraries of the various acting companies, and so forth. What is missing is any sense of how Shakespeare the man related to these topics.

Ackroyd then adopts a different approach in which he seemingly acquires privileged access to the workings of Shakespeare's mind. We "may imagine," he tells us, that Shakespeare as a child was "singularly competitive." Perhaps he was—but perhaps he wasn't. There is no evidence

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*Virtually nothing new is  
added to our knowledge of  
the man himself.*

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either way. As Shakespeare approaches manhood, Ackroyd's insights become more confident. "The young Shakespeare was eager for experience in all its forms." "We might also remark upon his buoyancy, an inward easiness of spirit." "He manifested a continual subtle humorousness like some stream of life." Where do such assertions come from? That is anyone's guess—but doubtfully from the testimony of anyone who knew Shakespeare. Ackroyd's explanations become even more startling: "words elicited more words from him in an act of sympathetic magic." Shakespeare was "without opinions" and "without beliefs." Nor did he feel for his characters: he "had no sympathies at all." On the contrary, he was "deeply excited" by his own expressiveness. "It may have been remarked that he was particularly cheerful that day."

Such romantic ideas and suggestions are

not new. Unfortunately, Ackroyd becomes so entangled that he contradicts himself without apparently noticing. Having posited a Shakespeare without sympathies, he claims that failure always arouses his sympathy: "Whenever any man fails, Shakespeare's sympathy envelops him." He speculates that this may reflect the playwright's grief at the down-turn of his father's career. With the same inconsistency he cautions that it would be "absurd and anachronistic to portray Shakespeare as a nihilist," though that is what someone without opinions or beliefs is.

Ackroyd seems hopelessly of two minds about what Shakespeare was like. Maybe he was "amorous, witty, fluent, full of furious energy" or, maybe he was "shy, reserved and aloof." He lived in lodgings away from his family, and it was said that he refused invitations to parties, pleading illness. The plays contain many references to "blushing," which Ackroyd thinks may signify their author's social awkwardness. He suspects that Shakespeare made himself, in effect, invisible by adapting his opinions to the company he was in. That could possibly explain why nobody bothered to collect biographical data about him until decades after his death. His personality "was not considered to be of any interest." At all events, no glimmer of it is discernible among the many indecisions and pontifications of this biography—which may, if Ackroyd is correct, make it true to life.

I would have enjoyed any cogent explanations as to why so few contemporary writers alluded to Shakespeare, and why some of their references imply that he was getting credit for other men's work. Or why, in marked contrast to the prevailing custom, did "Shakespeare" never write friendly eulogies in the prefaces of works by other authors; and why did they not write such tributes in any of his works? Why, following his death in 1616, is not a soul known to have uttered a word of lament—again in marked contrast to the usual custom of writing eulogies on a deceased author? Why, if Shakespeare had been the real author, did he

(cont'd on p. 32)

## Book Review

# Unmasking Another Shakespeare

By Ramon Jiménez

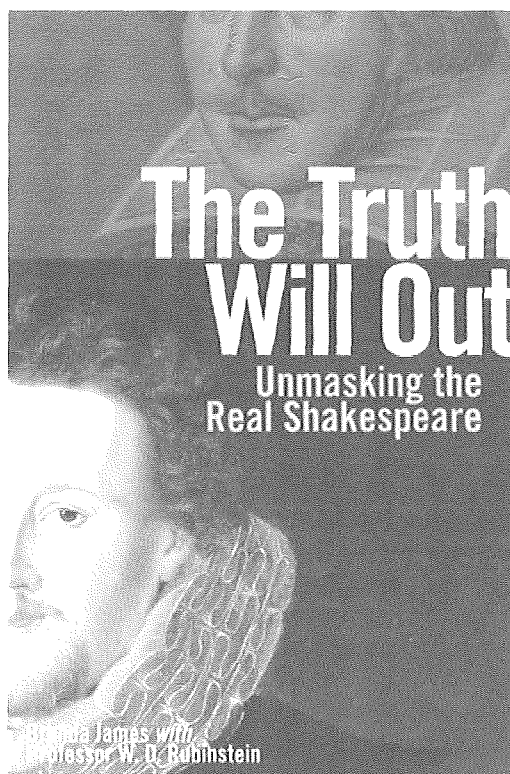
*The Truth Will Out, Unmasking the Real Shakespeare.* By Brenda James and William D. Rubinstein. Longman, 2005. (360 pages).

Hard on the heels of half a dozen biographies published just this year about the author of the Shakespeare canon, whoever he was, comes yet another, this one confidently revealing the name of the playwright—Sir Henry Neville, a politician and landowner who, the authors claim, chose for his pseudonym the name of a distant kinsman whom he paid well to be his “operative in the theatre.” Brenda James, a Warwickshire native and sometime lecturer in English at Portsmouth University, and Dr. William D. Rubinstein, a New Yorker now teaching modern history at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth, have put together an attractive and highly-publicized brief for the first new candidate for the authorship in several decades. They have brought new documents to light and assembled a host of facts, and more than a few speculations, to support their claim that Neville, who was England’s Ambassador to France for two years until May 1601, began writing history plays around 1590 and, over the next twenty years, produced the entire Shakespeare canon, including the narrative poems and the Sonnets.

Those who do not believe the Stratford theory will be pleased to find in *The Truth Will Out* another stinging demolition of the argument that a Warwickshire businessman with ambiguous theater connections wrote the plays and poems that bear his name. Throughout the book, the authors frequently refer to the yawning gap between the biography of Shakespeare of Stratford and the manifest education, knowledge, and experiences of the author of the canon. On the other hand, they summarily dismiss the claims of all other candidates—Bacon, Marlowe, Stanley, Rutland, Mary Sidney, and Edward de Vere.

The case for Neville rests on two categories of evidence. In the first are his dates,

his social class and circumstances, and his experiences, all of which appear to comport with those of the author of the canon. In the second category are his alleged associations with several Elizabethan documents, one discovered by the authors themselves.



At best, Sir Henry Neville’s dates (c. 1562-1615), circumstances, and experiences do not rule him out as the hidden Shakespeare. He was related to several noble families, was educated at Oxford, and became a Member of Parliament at age twenty-two. As a teen-ager he spent four years on the continent, visiting France, Germany, Vienna, and Italy, although only Padua, Venice and Rome are mentioned in Italy. He also paid a brief visit to Scotland. As a wealthy courtier and then Ambassador to France for two years, he was familiar with the intrigues and personalities of the court and with the political and social issues of the time. Neville was something of a scholar and a linguist who, the authors claim, “was

fluent in French and Spanish, and was able to read Italian, German, and Dutch,” as well as Latin and Greek.

But after this, the fit between Neville and the author of the canon begins to break down. To account for Shakespeare’s knowledge of the law, the authors first minimize it, and then explain that Neville, although never trained in the law, “was continuously immersed in legal matters, especially those concerning real estate and local government.” The single lame assertion that Neville “might have gone frequently to London, and it is highly probable that he would have visited the local theatres” is the only biographical information offered to connect him with plays or the theater. (On this score, it appears that there is more evidence for the Stratford man.) Shakespeare’s considerable knowledge of ships and maritime language is explained with this sentence: “... it is difficult to believe that as a young man Neville did not take an interest in the trading vessels of the great Gresham mercantile enterprise which must have been very prominent in the port of London.” Neville’s mother was a Gresham, a great-granddaughter of James Gresham, founder of the family’s trading company.

The most important episode in Neville’s life was certainly his involvement in the futile Essex plot and rebellion of 1600-1601. Neville was arrested, tried, convicted, deprived of his office of Ambassador, fined £10,000, sent to the Tower, and barely escaped execution. He and the Earl of Southampton, Neville’s “lifelong friend and political ally,” were the only two Essex conspirators neither executed nor freed. The two remained there for almost two years until the accession of James I, who released them both. Neville eventually regained his property, escaped the bulk of his fine, and returned to Parliament. But he spent the rest of his life trying to recoup his financial and political fortunes.

Considering the biography that the authors present, Neville’s interests, aspira-  
(cont’d on p. 26)

Jiménez (cont'd from p. 25)

tions, and activities do not seem to be those of a writer, much less of a thoroughgoing man of the theater. The authors admit that his "major ambition in life was to gain high political office." It seems hardly credible that the conservative and Royalist author of the Shakespeare canon would take part in a conspiracy against Elizabeth, a legitimate queen for over forty years. It is also significant that the authors cannot cite a single verse, poem, sonnet, play, masque, or even a prose work that has come from the quill of Sir Henry Neville, except, of course, the Shakespearean *oeuvre*, which he chose to conceal. However, none of the above facts disqualifies Neville outright. What might be, according to the authors, direct evidence that he was Shakespeare is to be found in several Elizabethan documents.

## The Documentary Evidence

The most interesting new evidence offered in *The Truth Will Out* is the so-called "Tower Notebook," a manuscript of nearly two hundred pages dated to the late 1590s, and consisting mainly of extracts copied from various historical sources about "personal services" provided to English monarchs, especially at coronations. Some extracts have been annotated in a different hand, "presumably but not certainly another man," one in particular with twenty or so sentences and phrases describing what was apparently the coronation of Anne Boleyn. The authors point to the occurrence of several of these phrases in the opening Prologue of *Henry VIII*, and in four different places in Act IV, sc. i, which describes the coronation of Anne Boleyn. The "Tower Notebook" was "discovered in the course of researching this book" among a group of manuscripts deposited in the Lincolnshire Record Office in 1954 by a family in a direct line of descent from Neville's second daughter. The authors claim that it is a compilation or composition by Neville himself, or dictated by him to a scribe, and that it demonstrates that he

wrote *Henry VIII*, or most of it, while in the Tower. They do not mention the fact that most modern scholars assign large portions of *Henry VIII* to John Fletcher, including all of Act IV.

Another document advanced in support of Neville is the well-known copy of *Hall's Chronicle* (1548) that contains several hundred marginal annotations made in the sections on the reigns of Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI by an unknown commentator who used three different styles of writing. *Hall's Chronicle* is accepted by many scholars as a major source for several of Shakespeare's history plays. The authors attempt to connect this book with Sir Henry Neville by pointing out that the letters "Eed" on a label pasted inside the cover (actually "EEd") are similar to the letters "App" that have been found on a similar label in a book published in 1591 and owned by a Robert Worsley. This Worsley may have been the Sir Robert Worsley (1669-1742) who was

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*the authors cannot cite a single verse, poem, sonnet, play,  
masque, or even a prose work that has come from the quill  
of Sir Henry Neville, except, of course, the Shakespearean  
oeuvre, which he chose to conceal*

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a descendant of Neville's second daughter. He owned a large library and lived at Appeldurcombe on the Isle of Wight, hence the "App."

A evidence for the connection to Neville, the authors have unearthed one Richard Edes (or Eedes, as they spell it) a clergyman and sometime poet and playwright who was an acquaintance of Neville's. In a 1583 poem, Edes referred to Neville as "distinguished for his book-learning." Thus, Richard Edes (1554-1604) must have owned the copy of *Hall's Chronicle* with the "EEd" label in it and loaned it to Neville, who made the annotations, and then wrote the plays, etc. But Alan Keen and Roger Lubbock, authors of *The Annotator*, report that the "EEd" in this copy of *Hall's Chronicle* was probably the pressmark of a large library, and had been inserted when the book was rebound,

c. 1700. Furthermore, Keen and Lubbock describe the annotator as having a strong Catholic bias. Sir Henry Neville was "a staunch Protestant." Thus, the connection between the mysterious Hall's Chronicle and the Elizabethan Richard Edes, and Sir Henry Neville, described by James and Rubinstein as "virtually certain," dies away.

Possible evidence for Neville's literary interests is the familiar cover page of the so-called "Northumberland Manuscript" that was discovered in 1867 in a London mansion. The twenty-two page manuscript itself is a collection of essays and speeches by Francis Bacon, a letter by Philip Sidney, and other miscellaneous items. On the cluttered cover page are dozens of scribbled words and phrases (many in Latin), titles of essays and plays (including *Richard II* and *Richard III*), a garbled line from *Rape of Lucrece*, and several names, such as Francis Bacon, William Shakespeare (in various spellings), Thomas Nashe, and "Nevill" (sic). The

authors describe it as probably "the cover of a folder used to hold or catalogue some sixteenth-century literary works." Because Neville's name is at the top of the cover page and his family motto

(*ne vile velis*, "no vile intentions") and a poem about it appear below it, they claim that the manuscript belonged to him and that it means he is the author Shakespeare. But even if we could be sure that Neville had done the scribbling, the most it would mean is that the man had literary interests.

## Neville and the Authorship

The authors undertake to answer four questions about Henry Neville with respect to the Shakespeare authorship: Why did Neville decide to write plays? When did he begin? Why did he use a pseudonym? What was his relationship to William Shakespeare of Stratford?

There are simply no facts to answer the first question. Since Neville lived primarily in two country homes in East Sussex  
(cont'd on p. 27)



Jiménez (cont'd from p. 26)

and Berkshire, the authors are forced to speculate that when he visited London he "was temporarily away from his normal haunts," that "he was bored," and "felt an intense creative urge." They also suggest that Neville was so concerned about the possibility of civil war that he was determined "to prevent such warfare from breaking out again" and turned to the theater as "an obvious way to influence the population to reject any arguments over dynasties." On the other hand, two pages later they claim that in Shakespeare's history plays Neville was "writing in considerable measure about his own ancestors," and "might well be seen as advocating the claims of his own family to the throne, or at least failing to support the Tudor dynasty."

As for when Neville began to write, the authors can do no more than suggest a date near the time that orthodox scholars claim that William of Stratford began to write, that is, around 1589. It boggles the mind to be told that the world's greatest dramatic genius was, in 1589, a twenty-seven-year-old Member of Parliament who "had an eye to becoming a writer." The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 may have been the event "that gave Neville the nerve and motivation to begin writing."

Several reasons are advanced for Neville's use of a pseudonym. Men of his class did not write for the public stage. Also, there was his distant cousin, another Henry Neville (c. 1575-1641), and our author may "not have wished to cause any confusion between the two" and embarrass his kinsman. Thirdly, the author of *Venus and Adonis* and seventeen sonnets urging the Earl of Southampton to marry Elizabeth Vere may not have wanted his true identity known for fear of compromising Lord Burghley, the man who asked him to write them. Lastly, the history plays "might well be looked at very closely indeed for their partisanship, even for possible sedition." "Evidently, Neville thought that there was no point in inviting trouble when he could write under a pseudonym."

What led Neville to use "William Shakespeare" as a pseudonym? It turns out that he and Will were distant relatives through a generations-old connection between the Ardens and the Beauchamps, Earls of Warwick. When Neville met the Stratford

villager, he was happy to employ him as his "well-placed front man and factotum on the London stage."

## Playwright in the Tower

It is on the basis of the evidence summarized above that the authors claim that Sir Henry Neville wrote the plays and poems attributed to William Shakespeare. Although they reject the Stratford Shakespeare and make merry with the paucity of information about him, they give great weight to the match between Neville's dates and those alleged by orthodox scholars for the writing of the plays. Thus, they identify Neville's conviction and imprisonment as the "great divide" in his dramatic career, after which he turned away from Italianate comedies and "triumphalist histories," to darker, more cynical, works. After dashing off up to ten history plays, as well as a dozen others during the 1590s, including *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Twelfth Night*, Neville suddenly found himself "faced with the worst public and private catastrophe of his life."

In the Tower, "with abundant leisure time," he took up his quill again, but now with disappointment, bitterness, and doubt. The authors date *Hamlet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and "possibly" *Othello* to the two-year period of his confinement. "It seems as certain as it is possible to be about this subject, in view of our present knowledge, that Neville wrote *Hamlet* in the winter of 1601-02 while incarcerated in the Tower, and that it concerns the Essex rebellion and Neville's response to it." *Hamlet*, they say, "was meant to be a blending of Essex and Neville himself." Inconveniently, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is dated to 1601-2, but the authors suggest that "Conceivably, Neville wished to escape his misery with ribald, subversive, slapstick comedy..."

In the five years after his release, Neville completed six tragedies, including *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. In 1609 he finished *Cymbeline*—"its somewhat hackneyed apparatus [being] the product of Neville's preoccupation with parliamentary matters and his own personal finances at this time."

As a director and investor in the second London Virginia Company, the enterprise

that founded the famous Jamestown colony in 1607, Neville was in a position to see the letters and accounts of its travails (the Strachey Letter and The True Declaration) that were allegedly sent back to London in 1610. According to the authors, the evidence that he used these accounts in his "farewell to the theatre," *The Tempest*, in 1610-11 is "so overwhelming as to be irrefutable."

Far from "irrefutable," this claim has been dubious for years, and recent research casts strong doubt on the use of any seventeenth century sources in *The Tempest*.

## Shake-Speare's Sonnets

The opaque and haunting Sonnets of Shakespeare and their mysterious dedication have fueled more speculation and theorization than any other work in the canon, but the analysis presented in *The Truth Will Out* is decidedly spotty. As regards the dedication, the authors point out that publishers didn't ordinarily write dedications, although Thomas Thorpe had done so twice before—on both occasions for books by authors who were dead. "In contrast," they claim, "the author of the Sonnets was of course alive and well." This is an example of the startling line of reasoning they often use.

They then try to connect the Sonnets' dedication to the granting of the royal charter of the second London Virginia Company on May 23, 1609, just three days after the Sonnets were entered in the Stationers' Register. It turns out that the author of the dedication was Sir Henry Neville himself, and the "onlie begetter," in the sense of "inspirer," was his fellow investor in the Virginia Company, Henry Wriothesley.

The authors assert that a "deep friendship" had developed between the two men even though Wriothesley had testified against Neville at his trial for treason in 1601. "... the Sonnets were probably intended as a 'thanks-offering' offering [sic] by Neville to Southampton to mark a likely upturn in his financial fortunes and perhaps in the financial fortunes of both." Neville's use of the phrase "our ever-living poet," normally applied "only to the living or to God," was meant to convey the thought that his career as a poet was over. To top off this analysis, the authors explain that "'Mr. W. (cont'd on p. 28)"

Jiménez (cont'd from p. 27)

H.' must have been Neville's affectionate nickname for Southampton," but since they were both named Henry he "might have reversed his friend's initials so that there was no confusion as to which Henry was which." They dismiss the possibility that "Mr. W.H." was William Hall, the candidate of many Oxfordians, as "purely speculative and lacking in any plausibility."

To explain the first seventeen "marriage" Sonnets, the authors propose two possible scenarios. First, Henry Neville, on commission from Lady Southampton or Lord Burghley in 1589 or so, might have written them to urge Southampton to marry Elizabeth Vere. Since by 1609 Neville and Southampton had been through so much together, "The younger man might well have regarded the publication of these old Sonnets, so many years later, as a well-intended joke rather than as an unwelcome and impudent reminder of the distant past ..."

The second scenario has Neville, in difficult financial straits, writing the "marriage" Sonnets in 1608-9 to his own eldest son, also named Henry, urging him to marry the daughter of Sir John Smyth, a wealthy knight from Kent. "This would account for the intensity—indeed the sheer desperation—of the tone of these sonnets ..." Young Neville apparently took his father's advice and married the girl even before the Sonnets were published.

Some other suggestions by the authors: Neville wrote Sonnet 29 (*When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes*) and Sonnet 30 (*When to the sessions of sweet silent thought*) to Southampton while both were in the Tower. He wrote the bitter Sonnet 111 (*O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide, / The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds*) to Southampton complaining of James' treatment of him (Neville) after he was released in 1603. Neville addressed the well-known "canopy Sonnet" to King James in 1604-5. It is true that Neville was one of the Barons of the Cinque Ports—the traditional bearers of canopies over monarchs—but the Barons were not the only bearers of canopies, and nothing else in the Sonnet supports this interpretation.

The two most common questions about the Sonnets publication are disposed of in a single, but contradictory, paragraph. Neville "had a good deal of leisure time" in prison

to write the Sonnets, and the volume "was certainly authorized ... and ... published with his approval." On the other hand, "its many typographical errors [suggest] that it was hurriedly produced by Neville."

The authors confess that they cannot identify the Dark Lady, but note that Neville's wife, Anne Killigrew Neville, "was Cornish and was therefore presumably dark-haired."

The explanation of the why and who of the First Folio proceeds along the same lines. There was a continuing need for a pseudonym because "the political implications of the plays had to be deflected" from Neville. Moreover, "there were still other aristocratic Sir Henry Nevilles alive at the time," and "the then patrons and publishers would not have wished there to be any confusion concerning these men."

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*It fails to cohere as a usable  
authorship theory, and it is  
not likely to improve with  
further research.*

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Ben Jonson is confirmed as the putative editor of the First Folio, and there is a "strong likelihood, amounting to a near certainty, that he was paid to do so by Neville's family." Jonson knew Henry Neville (they both belonged to the Mitre Club), and had praised him in an epigram published in 1616. In it Jonson contrasted Neville's virtue with his lack of honors, but didn't mention plays, poetry, or any kind of writing. As evidence of Jonson's association with the Neville family, the authors offer the fact that at the time of the Folio's publication Jonson was a resident at Gresham College, which had been founded and funded, and named, for Neville's great uncle, Sir Thomas Gresham.

### Neville vs. de Vere

In almost every category of evidence, such as literary reputation, personal circumstances, and theatrical associations, the biography of Oxford is superior to that of Neville with respect to the authorship

question. His descendants' connections to the Herbert brothers, dedicatees of the First Folio, are far stronger than those of Henry Neville's family. Even Oxford's familial relationship with William of Stratford was closer than Neville's. Yet the authors blandly assert that Oxford "could not have written Shakespeare's works, and no plausible evidence exists that he did." They repeat the Stratfordian mantra that "The greatest single stumbling block to accepting the Oxfordian case is that he died in 1604, and around 11 of Shakespeare's plays appeared after that date." They don't address the fact that three or four previously unknown plays appeared in the First Folio in 1623, eight years after Neville's death. The last straw might be the gratuitous reference to Oxford's "notoriously violent and quarrelsome personality" in contrast to that of "the scholarly, introspective family man Neville."

Despite its failure to make a convincing argument for Neville, *The Truth Will Out* is well worth a few hours of attention as a view of Elizabethan history from a different perspective. The writing is crisp and smooth and only occasionally redundant. Documentation is supplied in more than five hundred endnotes, and the book is well-indexed, but, unfortunately, there is no bibliography. After the first citation of a book, subsequent endnotes consist only of the author's last name (Hasler, Cockburn, Duncan, for instance), and the reader must search back through the endnotes to find the first citation.

The case for the newest Shakespeare authorship candidate is a ragbag of small facts, scattered coincidences of names and phrases, and dozens of weak and questionable speculations. It fails to cohere as a usable authorship theory, and it is not likely to improve with further research. It is the type of thing that we are accustomed to hearing from Stratfordians about their candidate's connections to the plays and his motives for writing them.

*The Truth Will Out* is bound to attract more attention to the authorship question and it will make the Stratford theory look even more untenable. The authors have dealt a setback to orthodoxy, but their Neville theory is only slightly better. The case for the Earl of Oxford as Shakespeare remains the most persuasive. □

*President (cont'd from p. 2)*

key cities, especially Washington, DC, and New York City. We'd also like to establish stronger ties with educational institutions, foundations and other authorship-related organizations.

- We're considering two new publication initiatives. First, to celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of the Oxfordian, we'd like to collect an anthology of the best articles published during the first ten years. Second, we're exploring the feasibility of creating a series of short pamphlets that address specific "Hot Topics" in the Shakespeare authorship debate. Some of these would deal with the case against the prevailing Stratford theory, while others would focus on making the case for Oxford in a compelling way. We're looking to distribute important research that has the greatest potential for changing ... or at least opening ... minds.

- Another task force is taking a look at the big strategic picture in which we find ourselves. We have to face facts and ask some tough questions. The Society's membership has not been growing in recent years. In fact, membership is declining compared

with a few years ago. Why is that? What should we do to turn things around? How do we become more of a growth-oriented society? How do we attract a more diverse membership, especially younger members? What is our mission exactly? Should we rewrite and widely publicize a clear, concise Mission Statement? How well do our current programs and initiatives (including our library, publications and annual conference) support our mission? What new projects should we undertake to enhance our effectiveness? Could we apply for and receive foundation or donor support for specific educational programs?

## What's In A Name?

And now for a big question: Should we consider changing our name to broaden our appeal and enhance our acceptability to key audiences such as the media and potential donors? I for one think our name should be changed. I personally think the SOS name holds us back in our outreach efforts. A simple change to the "Shakespeare

Authorship Society" (SAS) or perhaps the "Shakespeare Authorship Research Society International" (SARSI) might do the trick. There are many other possibilities, of course. We should also consider adding a succinct, catchy tagline (such as "Searching for the True Bard").

I recognize that changing our name and creating a tagline are major steps. These are changes that should not be embarked upon lightly. At this point, no decision has been made either way. I would like to encourage all members to let me and others on the Board know what you think about the name-change and tagline ideas. If you have any creative suggestions to offer, please share those with us.

Finally, I want to say that it's an honor for me to serve as the Society's president. I hope 2006 will prove to be a true watershed year in the history of the Society. We won't be able to make progress without your active support and participation. The Society's future is in your hands. □

*Oxfordian News (cont'd from p. 23)*

## Rollout of *The Truth Will Out* at The Globe

The official launch of the latest book on the Shakespeare authorship, *The Truth Will Out*, by Brenda James and Bill Rubinstein, was held at The Globe in their basement lecture theater on the evening of October 19. The remarks below cover just a few of the things that stuck in my mind

Former Artistic Director Mark Rylance started the proceedings by saying he'd always had doubts about the authorship, and that the Globe management had been happy for him to express such doubts, and allow them to appear in the programs, etc. He outlined a number of his doubts, and said he was very impressed by the book and the new author proposed in it, though not going so far as to endorse it.

Brenda James spoke next, followed by Bill Rubinstein, and from them we learned that Sir Henry Neville was a wealthy landowner, Member of Parliament, with many distinguished ancestors including John of Gaunt and Warwick the Kingmaker. He was related to Shakespeare of Stratford through

the Ardens (and also had several relatives living in or near Stratford) and finding his distant relative an actor in London, might have arranged to borrow his name. Brenda then said that while no poetry existed in Neville's own name, his dispatches from France, where he was ambassador for sixteen months, were beautifully written, and had been admired by David Hume in the eighteenth century. She read an excerpt from these dispatches, which did indeed sound very fluent and well-expressed, and by contrast read a letter from Robert Cecil (to whom the dispatches were written), which was lumpy and unmusical by comparison.

Bill then told us more about Neville's background and his four-year travels on the continent in his youth with Sir Henry Saville, which took them as far north as Poland, and south to Rome (though no record of Denmark). Saville later became a foremost Oxford academic at Merton, Neville's College. Apparently there are several comments on Neville's learning and ability, though he did not say by whom. Bill explained that

Neville's father had written masques for Queen Elizabeth, which might have started Neville on his playwriting career. He made much of the fact that the tragedies began in 1601, the year that Neville was sent to the Tower (as a result of being mixed up in the Essex rebellion), and after that no more comedies were written. He quoted from a letter Neville wrote to a friend after his release, to the effect that he was now able to enjoy the same "beatitude" as Horace, which was "to retire into the country and write". There followed eleven plays (post hoc, if not propter hoc?). The phrase "well-wishing adventurer" in the Dedication to the Sonnets he related to the fact that Neville was one of the subscribers to the Second Virginia Company, who were known as "adventurers", as in "merchant adventurer". James I authorized the company shortly before the Sonnets were entered in the Stationers' Register.

Then Brenda took over again, and showed us examples of Neville's handwriting, and also pages from the "Tower Notebook," to

*(cont'd on p. 32)*

## Book Review

By Richard F. Whalen

***The Case for Shakespeare: The End of the Authorship Question.*** By Scott McCrea. Praeger, 2005 (296 pages).

Don't believe the subtitle of Scott McCrea's book.

It's a deliberate falsehood, no doubt a marketing ploy. He himself says in the final pages the authorship question will never end. "Never" may well turn out to be too strong, but meanwhile, as McCrea himself admits, his book does not end the authorship question, despite its subtitle.

He does make a valiant attempt. *The Case for Shakespeare* is only the second heavily researched, book-length polemic for the Stratford man and against Oxford as the true author. The first was Irvin Matus's *Shakespeare, In Fact* (1994), which promised factual evidence but failed to deliver it. (See review in the winter 1994 issue of the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*.) McCrea dismisses Matus's book as a good try but "scattershot" and quotes him only once on a minor matter.

Neither Matus nor McCrea are establishment Shakespeare scholars. Matus is an independent scholar who did much research at the Folger Shakespeare Library. McCrea, who writes plays, is on the faculty of the Conservatory of Theater Arts and Film at the State University of New York-Purchase. His only previous publication was an article in *Skeptic* magazine on Will Shakspeare's education as it is supposedly reflected in the plays.

From the start, McCrea promises hard, historical evidence "pinpointing" Shakespeare's identity. But, as usual, the book relies entirely on Stratfordian interpretations of convoluted, abstruse passages, typically Elizabethan, that are almost always poetic allusions subject to interpretation.

He repeatedly cites three pieces of evidence to make his case for the Stratford man: "the Folio epistles, the Stratford monument, and posthumous references." (All, of course, are posthumous.) But in the First Folio, the separate references to Avon and Stratford are poetic allusions. He says that William Dugdale, the earliest eyewitness, made a mistake when he sketched a sack holder in the Stratford monument, and that today's

effigy of a writer is the original because it shows no signs of repairs or changes. That's backwards. If today's monument were the original, it would have to show signs of the wear, tear and repairs cited in historical records over the centuries. But it doesn't.

And, as usual, he never grapples with the anti-Stratfordian and Oxfordian arguments. They are glossed over, dismissed without examination or entirely omitted. For example, not until late in the book is it even mentioned that anti-Stratfordians consider "William Shakespeare" to be a pseudonym. Nor does he make clear that Oxfordians cite as powerful evidence that the First Folio of the Shakespeare plays was dedicated to Oxford's son-in-law and that man's brother.

He does not weigh the evidence. He makes a detailed, comprehensive case for the Stratford man and dismisses Oxfordians by accusing them of being tricksters, practicing a kind of sleight of hand with the evidence. He calls it a "con game." Such *ad hominem* arguments are scattered throughout the book. In the most egregious example, he equates those who question the identity of William Shakespeare with those who would deny that millions of men, women and children died in the Holocaust. Surprisingly, Stephen Greenblatt of Harvard picked up the same slur in his letter to the editor of *The New York Times* commenting on an article on the authorship controversy. It is, perhaps, a sign of desperation among the hard-core Stratfordians.

To his credit, for someone who is not a practicing Shakespeare scholar, McCrea has done the reading, research and analysis required to assess the authorship question. He offers several challenges. For example, Oxfordians find the language of a well-read courtier in the poems and plays, but, says McCrea, the same can be said of the plays of Marlowe, Chapman, Daniel, Marston, Webster, Middleton, Beaumont and especially Fletcher. In the Sonnets, Shakespeare describes himself as an old man, but, says McCrea, Richard Barnfield, Lord Byron and T. S. Eliot while still young wrote poems about themselves as old men.

Oxfordians will recognize all the usual Stratfordian arguments, from Robert Greene's *Groatsworth* to the allegedly post-1604 plays. In between, Will Shakspeare could have picked up all he needed to know to write the great works of Shakespeare at the grammar school, bookstores and around town. The plays, according to McCrea, do not show evidence of an unusual knowledge of the court, the law, the military, aristocratic activities, a courtier's mindset, or a firsthand knowledge of France and Italy. So much for Oxford.

McCrea rails against what he calls Oxfordian "assumptions" and says that scholars in academia have not realized that that was the real problem. The Oxfordian assumptions that he cites, however, turn out to be mostly inferences from historical evidence. For example, Oxfordians infer that today's Stratford monument is not the original based on Dugdale's eyewitness testimony. From the references in *Hamlet* to Oxford's life one can infer that he wrote the play. At the same time, he accepts Stratfordian assumptions as valid arguments. For example, he assumes the Stratford man went to school because the poems and plays show evidence of it (circular reasoning).

Astonishingly, McCrea writes, "By making a few legitimate assumptions, researchers have been able to discover a great deal about the life of William Shakespeare." (He is referring to Shakspeare of Stratford.) Assumptions, of course, cannot lead to biographical facts. Then, a few pages later, he contradicts himself: "Little is certain about the great man's life."

The book is full of unsupported assumptions, contradictions and faulty logic, such as circular reasoning and straw-man arguments. Fundamental to it is special pleading for the Stratford man. The book is far from a reasonably impartial examination of the evidence.

In the end, McCrea has found no "smoking gun" to end the authorship controversy. His comprehensive compilation of evidence for the Stratford man and against Oxford fails to add anything of significance to the debate. And the book's cover suggests that you can't judge a book by its title, either. □

## Book Review

By Richard F. Whalen

**Players: The Mysterious Identity of William Shakespeare.** By Bertram Fields. New York: HarperCollins, 2005 (308 pages).

The year 2005 has been a banner year for Oxfordians, with books on Oxford as Shakespeare from not just one but two of the biggest publishing houses in the United States, plus another major article in *The New York Times*.

Penguin-Gotham devoted its considerable publishing resources to Mark Anderson's "*Shakespeare*" by *Another Name*, a 400-page biography of the seventeenth Earl of Oxford as William Shakespeare, with an extraordinary 155 pages of notes. (See review in the Summer 2005 issue of the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*.) Penguin is an important publisher of Shakespeare's works under both the Penguin and Pelican imprints. The major *Times* article on the authorship controversy by William Nieder Korn on August 30 included favorable mention of Anderson's book. Anderson is a long-time member of the Shakespeare Oxford Society and a speaker at its conferences. HarperCollins lent its publishing prestige to Bertram Fields's provocative book, *Players: The Mysterious Identity of William Shakespeare*. HarperCollins publishes one of the big scholarly editions of the complete works of Shakespeare, along with Riverside, Oxford and Norton. Last May, Fields was the subject of a long profile in the *Times*, which also mentioned his book and *Variety's* positive review of it.

Both books have benefited from the publishers' prowess for promotion and distribution, and they can be found in most large bookstores.

Bertram Fields is not a member of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, nor is he a Shakespeare scholar. (Oxfordians did not know he was working on a book about Shakespeare's identity.) He bills himself as "the most prominent entertainment lawyer in America." He comes to the authorship issue as an outsider curious to know what it is all about, and his popular treatment of the issue is somewhat unusual, to say the least.

He provides no notes or bibliography. His acknowledgments do not include any Oxfordian or Stratfordian works, but he does demonstrate a careful, informed reading of the literature. For someone new to the controversy, he makes very few errors. He does quote briefly Charles Wisner Barrell, Barbara Burris, J. Thomas Looney, John Michell, Charlton Ogburn, Joseph Sobran and Roger Stritmatter. And he mentions that "one of my favorite professors at Harvard Law School, W. Barton Leach, was also a leading and articulate Oxfordian." His book may be a long-delayed result of Leach's influence.

Fields is willing to grapple with all the evidence, including the lack of evidence for the Stratford man, but he does not think Oxford was the sole author. He is, in short, a Groupist but with Oxford as the lead author, along with William Stanley, sixth Earl of Derby.

He defines his approach in his Introduction: "It is not the aim of this book to advocate a position, but rather to explore and evaluate the evidence on each side of the many relevant issues, and to set out a scenario that seems best to fit the facts, in an attempt to shed light on the mystery and come as close as possible to the elusive answer."

As a result, he hedges almost every statement in his book. For example, he says that on the one hand allusions to the Stratford man and his world fall short of demonstrating that he was the playwright; on the other hand, the shortfall does not mean he was not the playwright. "Beautified with our feathers" in Groatsworth may refer to the theft of a play; on the other hand, it could simply refer to Edward Alleyn's performing in a play.

The book is peppered with "could have" and "perhaps," questions posed and dismissed or not dismissed, issues raised and left hanging. He often hedges with "on the one hand ... on the other hand." His last sentence before a summing-up chapter telegraphs his general conclusions in a characteristic hedging: "A collaboration between Oxford and Stanley could make sense. But the combination could

have been Oxford and Bacon or Bacon and Stanley or there may have been no such collaboration at all."

Nevertheless, Oxford emerges as Fields's favorite. He decides that the Stratford man "was probably not the Bard" and that such a verdict would probably be upheld by an appellate court. "But the question," he adds, "is a close one." Despite arguments against Oxford, he says, "Oxford must be considered a strong candidate as at least one of the authors of the Shakespeare canon ... Oxford's life, education, knowledge and accomplishments seem a far better fit with Shakespeare than do those of the Stratford man."

Finally, he offers a long, bizarre scenario as his solution: "My own opinion? I believe the Stratford man did play a significant part in the creation of the plays, but that someone else originally created them and wrote the poems as well ... probably a nobleman." "Consider this scenario," he says. "The earl of Oxford writes the poems and plays beginning as early as 1580, or even before that ... Oxford hears of a hustling, provincial actor named Shaksper ... They make a deal ... [The actor] will, of course, be well paid for his assistance—and his silence .... In writing the three plays of Henry VI, [Oxford] turns for advice and assistance to Christopher Marlowe ..."

The scenario goes on like this for thirteen pages. It's almost wholly imaginary, complete with imagined dialogues. Oxford puts Shaksper's suggestions into the plays. Shaksper adds "still vex'd Bermoothes" to *The Tempest*. Stanley writes the plays that first appear in the records after Oxford dies, delivering them to Shaksper as "found" among Oxford's papers. Francis Bacon offers comments on the plays. Bacon and the Oxford and Southampton families agree to make Shaksper the poet-dramatist. They finance the Stratford monument. Bacon recommends collecting the plays in a folio volume and hires Ben Jonson to oversee the project and write the front matter that points to Shaksper as the author.

"Do I know that this is what occurred?" asks Fields. "Of course not. It seems to

(cont'd on p. 32)

*Fields (cont'd from p. 31)*

me a logical explanation ... But, instead of Oxford, it could have been Marlowe, hiding in Italy, or the brilliant philosopher-lawyer Bacon ... Or the Stratford man could really—somehow—have managed to write them all himself.

“What I have described is simply my own opinion ... only one of many possible solutions to this extraordinary mystery that has been with us for 400 years and may be with us forever.”

Appropriately enough, Fields's eccentric treatment inspired two reviewers from

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...strong support  
for Oxford as  
the true author

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opposite ends of the spectrum to condemn his book on amazon.com. Oxfordian Paul Streitz called it “truly an execrable book ... a horrendous mess ... nothing more than a half-baked synopsis of other more scholarly works.” He says that both Oxfordians and Stratfordians can join “to dislike this misbegotten creature.”

Sure enough, Stratfordian David Kathman says, “If you're really interested in the Shakespeare authorship question, this is a terrible book to start with.” Fields, he says, accepts anti-Stratfordian claims at face value even though “many of them can be shown to be either flat-out false or blatantly misleading.” He gives some examples from pages 281-2.

Despite Fields's constant hesitations about the evidence and maddening reluctance to express a firm conclusion, his book can still be taken as strong support for Oxford as the true author of the works of Shakespeare. In fact, Fields reportedly has sounded like an Oxfordian in TV interviews. The evidence he wrestles with should be quite persuasive for the thousands of readers who will pick up *Players*, itself an odd title, in book stores across the nation. They'll do much better, of course, with Mark Anderson's biography of Oxford as Shakespeare, *Shakespeare by Another Name*. □

*Oxfordian News (cont'd from p. 29)*

which it seemed that different people had contributed. Brenda explained that Neville had five (or more) handwriting styles. She then showed a short passage in the notebook that corresponds to some lines in a scene from *Henry VIII*. After the proceedings were over I happened to meet one of the Longman Pearson publicity ladies, who said it was the most exciting launch she had ever attended, as everyone was so keen and interested in the possibility the book opened up. There was certainly a definite buzz about the whole proceedings, which I daresay is rare, and it must be accounted a very successful launch.

Will the book sell well? We shall see. Will Neville displace Shakespeare? I doubt it. Will he displace Oxford? Maybe, but only among non-Oxfordians. See review on p. 25.)

-- John Rollett.

*Charlton (cont'd from p. 23)*

publish his plays anonymously until 1598, and retain so many unpublished ones at the time of his death? The few actors who were also dramatists did not do this. Why was no Shakespeare play ever registered at the Stationers' Hall in his or any similar name? Why do the original and present day monuments at Stratford-on-Avon differ hopelessly in their likeness? And why do both of them differ hopelessly from the famous Droeshout engraving in the 1623 Folio? Why did Phillip Henslowe, the most important theater-proprietor of the time, while making copious allusions in his diary to nearly all the dramatists and actors of the period, never mention Shakespeare either as an actor or writer? Why was it claimed that “Shakespeare never blotted a line” when his six extant signatures (all written on legal documents) contain blots upon blots?

In conclusion, while Ackroyd adds nothing original to the few documented facts, he brilliantly captures the bustling life of Elizabethan England and the rich pastoral landscapes of Warwickshire. His lengthy but ultimately ponderous biography reminds one of Hamlet without the Prince. Perhaps, as with Caliban, we ought to exclaim:

“...what a thrice double Asse  
Was I to take this drunkard for a god!  
And worship this dull foole!” □

### 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,  
and to encourage a high level  
of scholarly research  
and publication, and to  
foster and enhance  
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. 13-5105314; New York 07182.

## Correction

In her review of Mark Anderson's biography of Oxford, *Shakespeare by Another Name*, Stephanie Hopkins Hughes stated: “Two years ago Alan Nelson [in his book, *Monstrous Adversary*,] published transcriptions of all known documents relating to Oxford.” It has been brought to our attention that this ignores a number of documents relating to Oxford that have been transcribed by others than Nelson, documents that he did not publish, chief among them transcriptions by Nina Green and Christopher Paul. Hughes regrets the error.