Shakespeare Authorship Trust

The John Silberrad Memorial Lectures on the Shakespeare Authorship Question

by Kevin Gilvary

T.S. Eliot was wrong about April being the cruellest month – for me Herman Melville summed up the approach of winter with his haunting phrase "the cold November of my soul." Thus it was with the greatest excitement that in November 2006, I could catch a swift train to London Waterloo, walk along the South Bank to Shakespeare's Globe and find warmth in The John Silberrad Memorial Lectures.

First, may I say a few words about the Shakespearean Authorship Trust (SAT) which has been working with the De Vere Society and other groups interested in The Authorship Question (AQ). It was founded over 70 years earlier in (appropriately

Hide Fox and All After: the Search for Shakespeare

by Stephanie Hopkins Hughes

In the second scene of Act 4, we find Hamlet alone in a room in Elsinore, where he's discovered by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. They have been sent to bring him to the King who's just been informed of the death of Polonius. After taunting them with their servility, Hamlet agrees to go with them, and, as they exit together, he mutters "Hide fox and all after." Footnotes tell us what we might have guessed, that this is the name of a children's game, the one we know today as Hide and Go Seek.

Why does Hamlet say this? What does he mean? He isn't saying it to his former schoolmates, nor to the audience. They won't know what he means any more than we do. From this point on Hamlet talks in riddles a great deal of the time.

In Hide and Go Seek the child who is "it" plays the role of a hunted animal, a fox if you will, who is sought by the dogs, the other children. To evade the dogs the fox must be silent and crafty. When one of the hunters tracks him down, the hunter becomes the hunted, becomes the fox, becomes "it." This is only a game, of course, so the role of

> *To be the best dog, the one who finds the fox the quickest, then to be the best fox, the one who can evade the dogs for the longest time—is the motivating force that drives the game. Hamlet is a prince, born to rule. Refusing to see himself as a victim, he finds a way to cast himself as a winner—in his own mind at least—one who can "outfox" the dogs.*

the fox is more glamorous than just being a dog, thus there is competition to be "it." To be the best dog, the one who finds the fox the quickest, then to be the best fox, the one who can evade the dogs for the longest time— –is the motivating force that drives the game. Hamlet is a prince, born to rule. Refusing to see himself as a victim, he finds a way to cast himself as a winner—in his own mind at least—one who can "outfox" the dogs.

Hamlet is no longer a child, but until now he has lived a pampered existence. Blissfully unaware of the murderous animal energies that drive the politics of his father's court, he has, like Prospero, spent his life immersed in books and things of the mind. It has taken his father's murder to awaken him to the realities of power politics. Unwilling to believe the ghost without strong evidence of his uncle's guilt, he sets a trap, a play, to determine the truth. This works, yet it also puts him in serious jeopardy.

Once Claudius knows that he knows, Hamlet, formerly just an irritation, has be-

President's Page

Dear Fellow SOS Members!

I want to address two main topics in this letter. The first concerns our membership, specifically the need to grow our membership base. The second topic deals with my call for the creation of a Shakespeare Authorship Commission.

BOT Sets Ambitious 50th Anniversary Goal: Double Membership in 2007

Regarding our membership, I have a one-word message for you, a word I will repeat three times for emphasis: Recruit, recruit, recruit!

I am pleased to report that your Board of Trustees recently set an ambitious goal for the society: Double our membership during this our 50th anniversary year.

When I proposed this idea to the Board, I made the point that we should set an ambitious membership goal and then try to figure out how to reach it. Without first setting the goal, I argued, we're unlikely to develop aggressive plans and initiatives designed to substantially grow our membership.

Organizations tend to muddle along in a status-quo state. Setting ambitious goals tends to shake things up. And shaking things up is exactly what's needed when it comes to our membership base. Our membership is not growing. It's declining. We need to change that trajectory fast.

The best recruitment strategy is to encourage current members actively recruit new members. As I've written in this space previously, if every current SOS member recruits a single new member in 2007, by definition our membership would double.

We're making it as easy as possible for you to transform yourself from an SOS member into an SOS recruitment machine. Please take advantage of our exciting new Recruit-A-Member program.

If you serve as a "sponsor" for a new member, the new member pays only half the Regular membership dues the first year. This way you can offer a real benefit to your friends, colleagues or family members – a 50% first-year discount. So please take advantage of this new Recruit-A-Member program.

More information can be found on the SOS website. Or if you want additional information, feel free to call the office (914-962-1717) or send an email to sosoffice@optonline.net. Please do everything you can to help us double our membership in 2007. Go forth and multiply!

Needed: A Shakespeare Authorship Commission

In a press release and in several op/ed articles, I have been circulating a proposal to create a Shakespeare Authorship Commission. The point is this: It's time to solve the Shakespeare authorship mystery once and for all. My proposal calls for the formation of a blue-ribbon panel of renowned, independent experts in the fields of biography, history, law, and literature to review the existing evidence regarding Shakespeare's identity and determine whether the widespread acceptance of the "Stratfordian Candidate" is justified by the facts.

All members of this proposed "Shakespeare Authorship Commission" must be unbiased. They must declare going in that they have open minds on this subject and are willing to follow the evidence wherever it leads – using internationally recognized evidentiary standards employed by leading historians and biographers.

The initial task of this commission would be to take a fresh look at the available evi-

GREETINGS

In this edition please enjoy a report from and an address to The Shakespeare Authorship Trust in London, and note an upcoming conference of The Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference at Concordia in April. Exciting stuff! The sonnets are getting another look, and Arthur Brooke is, as well. "Collars" and a book review come from England, and we see that Richard Whalen is in need of mental stimuli. This is a diverse, entertaining and enlightening newsletter.

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(Shakespeare Authorship Trust continued from p. 1)

enough for Oxfordians) Hackney, London. As an "agnostic" trust it has been dedicated to:

1. seek, and if possible establish, the truth concerning the authorship of Shakespeare's plays and poems;
2. organise and encourage research to promote discussion of the authorship question and to provide means of publishing contributions to its solution;
3. maintain, and add to a reference library of works relating to the subject.

Most recently, in July 2005, the SAT organised a conference on Collaboration in Shakespeare, at which I had the honour to share the platform with other "agnostics."

For many years John Silberrad was treasurer of the SAT so it was appropriate that after his death, his memory should be maintained through a series of lectures, organised by DVS president Charles Beauclerk. These lectures were each attended by about 100 people, some new to the Question, while others might be classed as the "usual suspects." Mark Rylance introduced the first talk by saying how beneficial doubt had been in whether to ascribe various works to the hand of Shakespeare, e.g. "Live with me and be my love . . . " appeared originally as poem XIX in *the Passionate Pilgrim*, published in 1599 as by "William Shakespeare."

1 The Authorship Question and Academia - Dr William Leahy

The first lecture was given by Dr William Leahy, author of Elizabethan Triumphal Processions *(Ashgate, 2005) and* Director of English Studies of the University of Brunel, which is located in NW London, not far from Heathrow Airport. It is one of the newer universities in the UK with considerable prestige for its progressive teaching and high rate of graduate employment. Dr Leahy has instituted an MA in Shakespeare Authorship Studies – the first academic English Department in Britain to recognise The Question. Dr Leahy described his own trip to Damascus; he had been approached by the *New Statesman* magazine to write an article considering Mark Rylance's well-known doubts on the Authorship. Like almost every other academic, his first reaction was to follow the established line and dismiss the doubts, admitting that he did very little by way of research. The article appeared in *NS* on 20 June as "The Business of Bill - Theatre history: Who was Shakespeare? And why does it matter?" In this he followed the time-honoured academic reaction of ignoring arguments, dismissing any doubters as "snobs" and attempting belittlement to the point of humiliation.

Shortly afterwards, Leahy was invited to attend the SAT Conference at Shakespeare's Globe in July 2005 and he came to have his own doubts. In a remarkable turnaround, he wrote an article "The Bard by any name is still sweet" for the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (22 July 2005), in which he put much more emphasis on collaboration. Soon after, the doubts began to gnaw deeper into his soul.

Finally Leahy came to "move away from conformism" about the AQ, to use "cautious detachment" and to "brush against the grain" as Benjamin said. In this approach, he finds himself most at ease with Diana Price's *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography.*

He pointed at the absurdity of Stephen Greenblatt who in *Will in the World* invents a host of details about Shakespeare's family, friends and even his horse – none of which are documented. He thought that rather than ignore or dismiss the AQ, Greenblatt et al should at least consider as a cultural phenomenon why there has been so much doubt. Without ever giving any indication of his own inclination as to who might have been the author(s), Leahy ended by making a plea: keep consideration of the Authorship Question separate from consideration of any other contenders.

Among the lively questioners, Bill Rubinstein, Professor of History at University of Wales, Aberystwyth, pointed out that academics in History Departments were able to accept the AQ; Dr Leahy agreed but said that they were few in number. For my own part, I was fascinated by Dr Leahy's talk and readily agreed with all his points. I myself have always divided the AQ into two parts:

(a) Why is there a problem ? The lack of evidence and level of guesswork cannot be overlooked

(b) Who is the best candidate ? Tentatively I have believed that a good case can be made for Oxford. But I am always interested in the work of other doubters and give token recognition at least to the possibility that it was William of Stratford after all.

2 Shakespeare's Identity Crisis – Charles Beauclerk

To my intense disappointment I missed Charles Beauclerk's lecture (due to some rather tiresome work commitments – my November soul felt colder). We eagerly await his forthcoming book on the subject (to be published by Grove Atlantic). According to the advance publicity, the paper argued that the AQ develops out of the author's own identity crisis – manifest throughout the works. Certain critical themes and images recur which are set in a romantic chivalric tradition. The Author found an "ingenious means of celebrating his alienation and shaping his chief literary persona."

3 Richard Paul Roe – The Italy in Shakespeare

Richard Roe is a retired lawyer who has spent many years studying the topographies of Shakespeare's Italian plays. He noted how important Italy was to the author. His lecture treated the incidental knowledge of Italy shown in the plays and in particular *Romeo and Juliet.* When the Prince requires the separate attendance of Capulet and Montague (1.1.95-7) he summons Montague to "old Freetown, our common judgement place." This reference is puzzling to various editors (eg Jill Levenson, *R&J,* Oxford Shakespeare, 2000: 151). Roe confirms that in the historical period there was a free town (ie free from trade tariffs) to the south of Verona where the Dukes of Verona had a castle and did indeed give judgments. Such knowledge influences our understanding of the unequal treatment meted out by Escalus to the heads of the warring families.

Roe noted that Benvolio had seen Romeo walking outside Verona "underneath the grove of sycamore That westward rooteth from this city side." (1.1.117) Roe described how he confirmed the exact geographical location of a grove of sycamore. He added many more interesting and informed descriptions, asking about the author's intention eg in having the fights in public. We will have to await his forthcoming book to find the answers.

4 Stephanie Hopkins Hughes – "Hide Fox and All After" The Authorship Game – Playing to Win

Stephanie Hughes, the editor of *The Oxfordian,* also made the great trek from the west to her evident enjoyment. The main part of her paper concerned disguise – the concealment of identity, not just in the works of Shakespeare but also in other Elizabethan authors. Among these, she noted that Bacon for all his brilliance apparently wrote nothing between the ages of 20 and 40. Similarly, England's greatest genius in the early 1580s, Philip Sidney, published nothing in his lifetime. Mary Sidney was also highly regarded as was Edward de Vere, yet little writing under their names has come down to us. Hughes then suggested that it is possible Marlowe survived and that his death was faked.

To these riddles, Stephanie's answer was a bold masterstroke one so overwhelming as to leave most of the audience speechless: she put forward the hypothesis that during the later Elizabethan period, there was a group of six writers who wrote as much for each other as for their audiences, devoting themselves to different genres, and being their own critics in a spirit of "can you top this?" Marlowe was the only non-aristocrat to be admitted to this select group. She then began to assign various works from the this period to different writers, accepting that Nashe, Greene and Shakespeare were clearly pseudonyms.

Space does not allow me to do full justice to these lectures, nor the impact they had on the audiences who were lucky enough to hear them. We look forward to reading more fully on these matters in due course. Our thanks to Mark Rylance, Charles Beauclerk and the Shakespeare Authorship Trust for organising them.

come a deadly threat. Further, by killing Polonius, Hamlet has given his uncle a legitimate reason to get rid of him. Suddenly, for the first time in his life, he needs to get the hell out of his intellectual ivory tower and engage on the level of animal energies with all his wits about him. Knowing how fear can paralyze action, to encourage himself he summons up a game from his childhood, so that he can act freely, with the élan of a child at play. Thus it is to himself that he speaks when he murmurs "Hide fox, and all after."

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark is full of clues about the author, but these have led nowhere since there's nothing to be found in Stratford. There was no prince in Stratford, living in an ivory tower. This author felt safe in childhood, and what does he do as an adult? How does he deal with the cruel realities of life? He plays. He plays the lute, and he writes plays, in which, as in children's games, the victims rise when the curtain falls and the show is over to play again the following day in a world of make believe. This author was a man who felt powerless in the real world, but who found his strength and power in the world of the theater, the world of play.

The fox is safe as long as he remains hidden. There is nowhere Hamlet can hide his physical self from the King and his henchmen. But what he can hide are his *intentions*. From now on, Hamlet, who is of an open disposition by nature and inclined to reveal his feelings, hides them behind a mask of foolery.

Like Hamlet, his author too hides himself behind a mask—the one we call "Shakespeare."

Why Shakespeare hid

Whoever he was, Shakespeare was a genius. We may not agree on who he was at this point, but surely we all agree that he was a genius. There's something else we know about him now, something we didn't realize until recently: he was not only a genius at writing plays and poetry, he was also a genius at *hiding*. We've been playing Hide Fox and All After with Shakespeare for roughly two hundred years, and still he remains elusive, dim, half—if no longer completely—hidden. But why?

Hamlet hid his intentions because he was in mortal danger. Is this a clue to Shakespeare's hiding? Was he in some kind of danger?

Authors frequently hide behind pseudonyms when they publish works that might get them into trouble with the authorities. The list of famous writers who have done this is extensive. Is this why Shakespeare hid his identity? Would he have been in trouble with the authorities had they known who he was?

Writers often use pseudonyms when they branch out and try something different, so that they won't turn away faithful readers used to a different style or genre. Again, the list of famous writers who have done this, and are doing it today, is too long to read here. Is this the reason Shakespeare hid his identity, so that he'd have the freedom to change style and genre without disturbing his audience? Many writers in the past have hidden their identities because they

wished to protect their class status or another professional identity. Was this it?

Writers hide from family, friends and fans behind unmarked doors and unlisted phone numbers because they need extended periods of unbroken time to get into the creative zone and stay there long enough to make something happen. Is this why he hid? To protect his privacy?

As many great writers have agreed, the best writers create out of their own experience, some of it potentially scandalous and embarrassing to their families, friends and lovers. Did Shakespeare hide to protect his family and friends from an audience that might connect their private secrets with the plots of his plays? With his villains and fools? With the passion of his sonnets?

The early modern period was a time when poets were ashamed to put their names to the poetry they published. In Shakespeare's day, poetry, particularly love poetry, was regarded as a "toy," a foolish pastime that healthy-minded adults gave up with maturity. Is this why he hid? Because, once past his twenties, he was ashamed to be known as *just a poet*?

This was a time of fierce criticism of all innovations in word usage, spelling, syntax. The messy experiments of a language getting born led to ferocious condemnations of all attempts to do something new. Is this why he hid? Because he didn't care to hear himself condemned by critics he considered ignorant fools?

Another reason was suggested recently in an article in *The New Yorker* magazine by the Czech novelist Milan Kundera, titled: "What is a Novelist?" In an effort to explain what motivates a serious novelist, Kundera makes the very interesting point that great writers are haunted by a demon unique to their craft, the awareness that their true audience may well be posterity. If they're really good, their name, unlike that of mere generals and tyrants, may last forever, and in fact, the fame of generals and tyrants depends on them, for no one will remember the greatest hero unless some writer preserves his deeds in words on paper. Every Achilles needs his Homer, every Napoleon his Ludwig. Shakespeare was certainly aware of this when he promised the Fair Youth that so "great was his pen," that the young man's memory would continue to live "when tyrant's crests and tombs of brass are spent." By separating himself from his name, did he wish to keep his inspiration free from the psychological burden of having to consider this vast, unknown future audience?

Finally, feeling bad about himself, as we know he did from the *Sonnets*, did he hope to preserve for posterity the brilliance and beauty of his works without any taint from his own bad reputation?

Are any of these the reason? Are none of them the reason? Are all of them the reason? Why do we do anything important in life, marry, start a family, divorce, move, change career paths, go back to school? Isn't it always for *more than one reason*?
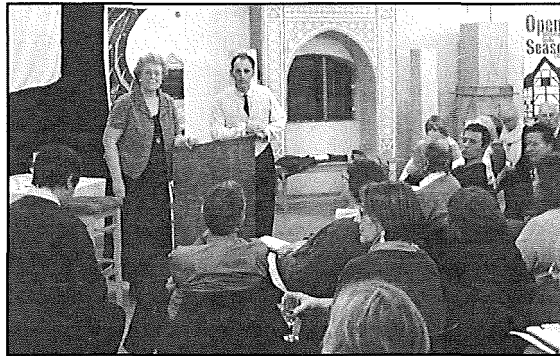
Stephanie Hopkins Hughes, editor of The Oxfordian, and actor/director Mark Rylance, President of the Shakespeare Authorship Trust, answer questions following Stephanie's lecture on the authorship issue at the New Globe this past November. Photo by Charles Beauclerk.

Barriers to understanding the period

To find the fox it is necessary to understand him, how he thinks, what motivates him. Those of us who reject the Stratford biography are forced to deal with a number of problems that complicate the search for Shakespeare, problems that we must address before we can understand him, before we can feel certain that we've found the man himself and not just another one of his colleagues, rivals, imitators, or proxies. Many of these problems are rooted in the immense differences that separate our time from his.

We all know that there are a great many differences between our time and earlier times, and most of us know what they are, but what we don't always consider is the source of these differences and the effect they must have had on all aspects of life. When concentrating on some particular point we can't help but begin by seeing it through the lens of today's familiar attitudes. To see it the way Shakespeare and his audience saw it, we must work to keep a number of things in mind.

For instance, despite the lack of newspapers and broadcast media, more people knew each other percentage-wise then than now for the simple reason that there were far fewer people and, for the most part, they never went anywhere. There was only one real city, still consisting of well under 200,000 residents, while the larger towns were more like what we consider villages today, and the villages were hamlets. Most people tended to stay in one community and keep to one occupation for their entire lives, usually the same one their parents knew. Most people lived in smaller and more stable communities than we do today, with fewer natural opportunities for change or advancement. Even aristocrats, who moved around more than any other social group, going from one estate to another, moved within an itinerary that changed very infrequently, and within a community that was just as small as that of any yeoman farm family.

What opportunities there were arose chiefly because somebody died, more often from disease or accident than old age, there being no real medical science as yet, but often enough because they were murdered or executed, frequently without anything like a fair trial. With no official police as yet, murder or death by violence was a constant concern. To feel secure, people stuck to each other, they depended on each other for protection, they traveled in groups, and when offended by some individual or group, took it on themselves to right the wrong through violence.

The extremely high death rate meant that, despite the fact that divorce was not allowed, most men and women who lived longer than thirty had at least two and often three marriage partners. The extremely high death rate among infants caused a set of very different attitudes towards children than what we know today, which in turn affected the attitudes towards life of those who managed to reach adulthood. It also caused women to have as many children as they could so that at least some would live to maturity, which had a great effect on the lives, the health, and the attitudes of women that must have been very different from how they think and feel today. With mates and offspring so subject to removal by death, and advancement in life so dependent on death, we may ask ourselves what effect this had on how people felt about each other and what they may have meant by the word "love."

Another result of the high death rate was to make religious tolerance next to impossible. With death a factor in everything, it was simply too important to feel secure about what happens to one's loved ones after death to allow any room for opinion. Today most of us are existentialists who accept uncertainty as the price of living in peace with neighbors of differing beliefs, but that was not yet the case in Shakespeare's time. When so much is uncertain, certainty of belief becomes a necessity.

Apart from religion there were other things we routinely question today that were not yet matters for discussion—at least, not open discussion, including the need for strongly-defined social classes, that prestigious bloodlines should be the determining factor in choosing a leader, and that the political system should reflect, and be part of, the chosen religious reality. These as well as others affect all efforts to understand the past, including questions about the identity of authors, making it difficult to come up with an answer when someone asks, "Why in the world would anyone want to hide his identity as an author?" Most people want something they can understand immediately. Most haven't the patience for a lesson in history or cultural anthropology. But unfortunately, that's where the answers lie.

A period of rapid change

One aspect of the period that may be easier for us to understand was the rapidly changing worldview. It was a different worldview than ours today; the similarity lies in how fast it was changing. There are plateaus in history, long periods where change occurs very slowly. Sooner or later these give way to periods of extremely rapid development, often triggered by discoveries. This was one such period. For several hundred years following the fall of Rome, change had occurred at a relatively slow and even rate, but with the discoveries and inventions of the European Renaissance, change began to pick up speed. In our own time, immense leaps in technology continue to shrink our planet while expanding our concept of the universe. Similarly the Elizabethan era saw leaps in technology that brought about an equally rapid, changing and expanding worldview.

What's different about us is that we're a little more used to it. Considering how long their worldview had remained at the level it held at the beginning of the Middle Ages, there is no doubt that this process was a psychic shock of immense proportions. The stable, dependable world of their fathers was turning upside down, quite literally.

At the same time, a broader awareness of these changes than was ever possible before was being spread by another great change, the expansion of literacy. The combined effects of the Reformation and the Renaissance, from the mid-1540s through the 1570s, an upsurge in the creation of grammar schools and colleges at the universities, an expansion of their teaching programs and rapid increase in their student populations, plus the addition of Renaissance humanist subjects to the medieval curricula, created a supernova of learning. People of all ranks and both sexes were learning to read and write in far greater numbers than ever before while at the same time, the language itself was experiencing rapid change and expansion.

This supernova of learning was not only extremely intense, it lasted at that level of intensity for only a short period of time,

roughly fifteen years. This becomes apparent when we correlate the pertinent records with the relevant dates. Change and growth in education continued after this, of course, but at a slower rate. Then, shortly after it began to slow, it was followed by another equally intense and only slightly longer period of language development, the period when Shakespeare was writing.

Since Shakespeare is *the* great creator of modern English, the timing of these two surges must be taken into account as we seek his identity. Surely he was both a benefactor and a contributor to these surges in education and language development. This perception that should help us to locate him, for he would most likely have been a student during the surge in education, and a contributor during the following surge in language development. His seminal influence on the English language requires his central presence during both these phases.

Poetry and prose

Finally, because this authorship question concerns the writing of poetry and poetic prose, we need to consider the place that poetry occupied in European minds at that time.

Poetry, so important to antiquity, has lost its significance today because it's no longer a necessity. In Shakespeare's day, although the need was already gone, centuries of habit caused scholars and writers to regard it with respect as the legacy of the past, the eons that today we rather dismissively term the "oral tradition." Before people knew how to read and write, poetry and song were the means with which they preserved their cultures in memory, the vehicles whereby they passed them on from one generation to the next.

Poetry was necessary before writing because it makes use of mnemonics, tricks of sound that make things easier to remember. There are three major mnemonics: rhythm (or meter), rhyme, and alliteration. These, with the addition of repetition and song, are the means by which all peoples who do not write keep their cultures alive in memory.

With the development of writing, they were no longer forced to store everything—their history, their traditions, their stories, their wisdom—in their minds; they could simply write them down and refer to them when necessary. Thus mnemonics, and eventually poetry itself, were no longer needed, although they continued to remain a tradition for the centuries preceding printing.

Today we think of poetry as purely a vehicle for personal and emotional themes, but for thousands of years all works of philosophy, religion, history, science, and medicine were written in poetry, up to and including the period of the Renaissance. It wasn't until Shakespeare's time that, due to the Reformation, negative attitudes towards art and the rapid increases in printing and education, saw the need for poetry seriously questioned for the first time.

Renaissance vs. Reformation

The great cultural revolution known as the European Renaissance, imported from Southern Europe, came late to England, and when it arrived, it was almost immediately modified by another great cultural revolution, the Protestant Reformation, imported from Northern Europe. They reinforced each other in some respects, particularly in encouraging education, but in others they clashed,

creating a tension that continues to exist in the English-speaking culture today. This tension was at high voltage during Shakespeare's time. While the Renaissance craved art, music and poetry, the Reformation tended to frown on the arts as, at best, a waste of the Lord's precious time, at worst, tools of the Devil. For the Puritans, the Devil was everywhere, and he was never more tempting than when he wore the mask of beauty.

Following the period of the most intense growth of education came a second period of rapid change, one that also lasted a fairly short period of time, roughly the two decades that spanned the 1580s and 1590s. During this period language and style developed at a breathless pace, but this development was forced to take place within the constraints of a puritanically restrictive attitude towards the arts.

To understand what the writers of imaginative literature were up against in the 1560s and '70s, try reading a few pages of Sir Thomas Hoby's 1561 translation of Castiglione's famous book *The Courtier*. Hoby's attempt to turn this masterpiece of Italian style into English is so turgid, so stilted, so convoluted, and basically so afraid of the true message that Castiglione intended, that over and over, the editor finds it necessary to translate so today's reader can understand what it was that the original was saying. Or try some of the jog-trot poetry of Thomas Churchyard or George Whetstone. C.S. Lewis's term for this period says it all: "the drab era." But by 1600, two short decades later, the standard had climbed to perhaps the highest level it has ever reached, one that set the bars for every writer of English since.

This is a bell curve of change so steep it's almost vertical. While the previous generation saw a supernova of education, the era of Marlowe, Sidney, Bacon, Shakespeare and Raleigh saw a supernova of culture. What caused this abrupt and rapid change? Certainly the preceding upsurge in printing and education had a great deal to do with it. But was there more to it than that?

Birth of the commercial media

This cultural supernova was fueled by an extremely important event in history, not just English history, but world history. This momentous event was the birth of the commercial stage and the commercial press in London in the mid-1580s.

Possibly because our views of the past have become compartmenttalized by divisions into Departments of English and Departments of History, that this was the first functional step towards freedom of speech and true democracy has fallen between two academic stools. History notes the importance of Parliament in the long reach towards democratic government, but Parliament, at this time, was still dependent on the patronage of high government officials. Although there was talk of freedom of speech and religion from radical members of Parliament, this was talk only, most of which ended up behind bars.

Far more important is the fact that, as the people of London began to make their will known by the plays, they supported and the pamphlets they read, a new branch of government was born, one that was not born into office, nor appointed by wealth and rank. This was the Fourth Estate, what today we call the Media, *vox populi*, the voice of the people, something that simply did not exist before

the mid-1580s. Before this, plays and books were dependent on wealthy patrons to get produced. Following the Edwardine Reformation, when printing took off, roughly ninety percent of everything published were sermons or translations of religious tracts, with five percent how-to books or other works of self-improvement. But with the popularity of *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Tamburlaine* on the public stage and of Robert Greene's romances in the bookstalls in Paul's Churchyard, a wealthy patron was no longer necessary—for these paid for themselves. Now theater owners and publishers could produce works based purely on their appeal to the public. From this point on, writers began to write what they believed readers and audiences would want to read, rather than what someone thought they ought to read.

I can hardly make this emphatic enough. This development, the birth of the commercial Stage and Press, was a revolution. It was the *true beginning of democracy*, not just in theory, but in action. And it was, relatively speaking, a bloodless revolution, which may be the reason why it hasn't yet been seen in its true light.

But why did it occur at this particular moment in time?

A hunger for entertainment

For centuries throughout the Middle Ages the Church filled all the entertainment needs of the public at large. Almost every week some Saint's Day provided an excuse for a feast, while at least once per season there would be a full blown festival lasting for several days, offering an excuse to dress up, feast, drink to excess, play games, dance and make elaborate processions to the local parish church. Vagabond minstrels and troupes of itinerant players made use of these to pass the hat. This continual procession of events gave the common folk something to look forward to throughout the days and weeks of the year. With the Reformation, most of this came to an end. Such carryings-on were seen by the early reformers as papistic pandering to pagan disorder. Yule logs were banned—may poles torn down.

For centuries certain inns in London and the larger towns had doubled as theatres when acting troupes came to town. With the loss of the Church calendar, people began to spend more time and more money in the theater inns, to the point that eager business entrepreneurs like James Burbage and his sons thought a building dedicated solely to plays might be able to support itself. They at the Globe and Philip Henslowe at the Rose, just barely managed to do this until the mid-80s when two plays in particular, *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Tamburlaine,* showed that with the right play and the right performers, significant profits could be made from an audience enthusiastic enough to pay its penny, not once, not twice, but every single time the play was performed. *Tamburlaine* was the *Star Wars* of its time, the first super hit in English history.

As for the commercial press, the same scenario held, though on a considerably smaller scale since pamphlet sales were limited to the reading public, which at that time was at best 20 percent of the adult population. (Actually, a more likely figure for the beginning of this period would probably be 10 percent.) And while a pamphlet might reach 500 readers, a play could reach thousands. According to Thomas Nashe, by that time of his writing (1592), 10,000 people

had seen an early version of *Henry the Fourth*, a figure backed by modern theater historians.

Later historians may have missed the significance of this revolution, but the evidence is clear that the Crown, the City and the Church did not. Throughout this period they made continuous and frantic efforts either to stop the growth of the commercial theaters or to control them. But as some poet put it, "stop running water and it will rage"—once a popular revolution has been launched in full force, there's no stopping it.

The first professional writers and actors

By the end of the 1590s, the booming commercial theater and press began to produce a small corps of professional writers. By professional we mean that they could live, or at least hope to live, on the proceeds of their writing—something that is difficult at any time, but was, until then, so impossible that no one bothered to try. Point being, there simply were no commercial writers at the beginning of this revolution. There were scriveners who made their living acting as secretaries to the illiterate, but this trade was not an art, and no genuine writers emerged from it. Ultimately it would be from the small community of university-trained secretaries and tutors to the well-to-do that professional writers would emerge, but this would not occur until the very end of the 90s.

As for the actors, until the 1580s most performers had to have a trade to keep them going between holidays. Once the stage went commercial, and there was work year-round, talented actors simply gave up their "day jobs" as successful actors do today.

But the situation was different for the writers who had to provide the material that actors and theater directors must rely on. Until the professional writers began to appear in the early 17th century—Jonson, Chapman, Daniel, Drayton, Dekker, Beaumont and Fletcher—who was doing the writing on which the actors and theater owners and audiences relied for their entertainment? Truth to tell, we really don't know.

In fact, the so-called Shakespeare mystery is only part of a much larger mystery. Who wrote all these early plays and pamphlets? Who kick-started the revolution we call the English literary Renaissance? If we go solely by the records, Marlowe did it all by himself. By the time the records have Shakespeare entering the scene, it was already well underway. There must have been several hundred plays written by the beginning of the nineties for the various boy companies, the Queen's Men and the Lord Strange's Men, but apart from the occasional one-timer like Udall or Wilson, Sackville or Norton, for all of these we have authors for no more than 17 plays and for these, only four authors: four plays from Christopher Marlowe, nine from John Lyly, one from Thomas Kyd, and three from Robert Greene—and two of these, Kyd and Greene, are no more than conjectures. Since pamphlets required names on the title page, we do have a few of these, but for genuinely literary pamphlets, we have only two, Robert Greene and Thomas Nashe.

Groups or coteries

First: Marlowe did not create this revolution alone, nor did Shakespeare. No lasting revolution was ever engineered by a

single individual, or even by two. Revolutions are always created by groups. They may center around an inspiring leader or two, but it requires a group to accomplish any set of common goals or to create an accepted standard, one that lasts. Alternately, great artists, who are almost always revolutionaries in more ways than one, do not create out of a vacuum. Invariably they have colleagues and rivals, patrons and imitators, who, if not equal in genius, are good enough to stimulate them to reach higher. That this is true takes only the most cursory glance at the history of art.

Second: nothing is so powerful in stimulating human action as competition, whether for food, power, or recognition, even if the recognition comes only from a handful of others of like mind. I could give dozens of examples of this if I had the time, but I leave it to you to consider based on your own experience and reading.

Third: writers and performers need audiences. And no artist finds a better, more stimulating, audience than that provided by his or her peers. That we see almost no evidence of any documented connection between the artists who stand out from this period: Shakespeare, Philip and Mary Sidney, Francis Bacon, Walter Raleigh, and Marlowe, not to mention Nashe, Greene, Jonson, Peele, Kyd, etc., does not mean, as the academics seem so strangely willing to accept, that they had no connection with each other. Of course they did. Birds of a feather flock together. Do we *need* evidence for this? Think of Bob Dylan tracking down Woody Guthrie. Think of the Beat Poets seeking each other from East Coast to West Coast and back again, thousands of miles of road trips. And these Elizabethan writers lived within miles, sometimes yards of each other, in a tight-knit, unchanging community. Do we need an affidavit?

Actually, the fact that there is no evidence of what common sense demands should tell us something else: namely that the connection was *hidden*—that concern with each other or time spent together was not, for whatever reason, something to spread about or refer to in print, at least not openly. Nashe is the only one who refers frequently and openly to other writers (but who was Nashe?). Nor was this a "conspiracy," at least not as the Stratfordians term it. Is it a conspiracy when former lovers who now are married to other partners have lunch together in some out of the way bistro, and then simply don't tell anyone about it? Or when politicians from opposing parties get together in private to discuss a sensitive issue and neglect to inform the newspapers? Very little of what was done and said in those days wound up in the records if the letters that survive with the legend "burn this" inscribed at the bottom are any indication.

There's no reason why writers who were members of different and sometimes opposing coteries would leave any record of their connections with each other, or why those who worked for them would reveal relationships that their employers preferred to remain hidden. There were no paparazzi in those days. Not only was there no yellow journalism in those days, there was no journalism, period. At least not what we call journalism today.

Point being, there was not just one fox in this game of Hide and Go Seek, but several. Why? Because *this was a revolution* and the stakes couldn't have been higher. Were they aware that they were creating a revolution? No doubt, to some extent, they were,

although if this was a conspiracy it was the kind that kids create to fool adults into allowing them to play forbidden games. What they were certainly aware of was that as soon as the fox was caught the game would be over.

Academics tend to be a serious lot. What they have most failed to understand about this literary phenomenon is its source in a common tradition of the period, one that's been lost in our time, the tradition of (genuine) merry-making.

Holidays: a time apart

To banish his fears of the horrors of an adult reality, Hamlet strives to return in his mind to a childhood world of play. In the effort to understand his creator, one of the prime factors that has been missed by the so-called experts is this quality of *playfulness*, this, to use an old English term, "merry-making." In English we call dramas "plays." Sixteenth-century audiences called actors "players," terms that reflect the source of modern theater in the games and rituals of holiday "merry-making," the English term for the age-old response of the human animal to the changes in the seasons. At particular moments during the year, the English of all classes and callings donned costumes and masks and stepped out of their humdrum workaday world into a holiday time of fantasy ritual, a time that was felt to lie outside of ordinary time. These moments occurred most significantly on May Day, on Midsummer Night's Eve, and on several occasions during the winter holidays from November 30th, All Hallow's Eve, to January 6th, Twelfth Night, then to Shrovetide in early February, also known as Fat Tuesday or, on the Continent, Carneval, the last big blowout before the beginning of Lent.

Though they were loosely connected to Christian holidays, these festivals were not Christian in origin. They had grown over the centuries out of pagan festivals, which themselves had grown during even earlier ages out of deadly serious tribal rituals—Stone Age rituals whose original purposes were long forgotten by the Elizabethan era. Shakespeare's early plays reflect their origins in these rituals. Authorship scholars are proving that the sexual greenwood adventures of May Day, as reflected in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, or the traditional wedding chivaree, as in *Taming of the Shrew*, were, in fact, written for two such occasions.

The teasing and tormenting of authorities or obnoxious neighbors through satires, burning of effigies, breaking of windows, chanting of naughty jingles, which, combined with a hearty consumption of ale, could lead to violence and the destruction of property, were refined by Shakespeare into the vicarious tormenting of stage characters like Malvolio and Falstaff. Thus were the crude animal energies that were so feared by the reformers sublimated into a more genteel theater event. And so welcome to the modern age.

In other words, for the first decade of this revolution, the 1580s, this uprush of expression through plays and pamphlets was done, most of it, in the age-old holiday spirit of merrymaking, which, bursting through the bondage of Calvinist reform, was spilling indiscriminately over those ancient time boundaries that had kept it contained within the traditional holiday periods, much to the horror of the very Church that had created the problem.

These folks whose identities we are tracking did what they did in a spirit of merry-making, of game-playing. Brilliant minds met to create the exhilaration of hilarity by which the tensions and fears of the regime could be released through laughter, first among themselves at Court gatherings, then spreading to the public theaters and bookstalls. That we can still hear that laughter echoing in the scenes with Falstaff, Nym and Pistol, with Hal and Poins teasing Francis the drawer, is due to Shakespeare's genius. And when Sir Toby confronts Malvolio with the ringing riposte: "dost think because thou art virtuous there will be no more cakes and ale?" we are hearing Shakespeare confront the rising tide of humorless Puritans that half a century later would shut down his brilliant, funny, witty theater, leaving it cold and shuttered for two long decades. He must have seen what was coming when he gave Malvolio the last word: "I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you!"

These young Court writers were not out to change the world, not at first. Like kids in school, they were just out to have a good time and were not about to let anyone stop them—a conspiracy of gifted mischief-makers out to torment the self-righteous, a conspiracy among the real Marias, Sir Tobys, Fabians and Festes.

So who were they?

None of them are unknown to us. All are known to us today, at least for their reputations if not for their actual works. Most of them were courtiers. Courtiers were the only people in Elizabethan society with the leisure to play such games, games that, like cards, dice, dancing and singing madrigals, could only be played by a group, and in this case, only by persons with expensive educations. They were also the only ones with an awareness of what was being done by their counterparts at the Italian courts, by Ariosto, Machiavelli, and Tasso.

How did they do it?

By using proxies, like William Shakspere of Stratford.

Why did they do it?

Because it was fun. Because it made use of their talents, talents that had no other outlet at the time. Because their counterparts in France and Italy were doing it. Because with it they could exercise their age-old prerogative to, as Jaques put it, "Cleanse the foul body of the infected world" with ridicule and laughter. And chiefly because they had nothing better to do.

At least, this was how it began.

Then who was a proxy and who was a real writer?

We can tell the real writers because they have genuine writers' biographies; their works match their life experiences, insofar as

we know them, and we know them today not only for their works but for the fact that they were acknowledged by their own communities as talented writers. Basically, we can distinguish them from their proxies because, ignoring what is said of the stand-ins in their works of fiction, the records show only that they lived and died; they give no evidence of a writer's life; their purported works do not match what the records suggest about their life experience; and, unlike the writers they "shadowed," they were men for whom a small amount of money would have meant a great deal.

There were five major figures in this revolution that came from the Court community: Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, his "cousin german" Francis Bacon (we don't call him Sir because he wasn't a knight yet, during this early revolutionary period), Philip Sidney, (for most of this period, Philip was not a knight yet either), his sister Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke (she *was* a countess during this period), and Sir Walter Raleigh. There was also a commoner who belongs in the top category of major forces in this revolution—Christopher Marlowe, the shoemaker's son from Canterbury.

Who were the proxies then, the men who lent or sold the use of their names so the Court writers could publish anonymously?

The men who rented their names to the Court writers for cash or other forms of remuneration were (in rough chronological order): Edmund Spenser, John Lyly, Robert Greene, Thomas Nashe, Thomas Watson, William Shakspere, and John Webster. There may be others, but of these we can be fairly certain, for all of them show similar problems with their biographies. In addition, there were several genuine writers who, for reasons of friendship or fealty, lent their names for one or two publications: among these were: George Gascoigne, George Pettie, Barnabe Riche, and Thomas Lodge.

Much is yet to be puzzled out, much reading of early works is left to do, many word studies created that may now give us some real results since we have better questions to propose, much time spent in thought, yet it is fair to state that the most important hidden Court writer was responsible for, in chronological order: the two plays by George Gascoigne that put him in the record books, the two books of George Pettie, the two novels of John Lyly, all but one or two of the works of Robert Greene, including his plays, poems and pamphlets, and all the works of Shakespeare—apart from some minimal additions by later editors and additions to the weaker plays by later playwrights.

I believe that the second most important of these hidden writers is responsible for most of the works of Edmund Spenser, the plays of John Lyly, and everything by Thomas Nashe. The third hidden Court writer is responsible for the plays and other works of John Webster and perhaps of other works as well. That they are grouped this way can be shown, I believe, first, by noting similarities of approach, basic habits of expression, and unchanging personal concerns that

> *The men who rented their names to the Court writers for cash or other forms of remuneration were (in rough chronological order): Edmund Spenser, John Lyly, Robert Greene, Thomas Nashe, Thomas Watson, William Shakspere, and John Webster.*

transcend all efforts to alter style and genre. Second, a close attention to dates. For instance, it is of utmost significance that the appearance of Shakespeare follows so closely on the demise of Robert Greene. And third, the way in which, for each of these three, these works reflect the events and issues of their personal lives.

Finally, the point must be made, that while three of these five seminal writers published under other names than their own, the works of two were published under their own names. Philip Sidney himself wrote everything, with a few minor exceptions, that was published under his name, while Marlowe's works, the plays at least, are all his own. It should also be noted that both Sidney and Marlowe died young, well before they were published, while the three who published under proxies all lived fairly long lives and published long before they died.

Where Raleigh fits into this picture is hard to tell at this point. Perhaps the few poems that we can be certain are his, plus his lively reports on naval events and the history of the world that he wrote towards the end of his life are, in fact, all he ever wrote. Hopefully his contributions will become more clear as we investigate his compatriots. He deserves far more attention in this regard than he's been given by the history of literature, due perhaps to his importance to the history of England's rise to power through command of the seas and, not last, the abysmal shame of his destruction by the Crown.

There may even be another writer that we haven't yet identified that will rise to claim some peripheral works, but these are the main players, the authors of most of the important works of this era, works of the imagination. Others there were without doubt, with possibly equal talent, who chose, for reasons that reflect the reasons these three hid their identities, not to develop it in later life. But the six writers who kick-started the English literary Renaissance had a passion for writing that could not be silenced, even if for their own good. It is this passion, plus talent, that leads to greatness.

Are there ways to check these attributions? I don't have enough time tonight to present the full case, and since I don't want to make too many assertions without backing them up, I don't want to get any more explicit than I have already. Some of this I have published in pamphlets. The rest will have to wait for the time to put it into book form. Tonight I'll share just this one tidbit: for centuries scholars have managed to ignore the obvious clues that the death of Robert Greene was a joke. Of these clues, the most glaring is that he was said to have died of an overdose of "pickle-herring." Now "Pickle-herring" at that time was a traditional name for a clown or a comedian, similar to "Harlequin" or "Punch." So the reader is being told, of course, that Greene's "death" was due to an overdose of *foolery*. You would think that this would alert the scholars to the game-playing nature of Robert Greene, and the fictional nature of his death, but so far as I know, for over four hundred years it has failed to alert a single one.

What then do I leave you with here tonight? First, that the English Literary Renaissance was launched by, not one, not two, nor yet by twelve or fifteen, but by six individuals, five courtiers and one commoner, five men and one woman, and that they knew each other, inspired each other, and through the desire to impress each other and outdo each other, were stimulated to reach for the heights. Second, that a number of important and not so important works attributed to other writers are, in fact, the work of three members of this group. Third, that their impulse to write and publish grew, at least at the beginning, out of a game-playing spirit of holiday merry-making, and that the hiding of their identities grew out of the same tradition, that of holiday mumming and disguising. Fourth, a subject that there was no time for tonight, that the game eventually turned deadly with the assassination or transportation of Marlowe, is a factor that deserves a lecture all its own. From that point on the mumming became serious and the disguising a necessity.

Finally, we will not know the truth about Shakespeare until we unravel the truth about all the writers of this period, both those who did the writing, and those who took, or have been given, the credit for it. This is the story of, not just one individual, however great that one may be, but a group. It's a darned good story, and well worth the telling.

This article was presented first as a lecture at the New Globe Theater, November 23, 2006, for the Friends of the Globe as part of their Silberrad Lecture Series under the direction of Mark Rylance.

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The Publications Committee has voted to give our writers the option of providing the SOS with a "License to Publish and Distribute" in lieu of "Assignment of Copyright." The choice will be that of the writer. The purpose remains the same: to publish and allow for distribution through the Gale world-wide database, as well as our web site. Our only interest remains to get our Oxfordian literature distributed to as wide an audience as possible. Nothing else.

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In this world of electronic media, the issue of copyright is very complicated. Although many web sites can be found to discuss/explain and sometimes confuse this issue, you might explore the US Copyright web site: http://www.copyright.gov/ for more information.

Frank Davis, Chairman
SOS Publications Committee

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

dence and determine whether there truly is reasonable doubt as to the true identity of the famous author.

Once reasonable doubt is established – as I firmly believe it will be – the Commission should then conduct additional research or at least recommend fruitful avenues for further research. Who would sponsor such a project? Ideally, a respected educational foundation, think tank, or neutral academic institution could take the lead in spearheading this Commission.

As most responsible biographers point out somewhere in their books – conveniently buried and then promptly forgotten – solid documentary evidence for the "Stratfordian" authorship theory is scant, at best. As a practical matter, if we're going to make progress on the authorship matter the lack of real evidence supporting Stratford Will needs to be more widely known and appreciated, especially in the media.

I believe the formation of this Commission alone would cause many to open their eyes to the existence of an authorship question. Having an unbiased commission determine that the evidence doesn't support the Stratford claim would be a dramatic development even if the Commission does not rule on the most likely alternative candidate.

Simply proposing this authorship commission, SOS will position itself as a true seeker of the truth in the authorship debate. To spread the word about this proposal, I would encourage SOS members to write an article or short letter to the editor of your local newspapers and other media outlets. Write your letters and articles in your own words using some of the ideas above. Just write that it's time to resolve the Shakespeare Authorship Mystery. Say that you and the SOS support the creation of an unbiased Shakespeare Authorship Commission to get to the bottom on this centuries-old controversy.

These two topics above are not unrelated. I believe we'll boost our membership based if we can do a better job of communicating the existence of a real, serious, widely recognized authorship mystery.

Finally, please remember that the SOS office has moved to New York. Our new address and contact information appear below.

Many thanks for your continued support.

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A Comparison of the 1609 and 1640 Texts of Shakespeare's Sonnets

James W. Brooks, Ph.D.

Shakespeare's sonnets appeared in two versions in the seventeenth century: Thomas Thorpe's 1609 edition and a subsequent one published by John Benson in 1640. Apart from a few word substitutions, correction of some—but not all—typographical errors, making some of the spelling consistent, and occasionally improving the punctuation, Benson's text is remarkably similar to the Thorpe version. This paper offers a detailed comparison of the two texts and supports the conclusions that Thorpe and Benson did not base their publications on a common scribal or authorial manuscript or on separate independent sources and that Benson's version is derivative of Thorpe's published volume.

In 1609 Thomas Thorpe published, with the services of George Eld as printer, in quarto the first edition of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. Modern editions of the Sonnets preserve the order of presentation and most of Thorpe's text, albeit with some emendations and modifications of punctuation. The Sonnets next appeared in 1640 in an octavo volume of Shakespeare's poems issued by John Benson. Benson reordered the Sonnets, omitting eight, and interspersed poems from *The Passionate Pilgrim* among them. Some of the sonnets are run together and given a title, making them appear to comprise a single poem. Benson also modified wording in some of the sonnets, apparently to foster the impression the speaker is referring to a woman rather than another man (Evans, "Shakespeare's Text" 60; Smith, "Sonnets" 1841; Giroux 5; Lee 55; Smith, *Desire* 268).

While Sidney Lee (56-57) states, "Benson's text seems based on some amateur collection of pieces of manuscript poetry, which had been in private circulation,"[1] the prevailing view among current scholars is that Benson's volume is essentially a "reprint, substantially rearranged, of Thomas Thorpe's 1609 *Sonnets*" and is "entirely derivative and has no independent manuscript authority" (Evans, *Sonnets* 284). Hallett Smith echoes Evans: "Benson's text has no authority and his volume is quite evidently a fraudulent publisher's venture" (1842).

According to Evans, the copyright to the Sonnets had been allowed to lapse; the Stationers' Company therefore held the right to reprint them (*Sonnets* 283). Also, Giroux (5) calls Benson's volume "pirated," and quoting the eighteenth-century editor Edward Capell, "rubbish," and Hubler indicates Benson did not own the copyright to the Sonnets (8).[2]

To provide a basis for assessing the reasons for and the validity of the strongly held views of modern scholars, the following analysis examines the question of whether the source for Benson's text differs from that of Thorpe. Possible answers include the following:

1. Benson's text is based on Thorpe's 1609 printed volume.
2. Benson's text is derived from a manuscript (holographic or scribal), distinct from the manuscript possessed by Thorpe.
3. Benson's text is based on the same manuscript possessed by Thorpe, whether holographic or scribal.

The following analysis furnishes compelling evidence that Benson's 1640 text of the sonnets is derived from Thorpe's 1609 printed volume (also known as "Q," from its quarto form) and not on any manuscript. The analysis is based on a detailed comparison of the two texts, with particular emphasis on the known preferences and compositorial errors of the two compositors responsible for preparing the 1609 text for printing.

That the Benson text has no independent textual authority and is indebted to Thorpe's volume as the primary source is supported by the results of all individual elements of the analyses.... Consequently, scrutiny of the small number of differences in the two texts appears to offer little prospect of furthering our understanding of Shakespeare's Sonnets

Scope of the Analysis

Benson's 1640 text includes 146 of the 154 sonnets published by Thorpe in 1609. The eight sonnets omitted are Sonnets 18, 19, 43, 56, 75, 76, 96, and 126. Two other sonnets included by Benson, 138 and 144, are based on versions contained in *The Passionate Pilgrim* published by William Jaggard. Benson evidently relied on the third edition of *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1612) because he incorporated all of its poems, including nine by Thomas Heywood, into his volume. The 1599 edition of *The Passionate Pilgrim* lacks Heywood's poems, which Jaggard lifted from Heywood's *Troia Britannica* (1609) (Evans, "Shakespeare's Text" 60; Smith, "The Passionate Pilgrim"1881-2, 1888; Smith, "Sonnets" 1841).[3]

The two sonnets included in *The Passionate Pilgrim* differ substantially from those published by Thorpe and are considered to be inferior early versions (Smith, "The Passionate Pilgrim" 1881). *Consequently, this analysis focuses on the 144 sonnets in Benson's text that correspond to the sonnets in the Thorpe volume.*

Analysis

Introduction

R. M. Alden in 1916 seems to have been the first to have undertaken a detailed, quantitative comparison of the spelling, punctuation, and typography of the 1609 and 1640 texts. He found a close similarity in the two texts and concluded:

> [T]o suppose the 1640 text to be based on a fugitive manuscript collection is quite impossible; and that, if we substitute for this the notion of an exceedingly accurate copy of the Quarto or its manuscript source, the typographical resemblances between the printed versions are still such as to make the view that Benson's printer can have followed the manuscript copy a violation of all the laws of chance. (21)

> On the whole, then, there is little or nothing in the way of new readings in Benson's text to call for the assumption of another source than the Quarto. Most of the alterations are naturally explained, and all can be explained, as due to natural conditions of correcting and reprinting. (26)

That it might be feasible to conduct an analysis to distinguish among the three possibilities posited above for the source of Benson's text is suggested by the following observation from Dobson:

> The 1609 text of the Sonnets…is on the whole a good one, though its punctuation is demonstrably not authorial (two recognizably different compositors display quite different preferences) and an unusual recurrent misprint of 'their' for 'thy', found nowhere else in the canon, suggests that the edition was printed from a manuscript not in Shakespeare's own handwriting. (438)

MacDonald P. Jackson in 1975 demonstrated the presence of preferences of the two 1609 compositors in terms of punctuation and spelling in addition to tendencies to produce certain types of errors.

Consequently, evidence based on the compositors' preferences could reinforce and solidify Alden's original assessment. If Benson based his text on Thorpe's printed version, we might expect many or most, but likely not all, of the compositors' preferences and errors to remain evident in 1640. On the other hand, if Benson had an authorial manuscript, few or none of the 1609 compositors' *their/thy* errors would be expected to persist, and we would see significant differences in the sort of compositorial errors that require emendation. Whether Benson had the same or different scribal manuscript as Thorpe would probably be more difficult to determine. We might expect the number of different compositorial errors (based on the 1609/1640 comparison) to be somewhat larger if Benson were relying on scribal manuscript different from Thorpe's.

Data Underlying the Analysis

The data supporting the analysis were obtained by a line-by-line, word-by-word comparison of photographic reproductions of the 1609 and 1640 texts. Vendler's edition of the Sonnets with a facsimile of a copy held by The Folger Shakespeare Library served as the source for Thorpe's version, and Benson's text was obtained from the University of Michigan microfilm of the copy held by the British Library.[4]

Data were collected on differences in punctuation, spelling, word substitutions, use of italics, and capitalization of words other than those at the beginning of a line.

Assignments of specific pages of the 1609 text to Compositors A and B were determined from Jackson's seminal work, with one modification, based on Evans' 1996 review of Jackson's work. Individual sonnets associated with each compositor were found using Booth's reproduction of the full quarto pages of the Huntington-Bridgewater copy of the 1609 Aspley imprint (each page typically contains text equivalent to about two and a half sonnets).

Initial Observations

An initial subjective impression emerges from a side-by-side comparison of the 1609/1640 texts:

1. The similarity in punctuation is striking. Many sonnets have *identical* punctuation.
2. Many of the most serious 1609 textual errors are also found in the 1640 version. (A prime example: the error in Line 2 of Sonnet 146, which repeats the end of the first line.)
3. Several words spelled in two different variations in 1609 are standardized to one variant in 1640. (ritch/rich ➔ rich; eie/eye ➔ eye)
4. Some words systematically appearing in a single variant in 1609 are seen nearly always in a different single variant in 1640. (beauty ➔ beautie)
5. Very occasionally, word substitutions occur.

The first two items may well be responsible for the prevailing view of scholars that Benson relied on Thorpe's imprint for the 144 sonnets of concern here. They may also see no independent authorial relevance in Benson's text because they view the relatively few word differences as inferior from a poetic or literary standpoint. (My conjecture: given these observations, they may not have felt the need for a more detailed analysis.) *The present analysis seeks to determine whether that view is sustained by an objective, thorough, quantitative analysis of the two texts.*

Punctuation

Evans notes that punctuation may be strongly influenced by the hands of compositors:

> At this time [circa 1609 presumably], many authors (and some professional scribes) when transcribing verse (both stanzaic and blank verse) tended to omit end-line punctuation, even when they made sporadic use of internal pointing within the line. [Evans cites a number of references in the prior literature relevant to the point.] As a result of this tendency, it often became the responsibility of the compositor (occasionally perhaps of an in-house editor) to supply punctuation, particularly end-line punctuation, as he was setting the text line-by-line (Evans, *Sonnets* 278).

Of the 144 sonnets, 90 exhibit identical punctuation, or 62.5 percent. These sonnets in aggregate comprise 2,017 lines of verse (one more than 14 x 144 because Sonnet 99 has 15 lines). The total number of lines with a 1609/1640 difference in punctuation is 78, leaving *96 percent of the lines with identical punctuation.*

Of the 78 lines with a difference, 57 pertain to the punctuation at the end of the line. The other lines show a total of 23 differ-

ences occurring elsewhere in the line, with two lines—103.3 and 130.5—each having two punctuation differences.

Assuming for the moment that the 1640 compositor worked from Thorpe's text, he apparently exercised some judgment regarding end-of-line punctuation. The 1609 text has twelve sonnets improperly terminated at Line 14 with a comma or with no punctuation; of these, nine are included in the 1640 text, with full stops—periods—terminating the last line of the sonnet. (The 1640 text lacks the improperly terminated Sonnets 18, 75, and 76.) Note, however, that three sonnets properly terminated in 1609—40, 80, and 142—are erroneously terminated in 1640. (See Table 1.)

Table 1. End-of-Couplet Punctuation Differences: 1609/1640

Sonnet	1609	1640	Riverside	1609 Compositor
2	…could,	…cold.	…cold.	B
16	…skill,	…skill.	…skill.	B
18	...to thee,	——	...to thee.	B
26	…prove me	…prove me.	…prove me.	B
28	…stronger	…stronger.	…stronger.	B
35	…from me,	…from me.	…from me.	A
40	…foes.	…foes	...foes.	A
62	…daies,	…dayes.	…days.	B
75	...all away,	—	...all away.	B
76	...told,	—	...told.	B
79	…pay,	…pay.	…pay.	B
80	…decay.	….decay,	…decay.	B
108	…dead,	…dead.	…dead.	B
117	…love	…love.	…love.	B
142	…denied.	…denide,	…denied.	B

Note: This table lists all sonnets for which Line 14 is not punctuated by a full stop in either 1609 or 1640.

We can estimate an error rate for the 1640 compositor, again employing the assumption of Thorpe's text as his source. If the 9 "corrections" are subtracted from the 57 end-of-line differences noted earlier, and we assign the remaining 48 as errors, we get an upper bound for the error rate at 3.3 percent. (This overestimates the error because at least some of the 48 differences are likely attributable to the compositors' preferences.) Another estimate can be calculated with the Line 14 results only: 3 errors in 144 opportunities, or 2.1 percent. An error rate of a few percent seems reasonable for a compositor attempting to reproduce a printed text. After all, if his error rate were significantly higher, he probably would soon be removed from his position.

Table 1 indicates the 1609 compositors made a total of 12 end-of-line errors, a rather high 8.3 percent. Perhaps this result indicates some haste in the setting of the text as has been suggested by scholars in light of the overall numerous errors in the text. (See Lee 41, for example.) Many of these 12 errors are found on Compositor B's pages, and Evans suggests that if A and B worked from different type cases, as Jackson assumes, B's period box may have been contaminated with some commas (the period and comma boxes being adjacent), which would lead to inadvertent errors by B, not caused by a lack of skill (*Sonnets* 278).[5]

Use of the Semicolon and Exclamation Mark

Semicolons occur infrequently in the 1609 text. Of the twenty instances, in only two cases does the 1640 text employ different punctuation, commas in both cases. The Riverside's punctuation differs significantly from 1609, which could be seen as evidence that providing appropriate punctuation was somewhat difficult when the semicolon was a possible choice (1609 compositors mostly made the "wrong" choice if we view Riverside as essentially "right") or that the "rules" for using the semicolon in those times were somewhat confusing. The 1640 text uses semicolons in place of commas used in 1609 in only two cases and on no other occasion.

Given the apparent reasonableness of using a mark other than the semicolon in the lines in Thorpe's text in which they appear (as implied by the Riverside data), the high degree of correspondence or overlap in the use of semicolons in 1609/1640 is striking, and easily interpreted as the 1640 compositor working from Thorpe's printed version.

Exclamation marks appear six times in the sonnets in both the 1609 and 1640 texts: Sonnets 92, 95 (twice), 103, 120, and 148. The mark also occurs in Sonnet 126, one of the sonnets omitted in 1640.[6] By way of comparison with a modern edition, the Riverside edition of the Sonnets has about four times as many exclamation marks, indicating multiple opportunities for deviation from the observed exact match in usage of this mark by the compositors of the two early texts.

Serious Punctuation Problems

Evans cites the punctuations shown in Table 2 as "four of the most serious pointing cruxes in Q" (*Sonnets* 280). In every case the 1640 punctuation is *identical* to that provided by Thorpe's compositor (B in all instances). As noted earlier, manuscripts in Shakespeare's time—either authorial or scribal—tended to be lightly punctuated;

Table 2. Serious Punctuation Problems

Sonnet	Line	1609 Text	Riverside Text	1640 Punctuation
16	10	(Times pensel or my pupill pen)	time's pencil, or my pupil pen	as in 1609
26	10	Haplye I thinke on thee, and then my state,	Haply I think on thee, and then my state	as in 1609
	11	(Like to the Larke at breake of daye arising)	(Like to the lark at break of day arising	as in 1609
	12	From sullen earthen sings himns at Heavens gate,	From the sullen earth) sings hymns at heaven's gate.	as in 1609
51	11	Shall neigh noe dull flesh in his fiery race,	Shall neigh (no dull flesh) in his fiery race,	as in 1609
148	8	Loves eye is not so true as all mens: no,	Love's eye is not so true as all nen's: no,	as in 1609
	9	How can it? O how can loves eye be true,"	How can it? O, how can Love's eye be true,	as in 1609

much was left to compositors to determine. Consequently, the replication of these four problems furnishes another piece of strong evidence for Thorpe as Benson's copy-text.

End-of-Quatrain Punctuation

In 1975 MacDonald Jackson published his study of the 1609 text. He showed that the volume printed by George Eld for Thorpe had been set by two compositors. (The work of the same two compositors with the same distinctive preferences as noted in the Sonnets had been previously detected by Walker and Williams in the *Troilus and Cressida* quarto,[7] also printed by Eld in 1609.) That two distinct sets of preferences are exhibited means that either one or the other or both of the compositors were following their own preferences rather than adhering to an authorial or scribal manuscript.

On the punctuation, Jackson observes:

> The two men punctuated the text in widely different ways. As an alternative to full stops at the end of quatrains, A on his twenty pages of sonnets used colons 51 times, commas only 6 times; B on his forty-five pages used colons 47 times, commas 67 times. (6)

Evans offers additional details on the point:

> In their use of punctuation, A and B differ most noticeably in their handling of the structural pause, usual in the English sonnet form at the end of the first, second, and third quatrain. Setting aside the period (used with relatively the same frequency by both A and B), A employs 51 colons and only 6 commas; B, 47 colons and 67 commas. A thus shows a much stronger sense of the quatrain as a closed rhetorical unit than B. A, moreover, unlike B, seems to have felt that the third quatrain, followed as it is by the final, often summary, couplet required a heavier stop than either the first or second quatrain (A, 10 colons, 1 comma; B, 12 colons, 29 commas). (*Sonnets* 277)

Evans extended Jackson's work by examining the seven pages of the 1609 text for which Jackson characterized the evidence for assignment to the compositors as "very slight." Evans confirmed all but one of Jackson's tentative assignments, and aligned page C2 with B rather than A. The present analysis accepts Evans's modification; nineteen pages are attributed to A, forty-six to B. Evans, however, failed to adjust his figures in the quote above to reflect the reassignment of C2. Also, the figure of 47 colons for B cited by both Jackson and Evans differs from the 46 shown in Jackson's table (6), which appears to be the correct number.[8]

As a consequence of the reassignment of C2, the data for punctuation with colons and commas for the 1609 text is modified (from Jackson) as follows:

Table 3. 1609 End-of-Quatrain Colon/Comma Punctuation

	Compositor A		Compositor B	
	Colon	Comma	Colon	Comma
Line 4	16	3	17	20
Line 8	23	2	19	w18
Line 12	9	1	13	29
	48	6	49	67

Evans's modification has no effect on the thrust of Jackson's point concerning the compositors' preferences. (Note that the data do not include Sonnet 126, which is a poem in six couplets; lines 4, 8, and 12 are terminated in periods.)

Turning now to Benson's 1640 text, we find that in only 17 instances (Table 4) does the end-of-quatrain punctuation of the 144 sonnets differ from that in Thorpe's text. (The table also shows the Riverside punctuation as an example of a modern editor's preferences; other modern editors will in some cases opt for different punctuation.) Thus, 96 percent of the time, the Benson/Thorpe punctuation matches, a good indication that the 1608 compositors' preferences likely carry over to 1640.

Table 4. End-of-Quatrain Punctuation Differences: 1609/1640

First Quatrain (line 4)

Sonnet	1609	1640	Riverside	1609 Compositor
98	…him.	…him,	…him.	A
114	…Alcumie?	…Alcumie	…alcumy,	A

Second Quatrain (line 8)

Sonnet	1609	1640	Riverside	1609 Compositor
23	…might:	…might,	…might.	B
36	…delight,	…delight:	…delight.	A
71	…woe.	…woe,	…woe.	B
98	…grew:	…grow.	…grew:	A
148	…no,	…no	…no,	B
149	…mone?	"…mone,"	…moan?	A
151	…reason.	"…reason,"	…reason,	A

Third Quatrain (line 12)

Sonnet	1609	1640	Riverside	1609 Compositor
31	…alone.	…alone,	…alone.	A
60	…mow.	…mow,	…mow:	B
74	…remembred,	…remembred.	…remembered.	B
93	…tell,	…tell.	…tell.	B
128	…lips,	…lips.	…lips:	B
130	…ground.	…ground,	…ground.	B
139	…injuries:	…injuries.	…injuries.	B
146	…more,	…more.	…more:	B

Table 5 compares the 1609 and 1640 texts more closely. The table depicts the colon/comma punctuation for the 144 common sonnets, retaining the distinction between the lines corresponding to those set by A and B in 1609. The preservation of the prefer-

ences of the 1609 compositors in the same sonnets in the 1640 text is quite clear.

Table 5. Colon/Comma Comparison (144 Sonnets)

	Comp. A	Comp. B
1609		
All Quatrains	46/6	45/63
Third Quatrain	9/1	12/28
1640		
All Quatrains	46/9	43/62
Third Quatrain	9/2	11/26

Finally, the next two tables (6 and 7) display data for all punctuation types for the 144 sonnets under consideration in this analysis (with question and exclamation marks, semicolons, and "none" grouped under "other"):

Table 6. 1609 End-of-Quatrain Punctuation (144 Sonnets)

	Compositor A				Compositor B			
	:	,	.	other	:	,	.	other
L. 4	15	3	17	8	16	19	50	15
L. 8	22	2	15	4	17	16	56	12
L. 12	9	1	31	1	12	28	53	9
	46	6	63	13	45	63	159	36

Table 7. 1640 End-of-Quatrain Punctuation (144 Sonnets)

	Compositor A				Compositor B			
	:	,	.	other	:	,	.	other
L. 4	15	4	16	8	16	19	50	15
L. 8	22	3	15	3	16	17	55	13
L. 12	9	2	30	1	11	26	56	9
	46	9	61	12	43	62	161	37

The numbers in these two tables match extremely well. The likelihood that the compositor in 1640 worked from anything other than Thorpe's text seems remote indeed. If he had set his text from a manuscript, even if it were the same manuscript that Thorpe had, the distribution of punctuation would have been different. It is highly unlikely that the 1640 compositor(s) would follow almost exactly the preferences exhibited by his counterparts in 1609; he would either follow his own preferences or adhere to the manuscript (or a combination). The evidence seems clear: the 1640 compositor followed the 1609 printed text, only occasionally deviating, either through a mistake or as an attempt to make an improvement.

The *O/Oh* Spelling Anomaly

Jackson takes advantage of the presence of variant spellings and Walker's and Williams's earlier work on *Troilus and Cressida* to distinguish the work of the two 1609 compositors. The same printer, George Eld, printed both *Troilus and Cressida* and the *Sonnets*. Of particular importance is the distinct difference between the pages on which Eld A spellings occur and the pages upon which Eld B spellings occur concerning the spelling of the exclamation *O* or *Oh*. Although many of the other spelling variations that were so helpful to Jackson are absent or much diminished in the 1640 text

(through the 1640 compositor's attempts to "fix" the spelling), the *O/Oh* distinction is very much intact in Benson's rendition of the sonnets.

O/Oh appear a total of 50 times in 1609 (in 38 sonnets), with A using *Oh* 15 times and *O* never; B, *Oh* once and *O* 34 times. Five of the fifty occasions are not relevant to a direct comparison of 1609 with 1640 because they occur in Sonnets 19, 76, 126 (twice), which Benson omits, and in 138, which is similar to a quite different version in *The Passionate Pilgrim*. In the remaining forty-five cases, the 1640 text differs from 1609 in only three instances (Sonnets 54, 59, and 148). In the 1640 text, the lines associated with 1609 Compositor A exhibit *Oh* 13 times and *O* 2 times, and for B's lines, *Oh* appears 2 times and *O*, 28 times. *The clear preference of A for* Oh *and B for* O *is strongly replicated in the 1640 text.*

If we compare the same forty-five instances of *O/Oh* use in 1609 with 1640, a remarkable similarity is noticeable (Table 8). The most plausible explanation, indeed the only one that comes to mind, is that the compositor in 1640 attempted to follow Thorpe's text and in the process made three errors (a 6.7 percent error rate).

Table 8. *O/Oh* Usage Summary

Edition	O		Oh		Total
	Compositor A	Compositor B	Compositor A	Compositor B	
1609	0	29	15	1	45
1640	2	28	13	2	45

Note: The compositor notation refers to the pages on which Oh or O appears in the 1609 text and which were set either by Compositor A or B. Sonnets compared between 1609 and 1640 exclude the eight missing from 1640 and the two that were similar to the versions found in *The Passionate Pilgrim*.

Note that on the page in Benson where *O* in Sonnet 59, line 5, differs from 1609's *Oh*, there are two other instances on the same page where 1609's *Oh* is retained. Similarly for Sonnet 148, line 9, an *O* in 1609 is instead *Oh* in Benson, while on the same page *O* remains unchanged from 1609 in three cases: twice in Sonnet 148 and once in Sonnet 149. Thus, the 1640 compositor seems not to have imposed his own preference, and may have simply made errors.

Compositorial Errors – Literals

Thorpe's text contains a number of misprints probably resulting from a compositor's errors. Evans assigns 16 of the 57 emendations in his edition of the Sonnets to this category, labeling them as "literals." He cites seven examples in his notes on the text (278). Evans writes, "An exact estimate of the number of compositorial errors and substantive misreadings is difficult to determine, partly because editors differ over what should be considered an 'error'… and partly because some of these 'errors,' both literal and substantive, may be due not to the compositor, but to Q-copy" (279).

Table 9 lists the seven literals cited by Evans along with nine others that appear to be similar in character. All but one of the 16 lines in question appear in Benson's volume; five retain the error of the 1609 text. It looks as if the most obvious errors have been

corrected in 1640 (wit→with, their→there, for example). The compositor in 1640 seems to have paid some attention to what he was doing. Nonetheless, he missed the *perfects* and *enmity* errors.

Table 9. Literal Errors

				Corrected in 1640	
Sonnet	Line	1609	Riverside	Yes	No
23	14	wit	with	x	
28	12	guil'st	gild'st		x
33	14	stainteh	staineth	x	
41	9	mighst	mightst	x	
51	10	perfects	perfect'st		x
96	11	mighst	mightst	N/A	N/A
100	14	prevenst	prevent'st		x
82	9	devisde	devis'd	x	
73	4	rn'wd	ruin'd	x	
69	14	solye	soil	x(soyle)	
31	6	stolne	stol'n		x
88	1	dispode	dispos'd	x	
55	9	enmity	enmity		x
59	1	their	there	x	
9	12	unusde	unus'd	x	

The *enmity* error is of interest. How likely would it be for the author to have misspelled *enmity* in an authorial manuscript? How likely is it that both 1609 and 1640 scribes would have made the same error (assuming Thorpe and Benson possessed different scribal manuscripts)? If Thorpe and Benson had possessed the same scribal manuscript, how likely is it that 1609 and 1640 compositors would have either made an error in setting *enmity* incorrectly or failed to correct the error in the manuscript? Shakespeare could likely spell *enmity*. Also, considering each of the other possibilities as a problem in joint probability, even if a 10 percent error rate is assumed for each scribe or compositor, the probability of a joint error is $0.1 \times 0.1 = 0.01$, or 1 percent. This suggests the 1640 compositor set exactly what he saw in his copy-text, i.e., a copy of Thorpe's imprint.

Compositorial Misreadings

The presence of substantive compositorial errors or misreadings underpins the argument against composition of the 1609 Sonnets with a holographic manuscript, an argument generally accepted today. Thus the copy-text for Q, while it may have been partly authorial, is probably primarily scribal. Whether the errors stem from scribes or the compositors is not possible to determine with a high degree of confidence, however, based on these data alone.

Table 10 lists 40 1609 errors and misreadings that require emendation in the Riverside 2nd Edition. The first 25 in the table are cited specifically in Evans's textual analysis (279-80); the others are culled from Riverside's emendations. The first 15 listed, the *thy/their* error, which appears nowhere else in the Shakespeare canon (except possibly in some parts of *Edward III*), "tells strongly against holographic printer's copy" (Evans 281). These errors may stem from confusion arising from scribal use of the contracted forms of *thy* and *their* (Evans, *Sonnets* 281).[9] Not counting the error in Line 11 of Sonnet 43, all but one of these errors are present in Benson's 1640 text (which does not include Sonnet 43).

Could the 1609 scribal text have survived and somehow made it into the hands of Thomas Cotes, Benson's printer? It is possible, but in light of the replication of the 1609 compositors' preferences in 1640, as discussed earlier, it is a highly unlikely explanation for the observed similarity. With only the scribal copy (probably lightly punctuated) to work from, the 1640 compositor would somehow have had to mimic these preferences. (How?) Following the scribal text or imposing his own preferences would have produced different results.

Survival of Thorpe's manuscript must be viewed as doubtful. Dawson and Kennedy-Skipton explain (3-7) that some manuscripts, like records involving property or court actions, for example, were perceived as having some continuing value and to be retained for safekeeping. Manuscripts of verse or drama, on the other hand, once they had been published, lost any practical value, and were sold as wastepaper. They note that "there is abundant evidence to show that used paper was a marketable commodity much in demand for a great variety of uses" (7), and with bookbinders belonging to the same guild as printers, posit "it is reasonable to assume that a printer would regularly sell his wastepaper to the binder down the street" (7), who would then use it in his craft.

Of the 36 lines with substantive misreadings that Benson includes in his text, only five differ from Thorpe's text. These five cases represent some of the more obvious errors that a 1640 compositor would be likely to notice and to correct. While Benson's text retains most of the errors in Thorpe's imprint, it also introduces seven new substantive errors (Table 11). The term "errors" is used here because modern scholars find no merit in them as emendations to the 1609 text, as shown by the Riverside data displayed in the table as an example of modern editors' views. Moreover, these errors appear to be of a type not likely to be found in an authorial or scribal manuscript, but are easily recognized as a botched attempt to "improve" the 1609 text.

The seven new errors are distinguished from the substitution of entirely different words (Table 12) in some sonnets which previous scholars attribute to Benson's desire to make his collection of poems appear to be standard amatory verse designed to appeal to female readers. Modern editors see no value to these substitutions, except for the *their* to *thy* change in Sonnet 128.

Findings and Conclusions

Some facts could be employed to argue in favor of the hypothesis of separate source for Benson's text:

- Benson's edition omits eight sonnets.
- Two of the sonnets resemble versions that appear in *The Passionate Pilgrim*, rather than the versions in Thorpe's volume.
- Benson's edition arranges these sonnets in an order differing from that of the 1609 text.
- Several of Benson's sonnets display word substitutions relative to the 1609 versions.
- Some words in Benson's text differ in spelling from those found in Thorpe's.

Apart from the spelling differences, an alternative explanation for these particular features of Benson's volume is that they are also consistent with the standard view of Benson's purpose to assemble

Table 10. Compositorial Misreadings

Sonnet	Line	1609	Riverside	Corrected in 1640 Yes	No	1609 Compositor
26	12	their	thy		x	B
27	10	their	thy		x	B
35	8(first)	their	thy		x	B
35	8(second)*	their	thy		x	A
37	7	their	thy		x	A
43	11	their	thy	not included in 1640 text		
45	12	their	thy		x	B
46	3	their	thy		x	B
46	8	their	thy		x	B
46	13	their	thy		x	B
46	14	their	thy		x	B
69	5	their	thy		x	B
70	6	their	thy		x	B
128	11	their	thy		x	B
128	14	their	thy	x		B
12	4	or silver'd	all silver'd		x	B
25	9	worth	fight		x	B
34	12	losse	cross		x	A
76	7	fel	tell	not included in 1640 text		
112	14	y'are	are		x	B
113	6	lack	latch		x	A
113	14	omitted word	Note 1		x	A
144	6	sight	side	1640 text based on Passionate Pilgrim		
55	1	monument	monuments		x	A
146	2	partial repeat of line 1	[…]		x	A
13	7	You selfe	Yourself	x (Your selfe)		B
19	3	yawes	jaws	not included in 1640 text		
23	6	right	rite		x	B
31	8	there	thee		x	B
41	8	he	she		x	B
46	9	side	'cide		x	B
47	11	nor	not	x		B
50	6	duly	dully	x		B
65	12	or	of		x	B
77	10	blacks	blanks		x	B
90	11	stall	shall	x		A
102	8	his	her		x	A
129	9	Made	Mad		x	B
132	9	morning	mourning		x	B
41	6	woes	woos	x (wooes)		B

* Not all editors accept *their*.

Note 1: Evans inserts *eye*; Riverside does not.

Table 11. New 1640 Errors

Sonnet	Line	1609	1640	Riverside
13	13	deare	dare	dear
54	10	unwoo'd	unmoov'd	unwoo'd
55	12	weare	were	wear
28	5	ethers	others	either's
65	5	hunny	hungry	honey
84	12	stile	still	style
129	14	heaven	haven	heaven

Table 12. Differences in Wording

Sonnet	Line Number	1609	1640	Riverside 2nd Edition
79	6	travaile	travell	travail
101	11	him	her	him
101	14	him	her	him
101	14	he	she	he
104	1	faire friend	faire love	fair friend
108	5	sweet boy	sweet love	sweet boy
111	2	harmfull	harmlesse	harmful
128	14	their	thy	thy
152	3	broake	brooke	broke

a collection of conventional (i.e., heterosexual) amorous verse on the subject of courtly love with the goal of appealing to women primarily—in other words, a moneymaking venture. In this construct, Benson might have felt that the omitted sonnets did not fit his purpose, and that the variant versions of Sonnets 138 and 144 were more suitable. None of this can be certain, however, because much depends on how acute Benson's perceptions were concerning the content and meaning of the verse, and that is something we do not know. Furthermore, the interspersal of the entire contents of Jaggard's 1612 edition of *The Passionate Pilgrim* among the 144 reordered (and often grouped in concatenated fashion) sonnets could be viewed as surreptitious intent to disguise his plundering of Thorpe and Jaggard.

The observed spelling differences can be explained as the 1640 compositor's attempt to correct the numerous spelling errors in the 1609 text and to make the spelling consistent, thus eliminating—except for *O/Oh*—the manifestation of the distinct spelling preferences of the two 1609 compositors.

The detailed textual analysis of the Thorpe and Benson texts offers a powerful means of eliminating the possibility of an independent origin for the source of Benson's 1640 version of the Sonnets. Comparing the 144 sonnets common to the 1609 and 1640 texts, this analysis yields several key findings:

- Ninety sonnets exhibit identical punctuation in their entirety in the two texts.
- Most—96 percent—of the sonnets' lines are punctuated identically.
- The use of infrequent pointing such as the semicolon and exclamation mark are nearly identical.

- All four of the "most serious pointing errors" are found in both texts.
- The end-of-quatrain punctuation preferences of the two 1609 compositors are replicated in Benson's edition.
- The preferences of the two 1609 compositors' use of *Oh* and *O* are replicated in 1640.
- Some of the literal compositorial (e.g., typographical) errors of 1609 are carried over in 1640.
- 31 of 36 (86 percent) of the substantive compositorial misreadings in Thorpe's text are also evident in Benson's version

The results of the analyses can be grouped in three principal elements:

- Common Punctuation Characteristics – In an overall sense the punctuation in the two texts matches extremely closely: 96 percent of the lines in the sonnets are punctuated identically. In addition, all serious punctuation errors are identical in both texts. Moreover, the semicolon and exclamation marks, used infrequently in both Thorpe and Benson, almost always appear in the same, corresponding locations. These results indicate a common source for the two texts, independently of whether we assume either an authorial or scribal manuscript with light or heavy punctuation as the copy text for Q.

- Compositorial Errors and Misreadings – The 1609 text contains many typographical errors and misreadings, along with four serious punctuation errors. All of the severe punctuation errors and most of the other errors are also found in the 1640 text. The errors are of such an egregious nature to make it unlikely that the author is responsible for their origination (viz., the *thy/their* error). Nor is it likely that different scribes, or even the same scribe working at a different time, would make the same errors leading to the 1640 compositor setting the same erroneous text. The observed commonality in errors is most easily reconcilable with the view that the 1640 compositor attempted to copy the printed 1609 text as best he could, while occasionally correcting some of the more obvious errors.

- Compositor Preferences – As Evans suggested (*The Sonnets* 278), Jackson's demonstration that the hands of two compositors were at work on the 1609 text is evidence in itself, albeit not strong, that the manuscript they had was sparsely punctuated (had it been heavily pointed, the simplest course would have been to follow the punctuation provided for the most part, which would have tended to obscure any compositorial preferences). Taken separately, either the preferred punctuation of quatrains or the *O/Oh* preference could be explained by Benson's compositor possessing the same scribal manuscript as was available in 1609. Also, had the author been indifferent about his end-of-quatrain punctuation and the use of *O/Oh* (or any

of the other variant spelling observed in Q), Jackson would not have been able to distinguish two compositors. That both of these preferences are present in the two texts and that they are the same as those shown in the 1609 *Troilus and Cressida* quarto argue strongly for a printed copy of Q as Benson's source.

That the Benson text has no independent textual authority and is indebted to Thorpe's volume as the primary source is supported by the results of all individual elements of the analyses.[10] The *similarities* revealed by the detailed textual comparison point unambiguously to Q as the copy-text for Benson's volume.

This analysis therefore confirms the current scholarly consensus concerning Benson's document.[11] Consequently, scrutiny of the small number of differences in the two texts appears to offer little prospect of furthering our understanding of Shakespeare's Sonnets.

Endnotes

1. None of Lee's arguments are based on a detailed textual comparison, however.
2. Benson's volume contains a short appendix of poems of other authors for which the Stationer's Register records show assignment of rights to Benson on November 4, 1639 (Lee 55). Evans in a footnote (*The Sonnets* 283) cites a defense of Benson against piracy by J. W. Bennett, "Benson's alleged piracy of *Shakespeare's Sonnets* and some of Jonson's works," *Studies in Bibliography* 21 (1968), 235-48.
3. A fragment of an earlier edition (perhaps 1598 but more likely 1599) is held by The Folger. It contains only the poems numbered i to v and xvi to xviii (Smith, "The Passionate Pilgrim" 1888).
4. Reel number: Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 1156:05.
5. McKerrow's Chapter 2 describes the physical processes for making a printed book in the early 1600s, including composition, imposition, and printing and provides (9) a diagram of the arrangement of a type case.
6. The 1640 text has what appears to be an upside down semicolon in Sonnet 9, line 3, which looks somewhat like an exclamation mark; the 1609 text has a semicolon.
7. Jackson refers to the work of Walker and Williams (2). The relevant citations are as follows: (a) Walker, Alice, ed. *Troilus and Cressida*, New Cambridge Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957 (p. 129); (b) Williams, Philip. "Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*: the relationship of quarto and Folio." *Studies in Bibliography*, 3 (1950-1), pp. 131-43.
8. Jackson omits from his calculations the 12-line Sonnet 126 and the first quatrain of the 15-line Sonnet 99 and treats lines 9 and 13 as lines 8 and 12.
9. Evans points out that there are over 4,000 uses of *thy* in the Shakespeare canon apart from the Sonnets, and that had he used the contraction for *thy* and *their*, some examples of the *their* for *thy* misreading would likely have occurred in these works (*The Sonnets* 281 (footnote 3)).
10. The replication of the preferences of Thorpe's compositors in Benson's

text of the Sonnets has to my knowledge not been noted by previous scholars.
11. See Rollins's thorough discussion, for example (2: 18-28). Note also that Benson's treatment of the Shakespeare's sonnets is similar to that given to the complete set of poems from the 1612 edition of *The Passionate Pilgrim* that he also included in the volume, as described by Rollins: "[N]ot one really significant variant occurs—not one that cannot be explained as a modernization or a misprint or an ordinary emendation. There is not a single change in the 1640 *Poems* that could not have been made from the printed 1612 text by any competent typesetter without assistance from any other source, manuscript or printed. In page after page, line after line, the two are almost exactly alike, even in their misprints" (2: 27).

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Shakespeare, not Arthur Brooke,
Wrote *Tragicall Historye of Romeus & Juliet*

Paul Hemenway Altrocchi, MD

Things are not always what they seem.
- Phaedrus, circa 8 AD

Oxfordians express amazement that highly intelligent Stratfordians can be hoodwinked by conventional wisdom's dogma that the untutored William Shakesper of Stratford wrote the great plays, a theory based primarily upon a similar name being printed on the First Folio's title page, yet Oxfordians find no disharmony in their own belief that a youthful unknown named Arthur Brooke was the author of the 1562 narrative poem, *Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet*, because *his* name, or an abbreviation thereof (Ar. Br.), was on the title page(1)

Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn first suggested that *Tragicall Historye* was actually written by Edward de Vere. Agreeing with many Stratfordians that *Romeo and Juliet* was based largely upon *Tragicall Historye,* they could not believe that de Vere would borrow so heavily from a youthful narrative poem, "At times even paraphrasing the text, unless it were his own." (2)

This paper presents new evidence against Brooke's authorship of *Tragicall Historye* and summarizes the case for Shakespeare as the author.

Arthur Brooke's short life may be summarized as follows:

1. He was born about 1544, six years before Edward de Vere. Based upon William Cecil's close friendship with Lord Cobham, a relative of Arthur, and because Edward de Vere lived at Cecil House beginning in 1562, Nina Green concluded that "the likelihood is strong that Oxford was personally acquainted with Arthur Brooke" (3). We do not know this for a fact.

2. Sponsored by Thomas Norton, a distant relative, and Thomas Sackville, Arthur Brooke was admitted to Middle Temple for law studies at age 18 beginning on Feb. 4, 1563 (modern calendar). He was given a full scholarship "in consideration of certain plays and shows in Christmas last, set forth by him." The words "set forth" meant to present to view, or to promote, i.e. to produce plays. The words do not imply that he wrote these plays (3).

> *Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn first suggested that Tragicall Historye was actually written by Edward de Vere. Agreeing with many Stratfordians that Romeo and Juliet was based largely upon Tragicall Historye, they could not believe that de Vere would borrow so heavily from a youthful narrative poem, "At times even paraphrasing the text, unless it were his own." (2)*

3. Less than 14 months after entering Middle Temple, Arthur Brooke drowned in the shipwreck of *The Greyhound* on March 19, 1564. The ship was on its way to Newhaven (Le Havre) to help Protestant forces in France's civil war. Presumably Brooke was a military recruit.

4. Henry Brooke, first cousin of Arthur Brooke, wrote to Sir Thomas Chaloner on May 14, 1564, confirming the drowning of "little Brook":

> Sir Thomas Finch was drowned going over to Newhaven . . .
>
> James Wentworth and his brother were on the same same vessel, on the sands near Rye, and little Brook. . ." (4)

5. Thomas Brooke, another cousin of Arthur, also confirmed the drowning in a commemorative poem:

> Example, lo, in Brooke before thine eye
>
> Whose praised gifts in him did late abound,

> By shipwreck force'd, alas, too soon to die. . .(5)

6. *Tragicall Historye* was the sole source of Arthur Brooke's instant fame; he had no prior track record of writing poetry or prose. Four years after Brooke's death, a poem appeared entitled *An Epitaph on the death of Master Arthur Brooke, drowned in passing to Newhaven*, attributed to George Turberville, including lines which imply that Brooke had indeed written *Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* :

> Apollo lent him lute for solace' sake
> To sound his verse by touch of stately string,
> And of the never fading bay did make
> A laurel crown, about his brows to cling,
> In proof that he for metre did excel,
> As may be judged by Juliet and her mate:
> For there he showed his cunning passing well
> When he the tale to English did translate(3).

Why did Arthur Brooke quit law school and join the military?

Law schools in the 1500s were much more casual and less studious than today. They were more places to meet other nobles in happy fellowship and to nurture literary pursuits including plays, with less emphasis on rigorous legal studies. Why did Brooke leave law school so soon? Was he being pressured to create brilliant plays for presentation at Middle Temple because of his supposed authorship of *Tragicall Historye* which he did not write? Did he join the army to avoid the discovery that he was *not* a gifted playwright? Whatever the cause, his decision to leave law school led to his death at age 19.

What is the only definite work of Arthur Brooke?

Sometime during 1563 a book was published with this title page which does not identify the original author:

> The Agreemente of Sondry places of Scripture, seeming in shew to Jarre, Serving in stead of Commentaryes, not onely for these, but others lyke, Translated out of French, and nowe first publyshed by Arthure Broke. Imprynted at London, in Paules Churchyard, at the signe of the crane, by Lucas Harrison. Anno. 1563.(6)

The Folger Library in Washington, D.C. and the British Library own originals; Rutgers microfilmed the British Library copy and put it onto Early English Books Online (6). The book is a theological interpretation, akin to mini-sermons, of 107 comparisons taken from Scripture which "seem in show to jar," *i.e.,* seem to show a basic contradiction between two Biblical quotations, for instance:

1. Example #17 from Exodus 21: "Eye for eye and tooth for tooth," compared to Matthew 5 – "If any man strike thee on the right cheek give him the other also."
2. Example #47 from Matthew 5: "Thou shalt hate thyne enemy," compared to another quote from Matthew 5 – "Love your enemies."

Does the actual title of the work, as translated by Brooke, tell us something of his literary talent and writing ability: "The Agreement of Sondry places of Scripture, seeming in shew to Jarre, Serving in stead of Commentaryes, not onely for these, but others lyke."? Is this a clear, compelling, meaningful title designed to immediately intrigue and engage a potential reader, whether in 1563 or subsequently?

A successful translator must himself have style and fluency of expression to capture the spirit or essence of the original as well as to convey its meaning. An excellent example is Edward de Vere's superb translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* completed between the ages of 13 and 17

which he published under the name of his uncle, Arthur Golding (7). A translation should not be a mere passive verbatim exercise but a signature of the translator's own verbal and imaginative creativity. One must have special literary talent to avoid the treacherous quicksand of what the Italians call "traduttore, tradittore" — the translator is a traitor.

A translator's choice of material is also a reflection of his own inner gifts and interests. A boring, tedious person is more likely to choose a boring, tedious literary work as Arthur Golding did for most of his life. A person with literary talent will choose a challenging work which allows his own uniqueness to emerge, as Edward de Vere did with Ovid's *Metamorphoses.*

Let's sample Arthur Brooke's translation from French of "Epistle to the Reader" at the very beginning of *Sondry Places of Scripture*:

> Some may heretofore have attempted this self manner of writing and that same work that is here offered unto you: neither was their labor altogether vain. For at the least if they had but gathered such places of Scripture as seem to disagree, and done their endeavor to agree thereby, though they have not yielded the true meaning of places which they had taken in hand to expound: yet so it is that this invention of theirs has given a taste and opened a way unto such other as followed them, who were able to give a more certain resolution of the same difference(8).

Does this tiresome, unclear, overly literal translation allow one to appraise a translator's creative writing abilities? This writer thinks so. Just as Arthur Golding's lifetime of dull, dry translations disqualifies him as the innovative translator of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (7), so Brooke's remarkably dreary, verbatim translation of *Sondry Places of Scripture* must raise a strong suspicion that he was *not* the author of the clever, imaginative *Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet.* The marked

discrepancy between the two works is compelling and demands further inquiry, not mere submissive acceptance of Brooke's authorship of both because his name is on both title pages.

Did Arthur Brooke write anything else?

J.J. Munro in his 1908 Introduction to a reprinting of *Tragicall Historye,* states that Lucas Harrison, publisher of *Sondry Places,* hints at "other works from Brooke's pen, but we know nothing of them" (9). What does Harrison actually say in his "The Printer to the Reader"?

> The author's absence, whose only countenance would have feared faults, and polished a far meaner work: pleadeth in excuse of the apparent slackness...which... had also flowed with eloquence might he have enjoyed himself, when the realm thought good to command him. But...enforced he was, by my oft entreaties, to leave behind him this orphan Babe...howbeit, yet rough, unmete to match with many other his travails, satisfying the high expectation that fame had blown of him(8).

Harrison is editorializing that Brooke's translation is not polished because England commanded Brooke to go overseas, and also because Harrison, to take advantage of Brooke's fame from *Tragicall Historye,* pressured Brooke with frequent entreaties to allow him to rush *Sondry Places* into print before the manuscript could be properly revised. Harrison never considered the possibility that the two works might have been written by different authors.

Harrison also says that *Sondry Places* is "unmete to match with many other his travails," i.e., is unfit in quality to match the talent shown in *Tragicall Historye.* If "many other his travails" means "many other creative works," there is no historical evidence of such. This writer concludes that Arthur Brooke did translate *Sondry Places,* but there is no valid evidence that he wrote any other work, prose or poetry.

Literary sources of *Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet*

Valid literary sources for *Tragicall Historye* include the following:

(1) Luigi Da Porto published in 1530 his *Historia novellamente retrovata di due nobile amanti* which portrays the tragic love story of Romeo and Juliet from two noble families of Verona, the Montecchi and Cappelletti, during the rule of Bartolomeo Della Scala in the early 1300s (10).

(2) In 1553, Clitia published a short story entitled "The Unhappy Love of Two Most Faithful Lovers, Julia and Romeo" (11).

(3) In 1554, Matteo Bandello published his *Novelle* (short stories), including *Giulietta & Romeo,* based upon the previous two books (12).

(4) In 1559, Pierre Boaistuau compiled in French a number of Bandello's Italian stories, including "Of two lovers, one of whom died of poison, the other of sadness" and a *Tragicall Historye* derived from Boaistuau's book (13).

Because Turberville in his epitaph to Arthur Brooke wrote "When he the tale to English did translate,"(13) many Oxfordians mistakenly conclude that the poet-author of *Tragicall Historye* "translated" Boaistuau's book. This is not correct. In fact, *Tragicall Historye* did follow Boaistuau's prose storyline but was an entirely new narrative poem with many plot and subplot changes. This is not a translation any more than a movie screenplay is a translation of a book.

Examples of original writing in *Tragicall Historye*

For comparison with Brooke's writing style in *Sondry Places*, let's take a look at some examples of the original literary creativity found in *Tragicall Historye*, beginning with prose in the author's Preface to the Reader:

> Every doing of man hath, by God's dispensation, something whereby God may and ought to be honoured. So the good doings of the good and the evil acts of the wicked, the happy success of the blessed and the woeful proceedings of the miserable, do in divers sort

sound one praise of God. And as each flower yieldeth honey to the bee, so every example ministereth good lessons to the well-disposed mind (14).

It is immediately apparent that there is no resemblance between the engaging skill of the poet-author of *Tragicall Historye* and the sterile, boring translation of *Sondry Places,* the latter continuing in the same totally unimaginative fashion throughout its entire cadaverous 307 pages. Isn't this original prose reminiscent both of Edward de Vere's writings and Shakespeare's? Let us now look at the poetic style of *Tragicall Historye* :

> But when she should have slept, as wont she was, in bed,   (line 365)
> Not half a wink of quiet sleep could harbour in her head.
> For lo, an hugy heap of divers thoughts arise,
> That rest have banished from her heart, and slumber from her eyes.
> And now from side to side she tosseth and she turns,
> And now for fear she shivereth, and now for love she burns.
> And now she likes her choice, and now her choice she blames,
> And now each hour within her head a thousand fancies frames.

    *   *

> What if with friendly speech the traitor lie in wait,   (line 387)
> As oft the poisoned hook is hid, wrapt in the pleasant bait?
> Oft under cloak of truth hath Falsehood served her lust;
> And turned their honour into shame, that did so slightly trust.
> What, was not Dido so, a crown'd queen, defamed?
> And eke, for such a heinous crime, have men not Theseus blamed?
> A thousand stories more, to teach me to beware,
> In Boccace and in Ovid's books too plainly written are.

    *   *

> For when the storms of care and troubles do arise,   (line 1207)
> Then is the time for men to know the foolish from the wise.

    *   *

> On Fortune eke he railed, he called her deaf and blind, (line 1343)
> Unconstant, fond, deceitful, rash, unruthful, and unkind.

    *   *

> Sickness the body's jail, grief jail is of the mind, (line 1389)
> If thou canst 'scape from heavy grief, true freedom shalt thou find.
> Fortune can fill nothing so full of hearty grief,
> But in the same a constant mind finds solace and relief.
> Virtue is always thrall to troubles and annoy,
> But wisdom in adversity finds cause of quiet joy.

    *   *

Who can deny that these lovely verses remind one of Shakespeare? For comparison, another sample from Brooke's translation of *Sondry Places of Scripture,* this time from the middle of the book:

> When the apostle to that Debra sayeth that the first ordinance ceased signifying that the law and the office of Priesthood were at an end because this law was weak and unprofitable, he showeth evidently that he speaketh in respect of ceremonies forasmuch as he addeth thereunto the office of sacrificing. The ceremonies had no certaintie in themselves, and of themself they help not a whit to salvation: for as touching that the promise of grace was tied unto them, and that which toils testifieth in sondry places that God should be appeased by sacrifices, and that by their sins should be blotted out, it belonged not properly to the oblations and sacrifices: but it proceedeth from another thing. (15)

Shouldn't this dreary translational style of Arthur Brooke raise the question of expunging him from consideration as the author of the captivating *Tragicall Historye* ?

Some unanswered questions concerning Brooke's authorship

1. Richard Tottel surely knew that Edward de Vere was the author of *Tragicall Historye* when he published the poem in 1562 at his printing house in Fleet Street, adjacent to Westminster (16). But did Lucas Harrison know this when he rushed *Sondry Places* into print in 1563 at his publishing house, The Crane, located more than half a mile away adjacent to St. Paul's Cathedra (17)? We should probably give Harrison the benefit of the doubt and believe that he thought Arthur Brooke wrote both books despite the marked difference in writing competence displayed in the two works.

2. Did de Vere attach the pen name "George Turberville" to *An Epitaph on the death of Master Arthur Brooke* in 1567 containing these lines:

> In proof that he for metre did excel,
> As may be judged by Juliet and her mate. . .?

Because of these lines, J. J. Munro in his 1908 publication of *Tragicall Historye* never questioned that Brooke was the author. Brame and Popova's linguistic analysis, however, suggests that de Vere wrote that epitaph (18).

3. If de Vere wrote *Tragicall Historye,* wouldn't he provide authorship clues to that effect, which he did so often in the Shakespeare plays by punning and clever code words, i.e. ciphering? Here are some possible clues.

Several times in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* Master Ford disguises himself as Master Brooke, e.g.:

> (1) II, ii, 149. (Enter Bardolph and Master Ford disguised as Brooke.)
> (2) IV, iv, 75. Ford: "Nay, I'll to him again in name of Brooke."

The keenly perceptive senior Ogburns believed that de Vere was punning on his own name, Ox-ford, and telling the world that he had disguised himself as Arthur Brooke (19). Ox-ford means a place where oxen "ford" brooks. The word "rother," meaning ox, was used in Elizabethan times. Rother sounds like Arthur. Did de Vere derive the pen name "Arthur Brooke" from "Rother Brooke" = Ox-Brook = Oxenford Brook = Oxen fording a brook?

The Ogburns also point to lines in *As You Like it* (III, ii, 276) which, like many other authorship clues, are irrelevant to the play itself (19):

> Jaques: By my troth, I was seeking for a fool when I found you.
> Orlando: He is drowned in the brook. Look but in, and you should
> see him.
> Jaques: There I shall see mine own figure.
> Orlando: Which I take to be either a fool or a cipher.

The word "fool" means "trick" as well as simpleton. Is the author telling us not only that his pen name is Brooke but also that Brooke drowned?

The author of Romeo and Juliet followed the story line of Tragicall Historye so closely, using similar passages and word-clusters, that Shakespeare would have been an outright plagiarist if he were not the author of both works.

Discussion

Those who believe that Edward de Vere wrote *Tragicall Historye*, as did the Senior Ogburns (4), Charlton Ogburn, Jr. (20), and many current Oxfordians (21), agree that it is an immature effort. But the imaginative verbal content and style are quite suggestive of a youthful Shakespeare.

The author of *Romeo and Juliet* followed the story line of *Tragicall Historye* so closely, using similar passages and word-clusters, that Shakespeare would have been an outright plagiarist if he were not the author of both works. As Daniel pointed out in 1875, "Brooke's poem contains whole scenes and many details and forms of expression adopted by Shakespeare, not found in any other versions of the story" (22). The idea that the Western World's

greatest literary genius was guilty of plagiarizing a teen-aged poet, or anyone else, is discordantly jarring.

Humans often conclude that two associated items are causally related. The Romans, knowing the logical hazards of false-association thinking, summarized the concept succinctly: *Propter hoc, ergo hoc.* 'On account of this, therefore that.' Oxfordian research has concentrated on finding historical evidence that Arthur Brooke existed as a person. Once that is established, then his name on the title page of *Tragicall History* must mean that he wrote it. *Res ipse loquitur* — the thing speaks for itself.

But does it? The Golden Age of Elizabethan literature was conjoined with the strange cultural restriction that nobles while alive could not publish the "manual labor" of their writings with their names attached. Hence, pseudonymous works abounded in the that era, with Edward de Vere being the prime example.

As evidenced in this paper, the boring, word-for-word translational style of Arthur Brooke in his *Sondry Places of Scripture* contrasts markedly with the imaginatively creative poetry of *Tragicall Historye* and makes it very unlikely that these two works were created by the same person. The poetry of *Tragicall Historye* is highly suggestive of a youthful Shakespeare, i.e. 12 year-old Edward de Vere. Brame and Popova provide linguistic evidence that Arthur Brooke was a pen name for de Vere and that de Vere not only wrote *Tragicall History* but also *Romeo and Juliet* (23).

Summary and Conclusions

1. Arthur Brooke was admitted to Middle Temple at age 18 in 1563, left within a few months and drowned on a military mission in 1564, at age 19.

2. There is no solid evidence that Brooke had any literary talent. His only definite work is the 1563 translation from French into English of *Sondry Places of Scripture.* Brooke's writing style is highly literal, unimaginative and dreary, for which the publisher, Lucas Harrison, offers excuses and apologies. The semantic evidence is compelling that Brooke could not have written the innovative, boyishly beautiful poem,

Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet.

3. Analysis of the writing style of *Tragical Historye* is highly suggestive of a youthful William Shakespeare. The concept that another literary genius lived at the same time as Edward de Vere is quite acceptable; genius coexistence has happened many times in history, e.g. Virgil, Horace and Ovid in the Rome of Augustus. But simultaneous literary geniuses with identical writing styles is a concept which does not resonate harmoniously.

4. Clues in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *As You Like it* hint that Arthur Brooke may have been a pseudonym of Edward de Vere.

5. If anyone sees no incongruity between the writing style of *Sondry Places of Scripture* and the writing style of *Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet*, then he should feel free to maintain that Arthur Brooke himself wrote *Tragicall Historye,* but he must also support the corollary conclusion that Shakespeare was a flagrant plagiarist of Brooke's narrative poem when he wrote *Romeo and Juliet.*

6. The final conclusion is obvious and significant. If the 1562 edition of *Tragicall Historye* is an early publication of William Shakespeare, this rules out William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon as the author of the Shakespeare canon, since Shaksper was not born until two years later, in 1564.

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Founded in 1957,

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dedicated to exploring the

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and researching the evidence that

Edward de Vere, the

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is the true author of

the poems and plays

of "William Shakespeare."

The Droeshout Collar

By Derran Charlton

Approximately sixteen years ago, during ongoing researches amongst the Wentworth Woodhouse Archives, Sheffield, I located the following undated print of a c. 1610 portrait depicting a youthful Lord Thomas Wentworth, 1st Earl of Stratford, Viscount Wentworth, Baron Wentworth of Wentworth Woodhouse, Newmarsh, Oversley, and Raby- Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; Lord President of the North of England; and Knight of the most noble order of the Garter {Fig. 1]. Thomas Wentworth was born on Good Friday, April 13th 1593. His head was ceremoniously removed from his shoulders on May 12th 1641, precipitating the English Civil Wars of 1642-8.

It has long been indicated, and recently reiterated on the internet (see below) that

> It has been suggested that the type of collar depicted on the engraving (First Folio) did not exist. This is not the style of collar that has ever been traced to any one else during this era, it appears to be completely unique..

Most remarkably, the c.1610 portrait depicts Thomas Wentworth wearing a collar that is identical to the one worn by William Shakespeare in the 1623 Folio engraving by Martin Droeshout [Fig. 2]. Particularly note that the identical triangular "rays" emanating from the neck are "clocks" or "pleats" characteristic of bands of the period. I suggest that the collar was not "completely unique" but I suggest that it would possibly have been most inappropriate for William Shakspere to have legally worn this type of nobleman-collar.

The portrait painter, Thomas Gainsborough (1727-88), was, of record, the first discriminating person to observe that "both the preposterous Droeshout engraving and the bizarre bust of Shakspere in Stratford church were "inane and spiritless." Gainsbourough, in 1768, journeyed to Stratford to see the bust. He wrote perceptively to Garrick: "Shakespeare's bust is a silly smiling thing." He also looked perceptively at the Droeshout engraving in the First Folio, and wrote of it: "A stupider face I never be-
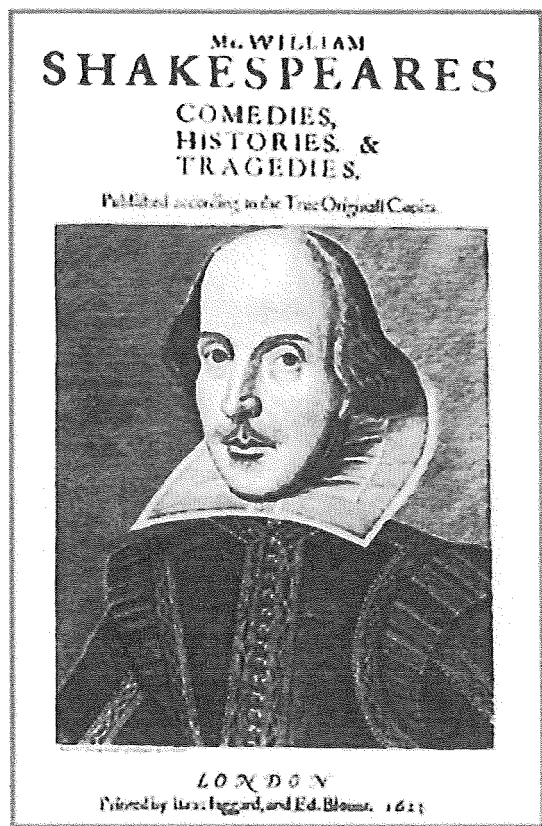

Fig. 1: Lord Wentworth

Fig. 2: Folio Engraving

held…It is impossible that such a mind and rqy of heaven could shine with such a face and a pair of eyes as that picture has."

Latterly, the late Stratfordian doyen, Samuel Schoenbaum, likened the Droeshout engraving to "a neckless head on a platter of a wired band…a decapitated Baptist being served up to Salome."

Martin Doeshout, an English printmaker of Flemish descent, supplied the engraving for the title page of the First Folio. He was only fifteen years old when Shakespeare died and just twenty-two when the First Folio was published in 1623. The engraving, a creation of a young artist of indifferent ability, unfortunately offers only a crudely executed likeness. Shakespeare wears a doublet with braid decorations and matching buttons. The strings and tassels of the stiffened linen band have been left out, and the outline of the under-propper beneath the ruff is visible on the viewers right-hand side. The edge of the band is presumably wired, and the band itself would also have been starched and pressed. The triangular "rays" emanating from the neck are "clocks"

or pleats characteristic of bands of the period. The crudity of the representation, with its anatomical distortions in both head and body, has often been commented on, and the head, which is too large for the body, is also isolated by the ruff, so that it is implausibly suspended above the more two-dimensional rendering of the torso.

Oxfordian Professor Stuart Marlow of Stuttgart observes on http://www.william-shake-speare.info/william-shake-speare-droeshout-engraving.htm.

Many opinions have been expressed about the copper engraving picture-and they are far from complimentary.

'Ludicrous' and 'Monstrous' are some terms that have been consistently applied. Samuel Schoenbaum the author of *Shakespeare's Lives,* wrote the following: … 'a huge head, placed against a starched ruff, surmounts an absurdly small tunic with oversized shoulder-wings…Light comes from several directions simultaneously: it falls on the protuberance of forehead…that horrible hydrocephalus development, as it has been called…creates an odd crescent under the right eye…' 'A hard, wooden, staring thing'-Grant White. 'Even in its best state, it is such a monstrosity that, I, for one, do not believe that it has any trustworthy exemplar'- C.M. Ingleby. 'The face is long and the forehead high; the one ear which is visible is shapeless; the top of the head is bald, but the hair falls in abundance over the ears'- Sir Sidney Lee."

At first glance one cannot help but agree! So what on earth was Martin Droeshout, the engraver, thinking of? Surely such an illustration, on an important 900 page document, commissioned by the powerful Pembroke family would have been immediately rejected as quite grotesque? Why did they choose Droeshout as the engraver? Would they really have entrusted such an important task to a raw apprentice, apparently incompetent, with no talent and no

sense of proportion or perspective?

Who was Martin Droeshout? Martin Droeshout (1601-1651) came from a Flemish family of painters and engravers. His grandfather, Michael and his elder brother, John, were both engravers and his father, John, was a painter. Martin had two nephews, sons of his brother Michael. The eldest son, John Droeshout (1599-1652), was also an engraver. Clearly this was a strong family business and an artistic family. Martin would have been trained at an early age in the family business. Martin's family came from Brussels as Protestant refugees. Martin Droeshout was 22 years old when the first Folio was published- still beyond the age of an apprentice and in fact reasonably mature for a role which required natural artistic talent. Shakespeare died in 1616 and there were no claims that Droeshout had ever met Shakespeare. It was therefore likely that Droeshout had been provided with a description of the required picture/illustration which was to be conveyed by the engraving. Ben Jonson, John Hemminge and Henry Condell, who were involved in the publication of the First Folio, all knew William Shakespeare personally and were therefore likely to have provided the engraver with a description and perhaps an existing likeness. The Burbages, when writing a letter to Pembroke, referred to Shakspere as "the man they all knew, the former actor and businessman from Stratford…"

Martin Droeshout made engravings of many famous and important people. These included John Donne, the Duke of Buckingham, the Bishop of Durham, the Marquis of Hamilton, and Lord Coventry. Most significant is that in 1631 Martin Droeshout was commissioned with the edition of Crooke's "Mikrokosmographia", a massive folio containing over 1000 pages. He therefore must have had an excellent reputation as an accomplished engraver. So there may be more to the First Folio engraving than meets the eye.

In addition to the above, the following comments have been made about the engraving: The head is out of all proportion to the body. There is a peculiar line running from the ear down to the chin. Does this signify that the face is in fact a mask? The mask speculation was suggested by Sir Edwin

Fig. 3: Young Man with a Rose

Durning-Lawrence (author of Bacon is Shakespeare) who stated that it was a cunningly drawn cryptographic picture. Could it be an actor's mask or even someone's death mask? Is the mask attached to the back of someone's head? It has also been suggested that the eyes are wrong as they appear to be two right eyes.

It has also been suggested that the type of collar depicted on the engraving did not exist. This is not a style of collar that has ever been traced to any one else during this era. It appears to be completely unique. There is no neck and the head appears to be "sitting" on the collar. The collar, as depicted, would have been an impossible part of Shakspere's apparel- the collar looks solid, it has no fastenings; how would you put this on? We looked at the collar at all angles- if it was not a collar what else could it possibly be? It suddenly dawned on us that it looked like a shield. The shape of the collar would be an unusual design as it has a concave or bowed top. All of the shields that we were familiar with had a straight top. There also appears to be a shield within a shield. Did such a shield design exist? Was there some significance to a shield to be within a shield? Our next step, of course, was to trace any shields of a similar design with the distinctive concave top shape.

From our research and investigations it would appear that according to 17th century heraldic rules, a shield within a shield signified "brethren", according to John Guillim's A Display of Heraldry (1610) where it states that "this sort of embroidering here spoken of, be of the number of differences of brethren." It is perhaps no coincidence that the First Folio was dedicated to the two Pembroke brothers, Phillip and William, referred to in the dedication of the Folio as 'the most Noble and incomparable paire of Brethren.' Their father, the Earl of

Fig. 4: James I

Pembroke was the leader of the English Rosicrucian movement and their mother was the Countess of Pembroke.

It has recently been called to my attention that David L. Roper refers to the Droeshout engraving on his web site and where can be found a portrait of a "Young Man With a Rose" by Nicholas Hillard. [Fig. 3] The unknown man, who certainly appears to be an aristocrat, is wearing a similar collar but with an embroidered edge. This can be viewed at: www.dlroper.shakespearians.com/Young_Man.jpg. Furthermore, a somewhat similar collar can also be found on James I. [Fig. 4] The difference is obvious- Shakspere was no Noble or aristocrat. Or was he?
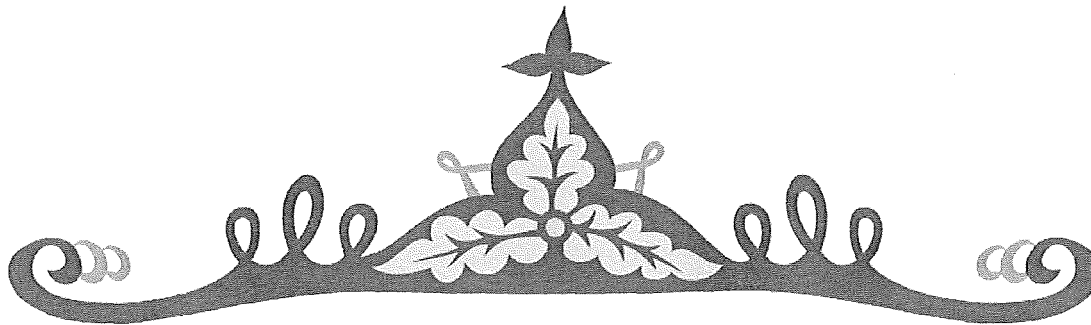
That Wild and Crazy Shakspere

"Indifferent to plot and character [in *Merry Wives of Windsor*], Shakespeare gets his laughs as he can." Russell Fraser in *Shakespeare: The Later Years* (63).

Christopher Marlowe, Francis Bacon and Will Shakspere walk into the bar at the Mermaid Tavern, and Shakspere says, "Give me a cup of sack. I am a rogue if I drunk today." (1H4, 2.4.152)

The bartender says, "Hey, which one of you guys wrote Shakespeare's plays?"

"Not me," says Marlowe, removing Bacon's hand from his knee.

"Not I," says Bacon.

"And how about you?" says the bartender to Shakspere.

"I don't know," says Shakspere. "I'm waiting to see what it says in the First Folio."

Later that afternoon, they wander over to the Globe to see what's playing. All the seats are taken so they push their way through the groundlings. Shakspere disappears. The actors are declaiming. The prompter below the front of the stage is struggling with his papers, when Shakspere suddenly appears on stage.

"Hey," says the prompter, "What are you doing up there. Why are you crossing the stage?"

"To get to the other side," roars Shakspere. (Ur-Hamlet, Act' Scene' Line')

"Ka, boom!" thumps an offstage drum.

After the show, Shakspere walks into a deli in Shoreditch and greets the counterman: "Knock, knock."

"OK" says the counterman, "who's there?"

"Hamlet," Shakspere giggles.

"Hamlet who?"

"Ham, let-tuce, to-ma-to, with mayonnaise on rye to go. Hee, hee, hee."

Leaving the deli, Shakspere is walking down the street, wearing his coat of arms, when a beggar approaches him and says, "Sir, could you help me? I haven't tasted food for a week."

"Don't worry," says Shakspere, giving him a playful punch on the shoulder. "It still tastes the same."

Walking on, he runs into John Manningham.

"Hey, Johnny, you heard the story about me and Dickie Burbage?"

"No. What story?"

"The one where this bawd saw Dickie playing Richard the third, and she told him to come over to her place and tell them at the door that he was Richard the third. You put it in your diary."

"I never heard this story."

"Yes, you did. You must have forgotten. I overheard this assignation (that's French for hooking-up) and got there first. And when we were finished, Dickie arrives and tells the servant that he's Richard the third, but I had the servant tell him that William the Conqueror came first. That's me, William. Get it?"

"Yeah, I get it, but I never heard that story."

"You will, because John Payne Collier is going to put it in your diary."

– Richard Whalen

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am compelled to write as no doubt many others will be in response to "Ideational Change, Why Is It So Difficult" by Paul Altrocchi. I found the great majority of the essay an exceedingly veracious discussion of the propensity of humans to cling to outmoded and irrational beliefs. I was shocked however, to discover that Dr. Altrocchi's focus was to argue that the Oxfordian failure to recognize "The Monument" was such a perfect example of this thinking. For it is far too premature to declare this reading of the Sonnets is genuine. Rather, I must argue conversely that it is another failure to realize indeed that errors are perpetuated by traditional thinking.

As I so recently introduced another option of understanding the Sonnets in a PT light, Dr. Altrocchi can be forgiven for not altering his own paradigm. None the less, Dr. Altrocchi might "look in his glass" to see his failure to appreciate that "The Monument" is actually still another example of the grip of "conventional wisdom" on the Sonnets with its understanding of the Sonnets largely the same as orthodoxy has long proclaimed. While far worse, a theory that has little justification for its origins and one characterized more by artificial and contrived readings that only contains a hint at the real truth.

If one truly wishes to understand the sonnets and is capable of a "paradigm shift", as I previously pointed out, another option exists (see my letter in the Fall 2006 newsletter). One which offers another opportunity but that requires that readers understand the amazing vividity of the metaphors in the Sonnets; understand that the vast majority of the sonnets are actually to Elizabeth; and critically that the sequence of the Sonnets is in reverse chronological order.

Understanding the Sonnets in this light is to understand that they were written almost completely prior to 1601 and that as Dorothy Ogburn pointed out long ago, "The Phoenix and the Turtle" is the complimentary metaphorical eulogy of Elizabeth. But to fail to understand them in this light is not only a failure to explain them, it is a failure to understand Shakespeare and offers far less hope of understanding the cover-up regarding Oxford's authorship.

Sadly, the other aspect that I did concur with is that Oxfordians have made very little progress in convincing the world that Oxford is Shakespeare. This is at least one truth I hope more Oxfordians will confront if they are incapable of confronting the far more interesting truth I've attempted to share.

Sincerely, Alan Tarica

Book Review

By Derran Charlton

Behind Shakespeare's Mask
By Charles Murray Willis
UPSO Ltd., East Sussex, Pub.

This excellent and prompting book by Charles Willis is a follow-up to his first two acclaimed books, "Shakespeare and George Puttenham's *Arte of English Posie*" (2003), and "George Puttenham and the Authorship of Shakespeare's Sonnets" (2005). Both explored the life and work of the mysterious writer and poet, George Puttenham (1529-1591?). The first book examined the anonymous *The Arte of English Posie*, referred to by William Shakespeare, and the second that argued that Puttenham may have authored the Sonnets, addressing them to Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford.

In his foreword to this third book of Willis, Sir Derek Jacobi, a joint-patron of the De Vere Society and one of Britain's most notable actors (having appeared in numerous Shakespeare adaptations on stage and film, and has performed Hamlet nearly four hundred times professionally), perceptively writes: "The authorship question is alive and well, and here is a fascinating additional spotlight on the breathtaking discrepancies and obvious anomalies in the accepted version of the creation of the Shakespeare canon. Here is another welcomed contribution to serious academic debate with which orthodoxy finds it so hard to connect, other than through unbecoming vilification. The introduction of George Puttenham as a key, if not prime, player in this mesmerizing "whodunit" is presented with a beguiling juxtaposition of fact and analysis, convincingly argued. It could even be true."

Sir Derek enhanced his considered opinions when he sent the following examples of his comments to the Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference at the Globe earlier this year:

"Like a growing number of interested parties, I have had grave doubts for some time now of the validity of the Stratford man's claim to have written some of the greatest literature the world has produced. Indeed, I must admit that it still seems incredible to me that one mind could possibly have encompassed such a monumental feat.

Is there any incontrovertible, unequivocal evidence that Stratford Will was even an actor? But, of course, with doubt comes not discussion but accusation. We are labeled eccentrics and loonies. All these years of academic dedication lavished on the wrong man must be defended at all costs it seems. Reputations tremble, an industry turns

Willis argues that it was highly unlikely that the poems could have been written by William Shakspere from Stratford, or could have had any connection with him.

pale, and the weapons of ridicule and abuse are leveled and fired. But at least the battle lines have been drawn, and it is heartening to see how many recruits are enlisting in the 'Doubter's Army' such as people like myself who cannot reconcile the illiteracy of Shakspere's offspring, alongside his own deep and adept knowledge of medicine, art, music, geography, law and his almost nonchalant use of metaphor form, for example, sporting activities that were exclusively the pursuit of the aristocracy, not to mention his mastery of history, languages and the intricacies of survival at court. The only evidence of Shakspere's literary life was produced after he died and is open to dispute. Nothing, while alive, apart from some shaky signatures, puts a pen in his hand. Legend, hearsay and myth have created the writer.

I have taken part in thirty-one plays so far, and I can imagine, I can feel, someone behind the words whose education and life experiences, whose knowledge of all strata of society, whose relationships and temperament simply do not fit the grain hoarder, the money lender and the entrepreneur. It is not enough to say, 'Oh, but the works of Shakespeare survive whoever wrote them; it doesn't therefore matter.' Yes, it does! The disclosure of the real author would enhance not only the historical significance but also the contemporary excitement of these treasures for both actors and spectators; and it should not be regarded as potential professional suicide, heresy or an actor's silliness to come out and say so.

The restrictive orthodox analysis must be open to seriously considered debate. There must be a challenge to the selective evidence of scholars, based on their desire to justify their man rather than assess objective criteria. Too much is conjecture, guesswork, allegory and assumption, what one writer has called a 'well documented blank.'"

In his work, *Behind Shakespeare's Mask*, Charles Willis cogently argues that the Elizabethan writer, George Puttenham, may have written the first two published works by William Shakespeare, the poems *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *Lucrece* (1594), and they were written as a secret assignment for the Lord Treasurer, Lord Burghley. Willis maintains that Puttenham was Lord Burghley's most skillful writer of Protestant propaganda material, and the name "William Shakespeare" was used as a pen-name to conceal Puttenham's authorship and his connections with Lord Burghley.

Willis argues that it was highly unlikely that the poems could have been written by William Shakspere from Stratford, or could have had any connection with him. The poems were printed by Richard Field, also from Stratford-upon-Avon, and according to the historical records, the Field and Shakspere families had long been involved in legal disputes between the years 1556-1592. Therefore Richard Field would have known of William Shakspere and his mother

Mary Arden, who during the 1580s had two Arden cousins who were implicated in Catholic plots to kill Queen Elizabeth. Richard Field's print-ship since the 1570's, had had a strict policy of only printing works which promoted the Protestant cause, and Field's first printing commission in 1588 had been a Protestant propaganda paper by Lord Burghley. Field would never have received authorization or permission to print the poems if they had been written by William Shakspere whose family was directly linked to two Catholic plots to kill Queen Elizabeth.

Shakspere's mother, Mary Arden, was the daughter of Robert Arden, a prosperous farmer in the Stratford-upon-Avon region. The family were a branch of the Ardens of Park Hall in Warwickshire, an old and large Catholic family. In 1593, Edward Arden was executed for treason having been found guilty of involvement in a failed Catholic plot to assassinate the Queen. In 1585, John Arden from Evenly, Northamptonshire, near Stratford-upon-Avon, was charged with complicity in the Babington Plot. Anthony Babinton and thirteen others were found guilty of treason and conspiracy to murder Queen Elizabeth,

and put the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, on the throne of England.

In summation, I found Willis' excellent book to be immensely stimulating; but the more I worked over it, the more I questioned the validity of some of his original and thought-provoking conclusions. For example, whilst Puttenham's name was deliberately concealed from all his known works (p.53), I did not find a "Shakespearean-styled" comparison between his oft-quoted literary writings and the fluidity of Venus and Adonis. Nonetheless, *Behind Shakespeare's Mask* deserves the highest of recommendations.

Welcome

"Then frolic, lordlings, to fair Concord's walls . . . "
--Locrine I.iv.11

Welcome to Concordia University in Portland, Oregon and the home of the Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference. We are the academic home of annual assemblies that bring together professors, teachers, students, playwrights, actors, directors and lovers of Shakespeare from all over the world to share research about and insights into the Elizabethan world's most acclaimed poet-playwright with the primary goals of establishing who the writer the world knows as Shakespeare was and exploring why he wrote anonymously and probably pseudonymously.

Navigate through the conference website for information on the annual April conference, the annual August seminar, Concordia University's plans for the establishment of a Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre and Library, the conference's scholarship fund, and books on and relevant to the Shakespeare Authorship Question that are available for purchase through the Concordia University Bookstore. Also available are authorship articles and addresses, as well as links to the websites of various Oxfordian, Marlovian, Baconian and other Shakespeare authorship organisations in the United States and the United Kingdom.

For more information on the April conference, August seminar, or Shakespeare authorship studies in general, contact the Centre's Director, Prof. Daniel Lee Christopher Andrew Rupert Wright, at dwright@cu-portland.edu Copyright 2007 - Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference

Conference <http://www.authorshipstudies.org/conference/index.cfm>