



# The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

A Publication of the Shakespeare Oxford Society  
"Dedicated to Researching and Honoring the True Bard"



Vol. 42: No. 3

"Oh let their bodies follow, my dear liege/ with blood, and sword and fire, to win your right." Henry V liii

Fall 2006

## R.I.P.: Bulbeck bites the dust

by Christopher Paul

Readers of the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* will have noticed a facelift on the cover of the last edition involving a new font and new emblem in place of the Bulbeck crest depicting a lion brandishing a broken spear/[pen] (Figure 1). The Bulbeck crest had been part of the newsletter's masthead since the Winter 1996 issue when it ironi-



Figure 1: Bulbeck crest depicting a lion brandishing a broken spear/[pen].

cally replaced the previous logo, a circular stamp containing the motto *vero nihil verius*. With the latest revision, the society has

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## Oxford's Childhood Part II: The first four years with Smith

by Stephanie Hopkins Hughes

In Part I, (Winter, 2006), we examined what is known about Oxford's early whereabouts, coming to the conclusion that: 1) at age four-and-a-half, because of the tense political situation following the start of Mary Tudor's Catholic regime, he was sent, primarily through the efforts of William Cecil, to live and study with Cecil's own former Cambridge tutor, Sir Thomas Smith, England's premiere scholar of Greek and Civil Law; and that 2) Edward lived in the Smith household for the better part of eight years,<sup>1</sup> leaving only when the death of the sixteenth Earl enabled Cecil to take the twelve-year-old into his own household for the final process of polishing his social skills and introducing him to the Court.

### Get thee to a nunnery<sup>2</sup>

Although the old buildings are gone, the landscape surrounding Smith's estate of Ankerwycke is probably not much different today from when de Vere was a boy. It has remained free of modern construction probably because this area, so close to Windsor and Windsor Park, has been privately owned over the centuries by a succession of gentry

and wealthy families. The historian George Lipscomb, writing in 1847, described the house as

a commodious rather than an elegant mansion, standing on low ground near the course of the Thames and a small branch of the Coln. . . . The grounds, interspersed with lofty trees, are charmingly disposed with every attention to its natural beauties [such as] the richly enameled meadows and high cultivated plain, . . . while Windsor Castle bursts, in all its majesty, on the distant view" (599).



Fig. 1: 18<sup>th</sup>-century engraving of Ankerwycke Hall on the bank of the Thames. Courtesy of Cambridge University Library.

That Smith's house was built close to the river can be seen from this eighteenth-century engraving of one wing of Smith's manor (Fig. 1). Shown is all that was left of it by then. The north bank on which it stood

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## Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

Published quarterly by the  
Shakespeare Oxford Society  
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Email: oxfordnet@aol.com  
ISSN 1525-6863  
www.shakespeare-oxford.com

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## President's Page

by Matthew Cossolotto

They say time flies when you're having fun. If that's even partly true, this past year as your president has been a real blast! I can't believe nearly one year has elapsed since the Board of Directors elected me to serve as president.

In my first President's Page message, I outlined a long list of ideas and initiatives that I thought were key to revitalizing the Society. Looking back and taking stock of what has actually been achieved during my term in office is a somewhat sobering exercise. I think we made a brave start in several areas, but many things remain to be done. One year just isn't enough time to get everything done.

We have managed, with the hard work and dedication of Trustee Richard Smiley, to revamp and upgrade the SOS website. We've given the site a new look and some enhanced features. But it's still a work in progress.

I'm pleased that the Board of Trustees adopted a new mission statement for the society and a new descriptive tagline—both of which are now prominently displayed on the updated website. Saying clearly that we are "dedicated to researching and honoring the true bard" sums it all up pretty well.

And our mission statement is much clearer and, I think, more compelling:

*Founded in 1957, 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."*

Last year I set forth a goal of increasing email communication among members. Some progress has been made but we still need to update our email address database. I've sent out a few email messages to members but we really haven't instituted a regular email update program. We'll continue to work on this.

One path to achieving more rapid email communication is through the Yahoo!

discussion group we created a few months ago. Sadly, not very many SOS members have joined the group. We'll continue to spread the word and I hope more members will sign up. The address is: [SOS4Ever@yahoogroups.com](mailto:SOS4Ever@yahoogroups.com). As I said in my last President's Page letter, this new Yahoo! group is specifically designed to give SOS members an opportunity to share ideas and suggestions about the Society itself — or just communicate more regularly with fellow SOS members. I hope you'll join. With an extensive list of members participating, the SOS Yahoo! discussion group will enable us to circulate news items and other timely information to a large number of SOS members.

Regarding the SOS library, we have contracted with a librarian to organize our extensive collection of books and create an electronic database so we will have an accurate record of the collection and a way to locate specific books. This project is about

(cont'd on p. 31)

## GREETINGS

Greetings. This is a great time for Shakespeare scholars, (that includes Oxford scholars). This newsletter has wonderful and exciting work inching us closer and closer to the Truth. The Ann Arbor Conference is going to inform us, energize us, and send us home to continue carrying the word. There the SOS will join with the Shakespeare Fellowship for a double dose of Oxford study, and one hopes we'll raise a glass or two to our common cause.

I offer thanks to the writers of the *SOS Newsletter* and a request that you keep it coming. Keep in mind that reports on events or experiences, responses to articles, or personal essays are welcome as well as the world class research that we are privileged to absorb.

Also, I add my thanks to Matthew Cossolotto for a year of creative and energetic leadership for the SOS.

Please enjoy this newsletter.

Lew Tate, ed.  
tate3211@bellsouth.net

## Much Ado About Oxford

Richard Desper, Ph.D.

### Part 1. Relating *Much Ado About Nothing* to the Life of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford

It shall be our task here to show that Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, whom many hold to be the true author of the Shakespeare canon, put himself, his feelings, and those persons closest to him in his life, along with their deepest feelings, into the play which has come down under the title *Much Ado About Nothing*. This should come to no surprise to us. Charlton Ogburn, Jr. addresses in depth the concept that “the better part of genius is composed of memories” (Chateaubriand Jr. 352). He reinforces this position by reference to:

- a) “Failing the resolution to hold our peace, we can only talk of ourselves”;
- b) Anatole France: “Every man’s work whether it be literature or music or pictures or architecture or anything else is always a portrait of himself”;
- c) Havelock Ellis: “Every artist writes his own autobiography” (350-354).

Ogburn Jr. contrasts this with examples of a number of orthodox Shakespearean scholars, i.e. those supporting the person from Stratford-upon-Avon as the true identity of the writer “Shakespeare”, denying this tendency for their author (354). They take their author’s ability to create characters out of whole cloth *as a strength*, and find no difficulty that nothing resembling his *persona* or of personal significance to the writer, can be found in his writings: Thus John Wain avers, “Leafing through some recent books on Shakespeare, I was saddened to find too many people playing the dreary game of deducing the writer’s biography from his works. Any writer who could be so deduced, it seems to me, would by definition be a second-rate writer.” (qtd. Ogburn Jr. 354). Northrop Frye continues in the same note: “a capacity for subduing his nature . . . is unrivaled in the history of culture, a career which leaves him not only without a private life but almost without a private personality” (354).

Indeed, this is a point upon which Oxfordians and many orthodox scholars are at odds. The gentleman from Stratford-upon-Avon leaves us little in the way of biographical material to associate with those works attributed to him. In particular, their author would seem to be devoid of any reason to identify himself with the values of individuals in the upper crust of Elizabethan / Jacobean society. A number of Oxfordians have posed this as an argument supporting Oxford as the identity of the author “Shakespeare.” They see the writer’s preoccupation with the noble characters of his plays, to the neglect of more common characters, as a reflection of his standing as a ranking nobleman.

This particular conflict, the question of how or whether the author Shakespeare appears in the works of Shakespeare, is more than one of the arguing points of the Shakespeare authorship question. To Oxfordians, who see their man in the plays and poems, the argument brings to focus how orthodox scholarship, lacking the wherewithal needed to find their candidate in the Shakespeare canon, have instead ventured to beguile us into denying a major aspect of the process of authorship. As Ogburn, Jr. has phrased it, “militant orthodoxy has not only misled us as to the authorship of Shakespeare’s works: It has also, in order that we might swallow its version of their derivation, talked us out of understanding the creative process” (356).

### THE DATE OF THE WRITING OF *MUCH ADO*

Past research efforts have placed a possible date for an early version of *Much Ado* as early 1583 in the form of the record of the performance of a play *A historie of Ariodante and Genevora* at court (Holland 377, Clark 354, Ogburn, JR. 660-1). The identification is based on the association of the title characters with those of similar names in a story from the Fifth Book of Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*, followed by a link of a plot device similarity between

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The Shakespeare Oxford Society welcomes articles, essays, commentary, book reviews, letters, and news items of relevance to Shakespeare, Edward de Vere and the Authorship Discussion. *It is the policy of the Shakespeare Oxford Society to require assignment of copyright on any article submitted to the Newsletter.* Please contact the editor with any questions.

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the Ariosto story with the *Much Ado* scene in which Borachio woos Margaret from outside a bedroom window to instigate some mischief involving mistaken identity ( Kittridge 159-60, Dowden I 359, Neisen and Hill 179). However, one may ask whether the Beatrice and Benedick subplot appeared in the original *Ariodante and Genevora* — the 1583 play could have been an early version lacking the vital Beatrice and Benedick subplot. There is reason to believe that the subplot was present in *Ariodante and Genevora* and shall present our reasoning.

Orthodox scholars have placed *Much Ado* as no earlier than 1598, based upon its absence from Meres' list printed in that year of a dozen Shakespeare plays. However, it may well be fallacious to assume that Meres' list was an *exhaustive* list containing all existing plays written by that date by Shakespeare, whoever that might be. In rebuttal, the latest *Riverside Shakespeare*, edited by the respected scholars J. J. M. Tobin and G. Blakemore Evans, includes *Edward III* in the Shakespeare canon. This play was published in quarto with anonymous authorship in 1596 and 1599, yet the *Riverside* editors feel so strongly about its authorship to give it a long-belated place among the plays of Shakespeare. Yet *Edward III* was not on the Meres list of 1598. If we accept the attribution of Tobin and Evans, this establishes that, whether by design or by accident, the Meres list was *not* a complete list of the Shakespeare plays in existence in 1598. Hence the exclusion of *Much Ado* from that same list may *not* be taken as evidence that it was written after the 1598 date of the list.

Two sources have been commonly ascribed<sup>1</sup> for the Hero and Claudio plot line of *Much Ado*: first, the tale of Ariodante and Genevra in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* of 1532, and second, the 22<sup>nd</sup> tale in Bandello's *Novelle* of 1554. Both sources contain source material suggesting the Hero and Claudio plot line, but nothing resembling the Beatrice and Benedick plot line. *Orlando Furioso* was available to Oxford — Jolly (11) reports that *Orlando Furioso*, in Italian, formed part of Lord Burghley's library, and Oxford was a ward under the care of Burghley from

age 12 to age 21(11). However, Oxford needed no literary source for the subplot; he had his own memories of the Anne Vavasor episode as source material.

The names Ariodante and Genevra are particularly significant, in that a play named *a historie of Ariodante and Genevora* was played before Queen Elizabeth on February 12, 1583 (Shrove Tuesday), mentioned by Ogburn Jr. as the likely first version of *Much Ado about Nothing* (660-61). This accords with our reckoning of the events of Oxford's life after his 1576 separation from his wife, after the birth of his illegitimate son by Anne Vavasor in April 1581, and after his reconciliation with his wife in December 1581. These matters will be discussed in more detail.

There may be valuable implications further linking particular episodes in Oxford's life to the writing of *Much Ado about Nothing*. Hugh Holland, in his 1933 book, has analyzed the text of *Much Ado* and related passages to events which were current in England in the 1579-83 time frame; he suggests the possibility that Oxford first wrote the play in that time and had it staged as *Ariodante and Genevora* for the Queen in 1583. The February date for the play is particularly intriguing, in that Oxford was still under banishment from the Queen's presence, as he had been since the 1581 birth of his son by Anne Vavasor. This banishment ended in June 1583 with the intervention of a newly-risen star at court, Sir Walter Raleigh, on the Earl's behalf (Ogburn, Jr. 663-66).

If *Ariodante and Genevora* was Oxford's play, having it performed before the Queen at a time of his own personal banishment could have presented difficulties. London theater was in a state of

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

is somewhat higher than the Berkshire shore, which was then (and still is) a flood plain, another reason, no doubt, why it has remained clear of buildings.<sup>3</sup> The old hall was torn down in the nineteenth century by a Smith descendant to make way for an up-to-date Victorian house built farther back from the river (Figs. 2 and 3).

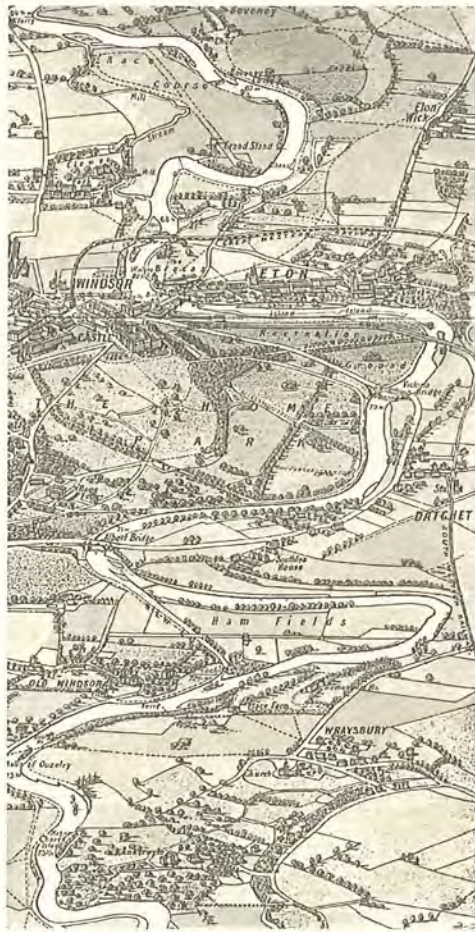


Fig. 2: From a 19<sup>th</sup>-century "Bird's Eye View of the River Thames from Oxford to London"; Ankerwycke and Wraysbury in the bottom left corner, Old Windsor just above it, Windsor Castle at the top left. Courtesy of Llewelyn Cartographic.

Today the spot where Smith's home must have stood is a grassy field bounded on half its circumference by trees and on the other half by the river (Fig. 4).

This section of the Thames has shrunk and now can carry little more than kayaks or punts, but then it was, as it had been for centuries, the main thoroughfare for those who lived near it to get to London and back and to visit friends who lived along it. Behind and on either side of the house were the gardens and orchards that Smith planted wherever he lived.

According to George Lipscombe (*History of Buckingham*, 1906), Ankerwycke priory was founded during the reign of Henry II by Gilbert de Montfichet, lord of Wyrardisbury (pronounced Wraysbury, as it's usually spelled today). Dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, it

was one of many small nunneries created during the Middle Ages as a place where single women of local gentry families might live out "useful" lives, supported by the Church. By the beginning of the sixteenth century its modest assets could have supported no more than six or seven nuns besides the prioress (355-57). In 1538,



Fig. 3: Closeup of the Thames map showing the location of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century manor: Rummymede Isle is on the left.



Fig. 4: The Thames from the old Ankerwycke site with a descendant of the royal swans of de Vere's time, still protected by royal fiat, as they have been since the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Photo Hughes.

this nunnery, with the estates belonging to it, were added to those of Bisham Abbey (further up the river, just past Windsor Castle). Following the surrender of that monastery in 1540, the estates were then granted to Lord Windsor, whose son and grandsons would cause so much trouble for both Smith and de Vere later on.

### Living with History

For a boy whose inheritance included a romantic vision of the past, this location was rich in historical associations. Back when the shore wasn't lined with trees, the Isle of Runnymede would have been well within view of Ankerwycke (Fig. 3). As Smith

would have informed Edward, it was here that in 1215 the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Oxford, along with twenty-four other barons, parlayed beneath the famous Charter Oak before signing the Magna Carta. Although Shakespeare ignores this event in *King John*, he does include one of his few child characters, a prince whose life was in jeopardy because of his status as a political pawn.

Also on the Berkshire side and within view was the town of Old Windsor, the oldest Saxon town in the region. This had been the ancient seat of Edward the Confessor, whose crown would have passed in time to the Saxon nobleman, Edgar Atheling, the 1st Earl of Oxford, had not England been invaded just then (1066) by William of Normandy, who gave the earldom to de Vere's ancestor (Hunter 13).

*Ed. Note: There has been conflicting research in naming the 1st Earl of Oxford, Edgar Atheling or Aubrey Devere. Stephanie Hopkins Hughes and Christopher Paul in this edition and Thomas Hunter in the Winter 2006 edition.*

Upriver from Windsor, closer to Oxford, was the gorgeous medieval abbey of Abingdon, built in 675 AD by a king of Wessex (West Essex), who, like many other builders of abbeys and monasteries in the Middle Ages, craved "a retreat" from "the World." Though no longer a Church property it would still have been a thing of splendor in de Vere's time, lavished with expensive reconstruction by four fifteenth-century abbots. Here, during the Middle Ages, what's now known as the Abingdon chronicle was being compiled by educated monks from texts dating back to the ninth century, forming a significant part of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the oldest history of any European country in a vernacular language. These records of the kings and events of the period make clear why men and women like the founders of the Abingdon Abbey might want to escape a "World" where brutal wars continuously raged among native British, Norse Vikings, Danes and Norman French.

Just previous to the period when Smith and de Vere were living nearby at Ankerwycke, these and similar chronicles from the other great medieval abbeys were in the process of being collected by Reformation scholars John Leland (1502-1552) and John Bale (1495-1563), in an effort to save them from destruction with the loss of the great monastery libraries. It was during this period that many of these precious documents were coming into the hands of William Cecil and Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, Cecil's friend from Cambridge days. Parker and Cecil would soon be sponsoring their translation into Latin by a corps of scholars, many of whom would form a coterie at Cecil House during the period that de Vere lived there in his mid-to-late teens, studying under their master, the antiquarian Lawrence Nowell.

From Nowell, de Vere would have heard passages from *The Chronicles* read aloud in the ringing sonority of Old English, in which alliteration (not rhyme) is the major mnemonic device, but his first acquaintance with their existence and the substance of their accounts of the early kings and wars of England would have been from Smith, who was well-acquainted with all four, Cecil, Parker, Leland, and Bale, from their years at Cambridge.

### At his "ghostly father's" knee

De Vere would have learned a great deal from overhearing discussions when Smith's former Cambridge students and colleagues visited

him during the Marian reign. With so many of their friends fleeing the country, forced into silence and inactivity by the regime, cautious about writing down anything in a letter or manuscript that might be used against them, the only recourse these reform-minded friends of Smith had for developing their ideas and exchanging information was hours of private, unrecorded conversation with others of like mind. Some were focused on new information about the heavens coming from discoveries in optics, chemical experiments, new ways of reaching and mapping the far corners of the earth, and almost all of them consumed with excitement over information gleaned from ancient works in Latin, rediscovered over the past century in monastery libraries in Italy, and most recently in the manuscripts in Latin and Old and Middle English, just then coming to light in the wake of the destruction of their own English monastic libraries.

As for female influences on de Vere, the primary figure must have been Smith's wife, Philippa Wilford. Although as yet we know little about her, it's clear she came from a staunchly Protestant background. In her early thirties when she married Smith and de Vere came to live with them, she was almost forty by the time he left at age twelve. What sort of relationship did they have? From what we do know of her, we can be sure of one thing, like most of Shakespeare's female characters, Philippa was no "patient Grissel," content to sit silently by while men ran her life.

Sadly, it's unlikely that Edward's own mother, the Countess of Oxford, had much influence over him as a young child, nor should we think it unusual. Few English aristocrats, then or later, had more than a passing acquaintance with their parents until they were finished with school (Stone 6, 132; Erickson 40). If de Vere's parents played any role in his early life, it would have been as idealized dream figures who came to life briefly once or twice a year at Court ceremonies, decked out in full holiday regalia.

On the other hand, he would probably have gotten to know Smith's family fairly well: Smith's father (whose room at Ankerwycke was next to de Vere's) and his brothers and sisters, seem to have played an active part in their famous brother's life, although unfortunately we still know little about them.<sup>4</sup> His father, John, and his older brother, also John, both died in 1557, so Edward would have known them only until he was seven (Dewar 9). The family were little more than poor farmers when Sir Thomas began his rise to eminence, but his death left at least one branch at the level of important landowners whose children and grandchildren would marry into the upper levels of Essex gentry for generations, a measure of Smith's rather amazing success.

Smith's years at the Court of Edward VI had put him in close touch with the London printing community, which was where he found his first wife, Agnes Charnock (Carkeke, Carkyke, Karkek), the daughter of a London printer, a modest young woman who died just as Mary took the throne, leaving him with no children. Later two of his nephews married the daughters of London printers, while a niece (his brother John's daughter) married Gabriel Cawood (Cawode, Cawoode, Caywood), the son of Queen Mary's royal printer. Cawood, who served Smith as a courier during his French embassy of 1571-72 (Dewar 136), would print *Euphues, The Anatomy of Wit*, in 1579, attributing it to Oxford's secretary at the time, John Lyly.<sup>5</sup>

On occasions when the Smiths had reason to travel downriver towards London, as their barge rounded each bend in the Thames another royal palace would come into view: Hampton Court on the right, Richmond on the left, Lambeth on the right, and, as the city with its multitude of buildings began to appear on the left, Whitehall, and the great manors of the nobles and Court officials whose houses lay along the Strand, including the splendid new Somerset House, built by Smith's former master, Protector Somerset. Finally, navigating the dangerous currents that poured through the narrow straits beneath London Bridge, they would pass the Tower on the left, then at last to Greenwich palace on the right. Some years earlier, John Leland described Greenwich palace in a long Latin poem about the Thames dedicated to Henry VIII:

See how the place I was seeking shone forth like the house of a celestial cathedral! What multicolored roofs! What windows! What turrets reaching toward the stars! And what pleasure gardens and ever-flowing fountains! Handsome flowers cover the bend in the river, furnishing the delights of a bright garden. (Carley 240)

The Thames was the great "King's Highway," each bend bringing a new vision of Tudor magnificence into view, until it climaxed with the great city itself.

### Cakes and ale

Children would have been welcome at certain moments during the festivities that marked the winter holidays at Windsor Palace. Here, in the company of the offspring of the palace retainers and those from nearby villages and estates, Edward would have seen puppet shows and possibly even been allowed to watch from a balcony in the great hall as his parents and other adults danced galliards and pavannes to music by the best players. During these get-togethers it's likely he would become acquainted with other children of his rank, among them his teenaged Howard cousins, Thomas and Henry, now being raised in London by the ultra-conservative Catholic clergyman John White (who had replaced Smith's old tutor, John Taylor, as Bishop of Lincoln) (Williams 28), and their mother, his aunt Frances (30). He may also have had the chance to socialize with some of his many Vere cousins. As for his parents, it's more likely that he would have seen them at Windsor or in London at Christmas than at Hedingham Castle, a long winter trip for a young boy on dangerous winter roads. The magnates, particularly those subject to royal disfavor, were well aware that it was unwise to keep the holidays away from Court.

To a solitary boy raised by a parsimonious scholar, one for whom such entertainments were wasteful follies (Dewar 57, 167), the glittering lights of thousands of candles, the sweetness of candies, perfumes, and freshly cut herbs, the richly colored clothing of the dancers and musicians, the shouts of excitement at the antics of clowns and acrobats, the chaotic gabble of dozens of conversations all going on at once, must have been overwhelming. The "Yorick" who bore him "on his back a thousand times" would have been the legendary Will Sommers, Henry's jester (d.1560), who, to the shrieking delight of an audience of children, might well have "poured a flagon of Rhenish" on some drunken bystander's head.

Sommers would have been well-acquainted with Edward's father, the sixteenth earl, from early days at the Court of Henry VIII, where both were involved in Court entertainment.

### "For O, the hobby horse is forgot"

Far different from the carefully-engineered merry-making at Court would have been the wild spontaneity of local country festivals such as: the May-games of Spring, the pagan rituals of Midsummer's Eve, the "mumming and disguising" of the winter holidays, the running of the stag in Windsor Forest. These rituals were still in full force in the country villages in Edward's childhood, though soon to be under all-out attack in the gathering storm of the puritan revolution. By the end of the Civil War of 1640-80 they would be gone, at least in their fullest form, though watered-down vestiges would remain for centuries in the more distant rural villages. Every community had its own home-grown version of these festivities, but all involved relaxed socializing, the consumption of alcoholic beverages, and some degree of sexual license. To what extent Sir Thomas would have allowed his household to get involved in such festivals is questionable. Although hardly a radical reformist, it's clear that Smith himself had little appetite for such "country matters." He would also have felt his responsibility to protect the Oxford heir and prevent his exposure to dangerous or licentious behavior.

A combination of ritual and spontaneity occurred at these seasonal festivals where social and gender inequities were leveled or even, in some respects reversed, where ordinary constraints of rank, marriage vows, and respectable behavior were relaxed, where known cuckolds, wanton wives, and annoying local authorities were tormented with riotous chivarees (*charivaris*). These chivarees were probably more effective at easing social tensions than anything that's come to replace them. Certainly the puritans who destroyed them had nothing better to offer than threats of hellfire in the life to come. It would be Shakespeare's task to create the modern compromise whereby men and women can participate, if only vicariously, in such leveling rituals by means of the staged dream worlds of "Illyria" and "Ephesus."

### A quiet life

Apart from Christmas extravaganzas and these seasonal local festivals, chances are that for the years of the Marian regime, little Edward lived a rather quiet life compared with children whose lives were enmeshed with those of siblings, friends, and schoolmates. There may have been other children connected with Smith's household, but none Edward could regard—or rather, that he would be allowed to regard—as his social equals. It's hard to have a genuine friendship with someone who's required to address you as "your Lordship."

Smith had a son some three years older than de Vere, fathered out of wedlock before his first marriage, but so far there is no sign that Thomas junior ever lived with his father and step-mother. None of the rooms in Smith's Ankerwycke inventory bore his name, nor do his detailed housekeeping records show anything that can be construed as payments for his upkeep. This is not to say that Smith ignored him. He may simply have made private arrangements with

his mother for his care.<sup>6</sup> Later in life Gabriel Harvey would claim that young Smith had introduced him to de Vere at Cambridge, where de Vere gave him “angels” (money) (Nelson 45). So far as we can tell, Smith’s patronage of Harvey began after de Vere’s departure, so it’s unlikely that they met while still boys.

### The Digges connection

One boy with whom he would have become acquainted during these early years was Thomas Digges, the future mathematician and scientist. Thomas, much like Edward, was being taught privately, not by a tutor but by his own father, Leonard Digges (c. 1520-1559), the mathematician, astronomer, and creator of an early telescope (ODNB). Although there is no hard evidence of such a meeting, that these two families would have connected during de Vere’s years with Smith seems more than likely because Smith’s wife Philippa Wilford (b. 1524) and Digges’s wife Brigitte Wilford (b. 1520) were first cousins.<sup>7</sup>

Family connections were all important in those days, and apparently Philippa had no sisters which makes it even more likely that she would arrange visits with a married female cousin close to herself in age. As the novels of Jane Austen reveal, family visits in the days of horseback travel could take anything from a week to several months. The Digges family lived in Wootton, Kent, just southeast of London, a journey of roughly fifty-five miles—a good day’s journey by horseback to or from Ankerwycke.

The likelihood of such a connection becomes a near certainty when we consider the interests shared by Smith and Digges in a number of areas, but most particularly in science and astronomy/astrology. The period when Edward was first living with Smith was one when Digges Senior was doing his most important work, publishing in 1553, 1554, and 1555 the “Prognostications” that brought him renown. Written in English rather than Latin,

These . . . contained . . . useful rules and tables for astronomy and astrology . . . ; calendar dates of moveable feasts for several years to come; tables of the Moon’s motion; a description of how to tell the time during day or night; descriptions of meteorological phenomena and an account of their causes; and even tables for bloodletting, computed—as was then customary—for propitious astrological times. The book also contained a short account of the Universe according to the traditional system of Ptolemy with tables of the dimensions of the planets and their orbits. . . . *Prognostication* was a best-seller . . . (Ronan website)

Leonard Digges’s most revolutionary work, however, remained in manuscript, to be cautiously shared with fellow scientists (though published after his death by his son). Digges was suffering financially from his recent (1554) involvement in Sir Thomas Wyatt’s Kentish Rebellion against the Marian regime, while his wife’s brothers (Philippa’s cousins) were still in Germany with other Protestants who had fled at Mary’s accession (Wilford ODNB).

With his father’s death in 1559, Thomas’s education (and, possibly, wardship) would be transferred, at Leonard’s request, to the young mathematician/astrologer, John Dee,<sup>8</sup> then in his thirties. Later, Digges would refer to Dee as his “revered second mathematical

father,” while Dee referred to Digges as “my most worthy mathematical heir” (ODNB). During this early period, Dee was based in London (ODNB), but he may already have been spending time at his mother’s property at Mortlake on the Thames, just southeast of London, which he would inherit in 1565, and where he was probably already collecting one of the largest and most important libraries of his time, with scores of books and manuscripts on ancient wisdom and science, many obtained through the dispersal of the monastic libraries. That knowledge of the Copernican theory had spread to the English scientific community by the time de Vere was six is suggested by mentions of it in publications by Robert Recorde and by Dee in his prefatory letter to John Field’s ephemeris, both published in 1556-57.

Smith must have known Dee from Cambridge, where he enrolled at St. John’s in 1542 at age fifteen, five years before Smith was called to Court. Dee was elected four years later as a Fellow and under-reader in Greek at the newly-formed Trinity College, receiving his MA in 1548. It would have been through Smith that de Vere came to know Dee, as we know he did from Dee’s own statement (Nelson 58).

That Dee was a charming young man is never mentioned by his biographers, but his wide circle of patrons and the ease with which he managed to talk himself into English and Continental Court circles and out of trouble suggests a certain charisma. Arrested in May 1555 on suspicion of witchcraft (i.e. for casting horoscopes for the Queen, Philip, and Princess Elizabeth, a criminal offense), he not only talked his way out (while his poor cell mate got the stake) but actually got himself hired by his interrogator as his personal chaplain! (ODNB)

Among his vast collection of books and manuscripts at Mortlake, Dee owned texts by Roger Bacon. Colin Ronan suggests that it was in Dee’s library that Leonard Digges came across references in Bacon’s *Opus Majus* (c. 1267) to lenses and the ability to use them to “cause the sun, moon and stars in appearance to descend here below.” This inspired him to construct a reflector for himself (Ronan website).<sup>9</sup>

How a Digges/Oxford connection might have played out in later years remains a matter for conjecture. It’s clear from Thomas Digges’s writing that he was more interested in science than poetry, and his early alliance with Burghley ended in the 1580s when he adopted Leicester as his patron. Nevertheless, his younger son, Leonard Jr., would provide a dedicatory poem for Shakespeare’s First Folio in 1623. That, following his father’s death in 1595, Leonard Jr.’s mother marrying Thomas Russell (1570-1634), who later would act as an “overseer” of William Shaksper’s will (Kathman website), raises some interesting questions regarding the Digges family and how aware they might have been of hidden truths about Shakespeare’s theater and publishing projects (Whalen 13-15).

### Other connections through Smith

Among the visitors to Ankerwycke during these years may also have been the young Greek and Latin scholar, Bartholomew Clerke (1537-1590). Clerke knew Smith from Eton, where he enrolled in 1550 (ODNB) during Smith’s stint as Provost (Dewar 29, 51). Clerke, aged thirteen to sixteen at the time, would certainly have



been drawn to Smith, whose interests were so similar to his own. Everyone at Eton would have known everyone else, as the enrollment at that time was only 70, with perhaps 30 more living off campus (Hatfield email). By the time de Vere joined Smith, Clerke was at Cambridge.

In his biography of Matthew Parker, Strype asserts that Clerke was “dear to” Oxford to whom he “seemed to have been” tutor at one time (2.183). If Bartholomew Clerke did act as Edward’s tutor, it must have been in Clerke’s early twenties during the five months that de Vere was enrolled at Queens’ College (1558-59), since Clerke was on campus and a teaching fellow at that time. Readers will recall that, as a young adult, Oxford would write a polished Latin introduction to Clerke’s Latin translation of Castiglione’s *Il Cortegiano* in which he would provide a template for what were about to become standards of taste for English Renaissance literature. *Il Cortegiano* is included on Smith’s library list of 1566 (Strype 278).

Another colleague of Smith’s that he might have come to know early on as a youngster at Eton was the geographer Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who joined Smith later in two failed projects, one to obtain copper from iron (Dewar 150-6), the other to colonize Ulster (ODNB). Following Smith’s death, Gilbert became a leader in the project to discover a northwest passage to China, this based on maps drawn by John Dee. As a young adult, de Vere would invest heavily in one of these voyages of exploration.

Other scholars and former students who might have visited Smith during the period that de Vere lived with him include Edward’s uncle, Arthur Golding, his mother’s brother, known later for his many translations, a Cambridge student until 1553, and a member of Smith’s community of Greek and Latin scholars.

William Cecil, Smith’s alter ego at the Court of Edward and Somerset, for whom Smith wrote a number of important position papers over the years, may well have felt it needful to consult with his old tutor in private during this period. From 1555 until he built Cecil House in Westminster in the early ’60s, Cecil was based at “The Parsonage,” at Wimbledon, about twenty-five miles southeast of Ankenwyke. Here de Vere could have met two teenagers, Cecil’s son Thomas and his ward Arthur Hall. That Cecil visited Smith at Ankerwycke is more likely since it lies midway on the route between Wimbledon and Bisham, the home of Mildred, Cecil’s sister, Elizabeth Cooke Hoby, later Lady Russell.

The geographer Richard Eden (1520-1576) is another likely visitor. He was Smith’s friend and former student from his Cambridge days (Dewar 139). Eden’s translation of the Italian geographer, Peter Martyr, titled *The Decades of the New World*, another highly influential book in its time (listed by Smith in his 1566 inventory), was published in 1555. According to the DNB, it was Eden’s relationship with Smith that led to his career as a translator and geographer and to other important connections and opportunities.<sup>10</sup>

Other friends and associates still in England during this period included Walter Haddon, who followed Smith’s lead into the study of Civil Law, and John Cheke, his partner in championing the new pronunciation of Greek at Cambridge, in London from 1556 until his death the following year. The same age and from similar backgrounds, Smith and Cheke had also been intimates in Somerset’s

household while Cheke was tutoring young Edward VI. In 1552, the famed Italian mathematician/astrologer/philosopher, Jerome Cardan, had stayed with Cheke at his London residence during his visit to the English Court (Nicholls 99). This would have been an event of extreme importance to Smith, who may have met Cardan during his stay in Padua in 1540-42. If not (Cardan’s biography places him in Pavia or Milan at this time) he would certainly have heard a great deal about him as by then Cardan was already renowned at Padua for brilliant mathematical discoveries. Cardan’s commentary on Ptolemy was on Smith’s 1566 library list.

Others personally known to Smith whom he may have introduced or at least mentioned to de Vere, included: Sir John Perrot, whom Smith would have known from the Courts of Henry VIII and Edward VI (ODNB); William Brooke, later Baron Cobham (1527-1597), who enrolled at Queens’ College during Smith’s tenure; and Sir John Harington, Sr. Smith and Harington Sr. spent several weeks in the Tower in each other’s company following their arrest as members of Somerset’s household, weeks Smith devoted to translating the Psalms (Dewar 64-5) and Harington to translating Cicero (ODNB).

It can’t be emphasized too strongly that the worlds of sixteenth-century English scholarship, particularly of language and science, and the worlds of court and reform politics, worlds that frequently overlapped, were all so small—the populations of each of the universities during Smith’s time numbered under a thousand, including masters, fellows, and students<sup>11</sup>—that everyone involved would have been acquainted, if not personally, at least by reputation.

## Books, maps, and globes

A solitary child, raised apart from home, family, and children his own age, will fill the void with imaginary beings, today from television and video games, in those days from books and fireside tales. Books were not in short supply in the Smith household. An inventory in Smith’s own hand from 1566, four years after de Vere’s departure, lists over 400 titles (Strype 274) and although most of these were tomes in Latin or Greek, far beyond most children of five, six, and seven, they would not have been beyond a budding genius of language. As Sir Thomas Elyot has assured us, in Sir Thomas Smith’s day, four was not too young to start if a boy was to be ready to understand Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero in their native languages by his early teens (Hughes 10). Along with books, Smith’s study provided maps and also wooden globes, made by Smith’s own hand, each no doubt following new developments that he learned about from his adventurous geographer friends. One of these, a celestial globe, can be seen in the old library at Queens’ College

Reading in de Vere’s day meant fluency in Latin and French. Latin was still the *lingua franca* of all the nations of the West, while French had been the language of law and literature since 1066. Only 20 of the 400 plus titles in Smith’s library were in English. The Renaissance roused interest in Greek, amplified by a Reformation belief that Greek and Hebrew were essential to understanding the Bible and the early Church. For a solitary boy, thirsty for adventure and romance, languages were just so many challenges to be overcome in his search for adventure stories. Homer, a favorite of Smith’s, offered an endless string of adventures. Smith’s Homer

was in the original Greek—the *Iliad* would not be translated into English until 1611.

Significantly absent from Smith's library (and from Shakespeare) were the French romances that fed the fantasies of most literate boys of Edward's class, tales of King Arthur, Tristram, and Lancelot (MacFarlane 236, 244). Reformation scholars scorned these, blaming them for the bad behavior of certain noblemen of recent history. What the growing peer needed was true history, true stories of real heroes that would build an awareness of right and wrong that could promise a future of peace and prosperity.

When Edward's appetite for the wrath of Achilles seemed to flag, Smith might direct him to Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans*, in either Latin or Greek. Plutarch's stories were not only rich in adventure, but had the added virtue of being history and therefore more "true." Other good sources for stories on Smith's shelves were Aesop, Apulius, Aristophanes, and Euripides in Greek; Plautus, Petrarch, and Ovid in Latin; Boccaccio and Dante in Italian, as well as the Bible in several languages (Strype 274-81), all of which would contribute, some significantly, to Shakespeare's sources. Smith had all the histories that Shakespeare used as sources for his history plays, even the more arcane, whether Greek, Roman, French, Italian, ancient and modern (Strype 275-77), while in the more recent chronicles of Edward Hall, Richard Grafton, and Polydore Virgil<sup>12</sup> Edward found stories in which his own ancestors played important roles. Smith had them all, that is, all but Holinshed, which was published the year he died, but which contained significant amounts of material from the earlier historians, as well as some traces of his own writing.<sup>13</sup>

Along with these texts from the past, recently published books offered another sort of challenge. Encouraged by John Bale, John Foxe's martyrology, a long, spirited account of the sufferings of the evangelical community, was published at Basle in 1554. Bale himself published a scurrilous blast against the Marian regime in 1554. Smith's friend, Richard Eden published his translation of Peter Martyr's reports of earlier explorers in 1555 and Leonard Digges published several editions of his *Prognostications*. In 1557, the bookseller Tottel published the poetry of Edward's uncle, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, along with the poetry of Sir Thomas Wyatt, for whose rebellious son Leonard Digges and other Kentish friends had lost their estates in 1554. Smith himself wrote a number of important treatises during this period, but since he "published" these only in the traditional manuscript form, his authorship has been lost from all but a few (Dewar 4-5).

## Woods, gardens, and laboratories

At five, six, seven, and eight, Edward was probably happy to follow Smith about the estate, helping him yank weeds and destroy caterpillars, absorbing without thinking his tutor's diatribes on just how composting turns nasty waste into useful soil, how grafting can create sweeter apples and roses, and the thousand and one other secrets of Nature that occupy the mind of the diligent gardener.<sup>14</sup> As Caroline Spurgeon has noted, gardening metaphors rank at the top in Shakespeare's use of imagery (16).

On the Berkshire side of the river were thousands of acres of woodland, the Forest of Windsor. Here deer, boar, and other wild

creatures, including the occasional hermit and poacher, managed to live a life of Eden-like immersion in Nature, disturbed only by the trumpets, shouts, and dogs of the occasional royal hunt.

Smith enjoyed the sports of hunting and hawking, and since horsemanship and falconry were skills in which a nobleman must also be well trained, he would have taken Edward with him, sometimes just the two of them, other times in the company of other men and boys, neighbors or visitors. Shakespeare's frequent use of hawking metaphors would seem to derive from just such early and exhilarating ventures into fields like the ones surrounding Ankerwycke and through woods like those of the Forest of Windsor, merlin on wrist or hounds yelping as they rode through fields and leaped over hedges, arriving home after dark, late, tired and dirty, to a cold supper by what was left of the kitchen fire.

Although the comparison of a woman to an untrained hawk, a favorite of Shakespeare's, may have been a commonplace in those days, it's one that Smith might well have resorted to on more than one occasion,<sup>15</sup> since, as Dewar points out, it's obvious from his letters and his dealings with Queen Elizabeth that he had little understanding of women. During a marriage of over twenty years, his relationship with his wife must have gone through a series of changes, but sadly, ended in bitter estrangement. During his final days, when dying of cancer, he became aware that his wife was plotting with his enemies to take the property that he had willed to his brothers. He scratched out her name in the list of executors, although he left her the property he considered rightfully hers. Nonetheless, as soon as he was dead, she "lost no time in drawing up a will to suit herself and in a series of elaborate bequests to no less than ninety-three relations, friends, and household servants, she disposed of all the furnishings of both houses down to the last pot and pan, sheet and napkin" (Dewar 207). One source of ill feeling must have been her failure to provide Smith with children. So intent was Smith on acquiring an heir that he kept track of his wife's ovulations, as can still be seen in a chart in one of his notebooks (now at Queen's College).

Along with food for the table, Smith's gardens and orchards provided materials for his "precious" stills, an interest he probably acquired during his year at the University of Padua, as renowned for its advanced views on medicine as for its teaching of the Law.<sup>16</sup> The word *still* derives from the verb *to distill*, the process whereby a substance is concentrated through heating in a glass vessel until the impurities are boiled away. Wherever he lived, Smith created labs with stills in which he decocted medicines, "sweet waters" (mild perfumes), and liquors. Smith had twenty books on medicine (Strype 279-80). Entire books have been written on the subject of Shakespeare's medical expertise (Davis 45, 58).

Most of Shakespeare's uses of the word "dew" derive from his knowledge of distilling, often at moments of intense emotion: as when Hamlet, his mind on suicide, cries, "O that this too too sullied flesh would melt, thaw, and resolve itself into a dew"; or from *Sonnet 119*: "What potions have I drunk of Sirens' tears, distill'd from limbecs foul as hell within . . ." As those readers who have taken beginning chemistry can imagine, some of Smith's trial decoctions must have looked pretty nasty—and smelled just as bad.

Distilling is a good metaphor for the process by which Shakespeare rendered so many of the popular sayings and maxims of

his time into the brief, potent forms in which they survive until this day, filling sixty-four pages of *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*. Oxfordians have pointed to Burghley's advice to his son Thomas as a model for Polonius's advice to Laertes. Closer to home might be Smith's "Advertisements and counsels very necessary for all noblemen and counselors, gathered out of divers authors both Italian and Spanish" (Strype 53), written in 1557 when he had no official status with any "noblemen and counselor" but one small boy. Polonius's advice says basically the same thing as Smith's, only condensed into a beautiful fraction of the words.

And so the days and years went by, and the Marian inquisition continued, probably without touching de Vere, though Smith must have suffered, knowing the trials his friends were enduring in Europe, hearing of the courage of his old colleagues, Cranmer and Ridley at Oxford as the flames consumed their clothes and licked their flesh. At the universities, revered scholars (and their wives) were dug from their graves, their bones burned or thrown on dung heaps (Fig. 5).

Near Windsor things were quiet, but in London and in Smith's home county of Essex, now with his old adversary William Bonner at the helm as Bishop of London, the imprisonments, tortures, and burnings raged on. In 1556, Smith must have wept to hear how his old friend John Cheke had been arrested by Philip's agents while

living in Strasbourg, dragged back to England and intimidated by the Dean of St. Paul's into recanting his Protestant beliefs in public. Sadder yet, the scorn that this brought down on the gentle scholar from his reform community, plus his own bitter self-hatred, must surely have contributed to his death the following year at age forty-two. A similar fate took away another colleague from Somerset days, Sir James Hales, Judge of the Common Pleas.

### The winds of change

But by May of 1558, it was becoming obvious that regime change was on its way. It had been well over nine months since the Queen's husband was last with her, nine months during which she had ostentatiously played at being pregnant, yet still there was no child. By now it was obvious there would never be. The false pregnancy had sapped Mary's fragile strength and will; she was failing. It was time to get ready.

From Cecil, whose contacts at Court kept him informed,<sup>17</sup> the word went out to be prepared, for the news could come at any time that the Queen was dead, and with so many colleagues overseas, those who remained at home must be ready to move at a moment's notice, to put the last living child of Henry VIII on the throne before the Papists could act to prevent it.

Both Smith and Cecil must have felt certain that Smith would

be picked for the new Privy Council. A seasoned statesman with years of experience in government, Smith had remained faithful to the Protestant cause, and unlike so many Reformation ministers, he was within reach. His work on England's claim to Scotland (Dewar 48), on the coinage (76), and the *Book of Common Prayer* (Strype 170) would surely put him at the top of the new queen's list.

Whether Smith waited at Ankerwycke or Hill Hall for the summons to Court, or hurried on to his house at Cannon Row in Westminster, is unknown. He was certainly at his Cannon Row house in December where he was called to officiate at a meeting of Protestant divines to discuss a revision of the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer* (Strype 56-7).



Fig. 5. Woodcut from Foxe's *Martyrology* (1563 ed.) showing Cranmer, author of the *Common Book of Prayer*, being burnt at the stake at Oxford. Courtesy "Shakespeare the Globe and the World" (Schoenbaum 17).

It must have been in response to Smith and Cecil's belief that Smith would soon be busy on Elizabeth's council that, on May 4, the sixteenth Earl had added to his payroll an annuity for one Thomas Fowle for "his service in teaching Edward de Vere . . . Viscount Bulbecke" (Nelson 25). In October the boy was enrolled at Smith's *alma mater*, Queens' College, Cambridge and new locks were installed in the rooms assigned to him (23-4). On November 14 his name was entered in the university matriculation records (24). Mary's death followed three days later.<sup>18</sup>

De Vere was one of a handful of youngsters enrolled at Cambridge as an *impubes*, an underage scholar. Although these boys were supposed to be studying with a tutor, they were not required to attend lectures or disputations with the undergraduates where, in fact, they would probably have been unwelcome. In all likelihood, they were there less to study than to keep them out of harms way, having, for any one of a number of possible reasons, nowhere else to go.

### "Fair is Fowle and Fowle is fair"

What little we know of Thomas Fowle tells us that he was made a Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1550, got his MA in 1553, was deprived under Mary that same year, and was restored again in 1558 under Elizabeth. During Mary's reign he acted as minister to a protestant group that met secretly in or near London (Cooper 1.452). Beyond that his history reveals him as a troublesome nonconformist (the contemporary term was "hot-gospeller")—not the sort Smith, who detested irrational fervor, would have approved.

What seems most likely is that Smith simply left the matter of Edward's care at this time in Cecil's hands, so that Cecil, who (understandably) was finding it a matter of urgent necessity to recruit agents willing to work for the Protestant cause, recruited the currently unemployed Fowle<sup>19</sup> as much for his own purposes as for de Vere's, (as he would more than once in the future), not hesitating to reward Fowle by means of the seemingly inexhaustible funds of the great Oxford earldom. Fowle's later anti-papist/nonconformist activities were under the authority of the bishops, but well in line with Cecil and Walsingham's efforts to force both to submit to state church policy. Whatever Fowle's personal beliefs, his willingness to assist the Bishop of Norwich by interfering with "certain religious exercises called 'prophesyings'" (spontaneous preachings à la the Quakers) at Bury St. Edmonds" in 1573 doesn't speak well for his personal integrity, nor would his participation in the destruction of the organ at the Norwich cathedral c.1570<sup>20</sup> have endeared him to his former pupil.

Because Fowle received an annuity from the Oxford estate from 1558-1571 does not necessarily mean that he acted in this capacity throughout the entire twelve-year period, only that it was in that capacity that the annuity was initiated.<sup>21</sup> Annuities were given for a variety of reasons, among them: as a form of retainer to keep the recipient on call for whatever duty might be required; another, as a stipend to keep bread on the table of a poor scholar or otherwise worthy individual. The traditional duty of a magnate like Earl John was to provide a living for as many persons as he could, which was at the same time his chief means of creating and maintaining his power base (MacFarlane 290).

Fowle's St. John's biography shows him as a Senior Fellow from January 4, 1559 to 1560, as Senior Dean from January 7, 1559 to 1560, and again from January 14, 1560 to 1561 (Harrison email). His appointments to various rectorships in East Anglia all begin in 1561, one continuing until 1581, another until his death in 1597 (Cooper 1.452); thus it is clear that he left the university in 1561/62. It is true that such offices were often sinecures, but this was no more true of such offices than it was of annuities or any other of the many ways in which Elizabethans of all ranks created their networks of support and clientage. Other than the months following his restoration as a Senior Fellow and Dean at St. John's upon Elizabeth's accession in January 1559, the record so far shows nothing indicating that Fowle resided with or near de Vere at any other time or location. Had he continued to tutor de Vere at Cambridge, the record of de Vere's presence would probably have continued, but since it ends after March, while Fowle continued on the books as Senior Fellow and Dean until 1561, it seems that whatever their connection, it must have ended after March, 1559.



Fig. 5: 17<sup>th</sup>-century map of Queens' College, courtesy of Cambridge University Library.

### "The winter of our discontent"

On the face of it, these five months at Cambridge during the winter of 1558-59 could not have been an easy time for the eight-year-old. Wherever it was that he was used to spending his Christmas holidays, they must have included either Smith's family or his own and at least one and possibly several exciting events, gift-giving, banquets, plays, and so forth. Due to the nature of that particular moment in time, it is unlikely that there was anything of the sort at Cambridge that January, or if there was, it must have been fairly half-hearted. Although in normal times the holidays were probably rather festive at the universities, with more than a few students staying over to catch up on their studies, or because they preferred to hang around with their pals, the plays and pranks that accompanied the holidays, the election of a Boy Bishop or a

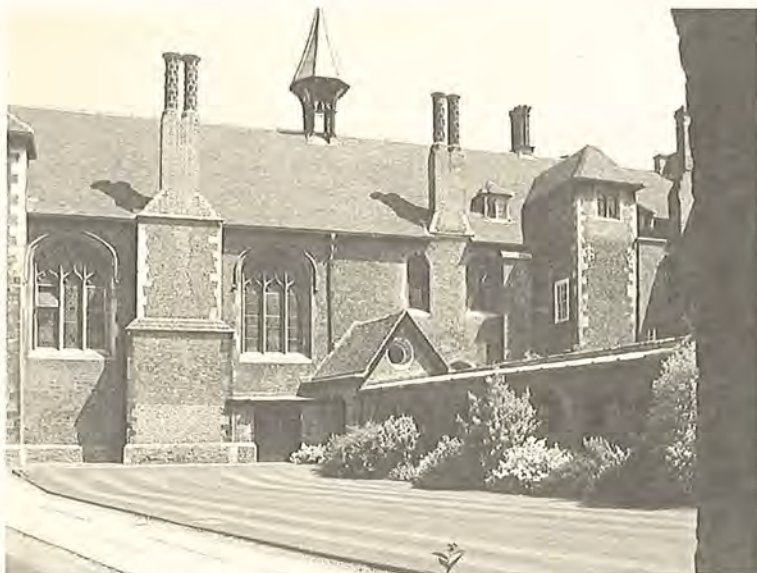


Fig. 6: *Queens' College, the Old Courtyard, built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.*  
Photo Hughes.

Lord of Misrule (banned under Edward), the Christmas pudding, wassail bowl, and so forth, would have overcome loneliness with pleasure or, at least, excitement.

But this was a unique moment in the history of the university, and it's unlikely, first, that there were many students staying over (everyone who could would be in London for the ensuing coronation ceremonies in mid-January) or second, that the Fellows who remained on campus had much enthusiasm for festivities. The Catholics feared what might come with the protestants back in power, and the rest would simply have dreaded the inevitable upheaval of another major policy shift. This period shows what may have been the lowest enrollment the university had ever experienced (Mullinger qtd. in Gray 95).

To Smith's no doubt shocked surprise, following his work on the committee for the Book of Common Prayer in December (Strype 31), he was passed over by Elizabeth. He may have blamed Cecil, but it was probably not Cecil's fault.<sup>22</sup> Elizabeth was open to suggestion, but she was not easily persuaded to do anything she did not want to do. As is obvious from later developments, the Queen did not like Smith very much, an attitude that may have originated with his interrogation of herself and her household during the excruciating 1549 examination into her relationship with Sir Thomas Seymour, Elizabeth bitterly resented being questioned by anyone, much less by Smith (Dewar 47). Under suspicion of encouraging Seymour in his efforts his tactlessness as a virtue. In any case, Elizabeth preferred to keep as many members of her sister's council in place as she could until such time as they could be quietly replaced by attrition, an early sign of the managerial skills that would mark her reign as one of the most successful in history.

By June of 1559, Smith was back in Essex, charged with various local duties, among them assisting the Lord Lieutenant (the 16<sup>th</sup> Earl) in swearing in the local Justices of the Peace (Strype 57-59). Aware that the accession of the Protestant Queen would be seen as an affront to Spanish sovereignty, Smith, and his counterparts in all the shires, were also to see to it that the constables carried

out the necessary musters and accounting of "the most likely and able men for the wars" and that these accounts, along with notes on the state of their arms and other equipment, were provided in due course to the Lord's Lieutenant, a situation that conjures up the review by Shallow and Silence of Falstaff's pitiful troop in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (3.2). Perhaps Smith took Edward along on one of these reviews, or regaled the table at dinner with a succinct account.

## Hill Hall

Although Smith had obtained the property of Hill Hall in Essex in July of 1554 through his marriage to Philippa Wilford, it is not at all clear when he actually made it his primary residence. Every commentator gives a different timetable. It could not have been earlier than 1556 since it took until then for the necessary paperwork to be completed. Once having obtained the title, he began the extensive renovations that had to be finished before his wife and their servants could be comfortable in their new home, which, according to his diary, took two years (1557-58). What records there are suggest that from 1557 or so he maintained some staff at Hill Hall, but that, even after the move to Essex, he continued to maintain a household at Ankerwycke, both probably staffed by local people who had ties to their respective communities.

Thus it's hard to say exactly where de Vere might have been at any given time between 1559 and 1562. Perhaps he too shuttled back and forth from Windsor to Essex during the final four years of his life with Smith. In any case, what seems most likely is that it was to the newly rebuilt Hill Hall that de Vere came to rejoin the Smith household following his departure from Cambridge in March or April, a period in his life that we must save for another article.

## A possible quid pro quo

That Smith had de Vere in his care for so long has been questioned because, despite his usual meticulous record-keeping, there is no record, either in his books<sup>23</sup> or the accounts of the 16<sup>th</sup> Earl, of payments for his eight years of care, feeding and tutoring of de Vere. Although it will probably always remain in the realm of conjecture, what seems most likely is that, in exchange for his agreement to tutor de Vere, Cecil agreed to arrange Smith's marriage to the recently widowed Philippa Wilford Hampden.<sup>24</sup> This marriage brought with it a magnificent property in Smith's home county of Essex. If, as part of the bargain, Cecil promised to get him a post with a subsequent regime, it would help to explain the "bickerings" that arose between them following his failure to get a post under Elizabeth, "bickerings" that disappear overnight following the death of the 16<sup>th</sup> Earl, de Vere's immediate removal to Cecil House in London, and his own immediate appointment as ambassador to France.

That Cecil was in a position in early 1554 to arrange such a marriage is entirely possible. It is entirely possible that both Cecil and Smith would have been well-acquainted with Sir John Hampden from their days at the Court of Edward VI, as he was the son of Elizabeth Sidney, governess to the King and sister to Sir Henry Sidney, Steward of the young king's household. While Smith had

been away from Court for several years, Cecil had only just terminated his own post, and would remain throughout the Marian regime in touch with his own and his father's friends at Court, who would have been quick to inform him of Hampden's death. With a property like Hampden's, and a widow unencumbered by children, this juicy plum would not last long.

It seems unlikely that Smith could have arranged it purely on his own, considering his poor prospects at the time and lack of Court contacts. Also, that the widow of a man so closely connected to Court circles would have been allowed to choose for herself also seems unlikely, knowing how such matters were handled in those days. As the daughter of a second son, one who had few connections (or at least, none that have made it into the record books<sup>25</sup>), the importance of her property would have outweighed her personal desires, a situation which, if true, might help shed light on her furious treatment of Smith's heirs following his death in 1577.

### End Notes

<sup>1</sup> That de Vere spent the major part of his childhood with Smith rests primarily on Smith's own letter to Cecil of 1576 in which he states that Oxford was "brought up in my house" (BL Harleian MS 6992/21), the meaning of "brought up" then being no different from what it means today. This is reinforced by Smith's 1569 inventory in which the contents of one of the rooms is labeled "in my Lordes Chamber" (Lipscombe 4.597), there being no other "lord" in Smith's life at the time.

<sup>2</sup> We spelled it "Ankerwick" in Part I, but "Ankerwyck" brings the most information on the Internet.

<sup>3</sup> Caroline Spurgeon, whose 1935 book *Shakespeare's Imagery* is still preeminent on the subject, gives quotations from Shakespeare indicating that, as a child, he must have "lived near a river where he would often have seen the meadows covered with the unprepossessing slime it leaves behind when it has overflowed it's banks" (11). She devotes some space to Shakespeare's use of river imagery, in her view, second only to his use of gardening terms (92-6).

<sup>4</sup> One thing we do know is that Smith's father and older brother were closely allied with their Walden neighbor, William Strachey, whose grandson William would write the treatise on Bermuda that orthodox scholars claim as Shakespeare's source for *The Tempest*. Dewar suggests that the Strachey's became involved in colonizing through Smith's efforts to colonize Ulster County in 1573-76 (169-70).

<sup>5</sup> Oxford's secretary, John Lyly, to whom is attributed authorship of the Euphues novels and several plays performed at Court by Paul's Boys during the 1580s, is usually described as the grandson of the grammarian, William Lily, but there is no documentation for this. There was, however, a "John Lyllye" listed as a beneficiary in Earl John's will (PRO PROB 11/46/174). If this John Lyly was related to Oxford's secretary, he would have been his father or uncle, as the secretary would have been about eight-years-old when Earl John died.

<sup>6</sup> He certainly connected with him later, taking him along on his ambassadorial junket to France in 1567 (Strype 95) and later, putting him in charge of his Irish project (Dewar 157-64).

<sup>7</sup> Their fathers were brothers. The Wilfords were an old landowning family from Kent that, besides Sheriffs of London, had also contributed military leaders to the nation. Brigitte's father, Thomas Wilford (of Hartridge, Kent) was the oldest son of James Wilford, Sheriff of London in the reign of Henry VII, while Philippa's father, John Wilford, Sheriff of London in the later years of Henry VIII, was his youngest son. In

1559, another of Thomas Wilford's children, Brigitte's younger half-sister Cicely, married Edwin Sandys (1519-1588), later Archbishop of York (1576-1588), whose struggles under the Marian regime are described in detail by John Foxe. Their son Edwin would be a future organizer of the Virginia Colony.

<sup>8</sup> Dee's father, Rowland Dee, a mercer, had been, like Leonard, imprisoned and sentenced to death for involvement in the Wyatt Rebellion, then later pardoned.

<sup>9</sup> Roger Bacon's alchemical magic and his reflecting glass provided the basis for an anonymous 1580s play in the style of early Shakespeare: *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, attributed to Robert Greene.

<sup>10</sup> There can be confusion over the name "Peter Martyr." Smith would have known the Italian theologian by that name who was brought to England by Cranmer in 1547. The author of the *Decades*, however, was a fifteenth-century Italo-Spanish abbot who traveled extensively throughout the Mediterranean recording the travels of various explorers of his time. Both had adopted the name from a famous thirteenth-century Christian martyr.

<sup>11</sup> This is my conjecture. There simply are no solid figures for the university populations at this time (Courtenay 2, Evans 660), but a guess can be made based on what records there are, indicating they reached their lowest levels from 1547 to 1558.

<sup>12</sup> All on Smith's library list of 1566.

<sup>13</sup> Dewar explains how Smith and William Harrison, author of *A Description of England* published in 1577, had exchanged material that was to be published in an unrealized project of the printer Reginald Wolfe, but that was not published in either Harrison's or Smith's book, *De Republic Anglorum*, until after Smith's death, material that was later incorporated into Holinshed (114).

<sup>14</sup> Smith wrote long letters to his wife while he was posted in France, instructing her in detail on the care of his gardens (Dewar 132). Strype comments on his "employing his own hands for his diversion in grafting and planting" (164).

<sup>15</sup> Strype includes Smith's treatise on the Queen's marriage in an appendix, which includes this statement: "The Italians be so jealous that almost every private man there doth not think himself sure of his wife unless he keep her close in a mew, as here in England men keep their hawks" (233).

<sup>16</sup> As Dr. Frank Davis points out in "Shakespeare's Medical Knowledge," most of the great Renaissance doctors and teachers of medicine, those who left their names on the science, "were either based at the University of Padua . . . or they studied there before returning home to practice" (46).

<sup>17</sup> Though Cecil had resigned his post as Principal Secretary, he remained in touch with those Court officers who continued under Mary, among them his former colleague William Petre, not to mention the numerous backstairs supernumeraries, his father's colleagues, whose private religious beliefs were no threat to the regime.

<sup>18</sup> Despite Nelson's assumption that de Vere was in residence at Queens' from October, when his room was reserved, through the following school year (24), records of payments to the university for services and dining privileges prove his actual presence only from January through March 1559.

<sup>19</sup> Cooper records that during the Marian regime, Fowle acted as "minister of a congregation of protestants which met secretly in or near London" (1.452).

<sup>20</sup> This information comes from the St. John's College Biographical Sheet on Fowle, courtesy of Jonathon Harrison, St. John's librarian, and of Alan Nelson.

<sup>21</sup> A case in point is the annuity granted Smith by Queen Mary on May

12, 1554. Ostensibly to recompense him for his loss of the Deanery of Carlisle and the Provostship of Eton, it was in fact given, as Dewar shows, for services already performed, namely for having provided Mary's Council with cogent reasons for the actions they then took on the coinage, actions that overruled the recommendations of their agent in Antwerp, Sir Thomas Gresham (*Memorandum* 476). Smith continued to get the annuity although he performed no other recorded service for the Marian regime.

<sup>22</sup> That Smith noted in his diary for 1561-62 certain "bickerings" between himself and Cecil has been noted by historians though they could determine no cause (Nichols 110).

<sup>23</sup> Though we can't be sure we have all of Smith's record books, those we have do show a number of accounts relating to this period. Smith was a fastidious record-keeper.

<sup>24</sup> Sir John Hampden died in December 1553. Philippa married Smith the following July.

<sup>25</sup> In a paper from 1626 on the subject of the coinage, in a list of names of persons who had written on the subject earlier, is a "Mr. Wilford Merchant of London," (SP 16/43/13, fo. 22) which, based on the dates for the other names in the list, might have been either Philippa's father or her brother (her cousins were military men from Kent), but this is slim evidence.

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BL British Library

ERO Essex Record Office

ODNB Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (2005)

PRO Public Record Office

SP State Papers (Public Record Office)

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## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I think Richard Whalen did a great job in his review of "The 'Prince Tudor' Hypothesis: A Brief Survey of the Pros and Cons." Whalen laid out very logically, the history, problems and issues around this theory.

I also want to thank Whalen for mentioning in his article my bisexual theory (published in the 2005 Oxfordian) as an alternative. Oxfordians need to know that there is an alternative. The only thing I would have added, is that in addition to Marjorie Garber, the bisexual theory has much support in academia. In the new Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (2004), Peter Holland acknowledges that the "explicit homoeroticism [of the Sonnets] suggests that Shakespeare's sexuality was consciously bisexual in its desires." Harold Bloom agrees: "The human endowment, Shakespeare keeps intimating, is bisexual." I don't think that Sobran or Pequiney's position concerning sexuality is any different from mine. They emphasize that the sonnets reveal the homosexual relationship of the author with the fair youth, but they do not deny the heterosexual nature of the Dark Lady sonnets.

So, I don't think there are three different positions: Prince Tudor, homosexual and bisexual. These last two are essentially the same position, and seem to be widely accepted — except in Oxfordian circles.

What IS different concerning the Sonnets, is the theory that Mark Anderson and I have raised on the strong possibility that the Dark Lady was Oxford's wife, Elizabeth Trentham, and its potentially explosive impact on the authorship issue. These two points (bisexuality and the identity of the Dark Lady and her Bastard) could jointly solve the riddles of the Sonnets

Best Regards  
John Hamill

Dear Editor,

It was very gratifying to see in the newsletter the article on Oxford's possible library to which I contributed ever so slightly, and I really enjoyed the balanced treatment Richard Whalen gave to the merits and limitations of the Prince Tudor theory.

I would like to submit, however, some additional thoughts on the Prince Tudor theory. I think there is too little appreciation for the possibility that many of the literary works to which Oxford and his associates contributed were both political and related to continuing a Tudor monarchy and recognizing an unrecognized prince. I believe *England's Helicon*, *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, *Emaricdulfe*, *Willobie His Avis*, and the *Parnassus* works are chief among them. The moral lessons that might also be related to the same theme in the works of Shakespeare have received too little attention, as well.

But my primary reason for writing is to offer another manner of understanding Shakespeare's sonnets in a PT perspective. This, however, requires a paradigm shift and a new realization and understanding of a greater depth and meaning in the sonnets. It also requires an ever greater understanding of J. B. Leishman's observation in *Themes and Variations in Shakespeare's Sonnets* that Shakespeare thought in metaphor. I believe there is a very simple explanation of the sonnets. They are exactly what the dedication tells us they are: an argument for Elizabeth to live on through Henry Wriothesley in a veritable eternal line stretching five hundred years into the future, as Oxford's own line stretched back that far. The dedication's description of Mr. W. H. as the "only begetter" means that the sonnets were written on his behalf and also provides the chief clue that the sonnets are in reversed order. When read in this order, they reveal essentially a complete story of Oxford's lobbying efforts to convince Queen Elizabeth to live on through their son, to use what she keeps in store and ultimately to metaphorically form another version of herself.

To appreciate the power of metaphor in these sonnets is to understand that the so-called rival poet is a metaphor for expressing

that Henry can "write" her story and future even better than the writer of the sonnets can. And to understand the sonnets in this light even reveals the timeline of Oxford's life and the metaphor of this travel in his move to Hackney to which he alludes in Sonnet 47 when he says a "league is took." (Hackney is approximately three miles—a league—distant from London.)

To understand the sonnets in this way is to understand that Sonnet 104 is written to Henry as a three-year-old and why there is so much language in the poem that relates to how a doting father would relate to a child and to realize why there are many expressions and references to his doting in the preceding sonnets. These doting verses are dedicated to one he calls his "friend" but one Elizabeth herself and others apparently abhor or hate. And to understand that Sonnet 126 as the first sonnet to his son actually metaphorically leaves the last couplet as a symbolic reference to his unwritten and undecided future, to which Oxford likely dedicated his life and his works.

To perceive the sonnets this way is the key to unlocking and understanding Shakespeare the man. To understand the grief that he expresses in the early sonnets in the shock at the crime Elizabeth commits and his ultimate disappointment as she takes to her grave Henry's secret. It is the key as well to understanding his plan for anonymity and his efforts to disguise the Stratford man as "Shakespeare."

While I've provided a very limited set of examples supporting my explanation, the key to my theory is that virtually anyone else can embark on this understanding by simply reading the sonnets the way I believe they should be read. If nothing else, I hope to have at least exposed a larger audience to yet another view of Shakespeare. Perhaps one day I will publish my book *Forgotten Secret, The True Story of Shakespeare's Sonnets* in which I fully explore what I have only briefly touched on here.

Sincerely,  
Alan Tarica



R.I.P. (cont'd from p. 1)

redoubled its efforts to represent "nothing truer than the truth." The design of the new masthead emblem, my own contribution, is based upon an image portraying Edward de Vere's illustrious ancestor, Aubrey de Vere, Lord Great Chamberlain of England (so granted by Henry I), who was father of Aubrey de Vere, first Earl of Oxford.<sup>1</sup> The banner bearing Oxford's motto and the 'dripping quill' were inspired by society president Matthew Cossolotto's use of the term "dripping quill" in lieu of "smoking gun". Although Oxfordians may not have an actual smoking gun (or dripping quill), the amount of circumstantial evidence that Edward de Vere was the author of the Shakespeare works is substantive enough to withstand the expulsion of the Bulbeck crest. Nevertheless, like many Oxfordians, I was enamored with the crest and its alleged symbolism and was therefore disappointed to learn that it was a fraud—or more likely an honest mistake. This article will take a brief look at how this may have come to pass, and why this crest does not, and never did, apply to Oxford.

It is difficult to pin down precisely when and how the Bulbeck crest of the lion brandishing a broken spear came to be associated with Edward de Vere as Viscount Bulbeck (variously spelled Bulbeke, Bollbecke, Bollebec, Bolbec, Bolebec, etc.). The earliest reference I have found is in the 1923 *Shakespeare Through Oxford Glasses*, wherein H.H. Holland asks, "Why should the Bolebec crest turn out to be a lion shaking a spear?"<sup>2</sup> Whether or not Holland introduced the notion, it obviously followed hard on the heels of J.T. Looney's 1920 *Shakespeare Identified*; we can be reasonably confident that it did not come before. This handsome crest eventually became an appealing 'selling point' in the Oxfordian arsenal. By the time it appeared on the dust jacket of Eleanor Brewster's 1964 *Oxford, Courtier to the Queen* (if not before), the lion's spear had been cleverly transformed into a pen. The late Ruth Loyd Miller championed the crest in several of her publications, including one of her circulars titled "Abstract of Facts", with the following explanation:

Isabel Bolebec (Bulbeck), Countess of the 3rd Earl of Oxford,

brought great wealth and the title of Viscount [Lord] Bolebeck to the de Veres. From thence the courtesy title of "Lord Bolebec" was bestowed at birth on the first-born son of each Earl of Oxford. (7)

Thus much is true, but Miller then asserts, "The crest of the Bolebecs was a lion shaking a broken spear, symbol of a disabled enemy, and of success in tournaments" (emphasis in original). Again true, but which Bolebecs, and when? The crest is also blazoned on the cover of Miller's 1974 edition of Eva Turner Clark's *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays* (beneath the dust jacket), and is again displayed in her 1975 annotated edition of Looney's *Shakespeare Identified*, with the caption "Lion brandishing a broken spear. Hereditary Crest of Edward de Vere as Lord Bolebec," followed by Ben Jonson's quote "He seems to shake a lance, As brandish't at the eyes of ignorance" (471).

In 1997, while perusing Canon Gerald Rendall's Oxfordian papers which had been deposited in Liverpool University Library, researcher John Rollett discovered that Rendall, over half a century earlier, had investigated the validity of the claim that this version of the Bulbeck crest was used by Edward de Vere. Rollett published his findings in the Summer 1999 web-based edition of the now defunct *Spear Shaker Review* in an article titled "An Oxfordian Myth?", in which he reported that there were two letters among Rendall's papers from correspondents on this topic. One of these, according to Rollett, had consulted Windsor Herald, who replied as follows: "The lion rampant with broken spear was the crest of another branch of the Bolebecs, which had nothing to do with de Vere." The second letter, also from an expert in the field, stated that "[t]he 'broken spear' is a later feature."

Although the spear-wielding lion is given in several books on heraldry as a crest of the Bolebecs, no information is given as to which member of the family might have assumed it. While I don't wish to weary my readers with a long antiquarian treatise, it will be useful to review the origin of the Bolebec intersection with the de Veres, and why it is that the crest in question would never have been used by the seventeenth earl of Oxford. Tracing the descent is a somewhat

complicated affair. There were apparently two separate branches of the Bolebecs: those holding baronies in Northumberland and those in Buckinghamshire—or only one branch with the Northumbrian Bolebecs also possessing the barony in Buckinghamshire, depending on which source is consulted. Whichever the case may have been, there were several consecutive generations from Domesday on consisting of fathers, sons, and brothers all named Walter and Hugh. Confusing matters further, the de Veres married into the Bolebecs twice, and both times with Isabels! In 1184 or thereabouts, Aubrey III, first Earl of Oxford, obtained the wardship (but not the lands) of Isabel I de Bolebec, daughter and heir of Walter de Bolebec, and in 1190 gave 500 marks for permission to marry her to his son, Aubrey IV, second Earl of Oxford, Aubrey IV obtained the Bolebec fief upon his marriage with Isabel I, and paid 100 shillings scutage on his wife's barony, and later paid 10 marks and one palfrey for having an inquisition of the land of her father Walter. Isabel I, however, died without issue in 1206/07 when her heirs were her aunts (her father Walter's sisters) Isabel II and Constance de Bolebec. Aubrey IV died without issue in 1214 and was succeeded by his brother Robert as third earl of Oxford. Robert had previously (around 1208) acquired one moiety of the Bolebec barony by marrying Isabel II, whose inheritance of half the barony increased to the whole after her sister Constance died without issue. It was through this match that the earls of Oxford assumed the Bolebec barony (and hence the title of Viscount Bulbeck).<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, I have had no more success than Rollett in pinpointing precisely when the crest as its known today came into being, or which branch of the Bulbecks created it, although it was probably a cadet branch (younger sons, cousins, etc.) that varied the crest with a mark of distinction.<sup>4</sup> However, as late as 1559, the lion-rampant arms and crest, with no broken spear, were confirmed to John Bulbeck of Knighton Seymour in Somerset.<sup>5</sup> While the earls of Oxford were able to quarter their coat of arms with the Bolebec charge after Isabel II's death in 1245, their own family crest alternated, as it had time out of mind, between the blue boar and the eagle.<sup>6</sup> Even if Oxford had deigned

to use a Bulbeck crest on any armorial bearings prior to 1562, while he was still only Viscount Bulbeck, it would have looked nothing like the one we know today, which is far too modern for the Sixteenth century.<sup>7</sup> If anything, it would have resembled the lion in the contemporaneous Bolebec arms, which consisted of a lion rampant (i.e. in profile with the body upraised), vulned in the shoulder (i.e. 'wounded', so that blood appears). One can get a good idea of how this would have looked from the Bolebec arms displayed in Thomas Milles' 1610 *The catalogue of honor, or treasury of true nobility, peculiar to Great Britain* (Figure 2). Milles included a chapter on the genealogy of the earls of Oxford and displayed the Bolebec escutcheon on page 679 above his discussion of Isabel II de Bolebec, wife of Robert de Vere, third Earl of Oxford. The heraldic description of the Bolebec ensign is given in the margin: "V[ert] a Lyon /



Figure 2: Isabel de Bolebec's arms in *The catalogue of honor, or treasury of true nobility, peculiar to Great Britain* (1610).

rampant A[rgent] / wounded G[ules]". In heraldic terminology, this would have been a green lion (Vert) on a silver background (Argent) with a red wound in the shoulder (Gules). The wounded (vulned) shoulder, is not particularly discernible here, but is quite clear in the Bolebec ensign illustrated in Percival Golding's presentation manuscript *The Armes, Honours, Matches, and Issues of the auncient and illustrious family of Veer*, which was written c. 1615-20 (Figure

3)<sup>8</sup>. One can see how much more primitive these insignia are than that of the lion in the Bulbeck crest we know.

Other pertinent examples may be found in the de Vere coat of arms portrayed in various Sixteenth and Seventeenth century publications. Sylvanus Morgan's 1661 *The Sphere of Gentry* contained a copper cut of



Figure 3: Isabel de Bolebec's arms in *Percival Golding's manuscript* (c. 1615-20).

the armorial bearings of Aubrey de Vere, twentieth and last earl of Oxford (Figure 4). In conjunction with the image, Morgan wrote: "Aubery de Vere Earle of Oxford, Lord Bulbeck, Sandford, and Badlesmer, Scales, beareth quarterly many Coats, of which I have chosen *Eight*." Morgan then describes each coat, left to right, top to bottom, with its corresponding



Figure 4: Aubrey de Vere, twentieth earl of Oxford's arms in *The Sphere of Gentry* (1661).

name and astrological significance. For *Bulbeck*—the second coat in the top row—Morgan writes: "2. Venus, a Lion rampant Luna, vulned in the shoulder." While the wounded shoulder does not appear obvious to the naked eye in this depiction, what is obvious is that there is no spear either in the illustration or in Morgan's heraldic description of the Bulbeck coat. Moreover, the Bulbeck coat appeared in several works that were dedicated to Edward de Vere in his own lifetime, but most Oxfordians were apparently unaware that the lion rampant pictured in this quarter of Oxford's coat of arms represented the Bulbeck cognizance. For comparative purposes, I have chosen the woodcut in George Baker's 1574 *The Composition or Making of the Most Excellent and Pretious Oil Called Oleum Magistrale*, which was dedicated to Oxford<sup>9</sup> (Figure 5). Again, the vulned, or wounded shoulder, is not discernible in the two foregoing examples, but is clear in Edward de Vere's arms illustrated in Golding's genealogical tract on the family of Vere (Figure 6).

A further comparison with contemporaneous emblematic lions should prove



Figure 5: Oxford's arms in *The Composition or making of the most excellent and pretious Oil called Oleum Magistrale* (1574).

helpful in demonstrating that the Bulbeck crest of the lion brandishing the broken spear/[pen] is simply too modern to be synchronous to the seventeenth earl of Oxford's lifetime.

Figure 7: The Lion crest is depicted in the frontis matter of the 1597 (2nd ed.) *Brittons Bowre of Delights*. Note the striped or interwoven padded ribbon (called a "torse") from which the lion's torso ex-



Figure 6: Oxford's arms in Percival Golding's MS. (c. 1615-20).

tends, similar to the one on which the lion in the modern Bulbeck crest is perched. The torse is similar; the lion is not.

Figure 8: Next we have lion emblem depicted in the 1591 English translation of Paradin's *Heroicall devises*. The accompanying moral describes "a Lion shaking a sword betweene his forefeete ingrauen, to signifie perhaps a hard and bold voyage or enterprise" (105-6).



Figure 7: Device from *Brittons Bowre of Delights* (1597).

Figure 9: The Lion emblem is depicted in Giovio's 1559 *Dialogo dell' imprese militari et amoroze*. The accompanying Italian moral describes "vn Leone rampante di color naturale in campo rosso con vno stocco in mano", i.e. "a lion rampant of color natural in red field with a long sword in hand" (130-1).<sup>10</sup>

Additional examples could be offered, but the foregoing illustrations are representative and should more than suffice to reveal the



Figure 8: Emblem in *The heroicall devises* (1591).

anachronistic quality of the Bulbeck crest with emblazonry contemporary to Edward de Vere's era. The earliest designs I've found of this style date to the mid to late Seventeenth century and beyond. One can in fact compare the progression in technique between the 1574 and 1661 renditions of the Oxford insignia (Figures 4 & 5). It has been suggested that perhaps some knowing descendants of the Bulbeck line added the spear in deference to their late great ancestor—a bit of a nudge, nudge, wink, wink, if you will. Such a view, of course, can only be pure speculation. I personally



Figure 9: Emblem in *Dialogo dell' imprese militari et amoroze* (1559).

take more comfort with the view that the degree of circumstantial evidence for Oxford having written the Shakespeare works can bear up against the loss of this particular crest with nary a dent in its hide, and that its passing should not be mourned. Indeed, as Oxfordian scholarship advances, I prefer to embrace Oxford's motto—*Vero Nihil Verius*—and thus say "good riddance" to the Bulbeck crest.

### (Endnotes)

1 The emblem appears in Robert Halstead's 1685 *Succinct Genealogies* (Wing P1693;

Halstead was a pseudonym for Henry Mordaunt, second earl of Peterborough). The Aubrey de Vere depicted here was the second of that name, being son of Aubrey I de Vere, who came in with William the Conqueror and founded Earls Colne Priory. Aubrey II's son, who became the first earl of Oxford, was also named Aubrey (III), and his son, still another Aubrey (IV), was the second earl of Oxford. In some records Aubreys I, II and III are also listed as earls (or counts) of Guisnes, but Aubrey III was apparently the only one who had a legitimate claim to that title through his first wife Beatrice, countess of Guisnes, which he subsequently lost when he divorced her. The tenth and twentieth earls of Oxford were also named Aubrey, and there were many more Aubreys in the de Vere lineage besides. The name Aubrey (anglicized from the Latin Albericus) was obviously favored among the de Veres, and has an interesting etymology; it literally meant 'elf king', deriving from the Germanic Albirich, or Alberic, the French form being Auberon, from whence we get Oberon.

2 As cited by Ron Hess, who rightly adds that "this fact has recently come into doubt as attributable to the 17th Oxford", *The Dark Side of Shakespeare*, I, 77.

3 For the foregoing information I have followed Geoffrey H. White, ed., *The Complete Peerage* (London: The St. Catherine Press, 1945), X, 204-13. However, other sources offer conflicting genealogies for Isabels de Bolebec I and II, and while the entries in *The Complete Peerage* seem to be the most reliable, they may not be without faults. Even Percival Golding in his genealogical tract on the family of Veres (c. 1615-20) expressed the difficulties in pinning down the matter, suggesting that there were not two, but only one Isabel de Bolebec, that Aubrey IV having married an Isabel de Bolebec was based on a forged document, and that only Robert, third earl of Oxford, married Isabel de Bolebec. Golding's frustration is evident when he wrote "Here is to be observed that the proper names of Hugh and Walter in this family . . . were very frequent insomuch as for the space of an hundreth yeeres together, there is no other to be found in the heires males" (10v). Additionally, I have found contradictory information on the matter in question in the following sources: I.J. Sanders, *English Baronies: A Study of their Origin and Descent, 1086-1327* (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1960), p. 98; Richard Welford, *Men of Mark 'twixt Tyne and Tweed* (London: Walter Scott, 1895), III, 344-5; Nicholas Harris Nicolas, *A Synopsis of the Peerage of*

*England* (London: J. Nichols and son, 1825) I, 69; *The Norman People, and Their Existing Descendants in the British Dominions and the United States of America* (London: Henry S King, 1874), 177 [no author given]; Charles Wriothesley, Windsor Herald, ed. William Douglas Hamilton, *A Chronicle of England during the Reigns of the Tudors, from A.D. 1485 to 1559* (XX, N.S., II, Camden Society, 1877), 50.

4 Citing Alexander Deuchar's *British Crests* (1817), Rollett describes several crests listed under the name Bolebec; included are: "(a) a lion's head regardant, proper; (b) a lion sejant supporting with his dexter paw a broken lance, all proper; (c) a hand holding a sealed letter, proper". This last refers to "plate 12, crest 3"; however, Rollett says that plate 12, crest 3 actually shows a hand holding a pen. Rollett writes that perhaps "some Oxfordian saw the lion with the lance in a book of crests, and assumed that Oxford as Lord Bulbeck would have used it. But there is no more warrant to assume this than there is to suppose that he used the crest of the lion's head, or the hand holding a letter, or pen."

5 Information supplied to Rollett from Oxfordian Eddi Jolly (obtained from a Herald personally known to her).

6 See Robert Brazil's article: "Oxford's Heraldry Explained", *Shakespeare Matters* 5:3, Spring 2006, 1+.

7 Rollett writes that "[t]he comment has been made that Oxford, as Lord Bulbeck, having inherited the ancient Bolebec crest of a lion, might have decided to add the lance to it. This seems very unlikely indeed. Edward became Earl of Oxford at age twelve, on the death of his father. He would use the undifferenced Vere arms, and the crest of a blue boar, from this date. He would have had no reason to revert to the inferior rank of Baron as Lord Bolebec, adopt the Bolebec crest of a lion rampant, and then difference it by adding a broken spear. In any case, such a difference normally indicates a cadet branch, while the de Veres were the senior branch, having inherited the barony."

8 Percival Golding was the son of Oxford's uncle, Arthur Golding. Internal evidence dates the composition of his manuscript (dedicated to Sir Horatio Vere "not as a publike worke

to patronize, but as a testimony of particular affection" [2r]) between 1615 and 1620. The closest reference to a *terminus ad quem* comes when Golding writes that Oxford's daughter Bridget Vere is "wife of ffrancis now Lord Norreis of Ricot" (25r). As Francis Lord Norris was created earl of Berkshire on 28 January 1621 it can be assumed the writing antedates this. Henry de Vere is referred to as "now Earle of Oxenford, High Chamberlayne of England" (25v). Earl Henry seems not to have officially taken up his duties as Lord Great Chamberlain until May of 1619, but Golding's reference cannot confidently post date that since Earl Henry was referred to as LGC in many earlier documents regardless of this fact. The pertinent *terminus a quo* comes with Golding's two references to Horatio Vere's children. He first writes that Horatio married Mary, daughter of Sir John Tracy, "by whom he hath issue fowr daughters" (23r). Horatio's first four daughters were born in Holland between 1610 and 1614. Six pages after this passage, Golding lists Horatio and Mary's five daughters (26r). The couple's fifth daughter was born in 1616, baptized at the parish of St. Bartholomew the Great in England on January 15th of that year.

9 Readers will observe in comparing Morgan's and Baker's versions of Oxford's arms that the coat representing *Colbrook* (on the bottom, third quarter to the right) differs: the 1574 version includes a Lion rampant behind a 'fess' (a division of a shield formed by two lines drawn horizontally) containing three crosses, whereas the 1661 version does not include the Lion, but only the fess. Morgan describes this quarter of the arms: "7. Luna, a Lion rampant Mars, debrused by a Fesse Sol, charged with Three Crosses partee fiched Saturn." The heraldic term 'debrused' is used when an ordinary or subsidiary is placed over an animal or charge, sometimes also called 'surmounted'. Although Morgan describes the lion in the Colbrook quartering, for some reason it is not rendered in the illustration.

10 *Stocco* in Italian is a sword, or rapier, and *stoccata* a thrust. Confer Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* (III, 1): "Alla *stoccata* carries it

away"; and noticed Shakespeare's familiar derivation of 'stuck' from 'stocco' in *Twelfth Night*: "I had a pass with him, rapier, scabbard and all, and he gives me the stuck in with such a mortal motion" (III, 4), and in *Hamlet*: "If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck"

(IV, 7).

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*Much Ado* (cont'd from p. 4)

flux in the period 1581-83. While records are sketchy, it appears that Oxford was not officially the sponsor of any professional acting troupe in this period, and as E.K. Chambers reports (II 5), the Queen's Company was formed "incorporating, in addition to Tarlton, . . . the leading members of the pre-existing companies", including "John Dutton from Oxford's". Eva Clark attributes the performance to "Mr. [Richard] Mulcaster's children, the boys of the Merchant Taylor's School" (Ogburn, Jr. 660 I, Clark 372ff). Oxford does appear in connection with the stage as holder of the sublease in 1583 of the theater at the former monastery of Blackfriars, which he transferred in turn to his secretary, John Lyly giving Lyly the supervision of the new boys' company acting there (Ogburn, Jr. 661-2). There are reports that Lyly was trying to amalgamate the children's troupes under Oxford's patronage, something which became an established troupe, but perhaps not by the time of the court performance of *Ariodante and Genevora* in February 1583 (Bradbrook 299, Chambers II 17, Ogburn, Jr. 662). It appears instead that boys of the Merchant Taylor's School were used to mount the February 1583 presentation of *Ariodante and Genevora*.

Holland's suggestion that the play *Ariodante and Genevora* staged in 1583 was the original version of *Much Ado* is based on dating a number of lines from the final version of the play to events and to other works of literature immediately predating that performance. Holland notes the following such examples:<sup>2</sup>

- "In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke" (I.i.263) occurs in Thomas Watson's *Hekatompathia* of March 1582, a work dedicated to the Earl of Oxford which, according to the dedication, Oxford had perused before its printing;
- "I look for an earthquake too then" I.i.274 may well refer to the earthquake which startled the English (a very rare occurrence for that nation) on April 6, 1580.
- "I will bring you the length of Prester John's foot, fetch you a hair of the great Cham's [Khan's] beard" (II. i.280ff) Such are mentioned in Marco

Polo's travels, translated to English by J. Frampton and published in 1579.

- In III.i.61ff: "She would spell him backward: if fair faced . . . her sister, if black . . . a foul blot; if tall a lance . . . if low, an agate very vilely cut; if speaking . . . blown with all winds, if silent . . . moved with none" (III. i.61ff). Holland (39-40) reports, as have others, that these lines were "inspired by a passage of a similar nature in Lyly's *Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit* (1579): "They account one a dastard if he be not desperate, a pinch penny if he be not prodigal, if silent a sot, if full of words a fool, if tall a lance, if short a dwarf" (39-40).
- "Thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet or a hat or a cloak is nothing to a man . . ." (III.ii.125ff). Holland finds this long passage to be an allusion to the Sumptuary Laws issued by the Queen in the spring of 1580 dealing with certain fashions then in vogue (41).

Four of the five ties noted here are found in the final text of *Much Ado* in speeches referencing the Beatrice and Benedick subplot, the first three relating to establishing Benedick as a professed bachelor, and the fourth relating to establishing the argumentative and contentious attitude of Beatrice towards a possible husband. Since these passages, through the literary works to which they allude, place the date of their writing to 1580-83, then we are dating Beatrice and Benedick lines to that time frame — such lines make no sense in terms of a simple Hero-and-Claudio plot line. This provides important evidence that the Beatrice and Benedick plot line formed an integral part of the original *Ariodante and Genevora*, a significant point which has been heretofore overlooked.

### DETAILS OF OXFORD'S LIFE APPEARING IN *MUCH ADO*<sup>3</sup>

As we proceed to seek evidence of the author's hand and person in *Much Ado about Nothing*, we must acknowledge that indeed, there is a history of Oxfordian identifications in the play. Ogburn, Jr. sees Benedick as the embodiment of Oxford

and sees Beatrice as a representation of Oxford's mistress Anne Vavator.<sup>4</sup> In addition, Oxford's first wife, Anne Cecil, has been counted by Ogburn as the model for Hero in this play as well as for other suffering, falsely accused wives — Imogen, Hermione, and Desdemona (567). These identifications have been suggested before — Vera and Charlton Ogburn in their earlier book, identified Beatrice and Benedick as being based on Anne Vavator and Oxford, and also saw the pair as the models for Rosaline and Berowne of *Love's Labour's Lost* (201,481-5). Certainly the concept that Oxford put himself and those about him in the play has been voiced before, but only in passing. A detailed examination is needed to show that *Much Ado* is a thoroughly autobiographical play delving quite deeply into the life and the feelings of Oxford, and of those nearest and dearest to him.

Let us first examine in detail the possible identification of Hero with Anne Cecil, Countess of Oxford, Edward de Vere's first wife. The strongest feature of Anne Cecil potentially identifying her as contributing to the Hero character is the suspicion of sexual infidelity and the subsequent alienation from her husband. The question of Anne's possible infidelity is one that remains problematical over the centuries. Oxford himself never *directly* voiced such an accusation: his most explicit word on the subject is in his letter of April 27, 1576, to Lord Burghley, his father-in-law (Chiljian 24, Ogburn, Jr. 559). In this he describes his countess "as your daughter or her mother's more than my wife . . ." and as one who had made their marriage "the fable of the world".<sup>5</sup> The public damage to her reputation along with the long-delayed reconciliation make her a very credible candidate for the living source of Hero. Add to this the Earl of Oxford's penchant, in his role as the playwright William Shakespeare, for dark plots revolving about other falsely accused wives — such as Hermione,<sup>6</sup> Desdemona, Imogen, and Helena — all strongly suggest Oxford's remorse over how he had treated her. If this is actually the case, nowhere is it more dramatically and explicitly displayed than in Claudio's remorse expressed before Hero's monument.

The playwright may have given Hero other marks identifying her with Anne Ce-

cil, notably her short stature and her brown hair. She lacked the stature and the blonde hair considered by some to be the mark of feminine beauty at the time. Benedick goes out of his way to apprise Claudio of these qualities in his beloved:

Claud. *Benedick, didst thou not note the daughter of signior Leonato?*

Bene. *I noted her not; but I look'd on her:*

Claud. *Is she not a modest young lady?*

Bene. *Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment, or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to her sex?*

Claud. *No; I pray thee speak in sober judgment.*

Bene. *Why, I' faith methinks she's too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise and too little for a great praise . . .* [emphasis added]

The lady's short stature is remarked on later at I.i.214-16:

Bene. . . . *He is in love. With who? Now that is your Grace's part. Mark how short his answer is: — with Hero, Leonato's short daughter." [Emphasis added] (I.i.163-75)*

The exchange is best understood, taking Oxford as the playwright, when one recognizes that Oxford was raised from age 12 to manhood in the house of Anne's father, Sir William Cecil, later Lord Burghley, with Anne in the role, effectively, of his little sister. If there is any constant in human nature, it is that older siblings tend to tease their younger siblings unmercifully, particularly in the case of an older brother and a younger sister. That feature of such a relationship is abundantly played out in the above exchanges. As a youth he might have been wont to express himself to one with the standing of a younger sister in the form of teasing. And how better to tease her? The ideal English lady of the day was tall and fair (i.e. blonde) — now there's the stuff with which to tease a short, brown-haired girl.

Having considered the short, brown-haired Anne Cecil as the possible model for Hero, we should also examine her possible

role as the model for Hermia in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in view of quite similar teasing material:

Hermia. *"Puppet?" Why so? Ay, that way goes the game. Now I perceive that she hath urg'd her height; and with her personage, her tall personage, Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him, And are you grown so high in his esteem, Because I am so dwarfish and so low? How low am I? I am not yet so low but that my nails can reach unto thine eyes . . .*

Helena. . . . *And though she be but little, she is fierce.*

Hermia. *"Little" again! Nothing but "low" and "little"! Why will you suffer her to flout me thus? [Emphasis added] (III.ii.289-98 and 325-27)*

We see here the personality of the Merry Madcap Earl, Edward de Vere in his irrepressible manic phase of his manic-depressive nature, so very common to artistic geniuses, as explored by Simonton<sup>7</sup> in general and by Llewellyn<sup>8</sup> for the particular case of the Earl of Oxford. The depressive phase is most eloquently expressed in Hero's Epitaph:

Done to death by slanderous tongues  
Was the Hero that here lies.  
Death, in guerdon of here wrongs,  
Gives her fame that never dies.  
So the life that died with shame  
Lives in death with glorious fame. (V.  
iii.3-8)

Anne Cecil died in 1588, but her memory is enshrined in a tomb in Westminster Abbey, where her short, brown-haired image is painted on her recumbent funeral statue in the style of Julio Romano,<sup>9</sup> as was the standing statue of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*. If we are correct in identifying Anne Cecil with Hero, as we earlier identified her with Hermione, two characters suffering from the injury of false accusation of sexual infidelity, the playwright, whom we identify as the Earl of Oxford, is obviously expressing a deep personal remorse. Indeed, such a deep expression of personal lament in such a public manner, were Oxford known as the author of *Much Ado about Nothing* and *The Winter's Tale* would of necessity

be a source of great embarrassment for members of his immediate family.

As for the other couple in the play, Beatrice and Benedick, there would seem to be a great deal of evidence supporting the association of these two with Oxford himself and his court mistress, Anne Vavasor. Miss Vavasor created quite a stir in the court of Queen Elizabeth when, while a lady-in-waiting to the Queen, she gave birth in the maidens' chambers to a son and named Edward de Vere as the father (Ogburn, Jr. 646-666) This background is essential to understanding the subtlety of many lines in the play.

Foremost among the elements of the relationship between the Beatrice and Benedick characters is the "merry war", the ongoing "skirmish of wit between them" as reported by Leonato in I.i.62-3. Indeed, many Oxfordian scholars, among them first Eva Turner Clark (192) then Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn (Sr.; 201) see in this "merry war" much the same relationship as that between Rosaline and Berowne in *Love's Labour's Lost*. There is a history between them, even before the start of the play, revealed by Beatrice in the opening scene):

Beat. *You always end with a jade's trick; I know you of old.* [Emphasis added] (I.i.146)

The later conversation between Don Pedro and Beatrice (II.i.285-95), viewed in this light, may be seen as being most pregnant<sup>10</sup> in meaning:

D. Pedro. *Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick.*

Beat. *Indeed, my lord; he lent it me a while; and I gave him use for it, a double heart for his single one. Marry, once before he won it of me with false dice, therefore your Grace may well say I have lost it.*

D. Pedro. *You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.* (II. i.285-95)

Beat. *So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools.* [Emphasis added] (I.i.146)

Viewed in terms of the history of Oxford and his mistress, double meanings leap off

the page. When Beatrice speaks of “knowing” Benedick of old, she is looking back to an earlier time when she, as Anne Vavator, knew “Benedick”, i.e. Oxford, in the biblical sense of carnal knowledge, only to lose his heart as he abandoned her when she bore his child.<sup>11</sup> The sexual innuendo<sup>12</sup> continues with “put him down”, a mildly bawdy allusion<sup>13</sup> to their past amorous activities, which led, in real life, to the pregnancy for which Beatrice marks herself as “the mother of fools”.

A particularly poignant pair of references to Oxford and Anne Vavator is found in the final scene of *Much Ado*:

Claud. *And I'll be sworn upon't that he loves her; / For here's a paper written in his hand, / A halting sonnet of his own pure brain, / Fashion'd to Beatrice.*

Hero. *And Here's another / Writ in my cousin's hand, stol'n from her pocket, / Containing her affection unto Benedick.* (V.iv.84-90)

In fact, two such poems have survived and were made public in Elizabethan times. The first is the “Dark Lady”<sup>14</sup> sonnet of *Love's Labour's Lost* (IV.iii.258-65):

Bir. *O, if in black my lady's brows be deck'd, / It mourns that painting and usurping hair / Should ravish doters with a false aspect; / And therefore is she born to make black fair. / Her favour turns the fashion of the days, / For native blood is counted painting now; / And therefore red, that would avoid dispraise, / Paints itself black, to imitate her brow.* (IV.iii.258-65)

Oxfordians identify Edward de Vere as the author of these lines. The second, in which Anne Vavator proclaims her love for Oxford, is known to the world as *Anne Vavator's Echo Poem*:

O heavens! Who was the first that bred in me this fever? Vere.  
Who was the first that gave the wound whose fear I wear for ever? Vere.  
What tyrant, Cupid, to my harm usurps thy golden quiver? Vere.  
What wight first caught this heart and can from bondage it deliver? Vere.

Yet who doth most adore this wight, oh hollow caves tell true? You.  
What nymph deserves his liking best, yet doth in sorrow rue? You.  
What makes him not regard good will with some regard or ruth? Youth.  
May I his favour match with love, if he my love will try? Ay.  
May I requite his birth with faith? Then Faithful will I die? Ay.

The “Echo Poem” is sometimes attributed to Edward de Vere himself. Looney (in Appendix III, *Poems of Edward de Vere*, Vol. I. pp. 560-61 of the Miller edition) and Ogburn, Jr. (393) offer the “Echo Poem” as a fragment within a larger work — ten lines beginning “Sitting alone upon my thought . . .” form an introduction to the “Echo Poem” itself. Ward’s biography of Edward de Vere offers<sup>15</sup> both the ten introductory lines under the heading “Verses made by the Earle of Oxforde” [sic], followed immediately by the “Echo Poem” itself under the title “Ann Vavesor’s Eccho” [sic]. Perhaps the “Echo Poem” was a separate work of Anne Vavator for which de Vere later penned an introduction; perhaps not. We shall not quibble here as to whether de Vere or Anne Vavator wrote the poem; if de Vere wrote it, the intention was to sound as though the lady wrote it.

### RELATING MUCH ADO WITH LYLY'S PLAY ENDIMION

Philip Johnson has researched the connection between *Much Ado about Nothing* and John Lyly’s court play, *Endimion*, as has Humphreys in the Arden Shakespeare. There is an obvious connection between the two plays in terms of the euphuistic speech styles they share. The speeches of the Messenger, Beatrice, Benedick, Don John, and Borachio in *Much Ado* show great similarity to Lyly’s euphuistic style in his fiction and in his courtly plays. More specifically, in terms of content, both Humphreys and Johnson link the befuddled watchmen in *Much Ado* to a similar group of characters in *Endimion*, and see borrowings between the two in terms of Dogberry’s “reasons/raisins” pun reflected by a similar pun in *Endimion*. Johnson notes further parallels: both sets of

watchmen “frequently address each other as ‘neighbour(s)’; and that in both plays their ‘bills’ (halberds or pikes) are mentioned in connection with the watchmen’s stupidity.” (152). Another parallel mentioned by Johnson is in references in both plays to the “bird-bolt”, “a blunt, wooden-headed arrow for stunning small birds and for safe use by children (and fools). In yet another parallel, both plays feature a speech concerning the transformation of a soldier into a lover: Sir Tophas speaking in *Endimion* (III.iii) and Benedick speaking in *Much Ado* (II.iii).

Johnson delineates further specific parallels between the two plays in terms of euphuistic style, showing characteristic pairings involving contrasts and parallels; syntactic parallelism; semantic contrast; and apparent contradiction (154). Finally, the two plays show remarkable parallels in word imagery, particularly in terms of metaphors of catching birds and fish (155). Essentially, Johnson has shown that there was extensive borrowing between the writers of *Much Ado* and of *Endimion*. This should hardly be a surprise, if Oxford wrote *Much Ado*, considering that Lyly had been Oxford’s secretary in the 1580-88 time frame, and manager of his acting troop at Blackfriar’s. This leads us to ask, which was the source, and which the derivative work? In dating *Endimion*, Johnson (151) notes that it was first published in 1591, and that (according to the title page) “it had been played ‘before the Queenes Majestie at Greenwich on Candlemas day at night by the Chyldren of Paules’” (qtd. in Johnson 151). Johnson further notes that scholars, such as W.A. Neilson, place an earlier date, perhaps even 1586 or 1588, on the performance indicated in the title page.

One must consider, however, that *A historie of Ariodante and Genevora* was staged at court in February, 1583, evidence that such a play had been written well before the writing of *Endimion*. In particular, as noted the final script of *Much Ado* contained allusions to literary works in the 1579-82 time frame: Watson’s *Hekatompathia* (1582); Frampton’s translation of Marco Polo’s travels (1579); and Lyly’s *Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit* (1579). These passages would have been fresh in the author’s mind (and topical to the public) in 1583, but would have been less fresh and less topical years later. These

considerations suggest that *Ariodante and Genevora* was an early version of *Much Ado*, including the Beatrice and Benedick plot (to which these lines contribute) as well as the Hero and Claudio plot suggested by its title, dating to 1583; if so, *Endimion* was the derivative work rather than the source.

### (Endnotes)

1 For discussion of these sources, see Holland, pp. 37-43; Ogburn and Ogburn (Sr.), pp. 480-506; Nielson and Hill, p. 179; Ogburn (Jr.), p. 661 Greenblatt (Norton 1381-8).

2 Ogburn and Ogburn (Sr.) echo many of these examples in their later book, Ch. 37, pp. 480-506.

3 There now seems to be a literary precedent for the title used for this paper, *Much Ado about Oxford*. Brame and Popova, in their recent book, *Shakespeare's Fingerprints*, begin with a chapter, "A Naughty Note on Nothing", and in this chapter they identify Oxford with the verbal cues *nothing* and *naught*. From repeated use in the Shakespeare canon, they identify *nothing* and *naught* through the digit zero (0) with "the big O", the letter "O", which they identify as symbolization for Oxford himself. Thus they see "Much Ado about Nothing" as the original playwright's way of saying "Much Ado about Oxford". While the coincidence is inadvertent, the present writer does not wish to take credit for originating the latter phrase.

4 Ogburn (Jr.), p. 614; he also sees Anne Vavator as the model for Rosaline of *Love's Labour's Lost* (pp. 613-15) and Oxford as the model of Rosaline's lover Berowne (pp. 475, 613-14, 623-25, 726).

5 Indeed, Anne herself broached the matter to the world outside the family herself. Before her child was born, while Oxford was away on travel, she discussed her fears as to whether her husband would suspect infidelity with Dr. Masters, the Queen's physician, which led to sharing these fears with the Queen and the Earl of Leicester, a personal enemy of her husband. See Ogburn (Jr.), pp. 561-2, 571-2.

6 Desper and Vezzoli have explored the identification of Leontes and Hermione with Oxford and his first Countess in a *Elizabethan Review* paper showing that and many other connections between *The Winter's Tale* and the life of its playwright, Edward de Vere.

7 See Simonton, *Origins of Genius . . .* for his thorough investigation of the association of artistic genius, in many instances, with a degree of psychopathology, problematic

relationships, broken marriages, disabling personality traits, and alcoholism.

8 Llewellyn's *Oxfordian* article would seem to indicate that a problematic personality, rather than being a bar for Oxford as a creative writer, is a common trait of gifted writers.

9 The painted statue, one of the few such in the Abbey, was noted by Desper and Vezzoli, and Bette Talvacchia has confirmed it as a typical work of the 16<sup>th</sup> century artist Julio Romano, although earlier critics had criticized "Shakespeare" for confusing the painter Romano with a sculptor. He was both.

10 The present author apologizes; he could not resist the temptation for use of "pregnant".

11 A secret love affair was one thing, but as a married man the Earl could not give his mistress his name. Even if he had wanted to do so, a divorce from Anne Cecil would have the crown as final arbiter, according to the Act of Supremacy, of such matters, and Elizabeth's Lord Treasurer, Anne's father William Cecil, Lord Burghley, would be adamant against it, and would call in every debt the Queen owed him on such an occasion, as one who had helped her survive princesshood to become Queen.

12 Ogburn and Ogburn (Sr.) (p. 485) find further sexual innuendoes in III.iv suggesting a pregnant Beatrice, such as references to "barns" ("bairns"?) and to "A maid, and stuff'd!"

13 Reminiscent of a quite similar bawdy allusion in *Romeo and Juliet*, I.iii.40-49.

14 Anne Vavator's well-known dark hair fits with the depiction in the "Dark Lady" sonnet in *LLL* (IV.iii.258-265) of Rosaline's hair. However, Ms. Vavator is *not* particularly identified here as the "Dark Lady" of the Shakespeare Sonnets collection.

15 Ward cites Bodleian, Rawlinson Poetical MS., 85.111; see also Clark, *Hidden Allusions*, pp. 472-73.

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## Did Shakespeare Read From the 17th Earl of Oxford's Personal Library?

W. Ron Hess, assisted by Alan Tarica

### PART TWO

#### **Book 4: *Geneva Bible* 1569 2nd Edition (under Archbishop Parker):**

The next example we need only briefly discuss, because Dr. Roger Stritmatter did a thorough job of examining the 1569 *Geneva Bible*, illustrating two examples of the manicule with aristocratic sleeve ruffs (224-25). Shakespeare seems to have been very interested in those cases associated with Psalms, yet Stritmatter couldn't completely overcome the problem that we have a not-before date (1569); therefore, we can't determine with certainty when specific annotations were made. Oxford likely scribbled in his Bible over the rest of his life, even though the assumption is reasonable that many annotations were made shortly after he bought it. Also, there is little doubt that Oxford owned that book which he annotated.

#### **Book 5: *Holinshed's Chronicles 1577, 1st Edition:***

Pressing on, the 1577 *Chronicles* (1st ed., Vols. I & II), attributed to Raphael Holinshed, and actually begun by Royal Printer Reginald Wolfe, who died 1573, drew on a number of older chronicles such as Hall's, as noted above. Along with its 1587 2nd ed., it was one of Shakespeare's major sources for his history plays. Thus, we note that Hamilton discussed a heavily annotated copy residing at the Folger Library (STC 13568b, copy 3, 1577), and even mentioned "finger-pointings" from it (167). The book itself is too fragile for first-hand examination, but at our request copies were made of an interior title page and ten pages selected by the Folger Photo Lab. There are many examples of the manicules we were looking for, some of them with ruffed sleeves, though perhaps not of particularly artistic quality. One on page

six of the "Description of Ireland" points to a humorous digression about a parson who diminished to 500 the number fed by Christ's few loaves and fishes, stating that his pragmatic flock would never have believed the Biblical claim that 5,000 were fed. Another on page ten points to a reference to the Castle of Dublin and another on page twenty-two to "Syr Thomas Butler Erle of Ormond and Offery." This last one is significant because "Black Tom Butler" entered Gray's Inn in 1566-67 alongside Oxford and was Queen Elizabeth's Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in the early 1580s, likely the conquering general of Ireland referred to in the "Prologue" in Shakespeare's *Henry V*, as opposed to the ignominious return of Essex to London in the late 1590s or the return of Mountjoy only after his "Empress" was dead in 1603. In *The Historie of England* there is an intriguing annotation, "Oxford founded in the year 895." This betrays the annotator as principally thinking of himself as a Cambridge man (as our Oxford would have), for below it was scribbled the prouder, "Cambridge founded the year 630." Another manicule points to a description of the Roman founding of Colchester, near Cambridge and Oxford's Hedingham and Wivenhoe estates, strangely describing a hill with a ditch, somewhat similar in *Henry IV* to the terrain for the Gads Hill escapade, which was actually in Kent. There are also examples of a strange "X" with dots in each of its quadrants which may be noteworthy (an "OX" symbol?). So, this fragile book bears closer examination.

#### **Book 6: *English Secretorie* 1586, 1st Edition:**

We proceed to perhaps the most surprising find we have ever made, a copy of the 1586 first edition of *The English Secretorie* by Angel Day, who had served as an apprentice printer 1563-75 and then took service as a secretary to a lord. He didn't

say to whom, but the fact that he dedicated his first work to Oxford was not likely accidental! Notably, all editions of this extremely popular manual on how to write letters, up to its 1635 last edition, featured Oxford's coat-of-arms after the title-page and slight variations on the original dedication to Oxford. Although Part two existed and was entered into the Stationers Registry in 1587, it wasn't published until 1592, at which time it was dedicated to: 1] Justice of the Common Pleas Sir Francis Gawdy, 2] Gawdy's ex-son-in-law (that same Sir Wm. Hatton mentioned above, who as a widower had remarried to Oxford's niece), and 3] Oxford's "old friend" Thomas Bedingfield, who had translated the 1573 *Cardanus Comfort* at Oxford's "commandment" and with Oxford's preface, a work many suggest was the book "Prince Hamlet" read in Shakespeare's play as "Polonius" got dubbed a "fishmonger!"

What was so surprising about this 1586 copy was that it had existed in a Scholar Press edition ever since 1967, and nobody, not even Oxfordians, had commented on its voluminous annotations. It contains at least six instances of the manicule figure in its margins and plenty of Shakespeare and Oxford relevant material. For example:

1] pg. 56 left margin, pointing to, "It may please your good Lord [i.e., Oxford?] On the twelfth hereof is *George Carey* [i.e., son of Oxford's ally Henry Carey, Lord Chamberlain] and his company came to the Town [Edinburgh] with greater speed then the Ll. [Lords] here looked for: causing them heereby (as they saye) to omit sundry complements of enterteingnement to haue beene shewed to him, both in the way, and also at his ariuall heere [i.e., in Scotland];" (some of A. Day's "letters" were intelligence reports? See my Vol. I, Sect. 6.N & Vol. II, Chap. 8);

2] pp. 70-71, underlined "Seemed *Vertue* euer proud, but in hys onely perfection?" & "sole imposition or taxe contraried in his

government of *Gascoigne* excepted" (under epistles for lauding dead persons, possibly relevant to the late G. Gascoigne, who died in 1577 after seemingly collaborating with Oxford and others in the 1576 *Paradyse of Dainty Devices*?);

3] pp. 80-81 left margin, a loop pointing at "Now in causes of sway and gouvernement, a man might be praysed for his great wisdom. . ." followed shortly by underlined-stippled 1st part of "...A president hereof might be the L. chiefe Justice of England in the time of king *Henry* the 4th, who was so strictly bent to the obseruation of Justice, as hauing one of the princes seruantes arraigned before hym at the kyngs bench barre, for a felonie, & being one that the young Prince greatly at that time of his youth faoured" (i.e., Shakespeare's *IH4* Iii, the "Chief Justice's" attempt to arrest "Falstaff");

4] pg. 170 left margin, the annotator apparently entered his first name, "Edvardius," and underlined "stile and order and deliuerie appertaining to either of these [craving vs. troubling] is greatly different" (possibly pertinent to the varying style of Oxford's beseeching Burghley for preferment at Court?); and

5] pg. 236, underlined "...*Vlisses* paragon was not so precious. . ." (Shakespeare's snide attitude about "Ulysses" & other "heroes" tarnished in *T&C*?).

Obviously, a more complete study should be done of this work's promising annotations. But an important point needs to be made about the manicules here. We noted they were crude in the c. 1565 annotations of *Hall's Chronicles*, and it still remained somewhat crude in the c. 1569 *Geneva Bible* annotations; with pencil-thin, uncreative, straight fingers. It was sometimes artistic but often crude in the 1577 *Holinshed's Chronicles*, but here in the c. 1586 annotations of what was likely a "presentation copy" personally given to Oxford by his probable secretary, the manicules were surprisingly anatomically correct, and some instances had a distinctive finger-band on the index finger. We marvel at the intricate detail of the knuckles and fingers. Even details of the sleeve ruffs differed from earlier books, here more aristocratically lacy than ever. Our annotator loved that book, even as he scribbled in it!

## Book 7: *Holinshed's Chronicles 1587* 2nd Edition:

Finally, the 1587 *Chronicles* (2nd ed.), attributed to Raphael Holinshed (died c. 1580), finished by a bevy of other authors, was, on orders of the Privy Council, partly censored in ways that may have affected Shakespeare, (such as treatments of King Richard II & III), and along with its 1577 1st edition was one of Shakespeare's major sources for his history plays. Thus, we note the many intriguing discoveries offered in 1938 by French orthodox Professor Clara L. De Chambrun. The Preface by Professor G.B. Harrison essentially credits her with the original information supporting the "Catholic roots" of Mr. Shakspeare, his family, and neighbors). Dr. Chambrun's Introduction described her problems with being taken seriously for her forward-probing theories and new evidence, until she took the trouble to attain a PhD (something Oxfordians can relate to). (vi) Immediately after her PhD, those who had earlier snubbed her, such as Sir Sidney Lee, turned to adopting her evidence for their own studies. Dawson (88-89) notes that she brought her copy of Holinshed to "this country" [the U.S.] where she spent time at the Folger Library, and he became dismayed at her insistence on comparing its annotations not with the authenticated Shakspeare signatures, but with the handwriting in the bulk of the 1616 Shakspeare Will, normally thought to be by a lawyer or scribe. (88-89) This snicker at her innovative thought processes prompted Dawson to observe:

"I do not think that the Jaggard-Chambrun Holinshed is a forgery; if it were, there would be more to connect it with Shakespeare. . . . It is a fairly obvious axiom in palaeography that the more value a piece of writing purports to have, the greater the chance there is of its being spurious, for no sane person will take the necessary pains or run the inevitable risks to fabricate a signature of [a nobody like] Nahum Tate." (89)

To briefly digress, Dawson listed several reasons for forgeries, neglecting the altruistic

one I hypothesized above, which I argue is the strongest modern reason: "despair over the scarcity of solid evidence for divine Willy, causing a strong temptation to 'correct the record' to match assumed history." (97-100) One comparison would be the "Piltdown Man", anonymous forger(s), who manufactured evidence less for personal gain than to support the fervent British notion that humanity's cradle just had to be found on their imperial island. Oxfordians have noted that even excellent scholars like Professors A.L. Rowse, Stanley Wells, and Alan Nelson have stretched reality to its uttermost limits in order to contrive pro-Shakspeare or anti-Oxford conclusions from otherwise benign evidence. With such an attitude pervasive among orthodox scholars, is it too much of a stretch for some of the weaker-ethical among them to put a dot inside of the loop of a "W," or to ingeniously modify an existing signature by "W. Lambarde" to make it appear to be "W. Shakspeare," then stand by thrillingly as they watch "history" unfold? I agree with Dawson (89-94) that Ireland and Collier forged for self-gain (89-94), but I believe even Collier was partly stricken by this altruistic reason to forge. The altruistic reason may also explain a "salting of the mine" in anticipation of Professor C.W. Wallace's trip to England from the University of Nebraska in 1905 when he almost immediately just happened to stumble on a 1612 MSS that British scholars had myopically overlooked for centuries. Wallace thus all-too-conveniently established for our opponents that Mr. Shakspeare had dwelt in London in 1604 and had in 1612 made the sixth authentic signature. But that forger was too ingenious, for he/she went too far by having Mr. Shakspeare give 48 as his age in 1612; whereas, the 1623 monument would inscribe in stone that his family knew he had been born in 1663, not the 1664 baptism date traditionally accepted today. My forthcoming Appendix O notes what the 1905 forger missed: in 1612 Mr. Shakspeare would have been calculated to reach age 49 from his 1663 actual birth-date, not 48 from his later-to-become traditional 1664!

To resume, in her book's section on her copy of *Holinshed*, de Chambrun described its annotations, beginning at discussions of the reign of King Richard II and stopping with King Richard III, the span of

Shakespeare's core history plays), and several were important (249-50):

"...shown by roughly drawn index fingers," or "a pointing finger" [i.e., manicules], especially two about King Henry V's claims to France (the Salic law dispute) and seige of Rouen which is paraphrased in the Prologue to Shakespeare's *Henry V*. (249-50) As Harrison's Preface to her book said:

"...Shakespeare's own copy of *Holinshed's Chronicles* [possibly] still exists. If so, it is a rare personal relic of the greatest sentimental and literary value. So far as such matters can be finally proved, I believe that the book has as much right to be accepted as Shakespeare's as the famous three pages in the manuscript of *Sir Thomas More*.... Palaeographic evidence based on such slight foundations [as that for *Sir T. More*] must be taken with faith, for hand-writing experts disagree more than most." (vii).

Note the wise emphasis on disagreement of experts, which is why we suspend judgment on whether handwriting of the annotator(s) of these works match or not, preferring to devote more space to the subject in my forthcoming Appendix R. We haven't yet examined the copy that de Chambrun described, and that may be just as well. Because, as Alan says, the manicule "may have predictive power." It may be a future test of our theory that genuine Oxford — and Shakespeare-related texts will tend to have the aristocratic manicule in them, and texts with them will more likely have been held by Oxford.

If readers know more about this 1587 *Holinshed*, please let us know. We sent out requests to every Shakespearean library we knew of worldwide, and none knew the location of de Chambrun's copy. Dr. Georgiana Ziegler, the Folger's Head of Research, did a closer study than most and noted de Chambrun began by discussing the 1577 1st edition, then lurched into a mention of the 1587 2nd, and possibly due to her

French native language, was unaware that she had muddied the waters. So, her opinion was that de Chambrun actually referred to the Folger's 1577 copy (discussed above). Sadly, colophons shown by de Chambrun's book don't match those of the 1577 copy. And even Dawson avoided distinguishing which edition de Chambrun was carrying around with her(88) So, we're puzzled.

### Manicule instances:

As Alan and I embarked on our Readership studies at the Folger Library (thanks to letters of recommendation from a PhD Chemist and a PhD Russian Literature scholar!), one of our discoveries was that our Stratfordian opponents have in recent years done a great deal of research into marginalia and annotations in general, and in particular into the manicule. Articles by Professors William H. Sherman and Dr. Jan Broadway highlight annotations by Archbishop Parker, Dr. John Dee, Gabriel Harvey, and Sir Walter Raleigh (whose libraries are largely identified; e.g., Parker died in 1575 after willing his vast ecclesiastical library to an extant collection). Each appears to have used the manicule to some extent, as did other Elizabethans. It is interesting to learn from an e-mail from Dr. Sherman that until recently most occurrences of the manicule were falsely attributed to libraries of Sir Francis Bacon or Ben Jonson. Of course, each of the above men were in some ways linked to the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford:

a) Archbishop Parker oversaw both the *Bishop's Bible* and the "*Geneva Bible* projects, and it's not unreasonable that a precocious royal ward & Gray's Inn student might have accessed Parker's books.

b) Dr. J. Dee noted Oxford and relatives as among his astrology customers, and they were both involved in preparations, finances, and aftermaths of the 1576 to 78 Frobisher expeditions.

c) Sir Walter Raleigh was a servant of Oxford's in the 1570s, and was noted by Aubrey's *Lives* as Oxford's second in a duel and a key member of a literary group including Oxford and his Vere cousins.

d) Sir Francis Bacon was Oxford's wife's first cousin and a fellow courtier sharing Oxford's plight of not getting the preferment they wished to have from their mutual in-law, the disapproving Lord Burghley.

e) B. Jonson collaborated in play projects with Oxford's associates Munday and Nashe, some possibly for the amalgamated Oxford's-Worcester's Men at the Boars Head Inn, and his dual-edged comments about Shakespeare in the 1623 First Folio and elsewhere helped create the "Stratfordian myth."

Although the manicule may be a "red-herring" in the sense that it may not definitively distinguish Oxford's or Shakespeare's annotations from others, such things may still be "predictive" at least in the sense that our man was very likely to have used manicules in any books he had lengthy access to. Thus, combined with the handwriting itself, which we saw Harrison pronounce to be a source of disagreement among experts, such things as the manicule may help lock down identification.

As alluded to earlier, Alan believes there was possibly a more reliable, and more rare indicator of Oxford's authorship of annotations and writings. This was the "griffe de notaire" identified by de Chambrun (267-72). Alan demonstrates in our forthcoming Appendix R that this insignia likely represented stylized initials "WSS" (for Will Shake-Spear). Thus, he believes Oxford is likely the author of a juvenilia play from an MS in the Folger called *July and Julian* (c.1560 at Cambridge U., there is a 1955 Malone Soc. Reprint). Derran Charlton demonstrated that an Oxford associate used a type of these seemingly rare French insignias. And we show that certain letters of Oxford's bore it in a very surprising way!

### Conclusion:

We argue that the aristocratic manicule key annotation element (the finger-pointing with ruffed sleeve) may not be just a frequently-used eccentricity. It could be one of the viable clues to "Shakespeare was here!" Thus, Oxfordians should more deliberately search for it elsewhere, among other clues. But what if the manicules are different from those used in the *Geneva Bible* known as Oxford's? Actually, we feel there's virtue in variability. Styles of ruffs varied, fashions changed, an individual like Oxford had his own habits change. Possibly he took an interest in anatomical drawing, and it may be that a crude symbol in his youth was

improved with age. He could have been in a hurry in one drawing but leisurely in another. In other words, variability should be expected rather than necessarily viewed as problematic.

Our opponents claim manicule "finger-pointing" or "fist" figures were common in Elizabethan texts. I say, to coin a phrase from a Texan, "bring 'em on!" Let's see all these alleged "many instances" and check each of them out. We've checked out quite a few from what we could find in the STC descriptions, through Readership at the Folger Library, and over Google, but so far few match what we are looking for with the aristocratic ruffed sleeve. It may be that a great majority of aristocratic manicules were actually the special eccentricity of one man. After all, Occam's razor would have us consider that possibility, since it would be far less complex than the alternative of many men each taking considerable trouble to draw these in such detail and frequency, then each would independently apply them preferentially to passages relevant to Shakespeare's works or Oxford's heritage. And, if Alan was right about the figure's "predictive power," we might get more unwitting help from our opponents in identifying potential texts at one time held and annotated by the 17th Earl of Oxford, or Shakespeare if you please!

In short, it may be that Shakespeare was routinely reading from the 17th Earl of Oxford's personal library, annotating with eccentric glee. And now that Oxford's vast

library has been dispersed over time, it just appears that many men used that aristocratic manicule affectation, when actually it was Oxford-Shakespeare's peculiar eccentricity! Dr. Stritmatter's study of the 1569 Bible located one volume in that library. The 1550 *Hall's Chronicle*, and 1577 & 87 *Holinshed's Chronicles* yield us three more good prospects, making four, thus beginning a pattern. But, when we add the 1586 *English Secretary*, we have five. Can Oxfordians build on this, and establish an even more-solid point?

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The following are the speakers:

Dr. Paul Altrocchi: "Ideational Change: Why Is It So Difficult?"

Dr. Peter Austin-Zacharias: "The Boar Among flowers: A Closer Look at 'The Adventures Passed by F.J.'"

Barbara Burris: "The Provenance of the Ashbourne Portrait of Shakespeare"

Matthew Cossolotto: "Oxfordian Speakers Bureau"

Dr. Richard Desper: "Stars or Suns: The Portrayal of the Earls of Oxford in Elizabethan Drama".

Jonathan Dixon: "A Mirror Up To Nature: Creativity, Psychology, and Universality in Shakespeare's *Playing* (or *This Disease is Beyond MY Practice*)"

Professor Ren Draya:

Professor Michael Egan: "*The Tragedy of Richard II, part one: a Newly Authenticated Play by William Shakespeare*"

Bill Farina: "The Puritan Politics and Geography Lessons: The Authorship Debate as an Educational Device"

Professor Robin Fox: "Personal Reflection on the Authorship Question and the Grammar School Issue"

Ron Halstead: "Suffer a Sea-change: Sources of the Alchemical Images of *The Tempest* in a Life of Crises of Edward De Vere"

W. Ron Hess: "In 1635 Did Thomas Heywood Identify Will Shakespeare as an Imitator?"

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Lynne Kositsky:

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Professor Tom Regnier: "Disclaiming Shakespeare's Legal Knowledge"

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Tom Townsend: "Shakespeare and the Essential Common Man Theory"

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Hank Whitmore: "The Subject of the Sonnets is...The Sonnets"

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Accommodations:

A very limited number of discounted rooms are being held at the Dahlmann Campus Inn. Regularly priced rooms at the Campus Inn and at two other campus hotels within walking distance of the Campus Inn and the theater are also being held. Please call the hotels directly and mention either the SOS or the Shakespeare Fellowship.

Dahlmann Campus Inn (734-769-2200): Discounted rooms are \$135/\$157 (single/double occupancy). Regular priced rooms are \$201/\$233

Bell Tower Hotel (734-769-3010): varying rates from \$139/\$161 to \$216/\$238

Inn At the Michigan League (734-764-3177): Single occupancy rate \$130 Thursday night and \$135 Friday and Saturday nights. Extra person \$10

A larger number of less expensive rooms are being held in several hotels located in a cluster (within walking distance of each other) about 2-3 miles off campus (on the way from the airport to the campus). Again, call the hotels directly and mention SOS or SF to get the discounted rate.

Hampton Inn South (734-665-5000): \$89

Four Points Sheraton (734-996-0600): \$92. There is a complimentary shuttle bus service for guests to get to campus.

Courtyard by Marriott (734-995-5900): \$89

Fairfield Inn by Marriott (734-995-5200): \$72

For information on the RSC visit to Ann Arbor, including ticket sales, go to [www.ums.org](http://www.ums.org).

If you are interested in presenting a paper at the Conference, please send a title and one-paragraph abstract to either John Hamill ([hamillx@pacbell.net](mailto:hamillx@pacbell.net)) or Lynne Kositsky ([lynnekositsky@hotmail.com](mailto:lynnekositsky@hotmail.com)).

**Be sure to register early! Theater tickets may be limited. If available, up to two extra theater tickets may be purchased with your registration. A registration form is enclosed with this newsletter. Send it in today!**

### Our Mission:

Founded in 1957, 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."

## Notes from the Field

Ren Draya

Quite often, Oxfordians ask me what goes on in college classrooms these days. What is the impact of the authorship question on today's college students? Which plays are favorites? With Spring Semester, 2006 drawing to its close, I decided to jot down a few observations and to describe some of the attitudes and reactions I see in my work as a professor of literature.

Of course, there's no pat answer; teaching Shakespeare is always a joy, a challenge, a frustration, a treat. In Introduction to Literature classes, those required catchall courses offered to everyone, many of the students hate to read, not just hate to read Shakespeare, but hate to read. So, any response, any glimmer of interest, any chuckle or tear strikes me as a victory. This past semester I had twenty freshmen in the Intro. class: three brave young men and seventeen young women, (sometimes the computer skews things). In the mix, were three African-Americans, one Chicana, three older women, ages 22, 35, and 48, and half the women's softball team.

In the eighth week, after short stories and poetry, I plunged into *Othello*. It's a good play for freshmen: easy (enough) plot, small cast, inter-racial love affair, plenty of passion and violence. We spent two class periods (an hour each) on Act One, then an entire class period for each of the next acts. We did quite a bit of reading aloud: "You have to wake Brabantio up! 'Let's hear you really yell, 'Thieves! Thieves! Thieves! Look to your house...'" Pretty soon, they handled the 'zounds and knaves and green-eyed monsters with quite a bit of enthusiasm.

I used portions from the Kenneth Branagh/Laurence Fishburne film and placed the videotape on reserve for anyone wishing to see the entire film. I showed maps of Italy, and we noted the distance to Cyprus. We argued about the components of a good marriage (both in the Sixteenth Century and in today's world), about Iago's motives, about the very moment Othello can no longer see objectively. With one or two exceptions, students became deeply absorbed. Several of them dragged friends along to see the film. Two husbands were

persuaded to take on roles. Several students confessed to using Cliff Notes, (or the Internet equivalents), to which I said, "Fine, anything that gets you past the language barrier is a plus — the most difficult page you'll ever read in Shakespeare is the very first page you read."

Except for one gal who had come down with mono, everyone passed the test (a series of quotations to identify and explicate). Some students wrote in their journals about actually loving the play! One student grumbled that returning to "regular literature" was a let down after *Othello*.

In the past, I've also had positive experiences with Freshman Intro. classes studying *The Tempest*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Most college students today have read some Shakespeare in high school, invariably *Romeo and Juliet*, occasionally *Hamlet* or *Julius Caesar*.

Ah, now I need to say a few things about the students who *like* to read, especially those who eschew the economically driven and trendy majors such as Criminal Justice, (Isn't that an oxymoron?), or accounting and become literature majors. Yes, in this brave new world of the twenty-first century, we do still have some bookworms!

This spring's Shakespeare class was a delight: one biology major, (there are always one or two, I'm never been sure why), two history majors, one psychology major, and the rest literature and/or secondary education majors. We began with *The Merchant of Venice*, which no one had read before and which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. The new film with Al Pacino as Shylock provided many fine excerpts, but mostly we read aloud, worried about Antonio's depression, speculated about Shylock's isolation, assessed Bassanio's worthiness, and chuckled over the cheeky women. Everyone memorized a short section (twelve to sixteen lines) and "delivered" their lines to us.

We spent a day on the sonnets (not all 154 of them), with each student nominating a particular sonnet to be inserted into *Merchant*..., explaining which character would say the lines, which exact moment would work best, and why the ideas in the sonnet were appropriate.

Then, in order, we tackled *Macbeth*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, (because Washington University mounted a lively production), *The Winter's Tale*, (a big winner), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, (another live staging, this time by the St. Louis Shakespeare Company), *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Henry V*. I really should do the history play earlier in the semester because end-of-the-year fatigue does create a number of breaches in concentration and valor.

Yes, during the semester, I talk about the authorship question, about the various contenders, about my Oxfordian views and my experiences at the various authorship conferences. Students, for the most part, are interested, but not surprised, that a major "story" might just be a big lie. After all, most of these students were born after 1980. They have no trouble accepting the fact that politicians lie, that cover-ups are common, that myths serve a purpose.

I also include a Shakespeare play each fall in my British Literature I course (*Beowulf*, Chaucer—all the good stuff with dragons and castles) and have assigned *Twelfth Night*, *Othello*, *As You Like It* and one or two others in the past. Finally, I should note that several of the literature majors have chosen a topic in Shakespeare for their senior seminar.

So, my "take" from the perspective of a liberal arts professor is simply that the plays endure; Shakespeare's emotions, characters, and grand language are as relevant to today's tattooed, cyber-savvy, i-podded kid as ever. As Vere might say,

The classroom is full of noises,  
Sounds, and sweet airs, that give  
delight and hurt not.

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

half completed at this time. I will provide a detail report on the library project at the annual meeting on November 11, 2006, in Ann Arbor. The database is necessary first step in being able to decide just what we should do with the library, which is clearly an important asset of the society. We simply haven't yet discovered how to leverage this asset in a meaningful way.

I want to spend a few moments on our publications. The society continues to publish the quarterly newsletter, now under the capable editorial direction of Lew Tate. Lew has done a terrific job with the newsletter and we all owe him a great debt of gratitude, along with Frank Davis and other members of the publications committee.

Our annual flagship publication, *The Oxfordian*, continues to flourish under the guidance of Stephanie Hopkins Hughes. Many thanks to Stephanie for her editorial leadership and steadfast dedication. As I mentioned last year, we'd like to celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of *The Oxfordian* with an anthology publication of the best

articles published over the past ten years. That project is still under development.

We have also been exploring the publication of a series of short pamphlets that address specific "Hot Topics" in the Shakespeare authorship debate. I have received many great suggestions from SOS members about topics to include in this pamphlet series. I regret that more progress has not been made on this Hot Topics project, but I am convinced now that this series of pamphlets will be an excellent project to launch as we celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2007. So you can certainly expect to see the publication of a series of Hot Topics pamphlets next year.

Finally, in my last President's Page message, I mentioned several specific ideas for celebrating our "Golden" 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year. This is such an important event in the history of the society, that I want to reiterate those ideas here again and to ask for your active involvement next year. I hope we will all take an opportunity in 2007 to Think Big so we make the most what is a

golden PR and marketing opportunity. I hope we will, among other things: Set an ambitious goal for expanding our membership; Sponsor a series of authorship-related lectures and conferences; Issue a series of special authorship and Oxford-related "Hot Topics" publications; Establish an active Speakers Bureau to speak to local schools and community groups; Seek funding from individuals and foundations to support our ongoing educational and outreach programs. This is only a partial list of activities and goals for next year. Please share your ideas with us!

That's about all the space I have for this report. It's been an honor serving as your president this past year. If I am re-elected to the Board in November and if the new Board decides to re-elect me as president, I look forward to working with all of you next year as we celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and make continued progress on a host of programs.

Sincerely,

Matthew Cossolotto

914-245-9721, matthew@ovations.com

## Book Review

### More Shakespeare Names

By Derran Charlton

*Pseudonymous Shakespeare: Rioting Language in the Sidney Circle*  
Ashgate Publishing Limited,  
www.ashgate.com.

*Pseudonymous Shakespeare* by Dr. Penny McCarthy, is an exhilaration of detailed study and presentation. The bibliography, alone, refers to 374 writers/publications. Among McCarthy's solidly underpinned conclusions are: "Shakespeare used the pseudonym "R.L." among other pseudonyms; one, 'William Smith', was also his alias in life; Shakespeare was at the heart of the Sidney circle, whose literary program was hostile to Elizabeth I; and his work, composed mainly from the late 1570s to the early 1590s, occasionally embedded in the work of others, was covertly alluded to more often than has been recognized".

In the course of unmasking 'R.L.', McCarthy scrutinizes devices employed by

writers in the Sidney coterie: punning, often across languages; repeated-insistence on a sound, or hiding two persons "under one hood"; disingenuous juxtaposition; evocation of original context; differential spelling (intended and significant). Cogent references are made to Nashe, Barnfield, Thomas Watson, George Gascoigne, Lyly, Munday, Greene, Breton, Harvey without any appropriate descriptions of their close links to Edward de Vere. Likewise, the nicknames Will Monox, Martin Mar-prelate, Maister Apis Lapis.

Dr. McCarthy in taking a leaf from the book of William Shakespeare, who played with two incompatible but identically worded versions of his chosen motto '*Non Sanz Droict* ('Not without justification') and *Non. Sanz Droict* (No! Without justification') chooses as her impressa "Not without a pinch of salt", or alternatively "No! Without a pinch of salt"; that is, "All is true".

*The Black Prince* is the title adopted by the author of a detailed account of Queen Elizabeth I's visit to Kenilworth Castle in 1575. The author also describes himself as 'R.L.' also known as Robert Langham—the quarry pursued throughout Dr. McCarthy's fine book. She then demonstrates why it is highly unlikely that Robert Langham had anything to do with the work: positing that his name was simply purloined by William Shakspeare, (at that time, he was aged only eleven), who, according to McCarthy, was employed as a page by the Earl of Leicester's protestant household.

Dr. McCarthy is intrigued by the spelling — odd even by Elizabethan standards — used in the Langham Letter: the cocksure air, the energy, both of language and character, the ease of the syntax, the natural-sounding alliteration ('frankly.friendly. fully') and the extraordinary adoption of the title 'the Black Prince'.

Unfortunately for Oxfordians, McCarthy makes no reference to the fact that the adopted title *The Black Prince* was the term used to describe Edward, the son of Edward III. A cogent fact that would have not been lost to Edward de Vere.

Dr. McCarthy and 'identifies' other such aliases, including 'Euphues': which she promptly rejects. This is puzzling to Oxfordians, who know that Lyly dedicated his *Euphues and His England* to Oxford. Nonetheless, McCarthy's reasons are interesting, as demonstrated by this quote:

Lyly's protagonist is not an abstract personification of a quality. I believe: he is a real member of the coterie (i.e. the literary coterie round Sir Philip Sidney), one who was naturally brilliant, but not university educated. If, as early as 1578, Lyly meant to allude to the presence of Shakespeare in this coterie by 'anatomizing' Wit, this brings out a feature of the phenomenon of contemporary reference to Shakespeare that I have not sufficiently stressed. I have written that other writers allude to Shakespeare out of pure admiration for his work. But by 1578, Shakespeare could not have achieved much that Lyly sincerely thought was superlative. (172)

Whilst Dr. McCarthy is so honest with the evidence, her Stratfordian logic prompts her to such conclusions. Neither does she refer to the fact that Lyly was engaged as a private secretary to the Earl of Oxford (Charlton Ogburn, Jr., *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, 44). However, Dr. McCarthy does not hesitate to disagree with the Stratfordian dating of several plays to post-1604. Writing on p.31, she states:

But *Macbeth* was not written in 1606. It was written before 1600. For William Kemp undoubtedly refers to it in his *Kemps Nine Days Wonder*, an account of a nine-day journey he made from London to Norwich, jigging and dancing all

the way." McCarthy then relates to the 'miserable stolne story of Macdoel, or Macdabeth, or Macsomewhat: for I am sure a Mac it was'.

She also places an early version of *Cymbeline* to the late 1570's (pp187-9), and denounces Strachey's letter as a source for *The Tempest* (p.225):

Many critics are adamant that William Strachey's account of the adventure of the ship *Sea Venture* of 1609 is a source for *The Tempest*. I would feel justified on the sole basis of Nashe's parody in supposing that Strachey echoed the play. Luckily the history of the Strachey publication supports this proposition, as does the odd literariness of the historical account, and the fact that Strachey was a sharer in a theatrical company, and presumably familiar with plays. His account was not published until 1625, though he wrote a private letter about it in 1610. Supporters of Shakespeare's indebtedness to Strachey therefore have to postulate that the letter was widely circulated and that Shakespeare saw it — the kind of argument they would never countenance in an opponent challenging the consensus date. Arthur Kinney in *Modern Philosophy*, like Kenneth Muir before him, has doubted whether the Strachey letter has the slightest connection with *The Tempest* (161-177).

Dr. McCarthy antedates *The Winter's Tale* from its *terminus ante quem* of 1611 to before 1598 (207), contending that it antedates *Mucedorus* of that year, which contains a parody of 'Exit pursued by a bear'. Similar beliefs are expressed in her review of *Two Noble Kinsmen* and *Henry VIII* (220):

I do not rule out the possibility that Shakespeare occasionally recast a play with the help of another, years after he had first written it. *Two Noble Kinsmen* and *Henry VIII* are obvious candidates. If unmistakable traces of the hand of another are found in some of the other plays, I shall suppose likewise that this other helped in the

revision. But I remain suspicious of the 'stylometricians' findings, blasphemous though this sounds in the present climate of their ascendancy. Again, it is partly my antedating that challenges their findings; though it is always open to them to say that they have the serial of Shakespeare's perfected plays, if not the decade of their composition, correct. However, (if, and only if) my 'maturation' principle is allowed, and naïve plays antedate mature ones, 'Senecan' antedate 'confident vernacular', even this claim of theirs will be weakened. My principle is likely to be a good one, if the author is not dead, but embodied in a historical person. Allowing the possibility that the poet could grow in technical skill implies, too, the possibility and utility for the critic evaluating a work on aesthetic grounds. The strongest arguments for my case against the conclusions of stylometrics in Shakespeare's case are less speculative. If R.L.'s corpus,

William Smith's works, three lyrics in the *Shepherd's Calendar*, some verse in the Familiar Letters, Robert Chester's Arthurian narrative, half of the *Poetical Rhapsody*, Humphrey King's work, and A.W.'s immature *Remedie* are indeed to be added to the Shakespeare corpus, the stylometricians' database for Shakespeare's practice has hitherto been woefully incomplete. Conversely their database for Philip Sidney and Spencer has been contaminated by alien matter.

In summation, Pseudonymous Shakespeare proves to be both a delightful but frustrating read. Delightful in that Dr. McCarthy does not accept a lot of the current literary and historical dogma, witness her considered dating of certain of the plays: frustrating because she fails to recognize the impossibility of Shakespeare being the 11-year-old William Shaksper of Stratford-upon-Avon, and does not consider the Oxfordian case for Edward de Vere.