



The Shakespeare OXFORD Newsletter



Vol. 42: No. 1 *But what care I for words? yet words do well/ when he that speaks them pleases those that hear."* As You Like It III v. Winter 2006

Concordia Conference – 2006

The 10th Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference was held at Concordia University in Portland, Oregon from April 20 - 23. About 70 attendees from all over the United States, Canada, United Kingdom and The Netherlands were present.

The Legitimacy of the Authorship Question

There seems to be some tangible progress in terms of establishing inquiry into the authorship question as a valid topic for research in academia. First, in his presentation, Dr. William Leahy, Senior Lecturer and Head of English at Brunel University in London, argued that such research was indeed a suitable topic and announced that his university had given him the go-ahead to institute a program leading to a master's degree in Shakespeare Authorship Studies starting in September 2007. This will be the first time in the world that an academic institution will grant an advanced degree

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Oxford's Childhood: What we know and what we don't

by Stephanie Hopkins Hughes

The recorded facts

As J.K. MacFarlane, Cambridge scholar specializing in the history of the aristocracy, makes clear, references to noble children in the letters and other documents of the period he terms *late medieval* are few and far between (242-3), something that was equally true of Oxford's time. With a child who becomes a political pawn we may have more information, but—apart from wills and baptismal or family birth documents that do no more than reveal the fact that they exist—most persons born at this time remain invisible until they marry or come of age. The extremely high rates of infant mortality may have had something to do with this. In any case, we're lucky that we know as much as we do about Oxford's early years.

What solid records there are give us the date of his birth (April 22, 1550 NS) and that he was "brought up" in the household of his tutor, Sir Thomas Smith, and that when he was nine he spent five months (1558-9) at Smith's alma mater, Queens' College, Cambridge. We know that with the death of his father, the sixteenth earl, in September 1562, he was transferred to the household of his henceforth unofficial guardian, Sir William Cecil. Of these facts we have records; the rest of what we know is necessarily based on secondary evidence, but some of this is almost as strong.

For instance, we can be certain that de Vere was with Smith long enough that Smith could refer to him as "brought up in my house," as he phrased it in a letter to Cecil (who of all people would certainly have known if he was lying or exaggerating).¹ Keeping in mind that families on

(cont'd on p. 5)

Among the areas of human knowledge that Shakespeare drew on repeatedly as sources for metaphor, nine stand out: the law, horticulture, medicine, distilling, astrology, hawking, music/instrumental musicianship, ships/the sea, and Italy. The first six of these were subjects that also fascinated Sir Thomas Smith, Edward de Vere's tutor. Much of Smith's four-hundred volume library consists of books on these six topics (Strype 274-81). Books have been written by professionals in every one of these fields to prove that Shakespeare's knowledge of their field was profound, even that of a professional. In a controversy less fraught with tension, this should be enough to make the connection from de Vere to "Shakespeare" for how else could "Shakespeare" acquire so much knowledge about the very things that fascinated Smith? And, since Shakespeare's use of his knowledge of these things rarely pertains directly to their functions—far more often he uses them as metaphors for subjects that have nothing to do with their ordinary functions—that they were absorbed into his consciousness in childhood makes good psychological sense.

Since arguments that attempt to connect the historical record with literary topics are subject to infinite quibbles and because the controversy over Shakespeare's identity is so ferocious, we need to know as much as we can about Oxford's time with Smith—when it began, how long it lasted, where it took place, and who, through Smith, might have had an influence on Oxford as a child. Some of this we know—much we still have to guess. We know for certain when he left Smith's care (September 1562), but exactly when he came to live with him has proven more difficult to determine.

Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

Published quarterly by the
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Shakespeare Oxford Society

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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President's Letter

Dear Fellow Shakespeare Lovers:

I'm writing this letter in mid-April. Every year at this time I think of TS Eliot famous line about April being the cruelest month. I doubt Eliot was thinking about April 15th, tax day in the United States.

Actually, I like to think Eliot had something else in mind. Shakespeare's birthday perhaps?

Yes, this April we'll have to endure another worldwide celebration of "Shakespeare's" birthday — on April 23rd for the Stratford Candidate instead of April 12th for Edward de Vere. April can be very cruel indeed.

Progress Report

I want to use this space to bring you up to date on the progress we've been making a several important fronts. First and foremost, let me call your attention to the new mission statement adopted by the Board of Trustees.

The Shakespeare Oxford Society is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to exploring the Shakespeare authorship question and researching the evidence that Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604) is the true author of the poems and plays of "William Shakespeare."

Recent visitors to the updated website have already seen this new mission statement prominently displayed on the homepage, along with a new tagline under the Shakespeare Oxford Society name in the masthead. The tagline reads:

"Dedicated to Researching and Honoring the True Bard."

I think the combination of the new mission statement and the tagline do more than simply clarify what we stand for. That's important. I also think these statements help to position the society appropriately. I'm especially pleased that we're stating clearly to the world that we're dedicated to honoring the "True Bard." The unstated implication — but I'll state it here — is that others, including those who remain wedded to the Stratford Candidate, have been honoring the wrong author.

I'd like to invite you to share any thoughts you have about our new mission statement and tagline.

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Editorial Greetings

I hope all readers of the newsletter will find an opportunity to thank Jim Brooks and Ramon Jimenez for their wonderful previous work as editors. Among their many talents was getting the thing out on time— time after time—. I managed not to do that the first time out. I will do better.

All contributors could help in considering August 1st the deadline for submissions for the next edition. I hope the high level, world-class research and reporting will continue. That smoking gun may well lie beneath the next document. It is my belief that the classroom is the first line of attack in disseminating information. This is an invitation to educators to share your work in teaching Shakespeare- Oxford. Please note in this edition a Q. & A. session with Richard Whalen on an independent newsletter he sends to college professors. Also, note the report from Concordia Conference regarding authorship studies in London. Stephanie Hopkins Hughes presents a look at Edward De Vere's tutor, Sir Thomas Smith. Matthew Cossolotto's energetic media campaigns make a dynamic complement to researching, writing, and teaching Oxford.

Another idea that is manifested in this edition is an occasional look through the archives for something interesting and relevant to revisit. You can read this time an article by Julia Cooley Altrocchi from *The Shakespearean Authorship Review*, No 2, Autumn 1959.

Some authorship events are worth noting. The peripatetic Derran Charlton was the first to report here on *A Portrait Exhibition, Searching for Shakespeare* held at The Portrait Gallery, London from March 2 to May 29. A book and BBC program accompany. Central to the exhibition is the finding of the Chandos Portrait of Shakespeare wearing a gold earring is "most likely to be taken from real life---". Martin Droeshout engravings, the Grafton Portrait, among others are also included. If anyone sees this, (it will travel), please report. See if you agree with Derran, "I think the Chandos Portrait is spurious...". Also, the city of Washington, D.C. is celebrating Shakespeare all over town beginning January 5, (12th Night), 2007 for six months. It is the project of Michael M. Kaiser, President of the Kennedy Center and Michael Kahn, Art Director of The Shakespeare Theater Company. When you are researching at the Folger, attend, and report here. Of course, it is not too soon to be making plans for the joint conference in Ann Arbor in the fall.

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William Shakspeare, Oxford, Elizabethan Actors And Playhouses

Dr. Frank Davis

Part One

After recently preparing for a talk on Elizabethan actors and playhouses, I came to realize that I, and perhaps many, have not given sufficient importance to this area of English history with regard to English literature and aspects of the Shakespeare authorship question. The Elizabethan era witnessed an important evolution in the reputation and significance of its theaters and actors. Let us begin by considering the following extract taken from a statute of 1572:

And for the full expressing what persone and persones shalbe intended within this Braunche to be Roges Vacaboundes and Sturdye Beggars, to have and receive the punyshment aforesaid for the said lewde maner of Lyef; It ys nowe published... and set forth... That...all Fencers Bearewardes Common Players in Enterludes & Minstrels, not belonging to any Baron of this Realme or towards any other honorable Personage of greater Degree... whiche...shall wander abroade and have not Lycense of two Justices of the Peace at the leaste, whereof one to be of the Quorum, wher and in what Shier they shall happen to wander...shalbee taken adjudged and deemed Roges Vacaboundes and Sturdy Beggars, intended by this present Act.

Act 16 Elizabeth, c.5, para 5.

And from an order of the Common Council of London in December, 1574, is found:

No Inn-keeper, tavern-keeper nor other person whatsoever within the liberties of this city shall openly show, or play, nor cause or suffer to be openly showed or played within the house or any other place within the liberties of this city, any play.

From these, and there are many, many more such documents, we can clearly see that theater and actors were equated with vagabonds and beggars and only were allowed as servants of a "Baron or other honorable personage of greater degree." Fortunately, Queen Elizabeth enjoyed and recognized the propaganda value of the theater, and in 1578 she gave official permission to six companies of players: they were (1) the Children of the Royal Chapel, (2) the Children of St Paul's, (3) Servants of Lord Warwick [later to be Oxford's Men], (4) Servants of the Earl of Leicester [his was the first permitted, in 1574], (5) Servants of the Earl of Essex and (6) the Servants of the Lord Chamberlain. The progressive public popularity of the theater presented a continued problem for the lay government and the crown. The lay government had to be concerned with safety; such gatherings were the haunts for thieves and the like, as well as the problem of recurring epidemics of the plague. The crown was worried about political problems of sedition and insurrection. Therefore strict censorship was required, to a large part led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift. Then, too, the growing influence of the Puritans, who vehemently opposed the theater,

was another conflicting issue. Understanding these concepts are crucial to acknowledging the inability, even impossibility, of a noble such as Oxford being identified as the author of plays that might be presented to the public.

Shakspeare an Actor?

There seems to be a prevailing denial amongst Oxfordians that Shakspeare was ever an actor—or at least that there is no extant documentation that is convincing. Charlton Ogburn Jr. wrote extensively about this in his book, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*. [99-110] But let us first look at the pertinent documentation, readily available through traditional works, that might suggest otherwise:

(1) The "Housekeeper" share in the Globe Theater, 1599, represents circumstantial evidence that Shakspeare was an actor. The actor, Richard Burbage and his brother, Cuthbert (a bookseller), had inherited the Theater and Curtain from their father, James, who had built the first theater (aptly named "The Theater") in 1576. When in 1599 it became evident that Gyles Alleyn would not renew the twenty year land lease for the Theater (it had expired in 1596), Richard and Cuthbert tore down the Theater for building the famous Globe on Bankside. For the first time, members of an acting troupe were made shareholders in a theater venture. Along with themselves, Richard and Cuthbert made five other members of the troupe, known as the Chamberlain's Men, shareholders in the Globe building. Richard and Cuthbert each had 2 ½ shares, the five others had one share each. These five members were John Heminges, Augustine Phillips, Thomas Pope, William Kempe and William Shakespeare. As all the others were documented actors, circumstantially it is certainly likely that Shakspeare was too. These seven "housekeepers" received half of the profits from the galleries, the rest of the actors received half of the profits from the "dore." Actors who were also housekeepers thereby shared twice in the profits.

(2) Shares of the Blackfriars Theater (2nd), 1608, included Henry Evans, Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, William Shakspeare, John Heminges, Henry Condell and William Slye. This venture arose out of Evans leasing Blackfriars from Richard Burbage, its proprietor. The Privy Council had decreed that Blackfriars could not be used as a "public" playhouse, but Evans used the property for "rehearsal" of the Children of the Chapel Royal. Due to a complaint in 1601 about Evans "forcing" gentlemen's children to act, Evans was forbidden by the Star Chamber to continue. He got around this by signing over his lease to his son-in-law, Alexander Hawkins. Evans eventually surrendered the lease back to Richard in 1608 leading to the syndicate mentioned above. Again, we have circumstantial evidence of Shakspeare's involvement as an actor. Evans and Cuthbert were theater managers, as was Richard—who was also a lead actor—but the rest were actors (assuming, for the moment, that Shakspeare was.)

(3) The will of Augustine Phillips, May 4, 1605 specifies to:

“geve and bequethe to my Fellowe William Shakespeare a thirty shillings peece in gould, To my Fellowe Henry Condell one other thirty shillinge peece in gould, To my Servant Christopher Beeston thirty shillings in gould...”

The significance here is the same; Phillips, Condell and Beeston were all actors with the same company, the Lord Chamberlain’s men. Circumstantially, this suggests that Shakspeare was as well.

(4) Then there is the issue of the “Red Clothe bought of sondrie persons and giuen by his Maiestie to diuerse persons against his Maiesties sayd royall proceedin through the Citie of London...” This was taken from the account of Sir George Home, Master of the Great Wardrobe, for the proceeding of King James through London on March, 1604. This lists nine persons, including Shakspeare, all others being actors. Although some doubt has been cast on this document relating to a possible cover up of missing funds, it still remains circumstantial evidence of Shakspeare being an actor.

(5) Ben Jonson’s 1616 Folio of his plays lists William Shakespeare as one of the actors in *Every Man In his Humour* of 1598. Shakespeare is listed first over the other eight actors. Then with his play, *Sejanus*, Jonson lists eight actors, the fifth (heading the second four) was Will. Shake-Speare. Granted it had been unusual to list the actors in reprinting plays (although it was done in Webster’s *Duchess of Malfi*, 1623, as well as the later folios of Beaumont & Fletcher), and Jonson’s Folio was written the year Shakspeare died, but we cannot simply ignore this documentation.

(6) In May, 1603, License was given to the King’s men:

“We..doe licence and aauthorize these our Servauntes Lawrence Fletcher, William Shakespeare, Richard Burbage, Augustyne Phillippes, Iohn Heninges, Henrie Condell, William Sly, Robert Armin, Richard Cowly, and the rest of their Associates freely to vse and exercise the Arte and faculty of playing Comedies, Tragedies, histories, Enterludes, morales, pastorall, Stageplaies, and Suche others like as theie aswell for the recreation of our lovinge Subjectes as for our Solace and pleasure when wee shall thincke good to see them duringe our pleasure.”

Clearly, unless proven a forgery, this is strong evidence that Shakspeare was an actor. We cannot take the position that because some evidence doesn’t agree with our position, that J.P. Collier (or someone) must have forged the document.

(7) Though we as Oxfordians, have our own theory about the construction and reasons for the first folio, we must use this documentation as evidence that Shakspeare was an actor.

(8) The final evidence of significance is the recent finding by our own Oxfordian researcher, Dr. Paul Altrocchi. This is, of course, his remarkable discovery of the annotation found in the Huntington Library’s 1590 edition of William Camden’s *Britannia*. (*Shakespeare Matters*, Summer 2003, pp.16-19) As Roscius was a famous Roman actor, this contemporary annotation is further documentary evidence that Shakspeare was, indeed, an actor— at least to the knowledge of the annotator.

It seems to me that Oxfordians do disservice to our purpose when we deny evidence of the dimension of the above. And there is more. Let us not forget, too, the issue of Greene’s “Groats-worth of Wit” which I find convincingly does refer to Shakspeare, but disagree that “bombast a line” refers to writing (as orthodoxy maintains), rather than speaking. I believe this curious enigma does refer to Shakspeare as an actor, but is not necessarily evidence of his being a writer. I feel that many Oxfordians, Charlton Ogburn included, feared that acknowledging Shakspeare’s being an actor would negate the theory that Shakspeare was illiterate. I disagree with that concern. He could be marginally literate and still be an actor at the time, though unlikely a prominent or lead actor— which seems to be the case as suggested by the evidence (or lack thereof). It is important that we give due consideration to credible evidence, something we have been long criticized by orthodox scholars for failing to do.

There is another possibility for Shakspeare’s role in the theater. He may have been a “play broker” and if Greene’s “Groatsworth” is correct, a money lender. If he were engaged in these activities, it still would not disallow him being an actor. The subject will continue to be debated for a long time to come, I suspect.

Henslowe’s Diary

There is other evidence against Shakspeare being a writer of plays that comes from a theater document, the Henslowe Diary. Phillip Henslowe was one of the most important Elizabethan theater entrepreneurs. After gaining wealth and property by marrying his employer’s widow, Henslowe bought property on Bankside where he built the Rose Theater in 1587. In addition to building the Rose Theater, at various times he managed the Newington Butts Theater, was a shareholder in the Swan, was builder of the Fortune and Hope theaters, and also had an interest in Paris Garden (used for bear-baiting.) But what is most important about Henslowe is what he left behind— the Henslowe Diary. This is universally accepted to be the most important extant document regarding Elizabethan theater activities from 1592-1609. This document lists the names of 27 writers of plays that were paid by Henslowe, among which were such notables as Jonson, Middleton, Dekker, Chapman, Marston and Drayton. But Shakespeare’s name is not listed, even though eight or nine Shakespeare plays were played at the Rose. This includes the first recorded playing of *Titus Andronicus* (1594) as well as others such as *Henry V*, *Henry VI*, *Richard III*, and *Taming of the Shrew*. It is interesting also that in 1599 the diary shows that Henslowe paid Dekker and Chettle for a play, *Troilus and Cressida*. Neither is Shakespeare among the many listed as actors. Although Stratfordians never fail to mention that the Diary is tainted because in 1845 J.P. Collier, accused of forgery by G.F. Warner in 1881, had handled the document. Logic would have it that if Collier wanted to enhance the Shakspeare hoax, he would have added his name to the 27 writers already listed. But in 1790, Malone had already worked on transcription of the diary which would likely have discouraged any forgery. The Lord Chamberlain’s Men, formed from Lord Strange’s Men in 1594, were the most important acting group with regard to Shakespeare’s plays. Lord Strange’s Men acted at the Rose in 1592

Oxford's Childhood (cont'd from p. 1)

this social level tended to move back and forth from one manor to another, we can be relatively certain that de Vere was under his care—or, we would imagine, that of his wife when Smith was away on business—from some time after Smith moved into his home in southeast Buckinghamshire in 1553 until he was called in September of 1562 to act as Elizabeth's ambassador to France.

It is next to impossible at this point to determine exactly when Smith moved his household, which by then would have included the young de Vere, from Ankerwick, just to the southwest of London, to Hill Hall in Essex, slightly northeast of London. Contradictory statements by both Smith's biographers, Dewar and Strype, suggest that they did not know either. Since John Strype was working with information from Smith's direct descendant, this suggests that by his time (1698) the Smith family had lost the details, although there is a local tradition that the young Earl of Oxford did live for a time at Hill Hall (or possibly the small manor nearby, Mount Hall) (Padfield).

Strype states that, by the 1560s, Smith was maintaining at least four fully furnished houses, including Ankerwick near Windsor, Hill Hall in Essex, one at Cannon Row at Westminster (170), and another one (or two) in London (170), which he would visit when work required it. A notebook of Smith's at Queens' College library contains a list of the rooms at Ankerwick and their contents dated 1569, well after the time when he began dating letters from Hill Hall. One of the rooms from this list is termed "my chambre," unlikely had he given up residence there. A letter exists from 1565 in which Smith, writing from France, comments on a recent visit to Ankerwick by the Queen and Leicester and his "sorrow" that his wife could not be present to welcome them (Dewar 85). These testify that Smith continued to maintain rooms for himself, and his wife, at Ankerwick long after he created living quarters at Hill Hall.

As for the date when de Vere came to live with Smith, Mary Dewar, Smith's biographer, reports that de Vere was placed in his household in late 1554. Her citation (the letter cited in endnote 1) does not support the exact month and year of the transfer, but what we hope to show here is that this period is in fact the most likely moment for his move from Essex to Buckinghamshire.

Rebellions and revolution

Apart from the paucity of records of noble childhoods, it also happens that Oxford's early years coincide with one of the most turbulent periods in English history, so that records, both public and private, are even more sparse than they might have been at another time. Unlike the so-called Wars of the Roses that take up so much space in histories of the period and that were mainly power struggles between regional factions that didn't greatly effect the lives of most Englishmen—the rebellions of the Edwardine and Marian eras were grassroots uprisings that erupted at the same time in several sections of the country, affecting everyone in those areas from magnates to yeomen. One doesn't often hear the reforms of the Edwardine regime or the heretic-hunting of the Marian regime referred to grandly as revolutions, but this is due to their relatively small size and duration, not their intent or their effect. As Lawrence Stone puts it:

Books have been written by professionals in every one of these fields to prove that Shakespeare's knowledge of their field was profound, even that of a professional. In a controversy less fraught with tension, this should be enough to make the connection from de Vere to "Shakespeare" for how else could "Shakespeare" acquire so much knowledge about the very things that fascinated Smith?

What is and what is not, a revolution? According to one view, it is change effected by the use of violence in government, and/or regime, and/or society. . . . [which, whether by a narrow or wide definition] allows the historian to distinguish between, on the one hand, the seizure of power that leads to a major restructuring of government or society, the establishment of a new set of values for distributive justice, and the replacement of the former élite by a new one, on the other hand, the coup d'état involving no more than a change of ruling personnel by violence or threat of violence. (3)

During the period of Oxford's conception, birth and early childhood, England experienced all of the above forms of violence, some more than once. As historians Fletcher and MacCulloch note, "In 1558, Elizabeth I inherited a country which had seen four successful rebellions in seven decades, and which had been seething with disturbances for the entire previous decade" (125), disturbances that were particularly fierce in Oxford's home territory of Essex and Suffolk counties.

In July of 1549, at around the time of his conception, a grass roots uprising known as Kett's Rebellion was firing much of his home territory. It centered in the town of Lavenham in southern Suffolk, for centuries the political control center of the Oxford earldom. For a time the rebels made their command center at Surrey Place on Mousehold Heath in Norfolk, formerly the home of the recently-executed (1547) Earl of Surrey and his wife Frances Vere, Oxford's aunt.² Kett's Rebellion was eventually brought under control, but not before the poet Lord Sheffield, the earl's brother-in-law, was murdered by a vengeful butcher (69).³ Close on the heels of this grassroots rebellion, two palace coups, one right after the other, threw the central government into a frenzy, while by his ninth birthday two revolutions (or two phases of the great revolution we call the Reformation) swept the nation—if not as devastating overall as the French or Russian revolutions, yet just as frightening and dangerous to those who lived through them.⁴

Thus, it should be no wonder that letters from this period are sparse and that most of those that survive are lacking in specifics. In times of revolution people avoid putting their private thoughts on paper. For the same reason, official records often fail to survive because officials fearing incrimination destroyed them. Even William Cecil, whose life is so thoroughly documented by his paper trail, disappears from history between the autumn of 1548 and the spring of 1549 (Read 52), an unusually long hiatus for someone in high office. (Cecil was Somerset's Master of Requests until the Duke's downfall in October, 1549.) His biographer, Conyers Read, conjectures that later, during the Marian regime (1553-58), Cecil was even wary of spending his holidays with his protestant friends and relatives (116).

Surprisingly, despite his obvious commitment to the protestant regime, Smith was treated well by Mary. Although she was forced to remove him from his post at Eton, she compensated with a lavish (for the time) £100 annuity. He would not be called again to important public service for nine long years.

Northumberland's failed coup

Of all the upheavals that touched the Oxford earldom, the closest was the attempt by John Dudley, self-styled Duke of Northumberland (and father of Queen Elizabeth's favorite, the Earl of Leicester), to put his own daughter-in-law on the throne in 1553 following the death of the young Edward VI. By the time of Mary Tudor's show-down with Northumberland in July, the sixteenth earl had already signed the letters patent of June 16, nominating Lady Jane Grey to succeed Mary's brother (ODNB). Here is the story of the day in mid-July, 1553 when the Oxford household forced the earl to change his allegiance, as it was penned not long after by his neighbor and distant relative, Robert Wingfield, an ardent Catholic:

... while [Northumberland] was setting out for Bury [St. Edmund's, where his forces were gathering], he was brought news by Henry Gate and ... Thomas Golding, brother to the Countess of Oxford, that the earl himself had deserted Northumberland's party, mainly through the efforts of his menial household servants.⁵ Some attribute Oxford's adherence to Mary to the agency of Sir John Wentworth, the earl's cousin and a man of noble stock and reliable character; others, whose account I prefer, find the explanation of the earl's defection elsewhere. ...

Clement Tusser, a lawyer and a truly courageous character, was being kept prisoner at Hedingham castle, the earl's most delightful home set on the hill above the town which derives its name from the castle, for no other reason than that he had publicly proclaimed Mary as the only undoubted heir to the throne. ... Since he was, as the comic poet puts it, a man well-disposed at all times, he was treated with great kindness especially by the menial servants; he fully convinced them that it was their duty to urge the earl to espouse and embrace Mary's cause with all his might. This daring man spoke thus and in similar vein, adding the proverbial spur to the horse and fuel to the fire, for these menial servants were loyal enough to Mary as their queen to make the voice of the common people heard.

At that time Henry Gate and Robert Stafford came from Northumberland to the earl, Stafford being designated captain of the earl of Oxford's contingent because of his courage and military skill. According to their instructions, these men were trying every means and thinking of every argument to bring Oxford into their ranks. However, when Tusser saw this he once more fiercely urged the servants to encourage and force their master to obey Queen Mary. Manfully and zealously doing their duty on Tusser's initiative, they crowded into the ample space of the castle hall and sent up deafening shouts that they recognized no other queen but Mary, the eldest daughter of Henry VIII; if their lord was willing to join her party, they were ready to give their lives in this most just cause, but on the other hand, if their lord did not wish to give his backing to this cause ... they threatened immediately to throw off their liveries and set out for Princess Mary.

The earl professed himself much moved by their words and gave his agreement to his menial servants, asking for their help against the gentlemen who were doing everything they could to oppose this move. The earl had at that time a hundred common servants remarkable for their stature and strength and they were quick to aid their master. They fell on the gentlemen and on the earl's orders, they threw the most important into gaol. Those imprisoned included Sir Robert Stafford, Sir Henry Gate, Sir Thomas Golding, ... Henry Golding, Thomas's brother, and [three others].⁶ After this, the earl, accompanied by Tusser, whom he had just restored to liberty, and the rest of his household, made for Framlingham [where Mary's forces were gathering], and his defection from Northumberland was a severe blow to the morale of that party. (263-64)⁷

It is of course not known exactly where the three-year-old heir was during this fracas—presumably with his nurse, either with her family somewhere on the Hedingham estate or a few miles to the north with his mother's family at Bloomsters in Halstead, Suffolk (Anderson 150). Whichever it was, there would have been long-echoing reverberations of the events of that day, since both his father's and his mother's families were involved, and on opposing sides.

For the Goldings, it must have reinforced their no doubt already poor opinion of Earl John. It can't be said that it was the earl's "defection" that tipped the scales against Northumberland and along

with him, all who had risen to power under her brother, including the Golding family, but it certainly must have been a factor.

1554: Dark days for the Protestants

Although the nation at large may have welcomed good King Harry's "legitimate" daughter and the restitution of the familiar Mass, once the new queen made it clear that she intended to marry the King of Spain, the national mood began to shift. A return to Catholicism was one thing—but to willingly bow to a foreign king, particularly this king, was another. Soon a new rebellion was brewing, this time in Kent and the west country.

Had the conspirators waited a year or so (or even just until the weather warmed up) before making their move they might have found more support, but when the revolt erupted in February the nation was not yet ready and, as the ringleaders dropped out one by one, they left Sir Thomas Wyatt (son of the Henrician sonneteer),⁸ along with his crew of Kentish men to take the brunt of its failure. Wyatt was executed in April, while most of the other conspirators were let off later with fines by a still conciliatory Mary (Fletcher 81-93).

When the Spanish envoys who were sent to arrange the wedding arrived in late December 1553, they were pelted with snowballs by schoolboys (Prescott 288) and with scurrilous rhymes by the citizenry:

Flour of England, fruit of Spain,
Met together in a shower of rain.
Put in a bag tied round with a string,
If you tell me this riddle I'll give you a ring.

This relatively mild jape compares the marriage to a Christmas pudding with Mary as the flour and Philip as the fruit. It was in fact raining when the two finally met. (Baring-Gould 272-3.)

Although an agreement had been in place since the previous December, the young king did not arrive in England until mid-July. Following their marriage later that month, the royal couple and their advisors seemed more engrossed in hunting, feasting and dancing than in stamping out heresy, but as the nights grew longer and the days colder, the arrival in November of the Pope's legate, Cardinal Pole, followed by Parliament's acceptance of Mary's proclamation that England was again a Catholic nation, announced the true beginning of the regime, the one that would leave the Queen dubbed "Bloody Mary" ever after by an unforgiving History. The Sunday following Advent saw High Mass celebrated once again in full panoply at Paul's Cathedral where hundreds gathered to hear Lord Chancellor Stephen Gardiner beg God for forgiveness for England's great sin of heresy (Prescott 348-65). Thus seemed undone two decades of government and church reform.

It takes no great effort to imagine just how festive the reformers were feeling that winter holiday season of 1554-55. The promised uprisings against Mary had come to nothing. Backed by his father Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, Philip was—if not yet officially, no doubt soon to be—King of England, which was now once more, by official fiat, a Catholic nation. The international repercussions were almost as disturbing. Scotland was still tightly

controlled by the Catholics under Mary of Guise (mother of Mary Queen of Scots), while the advent of Philip was certain to turn the French, always a menace, into an active encroacher (Prescott 337). So fearful of a future under Spanish rule were the Mayor and aldermen of Plymouth, that they begged the French ambassador for French protection (286-7). Most worrisome of all to Cecil and his friends may have been the danger from within their own ranks from the hotheads, the English Robespierres, whose rash actions could easily have provoked an all out civil war (376-80). We can only imagine with what dread the Protestant leadership faced the New Year.

It was at this time, December of 1554, that the former Bishop of Lincoln, Dr. John Taylor, died at Ankerwick, the home of his former student and old friend, Sir Thomas Smith, and also that, according to Smith's biographer, the four-year-old de Vere came to live with Smith (Dewar 77).

Since the dawn of time aristocrats had been accustomed to splitting up their families, living and traveling separately so that, should something happen to one member, others would remain alive to continue the line. In addition, it was, as it had been for centuries, the tradition to send well-born children out to board, study, and learn the niceties of noble life with relatives, friends or tutors.

Sir Thomas Smith

That few today recognize the name Sir Thomas Smith,⁹ is one of those strange cruelties of Fate, since Smith was justly as famous in his own time, and for decades after, as any of the friends and colleagues whose names continue to ring loud in histories of the period. Among such as John Cheke, Roger Ascham, Sir William Cecil, Matthew Parker, Richard Eden, Gabriel Harvey, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Sir Francis Walsingham, Smith's name ranked at or close to the top. That Smith was Queen Elizabeth's active and diligent Principal Secretary for four years from 1572 to 1576 is often overlooked by historians, whose interest focuses on Walsingham, who joined Smith as a second secretary in 1573, but whose secretaryship lasted so much longer (until 1590).

From humble beginnings as the second son of a poor Essex farmer, Smith's Cambridge career rocketed him to collegial stardom: King's scholar at thirteen, Fellow of Queens' College at nineteen, Greek



Sir Thomas Smith: from a portrait in a book in the Cambridge University Library containing short bios of all the Presidents, Masters, and important Fellows of Queens College through the years.

orator at twenty, first Regius Chair in Civil Law at twenty-seven, Vice Chancellor of the University at thirty (Strype 9-10). And there was yet more to come: by thirty-four he was at Court, acting as personal Master of Requests to the Protector, the Duke of Somerset, and, shortly after, as Principal Secretary to the young king himself. But however

fast he rose, Smith was to fall just as fast. With the overthrow of Somerset in 1549, Master Secretary Smith fell too. He would rise again later, but never so far (Dewar, Strype).

More unfair still has been his fate with regard to credit due him for his contributions to the intellectual achievements and statesmanship of his time. Until very recently, the majority of his works have been attributed to others, while those accomplishments he shared are still, in most works of history and biography, assigned to one of his colleagues. In book after book, Smith's name has been left out where it should have been included, even put foremost.¹⁰ It has been only gradually with the passage of centuries that his authorship

of one after another of the seminal works of the period has been recognized, though still not by enough, and there are at least three other extremely important works that may someday be acknowledged either as all his or strongly influenced by him.¹¹ When that happens, the name Sir Thomas Smith will finally rise to its proper place in the history of the English Reformation.

Despite the humiliation Smith must have felt when in 1550 his former Cambridge student, William Cecil, succeeded him as the king's secretary, by 1555 he must have realized how losing his office had saved him from the trials that so many of his friends and former associates were about to suffer. For, surprisingly, despite his obvious commitment to the protestant regime, Smith was treated well by Mary. Although she was forced to remove him from his post at Eton, she compensated with a lavish (for the time) £100 annuity (Dewar 75-6).¹² He would not be called again to important public service for nine long years. An ambitious, energetic and nervous man, Smith tried to put a good face on his rustication, writing later to Cecil that he had passed the time "with hunting and hawking and now and then looking on a book" (78).

Shortly before his fall from grace in 1549, Smith had acquired the former priory of Ankerwick, located on a bend in the Thames southeast of London, a stone's throw from Windsor Forest, Runnymede (where the Magna Carta was signed), and close enough to London that the steeple of St. Paul's was visible. While Smith was secretary to the King, Ankerwick was handy both to Windsor and to Westminster, and also afterwards while he was still active as Provost at Eton.

The priory was old and in disrepair, so now, with time on his hands, Smith set about having it dismantled and the stone used to create an up-to-date twenty-room manor house. His diary reports that work on Ankerwick began in 1550 and was finished in 1553 (Nichols 108, 117-18). Although the following year he would acquire a grander property in Essex known variously as Mount Hall or Hill Hall, which at some point became his primary residence, Ankerwick would remain in the Smith family for generations. Following his removal to Hill Hall in Essex, Smith passed Ankerwick on to his son George, but in all likelihood he continued to maintain rooms there for occasions in the 1570s when, as Elizabeth's Principal Secretary, he was needed at Court when it was at Windsor.

De Vere comes to Ankerwick

According to Dewar:

When John Taylor, Bishop of Lincoln, specially aroused Mary's wrath and was evicted from his bishopric in March of 1554, Smith offered him a home at Ankerwick where he died in December. At the same time Edward de Vere, only son of the Earl of Oxford, Mary's Great Chamberlain, was placed in Smith's household. (77)

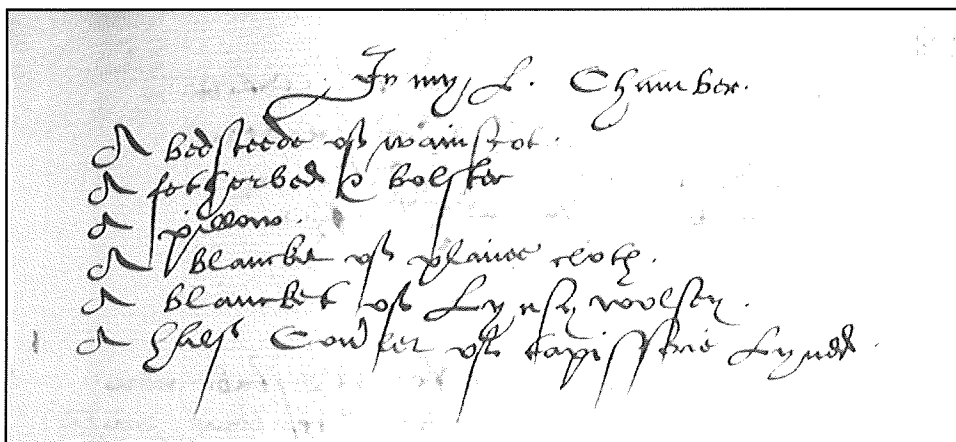
There is a pleasing symmetry to the image of Smith opening his door at the same time to both his old tutor, who had launched him on his own illustrious career at Cambridge,¹³ and the boy he would be tutoring himself for the next eight years—the one at the end of his life, the other just beginning. Nevertheless, we do not know exactly what Dewar means by "at the same time." The

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same week? The same month? Within the same twelve-month period? As for December 1554, although the letter she cites fails to support it, she is specific enough that we may consider it partial, if not definitive, evidence for the year at least, perhaps based on information in a letter or other document that she couldn't find when it came time to cite. (To her, Oxford's advent was an event of minor importance.)

From what we know, Taylor may have come to Smith at any point after March, but it is unlikely that de Vere would have arrived before July, when Smith married for the second time (his first wife having died the day Queen Mary rode into London). It seems unlikely that so young a boy would have been placed in a bachelor's household; though no longer in need of a nurse, a four-year-old would still require the attentions of a woman and her female entourage.

That de Vere did indeed live with Smith at Ankerwick and for a substantial period can be shown by the fact that, in his 1569 list of the rooms at Ankerwick, one on an upper floor is labeled "My Lorde's chambre" (Strype 170). Strype "supposes" that by "my Lord" Smith means the Duke of Somerset, but that's impossible since the building was not finished until 1553, by which time Somerset was dead. It could not be Cecil, since from 1555 Cecil kept his household not far from Ankerwick at his own manor house at Wimbledon, nor did Cecil become a "lord" until 1571. Other than these, we can't think of any lord other than de Vere who could possibly have required a room to himself in Smith's home. De Vere was a "lord" from birth, since he was born a Viscount (Badlesmere).



The entry in Smith's notebook that lists the items in "my L's chambre In a second inventory taken about the same time this list is headed "my lorde's chambre." (Courtesy o Queens' College library.)

The fear factor

We need to keep in mind that little Edward de Vere, as the sole heir to one of the most ancient and prestigious names in English history and to an earldom that, though declining, was still of immense power and prestige, was a person of extreme importance to a community that extended far beyond his immediate family. Until the death of his father, his parents could conceivably have produced another son or two, but they did not, so until he was well into his twenties, his life was regarded by his overseers as too precious to risk in any situation that was potentially harmful to his health or well-being, a concern that would have been most intense during his vulnerable childhood years.

Considering the background conditions as described above, we feel that Mary Dewar's date for de Vere's placement with Smith, December 1554 or thereabouts, while not certain is still the most likely time for his removal from Essex, the primary reason being

fear, fear of the regime and even more perhaps, fear of the kind of religious inquisition that did in fact begin to grip Essex early the following year. These fears that would have been at their peak during the holiday season following the portents of November. By the following September however, such fears would have eased. The Queen's obvious failure to get pregnant and her husband's return to Spain must have made it apparent that, no matter how many evangelical protestants she and her bishops dragged to the stake, the Catholic grasp on the nation was unlikely to outlast her reign.

Dewar suggests that it was the boy's uncle, the translator Arthur Golding, who arranged for him to be placed with Smith, as the two were friends and fellow Cambridge scholars. Certainly young Golding may have been involved, but for a number of reasons it's more likely that the change was engineered by William Cecil. First, he was a far more intimate and long time friend of Smith's than was Golding. Second, Cecil was uniquely positioned to know what the Catholic regime was intending. Though not an official delegate, he was among the group that had traveled to Brussels in November to bring the Papal legate, Cardinal William de la Pole, back to England. The highest ranking official in the English Church and a member of one of England's most ancient and prestigious families, De la

Pole was the most influential of Mary's English advisors. The fact that Cecil then continued to act as a sort of unofficial secretary to the Cardinal during his first weeks in England and that he managed to maintain a personal friendship with him until the Cardinal's death in 1558 (Read 103-4) tells us a great deal about the future Lord Treasurer's

political genius. This proximity to the English official most closely involved in the regime's plans for eradicating heresy made him the point man on just what sort of troubles were in store for the protestant community. Third, throughout his long career Cecil was always intensely concerned that the coming generation of peers be raised as protestants. We can be certain that he was not about to leave the education of this particular young lord up to fate or the whims of his unstable father. Finally, Cecil would have been in the best position to bring the Goldings, who had every reason to mistrust the earl, into agreement with Earl John. That Cecil himself tended not to trust the earl is suggested by a letter to him from Smith praising the earl in a somewhat defensive tone (Nelson 28).

Furthermore, despite Earl John's quick reversal of allegiance and the fact that Mary returned to him the office of Lord Great Chamberlain (Debrett 249) and put him on her Privy Council, the Marian regime would have been well aware of the earl's connection

to the protestant reform movement through his Golding and Darcy in-laws as well as his earlier support of the militant reformer John Bale, whose scurrilous pamphlet against the Catholic bishops was being widely distributed that winter (Prescott 378), to their great consternation.

Of greatest concern, however, would have been the fact that the coast of East Anglia is provided with a number of small ports where narrow winding rivers, draped in shrubbery, connect with the sea, making it easy for small vessels to hide, then slip across the Channel to protestant safety, or conversely, for the notorious Dutch pirates—later termed the Sea Beggars—to lurk, then pounce upon English ships. Normally the earl could be relied on to defend the coast for his monarch, but would he do so for Mary and Philip of Spain? Despite his weaknesses, Earl John had a large following in Essex and Suffolk. Which way would he jump? And what measures would Mary's councilors take to insure that he jumped the way they wanted?

With the government gearing up for extreme measures against protestant leaders, and with the radical reformers, many of them located in Essex, thirsting for a showdown, those who were most concerned with the safety of the only son and heir to the great Oxford earldom would be eager to see him placed as far as could be from political hot spots and as soon as possible.

Was four too young?

At four-and-a-half, de Vere was young, but not too young. The two major considerations as to when to place a child outside the home were: was his need for a nurse at an end and was his prospective tutor set up to take care of so young a child? (Emotional needs of mother and child would not become a serious consideration until the nineteenth century.) Aristocrats had long been accustomed to splitting up their families, living and traveling separately so that, should something happen to one member, others would remain alive to continue the line. In addition, it was, as it had been for centuries, the tradition to send well-born children out to board, study, and learn the niceties of noble life with relatives, friends or tutors. Most children weren't sent out until seven or eight, but where such evidence exists, it shows that they were sometimes boarded out as young as three or even two (MacFarlane 243).

Nor was four considered by the Reformation pedagogues of Smith's generation to be too young for a "toward" child to begin his studies of Latin and even Greek. Sir Thomas Elyot, in his *Book of the Governour* (1531) stated the current thinking:

Some old authors hold opinion that, before the age of seven years, a child should not be instructed in letters, but those writers were either Greeks or Latins, among whom all doctrine and sciences were in their maternal tongues, by reason whereof they saved all that long time which at this day is spent in understanding perfectly the Greek or Latin. Wherefore it requireth now a longer time to the understanding of both. Therefore that infelicity of our time and country conpelleth us to encroach somewhat upon the years of children, and especially of noblemen, that they may sooner attain to wisdom and gravity than private persons (Wikipedia)

This then should be our view of Oxford's childhood (always keeping in mind that we need more facts). Having been placed with a wet nurse immediately after birth, one who resided on or near the estate, as trouble began to escalate throughout 1554, those concerned for his safety would have begun to consider where best to place him. With the announcement of Mary's decision to marry the King of Spain, followed by Philip's arrival in July with a contingent of arrogant Spaniards, and finally, most ominously, the reinstatement by Parliament of all the old laws against heresy including

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the penalty of death by burning, they may have felt that it would be dangerous to wait any longer to place the boy somewhere safe, sufficiently far from Essex and its hotbeds of Protestantism, and as soon as possible. And indeed it was not long before Essex became one of the major locations for the burnings, while, the following year Earl John came under suspicion by the regime of involvement in another conspiracy to unseat Mary (Debrett 249 fn a).

That someone of Smith's stature was available just at this time must have seemed most fortunate to those concerned with de Vere's welfare. Smith's impeccable teaching credentials, his mastery of the Law, of Latin and Greek, of protestant theology, and in fact, of most of the subjects that were deemed appropriate for a noble child to study, would have been on a par with his reputation for loyalty and uprightness of dealing. Most important at the moment perhaps was the fact that he was located far from any of the current hot spots and close to Windsor Castle, the most heavily fortified of all the royal palaces and therefore the most safe. Equally important was that, unlike so many of the protestant leaders, Smith was on the good side of the Marian regime.

What Smith felt about it we will never know. To him it may have seemed an "offer he couldn't refuse," at least at first. But if de Vere was the young Shakespeare, and had the kind of eager and absorbent mind that Shakespeare must have had as a boy to have learned as much as he did, he couldn't have found a better, and undoubtedly, more willing tutor. As Strype remarked, "For Sir Thomas was glad

to be thus employed, to contribute to the generous education of all noble youth for the good of the commonwealth . . .” (20).

Endnotes

1 The final paragraph of Smith’s letter of April 25, 1576, in which he refers to Cecil’s complaint about Oxford’s treatment of himself and Anne upon his return home from Italy, reads: “I am sorry to hear of this undutiful and unkind dealing of my Lord of Oxford towards your Lordship which I am sure must very much grieve your honor. Saying it grieveth me ever [marked through] for the only [added in margin] love I bear him because he was brought up in my house” (BL Harleian MS 6992 no. 21 v). Smith may have intended to write “if only for the love I bear him . . .”; such syntactical missteps are frequent in private letters written to close friends, although it should be noted that letter writers of the sixteenth century had different notions about where to place the word “only” than ours today.

2 Frances Vere, the Countess of Surrey, was the sister of the sixteenth Earl of Oxford and the mother of two of his Howard cousins: Thomas, later Duke of Norfolk, executed for treason in 1572, and Henry, later Earl of Northampton, with whom Oxford would have a public showdown in 1580.

3 Traditionally aristocrats were spared summary executions in battle because they could command huge ransoms. But the rules of class warfare were different. How was a butcher to demand ransom for a lord from within that lord’s own domain without putting himself in extreme jeopardy?

4 The two coups d’etat: the overthrow of Protector Somerset by Northumberland in 1549 followed by the overthrow of Northumberland by Mary Tudor in 1553; the two crises of the Reformation, the overthrow of the protestant Edwardine regime by Mary Tudor’s party in 1553, followed by the overthrow of the Catholic Marian regime by Elizabeth Tudor’s party in 1558-9.

5 The term “menial servants” here designates, not day laborers, but retainers who live and serve on the premises, most of whom were gentry. To serve in a lord’s household was considered a privilege and a great opportunity for advancement. The word derives from “meinie” meaning simply “members of a household” (OED).

6 Henry Golding was an older brother of the recently wed Marjorie, Countess of Oxford. Arthur Golding, the translator, was their youngest brother. At the time of the rebellion Henry Golding was acting as the sixteenth earl’s steward (Arthur Golding, ODNB). Sir Thomas Golding, was their oldest brother.

7 Many thanks to Oxfordian scholar Mick Clarke for sharing this Wingfield text.

8 His father, Sir Thomas Wyatt the elder, and his father’s friend, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (Oxford’s uncle), were the chief contributors to Tottel’s *Miscellany*, published in 1557.

9 Or they confuse him with a different Thomas from slightly later: “Customer” Smith, a wealthy merchant.

10 Most annoying is his treatment by Conyers Read, Cecil’s primary biographer. Surely Read knew how much the period owed to Smith in a dozen different ways. Why does he ignore him? Could he be concerned that allowing Smith even a portion of the credit due him might diminish Cecil’s reputation? Read even goes so far as to pass on the misinformation that it was Smith who followed Cecil into office

under Edward VI, rather than, as is obvious from the primary sources, Cecil who followed Smith (Dewar 27 fn).

11 These works will be discussed at some length in a forthcoming article. The subject is too important and too complicated to be properly addressed in a few short sentences.

12 A possible reason for this had to do with Smith’s friendly relationship with Mary’s Lord Chancellor, Bishop Stephen Gardiner, who had been Chancellor of Cambridge when Smith was Vice-chancellor and whom Smith had defended, at risk to himself, in 1551, when Gardiner was in mortal danger from Northumberland’s regime (Dewar 70-1).

13 John Taylor had recently been appointed a Fellow of Queen’s College when Thomas Smith arrived at age eleven in 1524. Shortly after, Taylor began tutoring Smith (Dewar 12). Like Smith, Taylor was from a humble background; like Smith, he rose quickly at an early age; and, also like Smith, he owed his early promotions to the king’s physician, Sir William Butts, who may have been instrumental in bringing student and tutor together. Taylor was appointed master of St. John’s in 1538 by Henry VIII who named him Dean of Lincoln the following year. He was made bishop by King Edward in 1552, but was only able to enjoy his see for a year before Mary’s accession. A friend of Thomas Cranmer, Taylor was among the small group of reformers who helped Cranmer create the *Book of Common Prayer*. Taylor was a controversial figure, energetic in his passion for the Lutheran doctrine and equally passionate against the Calvinist version. Smith owed Taylor for having arranged for him to acquire a certain Church property (for which Taylor has been excoriated by later bishops). (ODNB).

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"Actors & Playhouses" (cont'd from p. 4)

where the lead actor was Edward Alleyn who happened to marry Henslowe's step-daughter, Joan Woodward. In 1599, the Globe theater was built for the Lord Chamberlain's men as in 1594 they had to surrender the Rose back to the Lord Admiral's Men, and were displaced from Burbage's the Theater to the Curtain in 1597. (See "Housekeepers" above.) Alleyn maintained the diary after the death of Henslowe; the diary along with the Fortune theater and other family assets were left to Dulwich College, London, where

Henslowe's papers and diary now reside.

Granted I have presented but a brief summary of the evidence, but hopefully I have made a case for accepting Shakspeare as an actor, while still rejecting him as a writer of the works of Shakespeare. Perhaps more evidence will develop with the passage of time: it is this very thought that keeps most of us questioning and probing.

[Next Issue: Part Two, Oxford and the First Blackfriars Theater]

The Pardon by King James I of Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton

Submitted by Derran Charlton

On the ninth of May, 2000, whilst researching at the Essex record Office, Chelmsford, I was amazed and delighted to find and transcribe (as written) an original double folded letter initialed by King James I.

"Although we are resolved as well in regard of the great and honest affection bourne unto us by the Earle of Southampton, as, in respect of his good pte in abidinge him for service of us and the State to extend our grace and favour towards him, whome wee prevue also the late Q our sistar, notwithstandinge his fault towarde her was mouved to exempt frome the stroke of Justice. Nevertheless because wee would be loathe in such a case se as his wherein the Peers of our Realme have preceeded according to the honorable forms used in like cases to take such courses as may not stand with our owne greatnes and the gravitie fitt to be observed in such matters wee have thought meete to give you notice of our pleasure though the same bee to bee extended by our owne Royall power which is onley this. Because the place is unwholesome and dolorous to him to whose bodie and mind wee would give present comfort intendinge unto him soe much further grace and favour we have written to our Leiftenant of

the Tower to deliver him out of prison presentlie to any such place as hee shall choose or neere our citie of London there to cary himselfe in such quiet and modest forme as wee knowe he will think meete in his own description until that bodie of our State now assembled shall come unto us. At whiche time wee are pleased he shall also come to our presence ffor as it is one (on) us that his hope depend, soe wee will reserve these workes of further favour until the tyme yee beeholde oour owne eyes. Whereof as wee knowe the comfote will be greate to him so it esteemacon of him. In anything heretofore belonginge wherein you shalbee doubtfull we have nowe by these our Peres directed our servant the L: of Kinloss to give you satisfaction. Whoe both att his cominge in pte and nowe by these oure Peres sente after him is best instructed wee have also written to our aforesaid Leiftenant for the present delivery of H. Nevill knight whom wee are pleased you of our councill shall bringe with you shall waight upon us. Ffrom our Pallace at Hollirood house this 5 of Aprille 1603."

(Initialed) J.R. (James. Rex.)

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Shakespeare and the First Earl Of Oxford

By R. Thomas Hunter, Ph.D.

Aubrey de Vere was the first EO of the Vere line, which kept the title for more than half a millennium, but Thomas Milles' *Catalogue of Honor*, a history of English kings and nobility published by William Jaggard in 1610, on p. 674 [see Illustration B] identifies the true first Earl of Oxford as Edgar Adeling (also Etheling), the grandson of Edmund Ironside, the Saxon King of England.

Milles' brief biography of the life of Edgar, the first Earl of Oxford, is the stuff of Shakespeare's plays. This one page contains references to events that may have provided the raw materials for *Macbeth* and other plays concerning the wrongful transfer of royal power, as well as elements of *Twelfth Night*, *The Tempest*, *King Lear* and *Edmund Ironside*.

The story of Edgar Adeling would certainly have appealed to a young Earl of Oxford, influencing his artistic vision as well as his concept of himself and of his position in English society. In this one page, as discussed below, is a tempest, a rightful king—the Earl of Oxford, no less—deprived of his kingdom, and a connection through the earldom to Edmund Ironside. Most astonishing of all, we find that the first Earl of Oxford became brother-in-law to the Malcolm in *Macbeth* who overthrew the murderous king and assumed the kingship himself as Malcolm III before marrying Edgar's sister Margaret and siring ten children by her, three of whom became Scottish kings. Finally, we find that when the Veres did receive the earldom, it was bestowed upon them by the niece of the true first Earl of Oxford.

It may come as a relief to some that pretensions to nobility suggested by Shakespeare's works no longer need frustrate literary historians attempting to prove the elusive Prince Tudor, since he can now be connected to Prince Saxon, the original Earl of Oxford who was from a righteous kingship untimely ripped. Here follows a paraphrase of the Milles passage about the royal Saxon Edgar and the apparent Oxford-Shakespeare connections:

Edgar, surnamed Adeling or Etheling, was the son of Edward the Outlaw. The name Adeling, in the OED(1) denotes a member of a noble family, a prince of the blood royal, and more especially heir apparent to the throne. As grandson of Edmund Ironside, the Saxon King of England, Edgar stood directly in the line of succession to the English throne, his rightful place documented in his name. He was deprived of the kingdom "a little before" the Norman invasion by Harald who "endowed [Edgar] with the said honor" as the first Earle of Oxford "at the time of the Norman invasion." Milles explains: "For Edward the Confessor being dead without issue, the inheritance of the kingdom did rightly belong unto this Edgar."

In the confusion, political and otherwise, of the Norman conquest, Edgar, with his mother and sisters, set sail for Hungary, "where he was born." A "sudden tempest" drove them to the shores of Scotland, where his sister Margaret was eventually married to Malcolm, the third king of Scots resulting in six sons and two daughters, of whom Edgar, Alexander, and David became kings of Scotland. This is the same Malcolm who overthrows Macbeth in history and in Shakespeare's play.

Milles wrote that when Edgar, the first Earl of Oxford, died without progeny, "the noble issue male of the Saxon Kinges did end," adding a sentiment that may well have remained with the 17th Earl of Oxford as the true Shakespeare throughout his life: "and the ancient Nobility of the English Princeps was ejected from their true inheritances."

Oxford Biography and the First Earl

The true first Earl of Oxford, Edgar Adeling, is mentioned nowhere in the established Oxford biographies. Ruth Loyd Miller's index to *Oxfordian Vistas*, for example, lists "Oxford, Earls of, See Vere," with no reference to Edgar Adeling.

There is, in fact, some disagreement among Oxfordian scholars as to which Aubrey de Vere, the third or the fourth, was the first Earl of Oxford. Ward identifies the first Earl of Oxford as the fourth Aubrey de Vere. The first Aubrey would have been contemporaneous with Edgar Adeling. According to Ward's sources, the de Veres, of French origin, settled in England before the Norman Conquest. Alberic or Aubrey de Vere held land under King Edward the Confessor. Ward postulates that he sided with his fellow-countryman William the Conqueror in 1066, for in the distribution of land that followed the Saxon defeat at Hastings, Aubrey de Vere received many estates.(2)

This Aubrey de Vere was the first of four Aubreys. Ward states, "It was probably the fourth successive Aubrey who was created first Earl of Oxford in the reign of King Stephen. He died in the reign of King Richard I." By then the de Veres had already become associated with the white star, the county of Essex in which Castle Hedingham was to be built, and the hereditary office of Lord Great Chamberlain conferred by the Conqueror's youngest son King Henry I upon his father.(3)

Ogburn goes back to the third Aubrey de Vere for the first Earl of Oxford, but no earlier. He identifies the Alberic de Vere who founded the English de Veres as descending from Zeeland via marriage into a direct line from Charlemagne. Ultimately, Ogburn states, "the de Veres must in origin have been Vikings—Danes to



the Anglo-Saxon English, who suffered so horribly from Danish raiders—for Alberic clearly held an important command in the Norman invasion of England, to account for the rich rewards that came to him.” (4) In Ogburn, the coming of the de Veres to the Earldom of Oxford was fairly unremarkable: “It was the second Aubrey who built Castle Hedingham and a third who was created an earl; evidently given the choice of several earldoms by the sovereign, he selected Oxford.” (5) This Aubrey died in 1194, five years before the de Veres, as Ogburn relates, “properly enter our story with the accession of John to the English throne in 1199.” (6)

Looney doesn’t even choose. He identifies the first Earl of Oxford as either the third or fourth Aubrey. He does, however, include a detail which will turn out to be of great importance: that the first Vere Earl of Oxford was given the title by Matilda, wife of Henry I in 1142. (7) Mark Anderson adds another detail of great significance: “The first [Vere] earl of Oxford had supported Empress Matilda’s (unsuccessful) claim to the throne against King Stephen.” (8) Such a claim undoubtedly was based on her uncle Edgar’s rightful though unexercised claim to the throne.

Thomas Milles, Edgar Adeling, the Veres, and Shakespeare

Thomas Milles is identified in the DNB as a customs official and antiquary, whose dates are 1550-1626. (9) He was in public and foreign service with frequent visits to France and Scotland. In 1585, he was an agent for Walsingham between England and Scotland and in 1586 assisted in negotiations in Edinburgh for the treaty of Berwick, afterward “with powers to intercept foreign agents and correspondence, the government employ[ed] him in unravelling the numerous plots of the period.” Milles appears to have been in a position to know what was going on. In 1598, he found less clandestine employment as secretary to Lord Cobham, lord warden of the Cinque Ports and henceforth bore responsible positions such as bailiff and collector of customs, experience which led him later to “the writing of influential treatises relating to early mercantilist ideas, the political and economic dominance of London, regulated trading companies,” customs farming, and heraldry. He stood against usury and trade monopoly. He stood for freedom of enterprise and the development of commerce.

The DNB entry refers to *The Catalogue of Honor* as “an important treatise in a burgeoning heraldic literature.” The work had been started by Milles’ uncle Robert Glover. Milles translated it from the Latin and carried it forward at his death. The volume is dedicated to Robert Cecil, Lord Treasurer of England, and to Lord Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton. The dedication reads in part:

that either to forget, or to be forgotten is alike iniurious to the Dead, as to the Living. For what bootes the kindnesse and mutuall Love of Friends? And whereto serue the Trau-ailes and Heroycall Achieuements of *Nobly-Minded-Men*, if Obluion write the Epitaph that should beautifie their Tombs? And to what end (most honored and worthy of the Worthiest to be made more honourable) will your cares and Labours be found at last to tend, if together with your Deaths they become forgotten?

It is, of course, tempting to apply Milles’ tribute to his uncle and his work to other nobly minded men, the worthiest of the worthy.

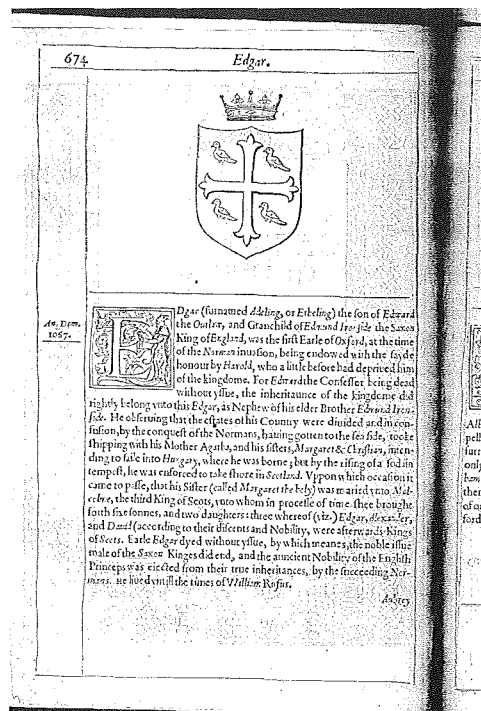
The section of the book written by Robert Glover in Latin, “Of Nobility Political and Civill,” as translated by Milles traces the idea and customs of nobility back to Greek and Roman times. Of special interest is the encyclopedic detail it provides on contemporary protocol, such as the “manner” of creating (installing) an earl or the crowning of the king, with many current examples, including the step-by-step record of the coronation of King James I. From p. 56 is this item: “The K. himselfe went vnder a Canopy or Thole, borne by sixe knights (the footmen going about him) before which two Gentlemen vsuers went with white stauers.” The Earls of Oxford appear throughout the text, such as at p. 66 under “The Parliamentary Pompe”: “The Earle of *Kent* after them carried the sworde, on whose right hand went the Earle of *Oxford*, then great Chamberlaine of *Leicester*; *Seneschall* or Steward of the Queene’s hovse.” In the 27th year of Queen Elizabeth’s reign, this Earl of Oxford was Edward de Vere.

As the DNB points out, Milles also wrote other works, the two volume *Treasurie of Auncient and Moderne Times* and a chronological catalogue of knights of the Garter in manuscript. Of great and curious interest is his economic writing. Ahead of its time, it draws heavily upon conceits found in

Shakespeare, especially *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Comedy of Errors*. A study of the use of pathological imagery as part of the mercantilist lexicon of Milles and others of the time can be found in Jonathan Gil Harris’

Sick Economies: Drama, Mercantilism and Disease in Shakespeare’s England. (10) Harris cites the work of Milles and three others as “now collectively regarded by economic historians as the canonical documents of early English mercantilism.” (11) Brief examples of Milles’ ongoing use of the pathological to describe the economic include his characterization of England’s foreign trade as “our sweete...Mistresse... distempered and distrest” (12) or “Money in a Kingdome, [is] the same that Blood is in the Body, and all Allayes but humors.” (13) In particular, Milles identifies usury with Jews and its effect as moving money, i.e. bullion, out of the country. (14)

(cont’d on p. 26)



Richard Whalen and Professors

Editor's Note: Richard Whalen, past president of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, is the founder, editor and publisher (all unpaid positions) of a newsletter on Oxfordian matters that he sends to university professors. Your editor having been on the distribution list from the very first issue thought it might be interesting to learn how Whalen's newsletter came about and what he hopes to achieve. The interview that follows is the result of a Q&A conducted recently by email.

When did you launch your newsletter to university professors and what led you to begin publishing it?

It was the summer of 1994, and in the first issue I wrote that the objective was "to increase communication about the authorship controversy and perhaps stimulate academic study and research by university scholars." That's still generally true today, although I'd drop "perhaps." That was also the year that I published "*Shakespeare: Who Was He?*", and I must admit I probably hoped the first issue would lead a few university professors to assign it as an introduction to the authorship controversy.

How many subscriptions do you have and how does someone get a subscription?

I started with 27, including yourself, Felicia Londre of the University of Missouri and Anne Pluto of Lesley College (now a university.) Just three Oxfordian professors that I knew about. The latest issue, in January, went to 170 professors. They are not really subscribers. They get it free, even if they don't ask. It goes to any university professor or retired professor who has shown a more-than-passing interest in the authorship question, including of course many Stratfordian professors.

How many professors are Oxfordians?

Almost fifty. About twenty are or were professors of English or comparative literature, and I'd estimate that about half of them raise the issue in class or are engaged in research about Oxford, or both. Seven professors in drama-theater departments are Oxfordians, and about twenty Oxfordians are in other academic disciplines.

That's a big increase from the three of us thirteen years ago. How do you account for it?

It is a big increase, and the total continues to grow. The number of Oxfordian professors today is twice what it was just five years ago. I don't know of any single reason for the very welcome increase. Probably major media articles, the Internet, Oxfordian professors finding us, and certainly Dan Wright's annual conference at Concordia University and his promotion of it on the Web.

Who are the Stratfordian professors on your distribution and have you heard from them?

They range from Harold Bloom at Yale to Stanley Wells at the Shakespeare Centre in Stratford, England, including luminaries like Stephen Greenblatt and Marjorie Garber at Harvard and scores of professors at universities from California to the Ukraine. I haven't had much feedback from them. Only one has asked to be taken off the distribution list.

Why do you include the distribution list with the newsletter?

I think it's important that the professors on the list, both Stratfordian and Oxfordian, see that they are not alone in having an interest in the Shakespeare authorship issue and that it's getting quite a bit of attention in academia. Anti-Oxfordians like to say that it's a controversy generated by amateurs outside of academia, but that's not true any more. Witness, seven English professors are doing Oxfordian editions of Shakespeare plays, and two of them are editors of Oxfordian newsletters. That could not have happened ten or even five years ago. Including the distribution list with the newsletter may help legitimize the issue as a subject for free and open inquiry in universities by Oxfordians and Stratfordians.

Why do you focus on academia? Many Oxfordians believe that the establishment Stratfordian professors are so entrenched in their belief that they will never seriously consider the case for Oxford. Shouldn't our energies go into reaching the students and general public who might be more receptive to the case for Oxford?

No question. The TV programs, articles in the major newspapers and magazines, public platform debates, and the reach of the Web are all extremely important. But I've discussed with many Oxfordians the question of how we will know when we've won. In my view, it'll be when one or two of the Shakespeare establishment leaders decide that the case for Oxford is quite persuasive. They are the opinion leaders. If they open that door, others may follow. Frankly, I don't think there's any other way it will happen.

That would be the tipping point?

Exactly. And I must add that all Oxfordians owe a great debt to the Oxfordian professors in departments of English and Comparative Lit today. They are on the front lines. It takes great dedication and courage. And, as you know, at least two of them have persuaded their administrations that Shakespeare's identity is a significant issue worth studying: Dan Wright at Concordia and Ren Draya at Blackburn. At least six more Oxfordian professors discuss authorship issues in their classes: Michael Delahoyde at Washington State, Kathleen Binns at the U. S. Air Force Academy, Roger Stritmatter at Coppin State, Nora Kriemer at Instituto Gonzalez in Argentina, and Kateryna Sinkevych at Kherson State in the Ukraine. And of course yourself.

Finally, how do you decide what to put into your "occasional communique"?

I almost always lead with Dan Wright's conference at Concordia, which I consider powerful evidence that the authorship

(cont'd on p. 17)

Conference (cont'd from p. 1)

for this issue. This acknowledgement that the Shakespeare authorship issue requires serious research in an academic setting is a major breakthrough for non-Stratfordian scholars. Dr. Leahy described his own evolution on becoming aware of the authorship problem. He admitted that he used to criticize the whole notion that there was an authorship question until he attended the Shakespeare Authorship Trust Conference at the Globe Theater in London. He now agrees that it is time that the academic world address this issue seriously instead of continuously ignoring it.

In addition, at the banquet on Saturday night, Gary Withers, Executive Vice President of Concordia University gave an overview of Concordia's plans to build a research center devoted to studies of the authorship question. Funds amounting to \$12 million to \$14 million would be allocated to constructing physical facilities, endowing a director and staff, providing funds for research, and disseminating the results of the research through publications. He noted that \$3 million had already been raised and that groundbreaking on the building could begin in late 2007.

Finally, Roger Stritmatter and Lynn Kositsky announced that they had received word just before the conference began that the *Review of English Studies* had approved their paper on *The Tempest* and the Strachey letter for publication. The paper effectively removes the Strachey letter as an impediment to Oxford's candidacy as the actual author of the canon by demonstrating that all the supposed references to the letter in the text of *The Tempest* are present in sources available prior to Oxford's death in 1604.

However, in a very lively and entertaining talk on psychological perspectives on the authorship debate, Professor Sandra Schruijer of the University of Utrecht pointed out that non-Stratfordians not only want to be eventually proven correct in doubting William Shakespeare as the author, but they were also driven by a need to see the Stratfordians knuckle under and agree that they had been right all along. "Never gonna happen," she averred. Prof. Schruijer also noted academicians in English departments were in control of deciding what was valid and "correct" regarding Shakespeare, and one could not expect them to cede authority

on this matter. Also influencing the nature of the debate is the typical human tendency to stick with a position once definitively declared even when strong contradictory evidence is offered by others.

The Case for Oxford

Several papers addressed the connection of Oxford to the canon. The excellent keynote presentation by Rima Greenhill, a lecturer on Russian at Stanford, focused on the Russian connections in *Love's Labours Lost*. Dr. Greenhill revealed many references to English-Russian trade relations in the last half of the sixteenth century, to Ivan the Terrible, and Russian words and customs present in the play. Greenhill then explained that these Russian details could have only been obtained by a courtier such as Oxford, since he knew several of the diplomats and merchants that traveled to Russia and that he attended at court a function for the Russian ambassador. She offered new insights to some of the more enigmatic allusions in the text that have proved problematic for Stratfordian commentators. How Shakespeare of Stratford obtained this information is unexplainable.

Oxfordians Richard Whalen and John Shahan made some pertinent objections to the work of Elliot and Valenza on stylometrics, raising strong doubts on the reliability of their conclusion that Oxford couldn't have written the works of Shakespeare. The objections were statistical and methodological problems — basically that Elliot and Valenza's Oxford database mixed his early poetry with what were probably song lyrics. They argued that poems and songs should be evaluated separately, otherwise one would be comparing apples to oranges. They also criticized Elliot and Valenza's comparison of these Oxford's works with a selection of Shakespeare's plays which did not include the earlier works (which would have been more likely to match other early work).

Professor Dan Wright spoke on *King John* and noted that de Vere took a cue from Philip Sydney, who said it was acceptable to reshape history for artistic literary purposes. The play hits upon the theme of bastardy in a major way, and Dan noted that the key bastard character in the play, despite several known historical bastards available for dramatization, was a total

invention by Shakespeare. The theme of bastardy would have resonated with de Vere because he had to defend himself as the rightful 17th earl shortly after his father died. Prof. Wright sees a high degree of political sensitivity to the play in that it can be interpreted as a rather pointed criticism of Elizabeth's failure to ensure a clear line of succession and possibly hinting at the existence of a bastard she had declined to acknowledge.

Charles Beauclerk presented an intricate paper on *The Tempest* in which he suggested that the play was in effect a roadmap to understanding the entire canon and de Vere's authorship. Prospero can be viewed as de Vere and Miranda as the works themselves. In this light, the play's appearance as the first play in the First Folio is appropriate. Mr. Beauclerk drew a number of other parallels with Oxford's life to further illustrate the connections with Oxford.

The Debates

Other highlights were the two full afternoon panels/debates on Friday and Saturday. The first panel on Friday afternoon focused on a debate by William Rubinstein, Professor of History at the University of Wales, and Lynne Kositsky, an author and independent Oxford researcher from Canada, on the sources of *The Tempest*. The principal point of contention was whether the 1610 Strachey letter is the main source for the play. If it is, Rubinstein pointed out, it would be a death blow for Oxford's candidacy for authorship, since he died in 1604. Rubinstein asserted that the play must have been written in response to public interest following the Bermuda shipwreck of 1610. Professor Rubinstein argued that the letter is accepted by academia as a clear and obvious source for the play since it has many direct references to it. In fact, Rubinstein emphatically agreed with the standard academic dating of Shakespeare's plays. He claimed that it is known when each play was written, many of them after Oxford died. Kositsky explained how *The Tempest* did not depend on the Strachey letter but on other sources such as Eden and Erasmus which reveal much closer references and were published in the later half of the sixteenth century. In addition, the description of a shipwreck in the play

matches other shipwrecks in Bermuda, such as the Bonaventure in 1589, not just the one of 1610. Kositsky also traced the history of the Strachey letter, demonstrating how it could not have been written in 1610, but much later than the first known performance of the play in 1611, and that therefore, it could not be a source of *The Tempest*. Rubinstein did admit that all of the material in the Strachey letter supposedly mirrored in *The Tempest* could have been added later than 1610 before the letter was published in 1625. Kositsky pointed out that the added material could have come from the Tempest instead of the other way around.

The last panel was focused on the issue of whether Shakespeare's Sonnets were "Personal" or "Political". The panelists presenting the political position were William Boyle, librarian and editor from Massachusetts and Hank Whittemore, author of *The Monument* from New York. Whittemore and Boyle argued for a political interpretation of the sonnets based on the assumption of the Prince Tudor theory (PT) — that the Fair Youth was Henry Wriothesley, Third Earl of Southampton, and that he was the son of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford and Queen Elizabeth, who is also the Dark Lady of the Sonnets. In this interpretation, the bulk of the Sonnets date to the Essex rebellion and its aftermath and emphasized that they are not sexual at all. Instead, they represent a father's concern for his son and his rightful claim to the throne of England. Boyle and Whittemore described the structure of the sonnets, centered on a 100 sonnet sequence from Sonnet 26 to 126, which start with the Essex rebellion and end with the death of Queen Elizabeth. They claim they can date each sonnet, sometimes to a particular day, using this "Monument" structure. Roger Stritmatter, Professor of English at Coppin State College in Maryland questioned the validity and logic of the methodology presented in Whittemore's *Monument*. Stritmatter demonstrated how Whittemore's interpretation of the meaning and dating of the sonnets lacks any logical foundation. He also criticized the so called 'monument structure' of the Sonnets that Whittemore claims to have found, and presented the much simpler and elegant

monument structure that Fowler discovered in the 30's. Stritmatter questioned how Hank and Bill "translated" each sonnet, asserting that these were clearly forced readings. John Hamill, an Oxfordian researcher from San Francisco, argued that the sonnets are the traditional format for poets since the time of Petrarch to express their personal sexual desires, loves, loneliness, etc., not the means to complain about the succession to the throne. He argued that the sonnets represent a bisexual three way affair between Oxford, Southampton, and Elizabeth Trentham, Oxford's wife. Hamill presented a summary that reveals that the author of the Canon was definitely interested in bisexuality, and was Oxford. He presented evidence that shows the many sexual puns in the sonnets, and how scholar after scholar have pointed this out. The reasons for identifying Trentham as the Dark Lady are based on Pauline Angell's 1937 paper in which she reveals how "Will-lobie his Avisa," published in 1594, was a libel against Oxford's wife, which questions the paternity of Oxford's son, and suggests the father was Southampton. Hamill claims that this is the reason for the alias in 1593-94—to hide the homosexual affair with Southampton and to protect the legitimacy of Henry Vere, Oxford's son, who seems to have actually been sired by Oxford's lover, Southampton. Hamill called this new theory the Bisexual and Bastard theory (B & B).

Other talks of the Conference will be described in the next SOS Newsletter.

Contributed by
John Hamill,
James Brooks, and
Ramon Jimenez.

(cont'd from p. 15)

issue is being raised and can be raised in universities. This year's agenda included eleven professors delivering papers. Stratfordians can no longer attack the Oxfordian proposition as being solely a matter for non-academic amateurs (like me). Then it's other news that should interest professors in academia, news you see in Oxfordian publications, major media such as *The New York Times* and *Harper's*, major books on Oxford such as the two last year by Mark Anderson and Bertram Field, and sometimes a short summary of a particularly significant paper by an Oxfordian professor. The goal, as always, is to support Oxfordian professors, encourage uncommitted professors to consider the case for Oxford, and let the Stratfordian professors know that Oxfordian professors are flourishing and that the issue of Shakespeare's identity is not going to go away.

A worthy goal. Thank you very much.

OXFORD'S LETTERS

*The Letters of Edward de Vere
Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*

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With quotes from letters by contemporaries
and music thought to be by de Vere

Narration by Joan Walker

Narrative and editing by Stephanie Hopkins Hughes

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Book Review

Another Early History Play is Added to the Shakespeare Canon

by Ramon Jiménez

The Tragedy of Richard II, Part One: a newly authenticated play by William Shakespeare Edited, introduced and with variorum notes by Michael Egan. 4 v. The Edwin Mellen Press 2006

The precise size of the canon of Shakespearean drama has fluctuated little in the nearly four hundred years since the publication in 1623 of thirty-six plays in the First Folio. *Pericles* was admitted in the late eighteenth century, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was added to the Penguin Shakespeare in 1977, the Oxford Shakespeare in 1987, and to the Arden in 1997, albeit as a collaboration with John Fletcher. After Eric Sams made a decisive case for it in 1996, *Edward III* was included in the 2nd edition of the Riverside Shakespeare in 1997 and in the New Cambridge series in 1998.

On the other hand, scholars and critics have steadily chipped away at the edges of the canon by assigning parts of half-a-dozen plays to collaborators, the most recent being Brian Vickers, who in 2002 assembled the evidence that *The Two Noble Kinsmen* and *Henry VIII* were co-authored by Fletcher, and that three other authors in addition to Shakespeare were responsible for *Pericles*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Timon of Athens*.

Therefore, Michael Egan's ascription to Shakespeare of the anonymous history play known to most as *Thomas of Woodstock* is a major event in Shakespeare attribution studies. His case is admirably researched, argued, and documented, and is totally convincing. Although Egan is not the first to make this claim, his is the most complete and authoritative brief for the addition of this play, which he calls *Richard II*, part one, to the Shakespeare canon. His attribution is based on abundant parallels of thought, imagery, vocabulary, and style between the anonymous play and those in the accepted canon, especially its sequel, *Richard II*. This

addition to the canon is not only significant in itself, but also because of its clear implication that there are other anonymous history plays that may also merit inclusion.

Thomas of Woodstock or *I Richard II* (the title page is missing in the ms.) is one of fifteen anonymous plays found in the notorious British Library manuscript—Egerton 1994—that has intrigued and puzzled scholars since James Halliwell discovered it in the late 1860s. The individual play manuscripts are thought to have been owned by the actor William Cartwright, and assembled and bound in the mid-seventeenth century.

Michael Egan's ascription to Shakespeare of the anonymous history play known to most as Thomas of Woodstock is a major event in Shakespeare attribution studies. His case is admirably researched, argued, and documented, and is totally convincing.

Several of them have since been attributed to John Fletcher, Thomas Heywood and others. The only other play in the collection that has received extended attention is *Edmond Ironside*, which was identified by Eric Sams in 1985 as a Shakespeare play dating to c. 1588. The fact that these two important plays would be entirely unknown to us except for this single manuscript (assembled some sixty years after their composition) calls attention to the shallow and sketchy knowledge we have of Elizabethan drama.

As for *Thomas of Woodstock*, Egan writes that "Nothing definite is known of the play's origins and early stage history..." His analysis leads him to conclude that Shakespeare wrote it for a touring company,

possibly Pembroke's Men, in 1592-3, after the Henry VI series and before *Richard II*. The events of the play are arranged in eighteen scenes that take place during a ten-year period (1387-97) during the reign of Richard II (1377-99)—*Woodstock* thus fitting neatly between *Edward III* and *Richard II* in the scheme of Shakespeare's history plays. The dialogue contains just under 3000 lines delivered by thirty-nine named characters, all but five of whom are men, including two ghosts. The horse that appears onstage in Act III does not speak, but is addressed at length by *Woodstock* himself. The poetry is primarily blank verse marked by "a relatively high proportion of feminine verse-endings," which is "consistent with Shakespeare's early practice."

The action of the play opens with Richard's abortive attempt to assassinate his uncles, followed by his appointment of his crony Tresilian as Lord Chief Justice, and culminates in the arrest and murder in 1397 of Richard's uncle, Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester. The dramatist is casual in his arrangement of historical events but clearly intended to adhere to the basic story of Richard's reign, whether factual or rumored. *Thomas of Woodstock* ends with Richard still on his throne, but weakened after a confrontation with his nobles over the murder of *Woodstock*. This is the state of affairs at the opening of *Richard II*, which is generally dated 1594-5. Over the five acts, Richard is transformed from an "arrogant youth" into the "self-pitying, self-dramatizing masochist" we find in *Richard II*.

Thomas of Woodstock and the Shakespeare Canon

In his discussion of the play, which runs to more than 500 pages, Egan repeatedly points to the typically Shakespearean markers to be found in *Woodstock*, including "careful blueprinting, grand historical

sweep, biting political concerns, sharp differentiations of character, vivid personal dictions, inventive prose, flashes of lyricism, [and] tragi-comic portraits of court and country life." Its themes resemble those of Shakespeare's histories, which "typically concern themselves with the dilemmas of succession complicated by the ambitions of the boy-king's relatives." The "historical grasp, range and scholarly industry" of the anonymous playwright "are matched," according to Egan "only by Shakespeare . . . among Elizabethan dramatists, Marlowe and Jonson not excluded."

Both *Richard II* plays deal with the "military and political confrontation between the emergent land-owners of the late fourteenth century in close association with the monarchy, and the long-established feudal aristocracy represented by the uncles of the King." Readers of the history plays, especially Oxfordians, will not be surprised by Egan's observation that both plays "uphold the uncles and their allies . . ." Nor will they be surprised at his remarks that the author "was no ordinary playwright," that he "seems to have had access to the Revels office," and displayed "familiarity with the court."

In the cast are not only almost all the characters we find in *Richard II*, but several who could fit in many another Shakespeare play. Nimble is an affable but devious assistant to the Lord Chief Justice, Cowtail a grazier, and Simon Ignorance a self-important but illiterate bailiff who has more than a passing resemblance to Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing*. These three are involved in the comic sub-plot, which centers around extorting money from local officials—another dramatic device that points ahead to Shakespeare, this time to Falstaff. In his cell, Woodstock is visited by the ghosts of his father, Edward III, and his eldest brother, Edward the Black Prince, who warn him of his impending assassination, which is then accomplished by two anonymous murderers at the direction of a henchman of the King, much as the murder of Clarence was accomplished in *Richard III*.

The core of Egan's case for Shakespeare's authorship is the swarm of images, thoughts, words, phrases, and rhetorical and dramatic devices found in *Thomas of Woodstock*, of

which there is "some sort of echo, parallel or strong resemblance" in Shakespeare's plays. There is no Shakespeare play without them, and Egan cites more than sixteen hundred.

In another category of evidence are the close connections between *Woodstock* and *Richard II* that go beyond characters, lines and phrases, and extend even to the manner of composition. Egan quotes previous editors and critics who remarked on the similar dramaturgy and characterization in the two plays—compressions of time, scenes of leave-taking, the histrionic Richard, and the plain simplicity of Woodstock himself, etc. Most of these details are peculiar to the two plays, and are not supported in the chronicles of the period.

Another aspect of the two plays' connections are the numerous details of plot, action, language, and characterization in *Richard II* that are explained or clarified by reference to *Thomas of Woodstock*. Egan quotes one recent critic on this topic:

[The two dramas are] halves of a dramatic diptych, a theatrical interplay of cause and effect in which the consequence of the events in *Woodstock* is displayed in *Richard II*. . . **Woodstock is not merely background or source material for Shakespeare's play, but a companion piece which articulates some of the silences and absences of *Richard II*** . . . Without *Woodstock*, *Richard II*, as it was written by the Elizabethan Shakespeare and experienced by its early audiences, is incomplete.

Nearly all previous editors and commentators noted these and other similarities, but treated them as coincidences or simple borrowings by Shakespeare, and refused to assign the play to him. A handful suggested that this evidence pointed to Shakespeare, but did not support their claims with anything like the extended analysis that Egan has produced.

Those few scholars who have attempted it have ascribed *Thomas of Woodstock* to half-a-dozen different authors from Peele to Nashe, but most declare the playwright unknown. In 2001 MacD. P. Jackson dated

Woodstock to 1608 and named Samuel Rowley as the author on the strength of his single extant play, *When You See Me You Know Me* (1604). This late date makes Rowley the debtor for the similarities between *Woodstock* and *Richard II*. But Egan exposes the omissions and contradictions in Jackson's argument and easily rebuts his narrow stylometric analysis with Jackson's own evidence.

Despite a dozen previous editions, *Woodstock* has been largely ignored by academia, and is not even found on most lists of Shakespeare apocrypha. Egan credits Oxfordians with bringing attention to it in the late 1990s, leading to several pioneering productions, one of which Mark Anderson and C. V. Berney reported on in the Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter (35:2, Summer 1999). The play was also presented, with *Edward III* and *Richard II*, as part of a thrilling single-day marathon by the Pacific Repertory Theater during the SOS Conference at Carmel in 2001.

Thomas of Woodstock or I Richard II?

Editors and critics appear to be evenly divided about what to call the play. In his edition, which he calls *Woodstock, a Moral History* (1946), A. P. Rossiter observed that the play was not about the fall of Richard, and that "throughout it keeps to the character, dismissal, retirement, arrest and murder of Woodstock." For these reasons, *Thomas of Woodstock* is the better title. It is also a welcome departure from the numbered kings and parts, and obviates adding a confusing "Part II" to the existing *Richard II*.

The four volumes of Michael Egan's *The Tragedy of Richard II, Part One* are arranged in three parts that include not only the play text and his detailed discussion of it, but also a variorum (in two volumes) of the text and notes of all twelve previous editions. It is hard to imagine that there will be much more to be written about *Thomas of Woodstock* than what Egan has included in these 2100 pages. The Edwin Mellen Press merits a compliment for subsidizing what can only be called an author's dream. On the other hand, it might be a reader's nightmare. Egan's commentary and analysis range over two volumes and are so errati-

cally organized that they are difficult to use. Without an index, it is nearly impossible to find specific items, and there is no index. It's also nearly impossible to find an affordable copy of *Woodstock*. However, the publisher is offering all four volumes in paperback for \$50. + shipping through June only. Also, Rossiter's text is online, but without notes, in the Oxford Text Archive at <http://ota.ahds.ac.uk>.

In the end, Egan's case is so thoroughly documented that it cannot be denied. He fully proves his remark that "*I Richard II* is . . . easily as good as Shakespeare's early

Histories, whose mode and manner it closely resembles." And he is justified in claiming that the author of *Woodstock* not only influenced Marlowe, but "was responsible for some of the most important technical advances in the theater of his day."

Michael Egan is Scholar in Residence at the Hawaii campus of Brigham Young University, and has written or edited ten books, including studies of Ibsen, Mark Twain, and Henry James. All Shakespeare scholars have reason to be grateful to him for not only resolving a longstanding authorship puzzle, but adding another rich and

glittering history play to the Shakespeare canon. Although Egan adheres throughout to the Stratfordian theory of authorship, those who dispute it owe him further thanks. His convincing demonstration of Shakespeare's authorship of the anonymous *Thomas of Woodstock* suggests that the path will be easier for those who seek to bring other anonymous, but obviously Shakespearean, history plays, such as *Edmond Ironside*, *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third*, and *The Troublesome Raigne of John*, into the canon, where they belong.

Shakespeare's Monarchs and Mark Anderson

By Carleton W. Sterling

Two queens, Elizabeth Tudor and Mary Stuart, both thought themselves the rightful ruler of England after the passing of Elizabeth's half-sister and Mary's distant cousin, who Protestants dubbed "Bloody Mary" because of the executions in her Catholic faith-based campaign to rid the realm of heretics during her short reign. To the relief of alleged heretics, Elizabeth became Queen of England in 1558 and restored the Protestant state church. But cousin Mary remained the great hope for a renewed Catholic restoration until she was executed in 1587 for conspiring to dethrone Elizabeth. In previous essays, I argued that Shakespeare's *Hamlet* reflected an author disenchanted with the regime change of 1603 that placed Mary's son, James, on the English throne. Here I focus on the rivalry between the Stuart and Tudor queens as a prelude to the 1603 regime change.

Shakespeare may have chosen to rework the Hamlet/Amleth legend in part to exploit the story of a misplaced succession following Gertrude's hasty marriage to her royal husband's murderer with its resemblance to Mary Stuart's precipitous marriage to a likely conspirator in her second husband's assassination. And Shakespeare attributes the death of Hamlet's royal father to a poisoned ear lotion, recalling the torture-

chamber confession of one of Mary's allies stating that she poisoned her first husband, King Francis II of France, who died of an ear inflammation in 1560. As a political scientist, I'm inclined to put more weight on the hard evidence of Mary's loss of the title Queen of France and her mother-in-law's gain of the title Regent of France in the 1560 political realignment, and I see Catherine de Medici as more adept at cutthroat politics than her daughter-in-law. And Mary, Queen of Scots, should have known how much bleaker and much more damp Scottish castles were than the French palaces she was kicked out of.

Although there are some commonalities between Mary Stuart's and Gertrude's situations, I believe Shakespeare gives Gertrude lines more suggestive of Elizabeth Tudor. But the Player Queen may also allude to Mary's reputation. Let's pick up from where the Player Queen breaks in before the sickly Player King can advise her who she might marry when he has gone to his eternal rest [*Hamlet*, Act III, scene 2, line 199-203]:¹

Player King For husband shalt thou—
Player Queen O confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in
my breast.

In second husband let me be accurst;
Non wed the second but who killed
the first.

The last line surely states an extreme view of remarriage even if "killed" is not taken literally. Hamlet interjects the aside "That's wormwood," suggesting Satan or at least a fiendish person. Fair or not, Mary Stuart got the fiendish reputation of a husband killer. The Player Queen continues [*Hamlet*, Act III, scene 2, line 205-8]:

The instances that second marriage
move
Are base respects of thrift, but none
of love.
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in
bed.

Because a woman can't kill the same spouse twice, we may think the second "kill" a metaphor for posthumous betrayal of a husband. But we may also read these lines literally as projecting a serial killer of husbands, and anyone who believes the ear poisoning story could also believe in weaponized lipstick. Replying to his wife's spurning the idea of remarriage, the Player King argues that she would think differently as a widow. She counters with the heavy

curse upon herself if she were to break her vow not to remarry [*Hamlet*, Act III, scene 2, line 239-46]:

Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven
light,
Sport and repose lock from me day
and night,
To desperation turn my trust and hope,
An anchor's cheer in prison be my
scope,
Each opposite, that blanks the face
of joy,
Meet what I would have well and it
destroy.
Both here and hence pursue me last-
ing strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be a wife.

Hamlet interjects, "If she should break it now!" suggesting that the curse should come true if the vow were broken. We may expect the Player Queen to remarry if we think she portrays Hamlet's mother, whose remarriage will lead to the destruction of her royal family. But the "lasting strife" and imprisonment specified in the curse fits the real-life Mary better than the fictional Gertrude. Childless by her first husband, Mary returned to Scotland and twice remarried to physically abusive men. Husband II denied paternity of Mary's son and plotted a palace coup that seized the Queen of Scots and murdered her alleged lover. When her estranged husband was later assassinated, Mary implicated herself in that murder by running off with the chief suspect, who then forced her into a marriage that violated the rules of her faith. The clergy denounced her. Her people mocked her. Rebels shattered Mary's army. Husband III fled to Denmark. In prison and pregnant, she suffered a bloody miscarriage. She abdicated her throne under threat of death. In desperation, she escaped into exile in England. Her protective custody became under increasingly tight surveillance as English suspicions grew of Mary's complicity in Catholic plots against Elizabeth.

Consider now Gertrude's famous response to the Player Queen's speech [*Hamlet*, Act III, scene 2, line 254]: "The lady doth protest too much, methinks." But why doubt the Player Queen's words? The "real" Queen Gertrude shows no sign she sees herself in the portrayal. Hamlet assures his mother, "O, but she'll keep her word."

Does he mean that the Player Queen would not remarry or that she would become a husband killer? King Claudius asks, "Have you heard the argument? Is there no offense in it?" Hamlet replies, "No, no, they do but jest—poison in jest. No offense i' th' world." Yeah, sure, and Shakespeare would never write satire offensive to a real-world king or his family.

I think the "protest too much" line expresses the Elizabethan assessment of Mary Stuart's defense at her trial for conspiracy against Elizabeth. The accused protested her innocence by saying she only sought to escape her imprisonment. Not likely. Springing Mary from English custody would have made her available as the Catholic replacement for the Protestant Elizabeth. If Mary had renounced scheming for regime change and prayed for her followers to give peace a chance, Elizabeth might have forgiven past offenses. Spinning a tale of innocent intent gave cover to the conspirators. Mary also protested the jurisdiction of the trial court, claiming that her status as a sovereign gave her immunity from prosecution according to Holy Scripture. This implicitly denied the legitimacy of her abdication that made her son King of Scots. Although she did not shout out her claim of sovereignty extending over England, she did nothing to discourage the movement for a Catholic restoration. These protests were "too much" for the Elizabethans. Mary's protest strategy was exactly wrong for saving her head but exactly right for rallying opposition to Elizabeth. Mary died a martyr to her faith, but it was not a live-and-let-live faith.

I make this case to rebut some of Mark Anderson's inferences in "*Shakespeare by Another Name*," a mostly brilliant study of how the life of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, illuminates many passages in Shakespeare's fiction and sonnets.² While acknowledging the brilliance of this book, Stephanie Hopkins Hughes' review (*Newsletter*, Summer 2005) identifies some places where Anderson's analytic lamp fades. I believe he also makes in-the-dark stumbles in assessing Oxford/Shakespeare's appreciation of the Stuarts.

De Vere was one of the judges at Mary's trial, and Anderson infers that de Vere believed that anointed monarchs are sacred. That belief is stated, if not upheld,

in Shakespeare's *Richard II* and perhaps elsewhere in the canon. The doctrine of once a sovereign always a sovereign certainly appealed to Elizabeth. The English Queen had wanted to restore the Scottish Queen to power after her 1567 abdication until Elizabeth's advisers finally persuaded her of the national security advantage of neighboring Scotland being governed in the name of a young prince being raised as a Protestant. As for the dethroned Queen Mother, Elizabeth dragged her heels throughout the long process of building a case against Mary, bringing her to trial, convicting her, sentencing her to die and executing the sentence. Anderson offers no evidence that de Vere sided with Mary's defense, and the judgment against her was unanimous. Beyond the facts and law at issue, Elizabeth's loyalists understood Mary's threat to the regime in 1587 when the once and no longer future queen was beheaded. Attempts to assassinate Elizabeth and insurrections in the countryside had failed, but the English court saw the clear and present danger of the Spanish plan to launch a grand fleet to carry an army to liberate Catholic England and occupy Protestant England. So Mary's execution was a preemptive strike.

Failing to appreciate the realist case for Mary's execution, Anderson misinterprets the villainy in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Lady Macbeth's most famous line is "Out, damned spot, out, I say" [*Macbeth*, Act V, scene 1, line 37].⁴ Her anguish over her bloodstained hand from the killing of King Duncan is taken by Anderson as reflecting Elizabeth's guilt in Mary's execution. Nonsense. Murdering house guests is a far cry from an execution after judicial proceedings that heard both the prosecution and the defense. Elizabethans would have understood the nighttime slaughter of Duncan and his entourage as invoking the 1572 St. Bartholomew Day's massacre of French Protestants instigated by Mary's first mother-in-law, Catherine de Medici. This bloodbath started at the royal quarters in Paris to which Protestant leaders had been invited to celebrate the marriage of a Catholic princess to a Protestant prince. In the source legend of *Macbeth*, Duncan is killed after he lost a battle and Macbeth switched to the winning side. Shakespeare instead portrayed the Macbeths as violating

the first rule of hospitality, that you don't kill your invited guests. The allusion to the real-world massacre illuminates Lady Macbeth's astonishment about the extent of the bloodshed [*Macbeth*, Act V, scene 1, line 41-2], "Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?" This sardonically recalls the assassination of the Protestant Admiral of France, the principal target of the Catholic House of Guise. When an initial attempt to kill the old man failed, the royal family panicked about a possible counterattack. Egged on by the Queen Mother, the plot was expanded to slay the Protestant nobles invited to the palace. This sparked a general massacre of Protestants in the capital city. The pogrom in Paris spread to other French communities, and thousands of Protestants were put to the sword. So the bloodshed exceeded expectations. The 1572 news from France alerted the Elizabethans to the escalation of the conflict between Catholics and Protestants. Because Mary Stuart was doubly related to the House of Guise, through her first husband and her own mother, recollection of that family's complicity in ethnic cleansing would shape Elizabethan fears of Mary Stuart taking up "Bloody Mary" Tudor's project to restore Catholic rule.

Anderson also infers that Shakespeare concludes *Hamlet* with an implied endorsement of James Stuart as King of England. This is a stretch on Anderson's belief that the Earl of Oxford was Shakespeare. As Lord High Chamberlain, Edward de Vere did attend James at his installation ceremonies, and the new King of England did continue de Vere on the royal payroll. But how did he really feel? The Stuart succession was managed by Robert Cecil, England's dominant royal official and the brother of Oxford's late wife. Pursuing a smooth transition to a new dynasty, Cecil cast a dragnet for dissenters. The commander of the Tower of London, where they had ways of making you talk, reported that on or about two days before the March 24, 1603 death of Elizabeth, the earls of Oxford and Lincoln discussed at least one royal-blooded Englishman as preferable to the Scottish King, whose legitimacy

de Vere disputed.⁴ Maybe that report was false or exaggerated as Anderson seems to think, but the allegation was a live grenade because even discussing the succession was deemed treason. Cecil would want to defuse that bomb because of his family ties to de Vere. It is unlikely he fully informed James about all the negative reviews of his Highness. Based on scant evidence, Sir Walter Raleigh was convicted of treason in 1603 for saying he would rather have another queen as ruler.

On or about two days before the April 28 funeral for Elizabeth, de Vere wrote Cecil acknowledging James as "our new master, and Sovereign Lord, who doth not come amongst us as a stranger, but as a natural prince, succeeding by right of blood and inheritance." That strikes me as a modest endorsement of a done deal from one hoping to advance his estate under the new regime with the help of his "very good brother in law." More telling, Oxford refers in this letter to Elizabeth's passing as a "common shipwreck" and he himself feeling uncertain of what course to take in the "storm."⁵

Anderson tries to rescue the thesis of a pro-Stuart Shakespeare by equating James, the prince from the north with respect to England, and Fortinbras, the prince from the north with respect to Denmark. I have made the same equation to yield a different solution to where the political bias lay in the publication of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* shortly after the 1603 Stuart succession [*Newsletter*; Spring 2005]. Anderson quotes the dying Hamlet [*Hamlet*, Act V, scene 2, 391-3]:

I cannot live to hear the news from England, But I do prophesy th' election lights On Fortinbras. He has my dying voice.

Anderson says "Hamlet's words are reminiscent of Beowulf's instructions to his beloved Wiglaf—that the prince from the north (Fortinbras) should inherit the throne."⁶ I can believe that Anderson and Shakespeare share the scholarly distinction of having read *Beowulf*, the saga dating back to the Danish invasions of England. Whatever Shakespeare's sources, I find Hamlet's

words a more feeble endorsement of a prince than Oxford's. Hamlet's "prophesy" of who is to rule follows his being informed that the gunfire he has heard outside is a salute to English envoys from Fortinbras' conquering army. Hamlet's "dying voice" spoken to Horatio is useless to Fortinbras unless Horatio transmits it with a positive spin. In the first scene [*Hamlet*, lines 89-119], Horatio describes Fortinbras as a rebel threat ungoverned by law or chivalry. When the Norwegian prince asserts his claim to takeover in the last scene, Horatio, Hamlet's chosen spokesman, says he will speak of that but never does and so fails to recant his original judgment [*Hamlet*, Act V, scene 2, 429-40]. Shakespeare could have used Horatio to aid and comfort the Stuart cause, either implicitly by affirming the claim of the "northern prince" or explicitly by stepping out of character and praising the "Solomon of Scotland." Fortinbras has the last words, which honor the fallen Hamlet and his lost potential, but says nothing to reassure his new subjects about the new dynasty.

If Shakespeare were the Kingsmen player of legend, then he would be obliged to clearly honor his patron's succession to the English throne. That's why I've scratched the "Bard of Avon" as a possible author of *Hamlet*. But it is also unlikely that *Hamlet* was written by the Earl of Oxford if his public support for James Stuart were heartfelt.

ENDNOTES:

1. *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* citations are to the 1992 New Folger Library Shakespeare editions, Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine, editors (Washington Square Press).
2. Mark Anderson, "*Shakespeare*" by *Another Name* (Gotham Books, 2005).
3. Op. cit.
4. The report by John Peyton, Lieutenant of the Tower, is discussed from different perspectives by Anderson, pp. 344-5; and Christopher Paul, "A Monument Without a Tomb: the Mystery of Oxford's Death," *The Oxfordian*, VII (2004), pp. 8-9.
5. Paul, p. 9-10; and Anderson, p. 349-50.
6. Anderson, pp. 23, 356-7.

Letters to the Editor

On Emaricdulfe

Robert Prechter

Congratulations to Derran Charlton for deducing the identity of "E.C. Esquire". I think we can also decode the subject of the Emaricdulfe sonnets. Sonnet XVII begins, "Emaricdulfe, if thou this sonnet read, / This darke Aenigma..." "Obviously", says Joe Sobron, "Emaricdulfe is a code name." [from a 1998 internet article, <http://sobron.com/emar.shtml>]. But what is it? The dedication says that these poems were written "at the command and service of a faire Dame." A bit of playing reveals that letters

in Emaricdulfe are an anagram for DAME LUCIFER. To modern ears, this seems an ironic title, as the dedication refers to the subject of the verses as "so sweete a Saint", and the poems are mostly benign, not railings against a devil-woman. The irony disappears with the information that Lucifer was the early roman astronomer's name for the planet Venus. Oxford used this meaning throughout his life, because Arthur Brooke in 1562 speaks of "Fayre Lucifer, the golden starre that Lady Venus chose," and

thirty-four years later B. Griffen, (another pseudonym), in the same year that the Emaricdulfe sonnets were published writes, "peeping Lucifer Auorae starre, / The skie with golden periwigs doth spangle" and talks of an impossible time "When Lucifer forerunnes the balefull night." Oxford, as E.C. Esquire, then was simply calling his love "Dame Venus", with perhaps a playful double meaning akin to "devil doll".

The Case of the Mad Mathematicians

Sam C. Saunders

Stephan Hawking has just published a book presenting the salient work of a few of the greatest mathematicians in history along with brief sketches of their lives. The American title is *God Created the Integers* which is a translation of a statement by Leopold Koneke, who said, "Die gins zahlen hat Gott gemacht, besonders manswerken ist." Its title in England, *On the Shoulders of Giants*, was from Isaac Newton, who modestly said of his accomplishments, "I have been standing on the shoulders of giants." This alteration of title is doubtless due to the godliness of Americans.

Georg Cantor is our person of interest here. He was born in 1845 into a German Protestant family; his mother was from a family known for its violin virtuosi, and as a young man Georg first gained notoriety for his violin playing. When he entered the University of Berlin, he chose to study pure mathematics, and he made good academic progress. In four years he earned a Doctor's Degree. Two years later he was made a professor at the University of Halle. His work on transfinite numbers over the next twelve years brought him world wide recognition with high praise from many but condemnation from a few. His attempt to obtain an appointment at his *alma mater* was blocked at every turn by the famous number theorist Leopold Koneke.

Cantor, thwarted in his professional advancement, suffered his first bout with deep mental depression. His anxiety about being unable to work only magnified his debilitating incapacity and indeed his years as a mathematician were finished. Recurring visits in mental hospitals were, for the next twenty-five years, an increasing part of his life. Hawkins writes on page 970:

As the years went on, Cantor's mental state got worse and worse. In those later years, He devoted himself to the study of Shakespeare. He even attempted to prove that the Bard and the philosopher Francis bacon were on and the same person!

What an apt description of Cantor's total insanity; to think The Bard was anyone other than The Bard. Can anyone imagine the depth of mental incapacity from which Cantor must have suffered for him to have studied Shakespeare and conclude that it was more likely that

Francis Bacon wrote the canon than did Stratford Bill? Unfortunately, Cantor died in 1918 during the last years of WWI, two years before J. Thomas Looney published *Shakespeare Identified*.

Hawking's first book *A Brief History of Time* sold over ten million copies. Since every displayed equation cuts potential readership by half, the average of about 23 displayed equations every ten pages reduces the comprehensible readership of *God Created Integers* to less than half that of *Will in the World*.

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While looking through old Oxfordian material and pamphlets, I happened upon a most interesting finding. Many Oxfordians are familiar with Edward de Vere's involvement in Italy with the *Commedia dell' Arte*'s "Tirade of the Tournament," but some may not be aware of the origin of this discovery although it is mentioned in Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (p. 549-50). The discovery was made by Julia Cooley Altrocchi, mother of our fellow Oxfordian researcher, Dr. Paul Altrocchi. Paul was kind enough to allow this reprinting of his mother's original article and to provide some biographical information.

Julia Altrocchi was a lifelong poet who published her first book of poetry at the age of nine and her second before she attended Vassar, class of 1914. Her finest book de-

scribed in dramatic poetry the tragic story of the Donner Party, trapped in the Sierra Mountains by the worst winter in a hundred years, on its way from St. Louis to California. *Snow Covered Wagons*, published by Macmillan in 1936, was immediately bought by Hollywood with James Cagney and Jean Arthur, cast as the leads, but production was halted by threatened suits from Donner Party descendents who didn't want the story of cannibalism to become widely known. Julia's best novel was *Wolves Against the Moon*, published in 1942, about the French and Indian wars in Canada and the Midwest. Living in Berkeley, where her husband was Chairman of the Dept. of Italian, she then became a California historian and published two books and many articles along with three volumes of poetry. She was twice President of the California Writer's Club. She died

in 1972 at the age of 79. Julia became an Oxfordian after reading Charles Wisner Barrell's 1940 *Scientific American* article which provided convincing x-ray evidence that the Folger Library's Ashbourne Portrait was actually Edward de Vere and not the man from Stratford. She published several other interesting Oxfordian discoveries, usually made in dusty backroom archives of libraries in Italy. Her enthusiasm was infectious and Paul became an Oxfordian in 1945 shortly before he was sent East in his early teens to have the rough edges of his Western barbarism honed and polished in the pristine atmosphere of Ivy League orthodoxy.

Archival and biographical information by Dr. Paul Altrocchi and Dr. Frank Davis.



Edward De Vere And The Commedia Dell' Arte

By Julia Cooley Altrocchi

(Reprinted from the *Shakespearean Authorship Review*, No. 2, Autumn 1959.)

It has always been a matter of some mystification to Shakespeare scholars

that there are such definite resemblances in *Love's Labour's Lost* and several other plays to the Italian *Commedia dell' arte*. No *Commedia* companies are known to have visited England except Drouisano's company in 1577/8; and Shakespeare of Stratford was fourteen at the time and living in his native burg.

Oxfordians know that the playwright Earl of Oxford was in Italy from May, 1575 to March, 1576 and letters written by him from Venice, Padua and Sienna testify to these cities as places of his sojourning. It is said that he spent six months in Venice. It has always been quite naturally assumed that, loving the theater as he did, he must

have attended the plays of the *Commedia* in Venice. There has been up to this time no "clincher" to substantiate this assumption. While working at the *Biblioteca Marciana* in Venice in 1956 I found, to my delight, such a clincher.

In 1669 there was published in Naples a book by Andrea Perrucci called *Dell' Arte Rappresentativa Premeditata ed all' Improviso. (Dramatic Art by Rote and Extemporaneous.)*

The extemporaneous portion treats, of course, the *Commedia dell' Arte*. A long section of this is devoted to the stock character of Graziano, the talkative Bolognese doctor who tells long tales and never stops for breath. One of his famous recitals is the so-called Tirade of Tournaments (*Tirata della Giostra*) in which the actor rattles off the names of twenty or thirty knights and ladies, their horses, the color and devices of their garments and shields and the events that befell each one on the field of tourney, for even the ladies took part in this hypotheti-

cal tournament. Perrucci proceed to quote a typical *Tirata*:

"I found myself ambassador of my illustrious country of Bologna at the court of the Emperor Polidor of Trebizond", spiels off the worthy doctor, "and attending the great Tournament celebrating his marriage to Irene, Empress of Constantinople. Present were many great worthies, Basil, King of Zelconda, Doralba, Princess of Dacia, Arcont, vaiode of Moldavia, Arsileus, heir of Denmark, Isuf, pasha of Aleppo, Fatima, Sultan of Persia, Elmond, milord of Oxford, etc., etc..."

Who but Edward, Earl of Oxford, who attended so many shows of the *Commedia* in Venice and consorted on so friendly a fashion with the brilliant improvisators that he was given a place in the doctor's gay enumeration as a personal tribute? (He

was known to have won tournaments in England and he had challenged all comers in Sicily.)

It is of interest to read on and to see with what tourney-equipment the good doctor furnishes Edward.

The horse of Milord of Oxford is faun-colored and goes by the name of Ultramarin—Beyond-the-Sea. Edward carries a large sword (*spadone*.) His color of costume is violet. He carries for device a falcon with a motto taken from Terence: *Tendit in ardua virtus* (Valour proceeds to arduous undertakings.)

In this *Tirata*, Milord of Oxford, amusingly enough, tilted against Alvilda, countess of Edemburg, who was mounted on a dapple-grey, was armed with a Frankish lance and was robed in lemon color. In the end, Edward and Alvilda, alas, threw one another simultaneously, both landing face down in the dust!

Nevertheless, Emperor Polidor awarded to all the knights and amazons gifts out of the cupboard of antiquity. To Elmond, our Edward, was given the horn of Astolf,

paladin of Charlemagne, the magic horn to rout armies—a spear of sorts to shake, with enchanted consequences.

It is not necessary, it seems to me, to hunt for occult significances in all this. It does not imply, for instance, that Edward reached Constantinople or Trebizond, as he had dreamed of doing.

All it signifies is that he was well and very companionably known at the performances of the *Commedia dell'arte* and that he was recognized as being not only so good a sportsman but so good a sport and possessed of so resilient a sense of humor that he could be introduced into a skit and, with impunity, described as meeting a woman in tilt and being unhorsed and rolled to the ground with her in the encounter! One can see him sitting in the performance-room at the Doge's Palace, or at the theater, and hear him roaring during this recital of the *Tirade of the Tournament*, delivered hilariously in the stage-doctor's Bolognese dialect!

Yes, Shakespeare knew indeed, first hand, his *Commedia dell'arte*!

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First Earl of Oxford (cont'd from p. 14)

Harris shows, for example, how the “pathological imagery” of *The Merchant of Venice* “resonates with an early mercantilist lexicon of infection.” (15) Further, “*The Comedy of Errors* offers an important glimpse of the extent to which the evolving premercantilist discourses of pathology and economy were entwined.” (16) The connection between Milles’ economics and Shakespeare’s dramatic and poetic language is the stuff of further study. Important here is that the connection has been made.

Is it the language of the day, or might there have been some further connection between Milles, the Veres, and Shakespeare? At least one other possible tie between Milles and the Veres through publisher Jaggard has been shown. Roger Stritmatter has noted that Milles contributed material on the heraldry and customs of England to *Arxiao-Ploutos*, a “translation and amalgamation of several works detailing the customs and cultural traditions of the Gauls, Spaniards, and Italians” published by Jaggard and dedicated in 1619 “To the Most Noble and Twin-like Paire,” Sir Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery, and his wife Lady Susan, daughter of the 17th Earl. Stritmatter points out how the dedication to the First Folio four years later, “To the Most Noble and Incomparable Paire of Brethern,” Sir Philip Herbert and his brother William, Earl of Pembroke, echoes the earlier dedication. (17)

Buchanan’s History of Scotland

The scant details provided by Milles about Edgar Adeling are, except for the Earldom of Oxford on which Buchanan is silent, supported and developed by the contemporary history of Scotland written by George Buchanan in 1582. (18)

After he overthrows Macbeth, Malcolm III consolidates his power:

In the meantime, Edgar [Adeling], who was next heir to the English throne, after Edward, being driven upon the Scottish coast by contrary winds, landed, with his whole family. (19)

Buchanan recounts how Canute the Dane, at the slaying of Edmond, King of England, sent the king’s surviving sons Edward and Edmond to Valgar, the governor of Sweden to have them put to death. Valgar, respecting their noble descent, their age, and their innocence, pretended that he had murdered them and sent them to king Solomon in Hungary. Young Edward was married to the king’s daughter Agatha, who bore Edgar, Margaret, and Christian. The slain king Edmond’s brother Edward, who became known as the Confessor, ruled over England but died without issue:

Having no children, this monarch brought back his relations from Hungary, in order to their undertaking the government, and wished immediately upon the return of Edgar, to resign the kingdom to him. (20)

Edgar refused to accept the throne during the king’s lifetime. At Edward’s death, however, earl Godwin’s son Harold captured the throne, then was in turn overthrown by William the Norman, called the Conqueror. Thus it happened that Edgar,

with his mother and sisters, in order to avoid the cruelty of the conqueror, fled, and, when attempting to return to Hungary, were forced, by a violent tempest, to land in Scotland. (21)

There, Malcolm III married Edgar’s sister Margaret. William demanded Edgar’s return, but Malcolm refused, retained Edgar and treated him and his followers well, so that they stayed in Scotland and prospered. War arose between England and Scotland. Sibard, king of Northumberland, favored Edgar and joined with the Scots, defeating William in the north territory. Buchanan writes that William eventually tired of war and received Edgar back into favor, conferring “upon him very ample possessions,” while Sibard’s son married the king’s daughter. (22)

Malcolm III maintained order and prosperity, said to be “much assisted by the advice and admonitions of his inimitable queen, a woman remarkable for her uncommon piety,” as was her mother Agatha and her sister Christian, who both retired to a convent. Malcolm was murdered after reigning 36 years, his wife, Edgar’s sister, following him soon thereafter in death. Three of his six sons, Edgar, Alexander, and David became kings of Scotland, all serving honorably. Edgar Adeling, now aged and infirm, was yet to be caught up in more court intrigue in the reign of William Rufus, son of William the Conqueror but was exonerated by “judicial combat,” in which a representative fought for his innocence and won. (23)

Malcolm’s daughter, Matilda, married Henry, king of England. Remember, Looney wrote that it was Matilda who conferred the title of Earl of Oxford upon Aubrey de Vere. Remember, too, Mark Anderson’s significant political detail: “the first [Vere] Earl of Oxford supported Empress Matilda’s (unsuccessful) claim to the throne against King Stephen.” (24) Was the conferring of the Earldom of Oxford then by Matilda, Henry I’s queen and the niece of Edgar Atheling, the first Earl of Oxford, a political reward? That interpretation would give point to the transfer of the earldom to the Veres greater than Ogburn’s suggestion that Earl Aubrey picked it for no apparent reason from many which might have been available.

So it is that the Veres are connected to the first Earl of Oxford, Edgar Adeling, the heir to the throne who would never be king. Whether a random result, as Ogburn portrays, the result of politics, or the result of some greater design, Edward de Vere must have known of his family’s connection, through its ancient title, to royalty. At the very least, this knowledge gives us greater appreciation of the title, of its place in English history, and of the deep and ancient well from which Edward de Vere drew for his art.

Geoffrey Bullough believes that Buchanan’s *Rerum Scotticarum Historica* (1582) was read in the Latin by Shakespeare and was a “more likely source” than William Stewart’s *The Buik of the Chronicles of Scotland*, (25) in no small part because Stratford Shakspeare would have had no chance to gain access to Stewart’s history in the king’s library. Bullough notes that Buchanan “had been tutor both to Mary, Queen of Scots, and to James VI,” and that his “work as reformer and historian was celebrated throughout Europe.” Although Bullough feels that Shakespeare could have

found the same material in Holinshed, the correspondences between Buchanan and Shakespeare are remarkable and are the stuff of further study. Although Buchanan died in 1582, Edward de Vere would have had ample opportunity to have made his acquaintance, especially through Lord and Lady Lennox, likely acquaintances of Edward de Vere, who appear as characters in the First Folio *Macbeth*, who appear no where in the history of Macbeth's time, and whose lives and relationships to de Vere also warrant much further looking into.

Edgar: the Rest of the Story

There is more to Edgar Adeling's story which would make him sympathetic to the 17th Earl. When Edgar was passed over for the crown, he was yet a boy. (26) As the nephew of Edward the Confessor, he was nearest in line at Edward's death early in 1066. With the looming Norman invasion, however, the power was held by Harold, descended from Scandinavian kings through his mother but, more importantly, ready to rule and to fight. Trevelyan observes:

It may be that Harold would have done better if he had resisted the suggestions of vaulting ambition, and set himself as the guardian lion on the steps of the Atheling's throne. But his acceptance of the crown, even if ill-advised, cannot be stigmatized as usurpation. (27)

In this case, the effect of hundreds of years of hindsight and perhaps perspective has softened the interpretation strongly stated by Milles and Buchanan at the time of Elizabeth. Trevelyan cites several reasons for his kindly interpretation of events—

England had previously not observed a strict law of hereditary succession; it was usual to pass over minors; Edward Confessor had named Harold as his heir; and, finally, he was chosen king by the royal council, the Witan. These are not even to consider that in a matter of months, attacks on England were underway by Harald Hardrada, King of Norway, and by William, Duke of Normandy, known as the Conqueror. Trevelyan further notes, "William's claims to the throne—if indeed we are willing to set aside the not altogether unimportant fact that he was a bastard—were genealogically better than Harold's, though worse than the Atheling's." (28)

There may have been other considerations to weaken Edgar's claim to the throne, but there can be no denying the injustice implied in Milles' and Buchanan's recounting of Edgar's story. Neither of those historians mentions that when Edgar was passed over, he was still a boy. But for us now, centuries later, trying to piece together the life and work of Shakespeare, here is another element which shows up in Shakespeare's plays. Very much like the youths Sebastian and Viola in *Twelfth Night* whose ship was caught up in a tempest and who were cast upon the shores of Illyria, Edgar and his sisters, seeking refuge on a ship sailing for Hungary (29) were

cast upon a foreign shore by a tempest The rest of the story may be as different as *Macbeth*, but here are common origins.

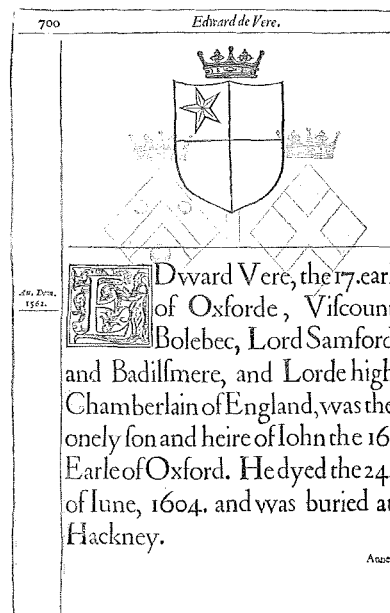
Conclusion

There is nothing new about Milles' *Catalogue of Honor*. It is relatively rare and difficult to find, but it has been often visited by historians, literary and otherwise. In a recent e-mail, Christopher Paul recalled that British scholar J.E. Neale who owned a copy.(30) How many such documents have been carefully scanned by past scholars who have only had eyes for William Shakspeare of Stratford and have therefore missed connections which are there for the taking between Shakespeare and the 17th Earl? This writer believes that Milles' *Catalogue of Honor* provides evidence that the most exciting and abundant opportunities for Shakespeare research are precisely in the area of authorship and especially concerning the 17th Earl of Oxford. Graduate students should take heed, however unlikely it is that their advisers and professors ever will.

Be that as it may, Thomas Milles provides us with a direct link between the Earl of Oxford and the Shakespeare canon, an immediate source of legendary proportions which must have been of great personal and artistic interest to the 17th Earl, who we know was intensely involved with the history of his country and the history of his family and who created works which, when the connections are made, are of epic force ultimately bound together by the identity of the author William Shakespeare.

Endnotes

- 1 Compact edition, pp. 134.
- 2 B. M. Ward, *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, 1550-1604: From Contemporary Documents*, John Murray, London, 1928, pp. 3-4.
- 3 Ward, pp. 4-5.
- 4 Charlton Ogburn, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality*: EPM Publications, Inc., McLean, Virginia, 1992, 2nd ed., p. 147.
- 5 Ogburn, p. 418.
- 6 Ogburn, p. 419.
- 7 *Shakespeare Identified*, Duell, Sloan & Pearce, New York, 1949, p. 182.
- 8 "Shakespeare" *By Another Name*, Gotham Books, New York, 2005, p. 1
9. Thank you to William Rubinstein for his generous sharing of the DNB entry.
- 10 University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- 11 Harris, p. 2.
12. Harris, p. 9.
13. Harris, p. 14.
14. Harris, p. 61.
- 15 Harris, p. 51.
- 16 Harris, p. 31.
- 17 www.everreader.com/1619dedi.htm



18 Cited in Bullough, p. 544, as *Rerum Scoticarum historia*, Edinburgh, 1582, London, 1583. Eng. trans.: T. Page, 1690. The edition used here is *The History of Scotland*, trans. from the Latin in four volumes by James Aikman, Blackie, Fullerton and Co., Glasgow, 1827. See Vol I, pp.338 ff.
 19 Buchanan, pp. 338-9.
 20 Buchanan, p. 340.
 21 Buchanan, p. 340.
 22 Buchanan, p. 342.
 23 Buchanan, p. 347.
 24 Anderson, p. 1.

25 *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1973, Vol. 7, p. 438.
 26 This account taken from G. M. Trevelyan, *History of England*, Vol. I, Doubleday and Co., Garden City, New York, 1956, pp. 155-61.
 27 Trevelyan, p. 156.
 28 Trevelyan, p. 156.
 29 Robert Brazil has provided access to a most helpful map of Europe c. 1560 at www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/shepherd/europe_1560.jpg The map includes all of Europe and in one glance shows the relative positioning of England, Hungary and Illyria, with Ragusa on the coast.
 30 March 28, 2006.

President (cont'd from p. 2)

The Updated Website: A Work In Progress

I also want to underscore the enormous progress made by Board member Richard Smiley on the website. If you haven't visited the site recently, please do. You'll experience a much more contemporary look and feel. Granted, we're still in the early stages of revamping the entire website, but the transformation so far has been significant. Please let us know what features you'd most like to see on the website so we can incorporate your ideas into our ongoing upgrade plans.

The Library

As you know, the question of what to do with the society's substantial library was discussed during the annual meeting in Ashland. The Board has created a task force to examine our options. In considering what to do with the library, we felt an important first step was to create a searchable electronic database of our books and to organize the library to facilitate easy retrieval of specific books. Once we have this organized shelf list of the books, I believe we'll be in a much better position to decide what our next steps should be. As always, any thoughts you have on the disposition of the library are most welcome.

Membership Drive: Current Member "Sponsorship" Program

Growing our membership base is critical to making progress on our mission. With that in mind, the Board has adopted an exciting new membership category designed to encourage current members to recruit new members. The theory here is that our best advocates and recruiters are our current members. But until now members haven't

been given much of an incentive to actively recruit new members.

We hope this new program will transform current members into active recruiters. Here's how it works. All current members will be allowed to "sponsor" as many new members as he/she likes. These "sponsored" members will be granted their first year's membership at half the normal price. We hope this will encourage all current members to go out and actively sponsor as many new members as you can. Now you can offer friends, relatives and colleagues a special half-price membership for the first year. It doesn't cost you anything (unless you decided to pay for your "sponsored" member). So it truly is a win-win for everyone involved. After the first year, we hope these "sponsored" new members will decide to continue their membership at the regular rate. So please go forth and multiply the membership by sponsoring new members under this program. Just tell your "sponsored" members to mention your name when they contact the office to join.

Hot Topic Pamphlet Series

Just a quick update on the Hot Topics pamphlet series. I have heard from several members about topics that should be included. We're looking for topics that can be covered in a short pamphlet of perhaps 10 to 15 pages, perhaps somewhere between 2,500 and 5,000 words. The goal is to make these pamphlets brief, punchy, compelling, and as accessible as possible to key audiences, including reporters, foundations, educators, and members of the general public. The topics should have the potential to open and ideally change minds with regard to the authorship question generally and the case for Oxford in particular. If you have suggestions about specific topics or if you'd

like to volunteer to serve on the Hot Topics Task Force, please contact me directly.

The first pamphlet will make the case that there is, indeed, a legitimate authorship issue. In other words, there is reasonable and substantial doubt about the traditional Stratfordian theory. Other potential topics include: The Italian plays; the publication and content of the Sonnets; dating Hamlet; the chronology of the plays; the Stratford monument; illiteracy in the Stratford Candidate's immediate family; Shakespeare's sources; Oxford's biography reflected in the plays and poems; and many more.

Second Joint SF-SOS Conference: Ann Arbor, Michigan, November 9-12, 2006

Please make plans to attend the second joint conference sponsored by the Shakespeare-Oxford Society and the Shakespeare Fellowship. The conference will be held in Ann Arbor, Michigan, November 9-12, 2006. More details will be posted on our website (www.shakespeare-oxford.com) and the SF website (www.shakespearefellowship.org).

That's about all for now. Please continue to share your thoughts and ideas with me and other members of the Board of Trustees. We encourage your active participation in the programs and outreach efforts of the society. Only through an active and engaged membership will the society succeed in fulfilling its important objectives.

With your help, perhaps in a not-too-distant April the true Shakespeare's birthday will be celebrated at long last and April will no longer be such a cruel month.

Sincerely,
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