



The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

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“Dedicated to Researching and Honoring the True Bard”



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“Too hot! Too Hot!” *The Winter's Tale* 1.2.108

Spring 2007

GREETINGS

We have an interesting and informative newsletter. Of interest is a report on the Concordia Conference as well as a notice of the upcoming joint SOS/SF Conference in Carmel. Just when you thought it was safe to read the sonnets again, an article and a letter concern this important subject. You will continue to learn and strengthen your Oxford resolve as you further read of the tremendous research being done and documents being uncovered. This newsletter offers reports on events, observations, letters, and, of course, the articles. Please continue to send any of these communications.

Lew Tate, ed.
tate3211@bellsouth.net

Cocordia Summary

by Richard Smiley and Richard Joyrich

The 11th Annual Shakespeare Authorship Conference was held April 12-15 at Concordia University in Portland, Oregon. There was a wide variety of topics, all presented by speakers with impressive academic and scholarly backgrounds.

The first presentation on Thursday was by William Michael Anthony Cecil, 8th Marquis of Exeter and 18th Baron Burghley. He is a direct descendent of William Cecil, the 1st Baron Burghley, Edward de Vere's father-in-law and the model for Polonius in *Hamlet*. The presentation described William Cecil's famous precepts he wrote out for his sons and how they closely mirror the precepts given by Polonius in *Hamlet* to his son Laertes. The Cecil precepts were eventually published but well after the writing of *Hamlet*. Therefore, the author needed to hear them “first hand” (for example, at Cecil House where Edward de Vere had been living).

The second presentation, by Ian Haste, described Mr. Haste's research into the amazing passage in Act 5 of *Merchant of Venice*, where 9 out of 10 consecutive lines all end with the word “Ring” (capitalized in the First Folio). It turns out that the Italian word “vera,” although more typically used to denote a ring-like enclosure, was used to refer to a wedding ring in the Italian dialect used in Venice at the time de Vere was living there. This means that the plural form of the word “vere” could be used to mean more than one wedding ring. Mr. Haste pointed out that the original Italian source for *Merchant of Venice* only had one married couple and one ring, but Shakespeare had added the characters of Gratiano and Nerissa, thereby making the play refer to two rings. This extra ring receives emphasis

by being mentioned in the last line of the play. Mr. Haste postulates that since there is more than one ring, de Vere can indulge in the pun on his name “vere” in the passage described above. The ending of each line with “Ring” or “Vere” recalls the famous “Echo Poem” written earlier by de Vere.

The third presentation was via a DVD of the presenter who sent it in when she realized she couldn't attend in person. It was by Claire Van Kampen, former music director at the Globe Theater in London (under Mark Rylance). Her presentation tried to show that Bacon was the leader of a group of writers (including Edward de Vere) who collaborated to produce the “Shakespeare” plays.

William Jansen then presented research conducted by Dr. Eric Altschuler and himself that tended to show that the plays must have been originally written for private performances in halls, rather than in a public theater, based on how Shakespeare would often have a major character say a line immediately after the stage direction for the character to enter or have other characters act like someone has left immediately after a stage direction for an exit. The idea is that this only works in a small venue with side entrances and exits so that a major character can quickly enter and get to the front of the stage or quickly exit and that in a large theater like the Globe with only an entrance at the back, the major character wouldn't make it on time.

Friday began with William Farina giving a nice talk on how Shakespeare shows amazing knowledge of Venice in the *Merchant of Venice*, and he wondered whether it was more likely that William of Stratford picked

(cont'd on p. 7)

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The Roscius Annotation Revisited: Epicurean Discovery or Ambiguous Tidbit?

Paul H. Altrocchi, M.D. and Alan H. Nelson, Ph.D

*Be not swept off your feet by the
vividness*

*of the impression, but say to
yourself,*

"Impression, wait for me a little.

*Let me
see what you are and what you
represent.*

Let me savor you."

- Epictetus, 1st Century AD (1)

Fere libentur homines id quod
volunt credunt.

"Men readily believe what they
want to believe." (3)

How have further research, reflection, and the mellowing effect of four years of time clarified the legitimacy of these differing interpretations of the same six word Roscius annotation?

*Oxfordians also were exuberant, concluding that the
annotation obviously implied that William Shaksper was only
an actor from Stratford, thereby destroying the case for his
being the great playwright.*

When the first Roscius annotation paper was published in 2003 in *Shakespeare Matters* (2), a plethora of internet exchanges circled cyberspace. The excitement of Stratfordians was palpable, with exultation that the discovery should finally end Oxfordian skepticism that Shaksper of Stratford was an actor. Later they claimed that "Roscius" actually referred to his stardom as a playwright, establishing once and for all that he was truly William Shakespeare.

Oxfordians also were exuberant, concluding that the annotation obviously implied that William Shaksper was only an actor from Stratford, thereby destroying the case for his being the great playwright. One eminent Oxfordian stated on the internet: "It's a tremendous breakthrough, and in my view virtually destroys the Stratfordian case."

Thus each side of the Shakespeare authorship debate claimed that the six-word handwritten Roscius annotation was an important research finding confirming their own authorship theory. These diametrically opposite conclusions validate what Julius Caesar said 2000 years ago:

The annotation

To recapitulate the problem, William Camden's *Britannia*, first published in 1586, details the environmental and historical features of cities and towns in England, including what made each place noteworthy. In the third edition of 1590 he describes Stratford-on-Avon as follows, translated from Camden's Latin (4):

"From here the River Avon flows down more strongly, first through Charlcott . . . and thence through the not undistinguished little market town of Stratford which owes all of its reputation to two of its foster sons, John of Stratford, the Archbishop of Canterbury who built the church, and Hugh Clopton, Lord Mayor of London who, not without very great expense, built the stone bridge over the Avon supported by fourteen arches."

At the bottom of that page in the Huntington Library copy in San Marino, California,

(Roscius continued on page 9)

“Leass for Making” Shakespeare Outed as a Liar?

By Dr. Frank Davis

While recently working on another project, looking up information regarding the 1623 First Folio, I discovered the web site (1) concerning Glasgow University’s lone copy of the 1623 First Folio of Shakespeare’s works. Their copy is described as a “class II B”, meaning it is in “fair” condition. What is important about this copy is that it has many annotations, and although the original owner is unknown, what is known is that the original annotator was a contemporary of the time of the First Folio. This first annotator is the one who has generated my interest in making this report, although there were multiple later annotators during the course of ownership of this particular copy; but these are of little importance here.

The annotations in question occur on the page listing the names of the principal actors. (Fig. 1) Underneath many (10 out of the 26) of the names of the actors (including the first, William Shakespeare) are comments such as: “know”, “by eyewitness”, “by report”, etc. What is most interesting is what is found annotated beneath the name of William Shakespeare. (Fig. 2) [Note: the annotation beneath Richard Burbage reads “by report”] The web site calls

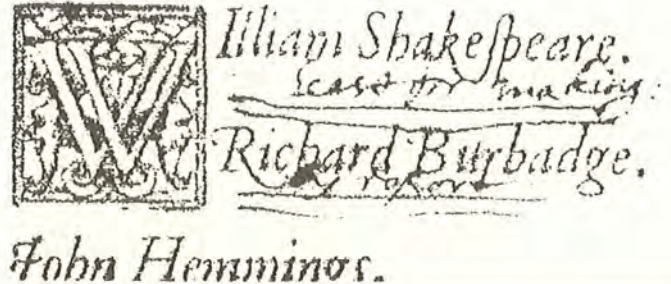


Fig. 2

this annotation under William Shakespeare’s name “an intriguing comment.” The annotation is:

“leass for making”

This word, “leass,” did not register with me, nor apparently did it with the people at Glasgow University. Therefore, they referred it to the eminent Shakespearean scholar, Jonathan Bate of the University of Warwick. According to the Glasgow University web site, he made the following response announced in September, 2004:

Professor Jonathan Bate of the University of Warwick suggests that this annotation actually reads as ‘Least for making’ (or possibly ‘Ceast for making’). In other words, the comment could imply that Shakespeare did the ‘least’ acting of anyone in the company because his main job was writing (‘making’) the plays.

The Workes of William Shakespeare, containing all his Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies: Truely set forth, according to their first ORIGINALL.

The Names of the Principall Actors in all these Playes.

William Shakespeare.
Richard Burbadge.

John Hemmings.

Augustine Phillips.

William Kempt.

Thomas Poope.

George Bryan.

Henry Condell.

William Slye.

Richard Cowly.

John Lowine.

Samuell Crosse.

Alexander Cooke.

Samuel Gilburne.

Robert Armin.

William Ostler.

Nathan Field.

John Underwood.

Nicholas Tooley.

William Ecclestone.

Joseph Taylor.

Robert Benfield.

Robert Gough.

Richard Robinson.

John Shancke.

John Rice.

Fig. 1

Being curious, I chanced to look for myself for any meaning of “leass.” Searching the OED, I found something most remarkable. Although there is no specific entry for “leass,” there are multiple meanings for “lease” spelled various ways. As a noun or adjective, the word may be spelled “leas”, “laes”, “lese”, “les”, “lees”. “lesse”, “less”, “leace”, “leis(s)”, “leas(s)e”, “leys”, and “lase”. [Note particularly the spelling, “leas(s)e”]. What is important, of course, is the meaning. As an adjective, it means: **“untrue, false, lying”**, as a noun, **“untruth, falsehood, lying.”** The OED here also states that the word was common in medieval poetry. A search by internet (2) has revealed “leis” was used three times by the Scot poet, Robert Henryson (1425-1500) in his rendition of Aesop’s fables first published in 1570, showing the term was recognized in early Elizabethan times:

(1)

For dreid off deith, he duschit ouer ane dyke,
And brak his nek. ‘Thow **leis**’ (quod scho), ‘fals tyke.’

[For dread of death, he dashed over a wall
And broke his neck. ‘Thou **liar**’ (quote she), ‘false scoundrel.’]

(2)

As trew Jugis; I beschrew thame ay that **leis**.
[As true Judges; I curse them always that **lie**.]

(3)

The revand Wolf unto ane man but leis
 [The thieving Wolf unto any man doubtless (no lie), where
 "but leis" = "without lies" or "doubtless"]

I have warned Oxfordians in the past to be careful about making assessments only through our eyes (our own prejudices), and I wanted to be careful here. But observe the manner in which Jonathan Bate seemed to try to escape the dilemma of this possible interpretation. His solution seemed quite suspicious. In my mind, there is likely little chance that Bate, and possibly Glasgow University as well, are not aware or likely became aware of the possible meanings as given above. If so, in the very least, he should have listed these meanings as possible options.

Of course, there is still the question that Bate's transcription (unlike Glasgow's) has raised regarding the word "leass" as being instead, "least" or "ceast". That issue required further review.

Christopher Paul was consulted and he brought to my attention a reference on the internet noting that this same annotation was discussed by Julia Cleave at The Shakespeare Authorship Trust, Third Annual Meeting, in July of 2005.(3) There, Cleave stated that she had discovered this annotation "by chance." She described the word "leass" to mean "least" or "less", and the reference to "making" meant writing plays or poetry. She offered the conclusion that Shakespeare was known less for writing plays and more for being a player. Cleave did not mention Jonathan Bate's assessment of a year earlier at her conference report. Cleave did go on to argue that "the annotator had heard rumors about the collaborative nature of Shakespeare's plays, or that Shakespeare was a front man for an anonymous author."

With some effort and help from Derran Charlton, I was able to obtain the e-mail address of Ms. Cleave, and I communicated with her. Not knowing her authorship persuasion, I was reluctant to cite my suspicions regarding the annotation in question. Ms Cleave did subsequently respond and was kind enough to include an attachment of her article she planned to have published in the April issue of the *The De Vere Society Newsletter*. (4) I was amazed to find that she had now also noted the OED meaning as given above! Although my "finding" was independently discovered, Ms Cleave definitely deserves the credit of "first" in this case. My heartiest congratulations to her! Here we have a case of "serendipity" from both sides of "The Pond."

Also more to the credit of Ms Cleave, is her reporting that Shakespeare recorded the use of "leasing" twice: *Twelfth Night* 1.5.105, "now Mercury endue thee with leasing" and in *Coriolanus* 5.2.22, "and in his praise have almost stamped the leasing." These quotations were confirmed by me in Schmidt (5) where the definition of "leasing" is given as "a euphemism for lying, falsehoods."

In addition to Shakespeare's usage as reported by Cleave, Paul has identified other contemporary Elizabethan authors that used "leasing" to denote "lying" or "untruthful." Edmund Spenser used the word several times with this meaning:

(1)

The Shepheardes Calender (1579)
 Fye on thee Diggon, and all thy foule leasing

(2)

COLIN CLOUTS Come home againe (1595)
 No leasing new, not Grandams fable stale,
 But auncient truth confirm'd with credence old.

(3)

The Faerie Queene (1596)
 But that false Pilgrim, which that leasing told, [Book I, Canto 6]
 For he loathed leasing, and base flattery, [Book VI. Canto 1]

John Lowine.
~~By appointment~~
 Samuel Croffe.

Fig. 3

William Ostler.
~~to the~~
 Nathan Field.
~~to the~~
 John Underwood.
~~to the~~
 Nicholas Tooley.
~~to the~~
 William Ecclestone.
~~to the~~
 Joseph Taylor.
~~to the~~
 Robert Benfield.
~~to the~~

Fig. 4

e should | Sir Iohn and all.
 ic Anne | Ford. Let it be so (Sir Iohn:)
 -masters | To Master *Bronse*, you yet shall hold your word
 For he, to night, shall lye with Mistris Ford:

very good, right.

further into't, and I haue a disguise, to sound *Falstaffe*; if
 I finde her honest, I loose not my laboꝛ: if she be other-
 wise, tis labour well bestowed. *Exeunt.*
A good deal of news in it.

Fig. 5

Even the *King James Bible* (1612) uses "leasing" in Psalm 5:6 saying:

Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the Lord will abhor the bloody deceitful man.

Derran Charlton also has provided me with a copy of the document page in question, and it is his opinion as well as that of Christopher Paul that the word is, in fact, "leass" as had been interpreted originally by Glasgow University. Bate's transcription of a possible "c" for "l" is disproved by the comparison of the letter "l" and "c" in other annotations, and the double "s" in "leass" compares favorably with the double "s" in "eyewitnesse" under "John Lowine." (Fig. 3) Other enlarged examples of annotations were provided by Glasgow. (Fig 4 and 5)

I believe we have in this original Shakespeare First Folio contemporary documentary evidence of someone who knew certain actors and knew of actors of the Elizabethan/Jacobean period that has stated his opinion that the

actor, William Shakespeare, was "untruthful or lying for making" [plays]!

*I believe we have in this original
 Shakespeare First Folio contemporary
 documentary evidence of someone who
 knew certain actors and knew of actors of
 the Elizabethan/Jacobean period that has
 stated his opinion that the actor, William
 Shakespeare, was "untruthful or lying for
 making" [plays]!*

Notes

1. Christopher Paul, personal communication. Source given: <http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/exhibus/month/July2001.html>
2. <http://www.scotstext.org/roughs/Robert-henryson-1.asp>
3. <http://www.shakespeareauthorshiptrust.org.uk/2005>
4. Cleave, Julia. More a Player Than a Playwright? Personal communication: February 25, 2007.
5. Schmidt, Alexander. Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary, 2 volumes. New York: Dover Publications, Inc. 1971. (vol. 1, 637)

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Shakespeare Authorship Coalition

Report on William Shakspeare's Birthday

by John Shahan

Today, on the 391st anniversary of the death of Stratford's Mr. William "Shakspeare," generally regarded as the author of the works of William "Shakespeare," a new organization – the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition (SAC) – posted on its website the names of 132 signers of its "Declaration of Reasonable Doubt About the Identity of William Shakespeare."

The SAC says it plans to continue operating the website, gathering and posting names of signatories, through April 23, 2016, the 400th anniversary of the death of Mr. William "Shakspeare" of Stratford.

The list includes, most notably, prominent Shakespearean actors Sir Derek Jacobi and Mark Rylance, former artistic director at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London, plus Dean Keith Simonton, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of California at Davis, a Shakespeare lover who is widely regarded by his peers as perhaps the world's leading expert on creativity and genius. Simonton reveres Shakespeare, but can't accept the traditional attribution to the man from Stratford. Also named on the list is Charles Champlin, former Arts Critic Emeritus at the *Los Angeles Times*.

The 132 declaration signers include 34 current or former college and university faculty members, 34 people with various types of doctoral degrees, and another 31 people with various master's degrees.

"This is a man bites dog story," said SAC chairman John Shahan, principal author of the declaration. "Orthodox Shakespeare scholars would have the public believe that only deranged people in isolated fringe groups question the identity of William Shakespeare. Nothing could be further from the truth."

The declaration itself names twenty prominent doubters of the past, including Mark Twain, Henry and William James, Walt Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Sigmund Freud, Orson Welles, Tyrone Guthrie, Charlie Chaplin, John Galsworthy, Sir John Gielgud, U.S. Supreme Court Justices Harry A. Blackmun and Lewis F. Powell, Jr., Mortimer J. Adler, editor of the University of Chicago, and Paul Nitze, co-founder of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

"If orthodox scholars were correct, it would be impossible to come up with such a list," Shahan said.

"One wonders, when orthodox scholars characterize all authorship doubters as 'conspiracy theorists,' or 'snobs' who cannot accept the idea of a commoner having the ability to produce great literature, exactly which of these outstanding individuals are they referring to? Was Walt Whitman, the poet of Democracy and the common man, just a snob? Charlie Chaplin? Twain? Reporters should ask them. When they say authorship doubters are all irrational, does that include the Supreme Court Justices? Now, they might also

ask, if the "ignorant fools" could write such a declaration, why haven't you?"

According to its website Home page, the SAC "has nothing against the man from Stratford-on-Avon, but we doubt that he was the author of the works. Our goal is to legitimize the issue in academia so students, teachers and professors can feel free to pursue it. This is necessary because the issue is widely viewed as settled in academia and is treated as a taboo subject. We believe that an open-minded examination of the evidence shows that the issue should be taken seriously. Your signature on the declaration will help us make the case that there is reasonable doubt about the author."

For more information contact:
www.DoubtAboutWill.org, or
 John Shahan at (909) 626-2000

OXFORD'S LETTERS

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

Read by Sir Derek Jacobi

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

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Narrative and editing by Stephanie Hopkins Hughes

Recorded by Malcolm Blackmoor at EFS Motivation Sound
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Concordia Summary (cont'd from p. 1)

up this knowledge in the Mermaid Tavern or that Edward de Vere picked it up when he was living in Venice in 1575-6. Mr. Farina talked about somewhat obscure details in the play that would seem to require first-hand experience with Venice. Mr. Farina mentioned how some orthodox scholars try to discount the idea that Shakespeare actually visited Venice since the famous canals are not mentioned in the play (except for one reference to the Rialto which is a bridge). This is similar to how some scholars believe that Marco Polo never actually went to China since he doesn't mention the Great Wall. However, in each of these cases it seems that such features were so well known to the public that their presence would not need to be mentioned when describing life in Venice or China.

Paul Nicholson, executive director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and recent convert to non-Stratfordianism (although he has not yet determined his favorite alternative author), then spoke on the responses he got when he asked different people at the OSF (actors, directors, dramaturgists, etc) what effect, if any, would there be on their work or performances if it were proven that someone other than William of Stratford wrote the plays. Most people responded that it probably wouldn't change things very much, but there might be new "nuances" to performances and that rehearsal and educational programs could change. The idea seems to be that the plays of Shakespeare is so rich that adding "biographical" data won't require substantial changes in how they can be presented.

William Leahy, Ph.D. from Brunel University in London, spoke on his achievement of starting a Masters Program in Authorship Studies at his University and then spoke at great length on the nature of traditional authority (truth seems to be what recognized authorities say it is) and the difficulty of effecting changes in what people believe is true. He mentioned a proposal to fund an authorship program he had submitted to a funding agency that was rejected, noting that one of the two reviewers simply dismissed the authorship issue as non-existent.

Hank Whittemore presented more on his Monument Theory of the sonnets. In this presentation, Mr. Whittemore concentrated on the very important central 100 sonnets of the "monument" noting that they formed a narrative sequence of Southampton's incarceration and subsequent release from the Tower of London.

William Boyle presented evidence on how the Earl of Essex was talked about in connection with the continuing debate about who would succeed Elizabeth. There were suggestions that some people thought the Earl would be the most influential person to

decide the succession (a "kingmaker") or even that he had a claim to succeed himself. Was he really a bastard son of Elizabeth? This was a fascinating look into some of the "behind-the-scenes" politics going on in Elizabeth's court.

On Saturday morning we were treated to a rare Oxfordian-Stratfordian collaboration on a paper by Dr. Paul Altrocchi and Dr. Alan Nelson about the annotation apparently made by a Richard Hunt between 1621 and 1661 while he was vicar of Ichington in his copy of William Camden's *Britannia* referring to William Shakespeare of Stratford as "our Roscius." Oxfordians and Stratfordians have each tried to "latch on" to this as a "smoking gun" that is beneficial to their own theory. The difficulty is that although "Roscius" is almost always used as a term for an actor, Altrocchi and Nelson found that it could possibly also be used to talk about a playwright and was so used in another document dating around the time of the annotation. So the jury's still out on this one.

Alan Nelson, Ph.D., then described an amazing amount of work he did in searching many databases containing a total of thousands of names in London and Stratford to find out how many Shakespeares, Shaksperes, Chaxperes, Brakespears, ShaksySpeares, Shakeshafts, Shakelegs, etc. he could find. It was fun to listen to, and it impressed the audience on the nature of such archival research. Dr. Nelson's point after showing all the various spellings and usages of the name, not all of which referred to either Shakespeare as a man in Stratford or Shakespeare as an author, was that is unfair and illegitimate to maintain the use of "Shaksper" for the Stratford man and "Shakespeare" for the author, even as a "convention" to distinguish them.

Dr. Earl Showerman gave another in his series of papers on Greek influences on the plays, this time covering *The Winter's Tale* and *Pericles*, in particular the idea of resurrection. Dr. Showerman has a great deal to say on this subject and has made the point many times that the author of the plays needed a great deal of familiarity with the Greek authors, (in some cases, in the original language).

Rima Greenhill, Ph.D. gave part two (part one given last year and recently published in the Oxfordian) of her work on allusions and characterizations in *Loves Labors Lost* informed by circumstances in Russian-English Relations from 1584-1598, many of which were only reported on secretly within the court. Many characters are based on Ivan the Terrible and his sons who succeeded him. Dr. Greenhill believes that earlier versions of this play, written by de Vere for the court, probably had even more of these sophisticated

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insider spoofs of the unsophisticated and sometimes cruel Russian leaders. In one instance, Ivan the Terrible sought the hand of Mary Hastings, a lady to whom Oxford's father had entered into a marriage agreement when Mary and Edward de Vere were children. This provided Oxford another opportunity for some insider jokes in *LLL*.

In his presentation Richard Whalen detailed many of the ambiguities found in the prefatory material in the First Folio, almost all by Ben Jonson, making this "document" unsuitable to be read at face value to provide Stratfordians with "evidence" for the Stratford man as the author Shakespeare. Ben Johnson's use of ambiguity in his writing has been noted by his biographers and there is no reason to believe that he put this lifetime habit aside for the FF.

Bonner Miller Cutting gave an excellent talk expanding on her work, recently published in *Shakespeare Matters*, on the famous triptych painting made for Lady Anne Clifford, who was connected by marriage and other means to just about everyone in the English nobility including being married for a time to Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery and one of the "incomparable brethren" of the First Folio. This large complex painting depicts several scenes in Lady Anne's life as well as several of her family members. It also shows almost fifty books including virtually all important works of literature and art of the time. However, it includes no First Folio or other work relating to Shakespeare. It is quite clear that Lady Anne put into this painting exactly what she thought was important for people to know about her and her family. There must have been a family or political reason why she would want to exclude Shakespeare's works and this would require her to know that the author was de Vere.

The Saturday night banquet at the University Club saw awards for Artistic Excellence presented to Claire van Kampen, former Director of Music at Shakespeare's Globe Theater, and Paul Nicholson, Executive Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. The Award for Scholarly Excellence was presented to William Farina for his new book *De Vere as Shakespeare*. Gary Withers from Concordia then spoke on the new Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre to be built on the Concordia Campus and the new Masters Program in Authorship Studies at Concordia to be held in association with the new program at Brunel University in London under Professor Leahy. Finally, it was announced that there would be a signing of the new Declaration of Reasonable Doubt by ten members of the Concordia faculty and administration.

The first presentation on Sunday was by Deena Linstedt, who expressed the theory that, judging from the way women are treated in the plays, Shakespeare may have been the pen name of a woman.

She suggests Elizabeth Trentham, Edward de Vere's second wife, as the author of the plays with perhaps some input from de Vere as well.

Jan Scheffer, Ph.D. surveyed the known history of Martin Droeshout, the engraver of the famous image in the First Folio and mentioned many of the peculiarities of this image. The conclusion is that these "mistakes" were probably deliberate and are meant to convey hidden meanings, or at least serve to alert the reader that "something else was going on.."

Darby Mitchell Degrand spoke next on her interpretation of what the "mistakes" in the Droeshout engraving mean. One quite interesting interpretation of hers is that the image may be the top half of some kind of playing card and that looking at the image upside down, as the bottom half of the card can reveal more hidden meanings. There are also apparent heraldic meanings in the image. Her final conclusion is that the plays were a collaborative work of Raleigh, Marlowe, having faked his death, and Shakespeare of Stratford, the front man.

Ren Draya, Ph.D. and Michael Delahoyde, Ph.D. then spoke on *Othello*, taking us "around the play in eighty lines", the title of their talk by going line-by-line through the first 42 lines of the play, 3 isolated middle lines further showing the author's familiarity with Venice, and the last 35 lines of the play. They illuminated many Oxfordian elements and provided interesting other commentary on the lines.

Sandra Schruijer, Ph.D. gave some very preliminary results from her study of Stratfordians and non-Stratfordians based on a questionnaire she sent out to various people, mostly in the de Vere Society in England and people she met through the first three Authorship Conferences she and Jan Scheffer organized in the Netherlands. As there were few responses from Stratfordians and only 45 from Oxfordians and 8 from non-Oxfordians, conclusions must be guarded. But there are some interesting trends being seen: among non-Oxfordians, de Vere is seen as a strong second runner-up and that a primary weakness in the Oxfordian case is the lack of consensus on why the "cover-up" was necessary. Dr. Schruijer plans to distribute her questionnaire more widely soon.

The last presentation involved two fencing experts who demonstrated different types of swordplay with emphasis on how swordplay was done in Elizabethan England and how it likely was used in theatrical performances. Since they were using "safe" fencing equipment, no one was hurt, not even a "volunteer" from the audience.

All in all, it was a very good conference, and the attendees left with much to think about and a desire to return next year.

Roscius (cont'd from p. 2)

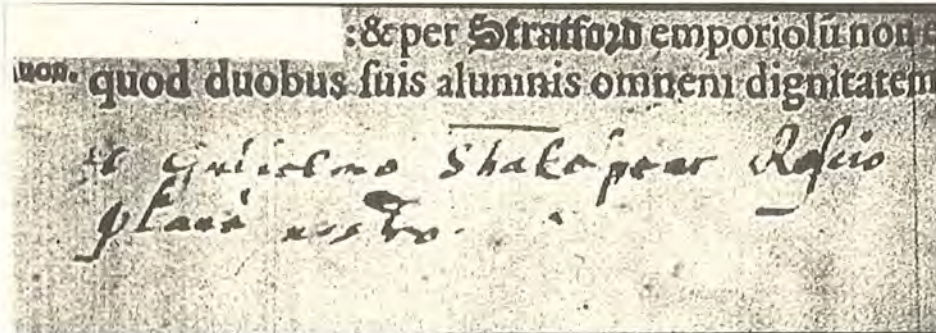


Figure 1. The Roscius annotation.

Courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library and Curator Stephen Tabor.

is a six-word, penned annotation which states an opinion that the town of Stratford-on-Avon not only owes its reputation (*dignitatem*) to its two native sons — John the Archbishop and Hugh the Mayor — but also to a third man: “*et Gulielmo Shakespear Roscio plani nostro*” — “and to William Shakespeare, certainly our Roscius.” (2)

The most significant word used by our quilled annotator is “Roscio,” the Latin dative case of “Roscius.” Note the capital “R.” It is the interpretation of that word which has prompted the vigorous debate between Stratfordians and Oxfordians.

Who was Roscius?

Roscius was born as a slave in the province of Latium south of Rome about 126 BC and died in 62 BC, a life of 64 years. He was the most famous actor in Rome during one of its greatest epochs — the era of Caesar, Cicero, Pompey, Crassus, Brutus, and Mark Antony. Roscius studied the eloquence and gestures of famous orators in the Roman Forum, especially the fluently persuasive attorneys Cicero and Quintus Hortensius (2).

Cicero became a close friend of Roscius, of whom he always wrote with admiration and affection. Roscius and Cicero held amicable acting-oratorical contests with each carefully analyzing the other’s techniques and panache in presenting a particular thought or emotion. Cicero adopted some of Roscius’ dramatic skills, and Roscius wrote a treatise comparing the fine points of oratory and acting (5).

Handsome and well-proportioned with an elegant carriage, Roscius fulfilled all of the criteria for quintessential greatness as an actor, especially in comedic roles. He was also regarded as superb in tragedies, equal to his outstanding contemporary, the noted tragedian Claudius Aesopus, now known as Aesop (6). Roscius founded and directed a school of acting and was universally admired by Rome’s populace.

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Origin of the term “Roscius” or “Roscian”

Since the time of Roscius, beginning in his own Rome and continuing up to the present time, his name has stood for an actor of unsurpassed excellence. For 2100 years, superlative actors, especially in England, have been labeled as “Roscius” or “Roscian.” Here are some examples:

(1) William Camden named actor Richard Burbage (c.1567-1619) “another Roscius.” (7)

(2) Coexisting with Burbage was Edward Alleyn (1566-1626), who was also called “Roscius” for his great acting, showing that two Roscian actors can coexist, using the same theatrical stages. Alleyn received unstinting praise from Thomas Heywood, Ben Jonson and Thomas Nashe (7).

(3) Thomas Betterton (1635-1710) was called “the British Roscius” — “He alone was born to speak what only Shakespeare knew to write” (8).

(4) Michael Boyron (1635-1729), whose life coincided with Betterton, was called the Roscius of France (8).

(5) David Garrick (1717-1779) was acclaimed England’s Roscius during a long and brilliant acting career (2, 9).

(6) William Henry West Betty (1791-1874) startled the English theatrical world at the age of 13,

playing leading roles such as Hamlet. He was quickly labeled “The Young Roscius” (7).

(7) Later in the 1800s came a seven year-old boy named Grossmith who was called “the celebrated Infant Roscius.” Miss Lee Sugg, another child acting prodigy, was labeled the “Young Roscia” (10).

(8) After his debut in London in 1825, 18 year-old black American actor Ira Aldridge was extolled as the African Roscius. In the 1800s, other Rosciuses were hailed in Kentucky, Ohio, Scotland, Ireland and Wales (10).

(9) That Roscius is still being honored today is exemplified by “The Roscian Players,” the present drama society of Ireland’s National University. When Hollywood actor Jack Lemmon died in 2001 at age 76, one newspaper epithet said, “Jack Lemmon, whose Roscian portrayals made him a movie icon for everyman, died Thursday. . .” In the 78th Annual Scripps Spelling Bee of 2005, the runner-up lost because he misspelled “Roscian.”

Shakespeare used “Roscius” twice in his plays (2):

- (1) 3 Henry VI— Act V, scene vi, line 10. As Henry VI is about to be murdered, he speaks to his murderer, Gloucester:
So flies the reckless shepherd from the wolf;
So first the harmless sheep doth yield his fleece,
And next his throat unto the butcher's knife.
What scene of death hath Roscius now to act?
- (2) Hamlet — Act II, scene ii, line 392. As a group of theatrical players arrives at Elinsore Castle, Hamlet mocks Polonius:
Hamlet (aside): I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players. Mark it. —You say right, sir, for o' Monday morning, 'twas so indeed.
Polonius: My lord, I have news to tell you.
Hamlet: My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome —

Polonius: The actors are come hither, my lord.

Hamlet: Buzz, buzz.

The words Roscius or Roscian have appeared elsewhere in English literature, e.g.:

(1) Thomas Green, in his *Menaphon* of 1589: "If you find dark enigmas or strange conceits as if Sphinx on the one side, and Roscius on the other, were playing the waggess." (11)

(2) Christopher Marlowe in *The Jew of Malta*, 1590:
... being a man

Whom we may rank with (doing no one wrong)
Proteus for shapes, and Roscius for a tongue. (11)

(3) Thomas Heywood in the Prologue of *Challenge for Beauty*, 1636:

Our (once applauded) Roscian straine
In acting such might be revived againe. (7)

(4) Ben Jonson, 1616, Epigram 89 to Edward Allen (Alleyn):

If Rome so great, and in her wisest Age,
Fear'd not to boast the Glories of her Stage,
As skilful Roscius, and grave Aesop, Men,
Yet crown'd with Honors, as with Riches, then;
Who had no less a Trumpet of their Name,
Than Cicero, whose every Breath was Fame:
How can so great Example dye in me,
That Allen, I should pause to publish thee? (12)

Who was the Roscius annotator?

The Camden book's owner has been identified by one of us (AHN) as Richard Hunt, who wrote on the title-page of the Huntington Library volume:

Ric: Hunt Vic: Ichingto Com: Warr

which translates as: "Richard Hunt, Vicar of Itchington in the County of Warwick."

At the top of the title page, partly cropped, is another inscription, "Best Pemb;" indicating that an earlier owner was Arthur Best (or Beast). Best matriculated as a pensioner at Pembroke College, Cambridge, at Michaelmas in 1598, received his B.A. in 1601/1602, and his M.A. in 1605 (13).

Richard Hunt, son of a Gloucestershire clergyman, entered Oriel College, Oxford, on December 4, 1612 as a Commoner. Since the age at matriculation was usually sixteen, this means he was born in 1596 or late 1595. A general remark by the 19th century historian of Oriel College clarifies the meaning of the term "Commoner":

"To the class of Commoners belonged the bulk of the students, whose fathers were of the upper ranks of society, the esquires and gentlemen of the country. The rise of the clergy in social position is marked by the gradual increase in the number of admissions of their children into the rank of Commoners." (14)

Hunt received his BA from Oxford in 1615 and his MA in 1618. He was vicar of Itchington for forty years, from 1621 to 1661, during which time he became a BD (Bachelor of Divinity), the equivalent



Fig. 2. Title page of the 1590 Edition of William Camden's *Britannia* owned by the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, with evidence of the book owner. Courtesy of the Henry E Huntington Library and Curator Stephen Tabor.

Right worship
 These are to give you notice and warning, that we have appointed
 to execute the Commission out of his majesties high Courts of Chancery
 to us and others directed for execution of witnesses in a cause there
 depending betwixt Robert Kessonier Clarke Comptroler and you
 and others defendants upon Tuesday the eight and twentieth
 day of August next - by eight of the clock in the forenoon
 of the same day at the dwelling house of Thomas Tustian scituate
 in warminster in the county of warw: commonly called the figure
 of the cocke, where you and yo^r commissioners may be if you
 please. And so we rest
 yo^r loving friends
 Richard Hunt
 Ric: Hunt

July the 13th 1638
 To the right worship
 Sr Peter Temple
 and Barronett Warw^{sh}

Fig. 3. Sample of Richard Hunt's handwriting in a personal letter written by him confirms that it is the same handwriting as that of the Roscius annotation.

of a modern Doctor of Divinity. The beginning and end of Hunt's career are revealed in the first and second editions respectively of William Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire*. The former, dated 1656, lists under Bishop's Itchington (15):

Ric. Hunte, Cler. in art, Magr. 8. Julii 1621.

Thus Hunt was confirmed as vicar on July 8, 1621. He was also responsible for the parishes of Chadshunt and Geydon and owned property in Morton and Warwick. He involved himself in community activities, including Stratford-on-Avon which was ten miles from Bishop's Itchington. He blended so well with the people of Warwick county that he regarded himself as their "countryman" (16). According to the Warwickshire burial register, all seven of Richard Hunt's children died in infancy or childhood between 1631 and 1657.

Hunt maintained the Parish Register of Bishop's Itchington in his own hand during his 40 year tenure as vicar (17). Handwriting analysis of his plentiful entries and signatures, as well as his personal letters and other documents, confirms that the annotation handwriting is authentically Hunt's, with no suggestion of forgery, as analyzed by Alan Nelson. From his sermons it is also clear that Hunt had an excellent knowledge of Latin. We believe that the Roscius annotation was written during his tenure as vicar of Bishop's Itchington between 1621 and 1661.

Richard Hunt's life overlapped the last 20 years of Will Shaksper's life (1564 -1616). Whether he knew Shaksper personally is not known. His attribution of Shakespeare (whom he spells "Shakspear" without a final "e") as "our Roscius" clearly means that he

knew well the Stratford man's reputation — but what reputation? By "Roscio," was he referring to acting ability or playwrighting skills? The implications of that distinction are vital.

Do "Roscius" and "Roscian" Refer Exclusively To Acting?

Since the Roscius annotation finding was published in 2003, Oxfordians have almost uniformly expressed the opinion that, since they believe "Roscius" and "Roscian" have been applied only to outstanding actors, Vicar Hunt has confirmed that William Shaksper was an actor but not a playwright. Thus Oxfordians, including highly respected ones, have confidently made internet statements like the following (18):

1. "It's the Stratfordians who have something to lose from the Roscius annotation, if it's not a forgery. The annotation's failure to highlight Shakespeare's status as a literary figure, merely an actor, is very damning."
2. "The glaring omission of any mention of Shaksper as a playwright is a fatal blow to Stratfordians."
3. "If it's authentic, the annotation demolishes the Strat case."

These confident Oxfordian statement-makers spent no time validating their opinions with research, a process all too common in humans — speak first, validate later or never. As the authors of *Follies & Fallacies in Medicine* point out, it is the most respected "authorities" who often "leap from a false premise to a foregone conclusion" (19).

Oxfordians self-assuredly point out that dictionaries uniformly refer to the word Roscius as referring to an actor of great renown. For example, the Oxford English Dictionary states that the word Roscius is "used to designate an actor, usually one of outstanding ability, success or fame" (7). Is this respected dictionary correct? Only partially. Even Roscius's friend Cicero said (20):

"... ut, in quo quisque excelleret, is in suo genere Roscius diceretur."

"... so that he, in whatever craft he excels, is spoken of as a Roscius in his field of endeavor."

So, in the same epoch during which the term "Roscius" began to be used as a highly complimentary adjective or noun, in the very lifetime of Roscius himself, Cicero tells us that the word could be applied to someone of remarkable ability in any skill. Diligent search provides other examples, albeit few and far between, of "Roscius" or "Roscian" applied to supremely talented individuals in fields other than acting:

1. Thomas Pecke, in his 1659 collection of poetry, *Parnassi Puerperium*, wrote this tribute to Ben Jonson:

That Ben, whose head, deserv'd the Roscian bayes;
Was the first gave the name of works, to playes.
You his corrival, in this waspish Age;
Are more then Atlas, to the fainting Stage.
Your bonus genius, you this way display:
And to delight us, is your opera.

Explanations of the words used by Pecke:

- (a) *Parnassi Puerperium* = a collection of poems (a labor or "puerperium") of Mt. Parnassus, the mountain of muses in Greece. The muses were nine goddesses, daughters of Zeus, who presided over the arts.
- (b) Bayes = the same as laurel, the crown of leaves awarded to the champion. The champion playwright gets the "laurel crown of Roscius."
- (c) Works = plays. In his own first folio, Jonson was the first to use the term "works" to refer to writings, i.e. his plays.
- (d) Corrival = co-rival, competitor.
- (e) Waspish = biting, hypercritical.
- (f) Fainting = weakening, lacking in vigor, strength and spirit.
- (g) Atlas = Davenant as Atlas to the stage, meaning he supports the stage or holds it up at a time when the theatre was lacking in vigor.
- (h) Bonus genius = literally "good genius" or "personal talent."
- (i) Opera = your body of works, i.e. your plays.

The key lines of this poem obviously are the first two:

That Ben, whose head deserv'd the Roscian bayes
Was the first gave the name of workes, to playes.

Ben Jonson was a minor actor but an outstanding major playwright. Thus Jonson deserves a laurel crown for his playwrighting, a supreme honor by itself, doubly distinctive when it is described as a Roscian laurel crown.

The key fact is this: **the term "Roscian" is applied by Pecke to Ben Jonson the playwright.** This is particularly significant because Pecke's 1659 poem is in the same historic era as Hunt's Roscius annotation.

2. In 1708, John Downes of England published *Roscius Anglicanus: An Historical Review of the Stage*. This is a history of English plays, actors, and playhouses, the word "Roscius" referring to more than just actors (6).

These two examples, along with Cicero's testimony, establish unequivocally that the word "Roscius" is *not* limited just to actors but can be used to describe playwrights.

Discussion

Word usage and word meanings obviously change over time. The above examples, however, show that between the time of Cicero (106 - 43 BC) and 1708, the terms "Roscius" and "Roscian" did *not* change their meaning during those 1800 years. The words usually described superlative actors but could also refer to outstanding talent in other fields, including playwrighting. We found no evidence to suggest that the meaning of "Roscius" has changed since 1708 — namely in the past 300 years.

In the original Roscius paper (2), paleographic analysis by Mary Robertson, handwriting expert at the Huntington Library, dated the annotation between 1620 and 1650 (21). This coincides well with our conclusion that Richard Hunt wrote the annotation during his years as vicar of Bishop's Itchington from 1621 to 1661. The 1659 reference by Pecke to Jonson as deserving "Roscian bayes" is particularly important because Vicar Hunt was alive at that time and could have been familiar with Pecke's poem which paid tribute to Ben Jonson the playwright.

We have found only one other occurrence in the same paragraph of the words "Roscius" and "William Shakespeare," namely in Sir Richard Baker's "Chronicle of the Kings of England" of 1643 (22). Baker (1568 - 1645), an Oxford-trained writer, lived in London and overlapped the life of Edward de Vere for 36 years and the life of Shaksper of Stratford for all of his 52 years. In his section on "The Reign of Queen Elizabeth," Baker lists "Men of Note" including the following paragraph:

"After such men, it might be thought ridiculous to speak of Stage-players; but seeing excellency in the meanest things deserves remembering, and Roscius the Comedian is recorded in history with such commendation, it may be allowed us to do the like with some of our nation. Richard Burbage and Edward Alleyn, two such actors, as no age must ever look to see the like; and, to make their comedies complete, Richard Tarlton, who for the Part called the Clown's Part, never had his match and never will have. For Writers of Playes, and such as had been Players themselves, William Shakespeare and Benjamin Johnson have specially left their names recommended to posterity." (22)

We know that Edward de Vere was regarded as the finest comedic actor in England and the continent, and that he acted in his own plays when presented before the Queen (23). We do not know in what plays or roles Shaksper of Stratford acted, nor do we know his general acting reputation. In this statement by Sir Richard

We know that Edward de Vere was regarded as the finest comedic actor in England and the continent, and that he acted in his own plays when presented before the Queen (23).

Baker, the word "Roscius" is not directly associated with William Shakespeare. Likewise, Baker does not clarify the identity of "William Shakespeare," i.e. whether he was referring to William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon or to someone using the pen name of William Shakespeare.

Vicar Richard Hunt's private annotation in his own book is a personal opinion, not a public declaration. He states that the town of Stratford, in addition to the two men mentioned by Camden, also owes its reputation "to William Shakespear, clearly our Roscius." If Hunt was referring to Shakespeare as an actor, this does *not* have to mean that he was equal in talent to England's two contemporary Roscian actors, Burbage and Alleyn. It could merely mean that Stratford villagers had the right to bask in the sunshine of a native son having "made it" to London's big-time stage in any acting role. Perhaps Hunt meant only that Shaksper was the first, or best, actor from Stratford to have acted on a London stage.

If we knew that Hunt was announcing to the world that Shakespeare of Stratford was a Roscian playwright, this might indeed be a smoking gun for Stratfordians. Likewise, if we knew for certain that Hunt was declaring "Shakespear" only a Roscian actor, this might be significant circumstantial evidence that he was *not* the great playwright and therefore this could be a potential victory for Oxfordians. But 350 years later, we obviously cannot be sure of Hunt's scriptorial meaning. To speak with certainty on this point, in the face of inadequate evidence, does not add lucidity to the authorship debate.

We conclude that statistics which show that for 2000 years the word "Roscius" or "Roscian" meant great actors more than 95% of the time, only rarely implying other crafts such as playwrighting, do not allow a meaningful conclusion regarding Richard Hunt's specific annotational intent. Therefore, his Roscius annotation can only be regarded as a tasty, but tiny, tidbit on the Epicurean dining table of Shakespeare authorship research, without any direct support for either the Stratfordian or the Oxfordian hypothesis.

Lessons for the future

The contrasting interpretations of Hunt's Roscius annotation by Oxfordians and Stratfordians are good examples of the inherent bias with which most humans analyze evidence for or against their basic beliefs. Physics Nobel Prizewinner Richard Feynmann emphasized the importance of removing rigidity of thought if one wants to advance one's discipline rather than merely steadfastly guarding the unproven mythology of one's favorite old-think (24).

Most Shakespeare authorship researchers, whether Oxfordian or Stratfordian, are very aware of the intellectual bias applied to research data and conclusions by their adversaries but are usually quite unaware of their own. As the authorship debate approaches what may be crucial times, researchers might be well advised to pay more attention to intrinsic rigidities and biases in their own verbal and written outpourings and those of their own guild before aiming their barbed darts at their intellectual adversaries.

Perhaps the most important lesson to be derived from this study is that a Stratfordian and an Oxfordian can work together doing research on the Shakespeare authorship debate. All it takes is the desire to do so and sufficient flexibility in viewpoint to achieve the chosen goal on a given issue, namely the truth. The present authors

have tried to accomplish that goal in this work, which we hope will encourage Stratfordians and Oxfordians to do more collaborative research in the future. After all, our goal should be precisely the same — to validate the correct identity of the genius who wrote under the name of William Shakespeare.

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Searching Under the Lamp-posts for Dating Shakespeare's *Sonnets*

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Introduction: Darkness and Illumination

Few facts exist regarding *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. However, these facts point to a time-frame of origination or make it possible to evaluate their intended meaning. If we are to date the *Sonnets*, we need to first isolate ALL the facts and then search for ways to accommodate all the facts. We shouldn't dismiss any "inconvenient truths." Though this treatment doesn't necessarily conflict with other Oxfordian *Sonnets* theories (e.g., Whittemore, Tarica, Sobran, Lubow, Hamill, Gordon) it addresses some key post-1623 facts that the others haven't.

When searching for keys to mysteries, it is well to remember 18th century philosopher David Hume's proverb, "A wise man proportions his beliefs to the evidence." Our codicil should be, "A foolish man proportions his evidence to his beliefs or biases." Yet, not all evidence is equally germane. So, how do we choose? Here's my own parable of a logical approach to evidence:

Late one stormy winter's night, a half-expired pedestrian arrived at his front door and discovered he'd lost his keys en route, and in the howling gale no amount of knocking could awaken the household or neighbors. Realizing he needed to find his keys before he died of exposure, he considered where he should search. His choice was to search only under the Lamp-posts, because if his keys were anywhere else, in the darkness he wouldn't be able to find them before he expired!

We have limited time, resources, and capabilities, so we must choose wisely, even though success isn't always guaranteed. Thus, searching under all the Lamp-posts can be crucial.

By shining light on the meaning of Shakespeare's (W.S.'s) *Sonnets*, we'll see we have little more than a handful of lamp-posts to go by, chiefly a few contemporary or nearly-contemporary comments and four sonnets with plausibly datable externally-pointing topical allusions. Clarity is scarce because W.S. emulated traditions of poetic vagary and timelessness often used by Ovid, Petrarch, Chaucer, Nostradamus, Ariosto, DuBellay, Surrey, Wyatt, Vaux, DuBellay, Ronsard, Sackville, Desportes, Sidney, and other greats, as listed in *Gillespie's Dictionary*. If a poet wanted to live for the ages, touch the human condition, or impart divine wisdom, majesty and mystery decreed his poetry must be timeless and enigmatic. Thus, W.S.'s frequent use of double-entendre could artfully yield multiple meanings, and thus a range of potential dates for topical allusions. Still, when each range begins in the 1570's to 80's, Oxfordians should take special note!

Poetic vagueness can skillfully hide forbidden or secret things. Still, unless there are ways to clarify secret places, our wallowing in darkness isn't likely to illuminate Truth. So, we should examine the few sonnets that have allusions to historically verifiable evidence, not make guesses about private or sexual matters. For

example, many theorists argue that the dedication of 1609 *Sonnets* to "Mr. W.H." should be read as "Lord H.W." (H. Wriothesley 3rd, Southampton), as if this dyslexia were key evidence. Yet, I reject this evidence because a more solid and favorably Oxfordian solution is that "Mr. W.H." was Anthony Munday's kinsman the printer William Hall (Miller-Looney II 215-23). So, we should search for solid evidence, particularly if it favors our cause.

I suggest any *Sonnets* dating scheme must explain: **A**) the topical allusion sonnets we examine below; **B**) for whom W.S. wrote his works, a topic too lengthy for here, but in my first book (Hess I, 261-312), I identified his audience as a highly cultured, internationalist focused group of nobles and friends centered on Oxford's mentor, the 3rd Earl of Sussex, with Charles Howard, Lord Effingham and Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon among them (the patrons of the 1590's London city and Court stage "duopoly" of the Admiral's Men and Lord Chamberlain's Men acting troupes); **C**) the September 1598 statement by Francis Meres that W.S. was circulating "his sugared sonnets among his private friends" (satisfied as long as any scheme can explain that there were a sizeable number of sonnets in existence by 1598, but I suggest that any scheme with less than 100 of the 154 sonnets by 1598 should take special pains to explain itself on this point, because this would require Oxford to have furiously composed sonnets at a hard to believe rate, almost to his deathbed); **D**) sonnets 138 and 144 that were published in the "by-1599" (possibly 1589-94) first edition of *Passionate Pilgrim* (PP, which I argue helps date *Sonnets* origination to the same pre-1595 time-frame); and **E**) an often ignored dedication by John Benson, publisher of 1640 *Poems Written by Wil. Shakespeare, Gent*. He stated that the collection of all of W.S.'s poetry was what "*the Authour himselfe then living avouched*," and as: "*serene, clear*," "*elegantly plain*," and "*perfect eloquence*" (as cited in *Hotson*, 2-3). From microfilm (1475-1640 series, 1156:05, STC 22344), we find it was also not "perplexing, intricate, puzzling, or cloudy stuff," but offered "authentick approbation" and "sufficiency":

To the Reader./

I Here presume (under fa-/ vour) to present to your view,/ some excellent and sweetely/ composed Poems, of Master/ William Shakespeare./ Which in themselves ap-/ peare of the same purity, the [sic] Authour him-/ selfe then living avouched; they had not the/ fortune by reason of their Infancie in his/ death, to have the due accomodatio[n] of propor-/ tionable glory, with the rest of his everliving/ Workes, yet the lines of themselves will afford/ you a more authentick approbation than my as-/ surance any way can, to invite your allowance,/// in your perusall you shall finde them *Seren./ cleere and eligantly plaine, such gentle/ straines as shall recreate and not perplexe your/ braine, no intricate or cloudy stuffe to puzzell/ intellect, but perfect eloquence; such as will/ raise your admiration to his praise: this assu-/ rance I know*

will not differ from your ac-/ knowledgement. And certain I am, my opini-/ on will be seconded by the sufficiency of these/ ensuing Lines; I have been somewhat soli-/ citus to bring this forth to the perfect view of/ all men; and in so doing, glad to be service-/ able for the continuance of glory to the deser-/ ved Author in these his Poems.// I.B.///

Whatever Benson meant here, it doesn't seem reasonable that he was addressing only some of W.S.'s poems and not others. A more full examination of 1640 *Poems* will have to wait for a later article. But for now, let it suffice that often where details of its texts deviated from the text of 1609 *Sonnets*, the orthodox scholars have generally opted to honor the text of *Poems* wherever the *Sonnets* version would not rhyme or in some cases made little sense. The myth that "*Poems* gender-bent the *Sonnets*" is wrong, since only 101 actually had pronoun changes from "he" to "she" (only three). Also, there were suspicious things of note about the publication of *Sonnets*, whereas much evidence points to *Poems* as having been what I call "the left hand for poetry of what the same enterprise gave us in the 1623 *First Folio* for drama" (e.g., Oxford's son-in-law Philip Herbert was Lord Chamberlain 1626-41, with much power over the publishing industry and censorship). Also, I've addressed some of the implications from treating *Poems* as "more authentick" than *Sonnets* in my 2004 article, "When Shakespeare 'originated' his *Sonnets*, did they have a 'Euphues' meaning?" There I argued that all of the sonnet's themes came from themes earlier used by great sonneteers, from Ovid to Chaucer, Ronsard, and Desportes. I also argued that the "Beloved Youth" theme was best understood as invocations to "Cupid, the little love god" as inspiration, or else a special interpretation of Oxford as personification of "Euphues," the fictional heroic knight who brought to England divine poetry of Greece's Muses from Mt. Parnassus, and traveled via Roman and Renaissance Italy, as celebrated by poet-playwrights in Oxford's 1570's to 80's circle of "Euphuists."

Sonnet 119 ("the apothecary sonnet")

Dated to 1569-76

Proceeding with our *Sonnets* Lamp-posts, one of the earliest sonnets to have been "originated" may have been 119 ("What potions haue I drunke of *Syren* teares/ Distil'd from *Lymbecks* foule as hell within"). Note that 119 did not in any compelling way refer to "the Beloved Youth." So, in my Euphues theory, this wasn't focused on Oxford's circle's Euphuist reforms and possibly pre-dated Oxford's trip to and return from Italy and France. It's possible to see "madding feuer" alluding to Oxford's illness at Windsor in 1569 (Hess *The Oxfordian*, 3-5). We might even tie "ruined love" to the aftermath of 1573 reports that Oxford's dancing was admired by his Queen as he was being advanced by Sussex and his father-in-law Burghley as a romantic foil to their political rival Leicester. Or, as we'll see, "ruined love" and the apothecary theme could be the early wreck of Oxford's own marriage.

Robert Brazil's book (40) noted orthodox Stephen Booth's 1977 book, which discussed the title page from the 1576 *The Newe*

Jewell of Health. Booth had argued this sonnet was a continuation of Sonnet 118's emphasis on appetites and health, whereas 119 is "constructed of metaphors and analogies from alchemy and medicine.... of transmuting imperfect things (base metals, diseased minds and bodies) to perfect ones (gold, healthy minds and bodies)" (Booth, 398-404). In illustration of his point, Booth had printed the title page of *Newe Jewell* with its woodcut of "Alchymya," the patroness of Alchemists, toiling in her lab with reagent flasks and boiling broths strewn about her. Oddly, Booth argued for a phallic interpretation and "perverse sexual activity" in its depicting a normally-female "Siren"; more sensibly he noted that "limbees" meant "alembics" or stills (reagent flasks). Vastly improving on Booth's analysis, Brazil noted:

"Booth relates the alchemical equipment in the drawing to Sonnet 119, which uses an extended alchemical metaphor, naming devices and methods described in the *New Jewell*. What Booth never mentions is that the author, George Baker [1540-1600], was family doctor to Edward de Vere [our Oxford!], and that the book has both a lavish dedication to Oxford's wife the countess Anne, and a full page depiction of the Vere Arms and motto: Vero Nihil Verius. The book was an expensive production, with many made-to-order woodcut illustrations. In plain language, a book that [orthodox scholars] think 'may have inspired Shakespeare,' turns out to have emerged from Oxford's household, at a time when the Stratford man was only 12 years old. It is much more likely that this alchemy book inspired the author of the Shakespeare plays because it was his own project." (40)

Brazil reasonably believed Oxford, or at least his countess, had commissioned this 1576 expensive production. But *New Jewell* was an enhancement of the 1574 *The Composition or making of the moste excellent and pretious Oil called Oleum Magistrale*, principally a translation from Spanish and from Galen's Greek (via French). It was dedicated to Oxford himself and discussed ancient Greek influences, possibly worthy of Oxford as a future Euphues (see Mark Alexander's webpage). *New Jewell* itself had an enhanced edition in the 1599 *Practice of the New & Old Physic*, also dedicated to Oxford himself.

There are several other indirect links to Oxford in *Oleum*-type books. In his 1579 *Mirroure of Mutabilitie*, Oxford's servant Anthony Munday noted that he had earlier dedicated to Oxford his "*Galen of France*," possibly an independent translation of one of the sources used by Baker (only recently has Munday's birth year been adjusted by orthodox scholars from 1553 to 1560; but if really the former, he may have been signaling in 1579 that at age 21 he had helped Baker in the 1574 *Oleum*). Per a June 2006 auction notice on the "Old & Sold" webpage, in the 1800's an MSS was discovered, labeled as "...A Booke of Phisicke & Chirurgery, with divers other things necessary to be knowne, collected out of sundry olde written bookes, & broughte into one order... 1610'." Its Folio 2 was dated Nov. 30, 1594, labeled as "A catalogue of all my books, and the prices they cost me, taken by me, Edward Potter," and in a different hand from the rest of the MSS. The first Book (folio 11a) was:

"A coppinge of all suche Medicines wherewt the noble *Cou-
tisse of Oxenford* most charitably, in her owne person, did
manye great & notable Cures upon her poore Neighbours."
[emphasis added]

This celebration of the Herbal-Medicinal skills of Oxford's late wife, for whom medicinal brews apparently were a passion, likely ignored "poore Neighbours" who had died instead. I've suggested Oxford's first wife was a model for the crazed "Shrew," witchlike "Ophelia," and scheming "Lady Macbeth" (Hess II, 137-44). Thus, might Oxford's distaste for his wife entering his bed have partly been due to loathing or fear of her herbal witchlike practices? It would explain why nearly all her pregnancies can be linked to "bed-tricks!" (142).

Note too that Oxford's ex-servant Munday was listed in the Stationer's Registry for June 5, 1600 as translator "A. M." for the Stationer's Company of a "*Booke of phisicke, wherein through commaundement of Lord Lodowick Duke of Wittenberge Erle of*

Mompelgart &c. translated out of Highe Dutche [= German] by Dr. Battus, & translated out of Low Dutche [= Dutch, or poss. Walloons-French?] into English by A. M. [= Munday] printed at Dort [Dordrecht, Germany] by Isaacke Caen 1599" for E. Bolifant and A. Hatfield [both of the Eliot's Court Press Printer's syndicate; in 1599 Bolifant was listed as a pirate!]. This was published 1601 in Germany. And "Gar-mombles" in *Merry Wives of Windsor* 4.5.78 (orthodox dated to 1597-1601), seems to have referred to a 1592 visit to Queen Elizabeth by that same Count Mompelgart (Hess II sec. B 5.4).

Before we leave 119, I offer a more sinister look at both it and 118. The dedication of books to Oxford and his wife, smacking much of Alchemist's poisonings and magical hocus pocus, may be very relevant to *Macbeth*, *Romeo & Juliet*, or *Tempest*. Prof. Nelson (58-61, 174-77, 322-34, 361-69, and 394-403) offers much evidence that Oxford had interests in those subjects. Also, my Sect. 5.A.28 said that the the likely-poisoning deaths of "Falstaff," "Henrico Willobego, Italo-Hispalensis," and Don Juan of Austria were all very similar to the "madding fever" described here, and to the "maladies unseen" or "bitter sauces" of 118. W.S. seemed to enjoy equating love with poisoning or fever; yet, so had his predecessors! (Hess I 217)

Hotson's Dating of Three Sonnets to 1586-89

Orthodox Professor Leslie Hotson's 1949 book shocked his colleagues by arguing that three of the higher-numbered sonnets could be reasonably dated to circa 1589. These were 107, 123, and 124. We'll address 107 separately below. 123 ("NO! Time, thou shalt not bost that I doe change, aThy pyramyds buylt vp with newer might") does not overtly address "the Beloved Youth" and thus is not subject to my Euphues theory's special concern with that theme.

For 123, Hotson provided a virtuoso example of dating a sonnet, documenting that the word "pyramids" was a special Elizabethan word for "obelisks," which referred to Pope Sixtus V's 1586-89 re-erection in Rome of four gargantuan 100 ton obelisks found lying in mud of the ancient Roman forum.(21-27). This engineering wonder and spectacle was described in a PBS NOVA television program and in an article in *Smithsonian Magazine*. I note further that Oxford's future son-in-law William Stanley (future 6th Derby) had just returned in July 1587 to England after five years of wandering, much of it in Rome (see Hess II, 399-412, about Stanley's travels). So, I argue that this was the clearest, most definitely-dat-

able sonnet of them all, even though its present text may be a slight overwrite of an earlier origination phase. It has occurred to me that Oxford possibly wrote a 1560's-70's version based on Burghley and his cronies' rebuilding of old monasteries and nunneries, such as Hatfield House, into Renaissance palaces (some Oxfordians have suggested

*Thus, might Oxford's distaste for his wife entering
his bed have partly been due to loathing or fear of
her herbal witchlike practices? It would explain
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"bed-tricks!" (142).*

this related to Prince Hamlet's exhortation to "Ophelia" to "get thee to a nunnerie!"). But no other dating for 123 that I've seen has as much real history backing it up as does Hotson's 1586-89, nor such precision of dating (i.e., these lines as interpreted would have made little sense after Sixtus V's death in 1590 had put an end to "pyramid" re-erections in Rome).

Here is 124, dressed up in a Euphues substitution (of EUPHUISM or ENGLISH) for occurrences of the "Beloved Youth" theme:

124 YF my deare loue [EUPHUISM] were but the childe of state,

[= became Official, or "the Queen's English"]

It might for fortunes basterd be vnfathered, [i.e., it would no longer be exclusively used by Oxford and his circle]

As subject to times loue, or to times hate, [i.e., indelible EUPHUISM can only speak truth, not just hack writing's fashion]

Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gatherd. [i.e., not reflecting hack writing's fashion; rather, seeking poetic genius]

No it [EUPHUISM] was buylded far from accident, [i.e., like Ronsard,

Oxford purposely & patriotically reformed his language]

It [EUPHUISM] suffers not in smilinge pomp, nor falls Vnder the blow of thralld discontent, [i.e., fashion's disfavor] Whereto th' inuiting time our fashion calls:

It [EUPHUISM] feares not policy that *Heriticke*, [i.e., that dissembler]

Which workes on leases of short numbred howers, [i.e., sneaks about in the early morning hours of darkness]

But all alone [EUPHUISM] stands hugely pollitick, [i.e., correct-true]

That it [EUPHUISM] nor growes with heat, nor drownes with showres.

[i.e., EUPHUISM is pure beauty, neither dependent on heated polemics nor weeping emotives]

To this I witness call the foies of time, [i.e., those who change their ENGLISH with Apollo-Time's fashion]

Which die for goodnes, who haue liu'd for crime. [i.e., the crime of adulterating ENGLISH with fashion's weeds].

Hotson identified "the child of state" with "King Henri III, favorite child of Catherine de Medici, and in 1571-72 a suitor for Queen Elizabeth's hand." (27-32) The "accident" referred to was the May 12, 1588 "Day of Barricades" in Paris, described by the Venetian ambassador as "the accident of France against that poor King." Other possible allusions were to Henri III's ordering assassination of the Duke of Guise on Christmas Eve 1588, and Henri's own assassination by a crazed monk from the Guisan party in August 1589, all of which explained the line "falls Vnder the blow of thrall'd discontent." The "foies of time... who have liu'd for crime" would be "gentlemen of the recent Babington Plot to kill the Queen" of England.

Though Hotson's approach to 124 was much more plausible than most I've seen, I've demonstrated in my textual insertions here that there is a completely reasonable alternative interpretation in my Euphuus thesis. In fact, under an origination in the circa 1583 heyday of Euphuism, my interpretation of "childe of state" as "the Queen's English" may have even more plausibility. This again sends us to a 1583-89 plausible dating regime, similar to others we're examining here. Finally, note that two of the most plausibly datable sonnets (123 and 124, 112 and 113 in 1640) were adjacent to one another in both sequences.

Sonnet 107 ("the dating sonnet") Dated to 1583-89

Sonnet 107, dubbed "the dating sonnet" by Prof. Hotson, is probably the pivotal sonnet from a dating perspective, especially since the whole "wide world" seems intent on dating its received text to early-to-mid-1603 so that it comments on the death of Queen Elizabeth, thought to be the virgin "Diana" described as "the mortall Moone." Yet, we will see that it not only does *NOT* refer to her death, but it almost certainly refers to events of circa 1583 and overwrites of 1588-89. From the perspective of my Euphuus substitution thesis, the substitution actually makes considerable sense in a circa-1583 context:

107 NOT mine owne feares, nor the prophetick soule,
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love [EUPHUISM] controule,
Supposde as forfeit to a confin'd doome.
The mortall Moone hath her eclipse indur'de,
And the sad Augurs mock their owne presage,
Incertenties now crowne them-selues assur'de,
And peace proclaimes Oliues of endlesse age,
Now with the drops of this most balmie time,
My loue [EUPHUISM] lookes fresh, and death to me sub-
scribes,
Since spight of him [i.e., of Death] Ile liue in this poore rime,
While he [Death] insults ore dull and speachlesse tribes.
And thou [EUPHUISM] in this shalt finde thy monument,
When tyrants crests and tombs of brasse are spent.

Note the peculiar reference to "dull and speachlesse tribes" immediately followed by lines of "immortalization" for the "Beloved

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Youth," or for Euphuism. Wasn't this juxtaposition and linkage only natural for a discussion related to patriotism and language? Note too that W.S. claimed immortalization through his lines ("Ile liue in this poore rime"), as if he was equivalent with or embodied Euphuism, and thus embodied the rhyme itself. Other theories are a bit weak in the regard of explaining the poet's immortality and living through his rhymes.

But, there are other reasons for 107 to have "originated" circa 1583. Eric Miller's article argued that the line "The mortall Moone hath her eclipse indur'de" derived from a 1578 line by Gabriel Harvey, "The sun of Cambridge has indeed endured a sad eclipse," written upon the occasion of the 1577 death of Oxford's boyhood guardian Sir Thomas Smith (71-74). And Miller said the failures of "the prophetick soule" related to Harvey's brother Richard Harvey's astrological prediction at Cambridge that caused some stir, about the recurrence of the "star of Bethlehem" alignment of the planets in a once-in-800-years event (75-76). R. Harvey noted the alignment would occur on April 28, 1583 and predicted it would usher in the end of the world. Those two observations corresponded to the era of Oxford's Euphuism at Court.

We should also look for an overwriting of the origination phase of 107 with later topical allusions to yield the extant text. Today, R. Harvey's prediction is quite obscure (its text is not even extant!). And though it may have made a modest stir at the English Court, it was far from bringing panic to the "wide world." Also, the R. Harvey prophecy was made only a few months before the event it predicted, whereas 107 referred to widespread fears of the author and the "wide world," as if decades and foreigners had been involved in 107's story. Moreover, the "tyrants crests and tombs of brass" hardly applied to R. Harvey and his Anglo-centric emphasis. Thus, despite agreeing with origination in 1583, we should include an overwrite phase in circa 1589.

Hotson (4-21) said the 1603 assumption for interpreting 107 leads "down a false trail," noting an "unnatural callousness of writing 'the Moone' instead of 'our Moone,'" among other "serious objections to this interpretation," including that "for the Elizabethan vogue of sonnet-writing, 1603 is too late" (4-21). Actually, after the spate of sonnet-form examples during Sidney's career, going out of fashion shortly after his 1586 death, we could argue even 1590 was too late. E.g., I argue the 1592 and 94 *Diana* sonnets by "H. C." were correctly marked as "1584" on their circa-1594 edition printed by James Roberts, successor to John Charlewood, the original printer of 1584 *Pandora*. Charlewood had registered and printed *Diana* in 1592 before dying in early-1593 but may have originally printed *Diana* for linking to 1584 *Pandora*!

Hotson related reports of the 1588 Spanish Armada's defensive crescent- or moon-shaped battle formation in the English Channel with better vessels out on the "limbs" of the formation to protect access to slower, poorly-armed vessels in the center (most of the Spanish galleons were built for grappling and boarding, not for long-distance cannonading; they were also slower and less maneuverable than the lighter English vessels). Hotson also described a series of astrological predictions circulated in both Catholic and Protestant circles that went back for nearly a century beforehand that 1588 would be "that fatal and wonderful year" or "the *Mar-*

veilous yeare...the Climactericall yeere of the world," a world in which Empires would topple, in other words the apocalypse itself! So, according to Hotson, the lines, "...my true love control... crown themselves assur'd" was a statement that his love for the addressee of the verse [in my approach, Euphuism] would transcend the end of the world, being more certain than false predictions about 1588, when nothing more dreadful than the flimsy "Invincible Armada" came to pass.

Thus, Hotson dated 107 to circa-1589, and though I agree it originated 6 years earlier, I prefer a topical overwrite in 1589. I'm even more confirmed in support for Hotson after reading Hogge. There was hysteria in the Court of the Emperor in Vienna and in England over the predictions for 1588, and even the Pope and Philip II got reports of what their sailors and subjects were quavering about. Indeed, the Armada crews mutinied several times, and required absolution of their sins, before leaving (1-6). Most interesting are accounts beginning in late 1587 of the inhabitants of the coasts of England repeatedly streaming inland in panic with every rumor of the impending Armada and dread of "the Wonderful Year" about to come. That panic may explain why Leicester (in charge of the land defenses to the Armada) ordered Oxford to leave the front to take command of Harwich, a major harbor on the coast of Essex; East Anglia was the De Vere traditional stronghold, and its harbors and coasts needed reassuring and reinforcement. One interesting aspect noted by Hogge was that the Privy Council had ordered two perilously conflicting things: 1) As soon as announcement of the approaching Armada, nobody was to be allowed to leave the coasts, to avoid disrupting the defenses and spreading panic; and 2) A scorched-earth tactic of burning everything that the Spanish fleet might approach to deprive the enemy of potential re-supply as English forces prepared to retreat inland. Thus, the hapless coastlanders were on tenterhooks trying to guess when to flee before they and theirs would be torched by their own countrymen!

Because interpreting sonnet 107 is the lynchpin to most theories about the *Sonnets* in general, here is my detailed explication of the text, merging Hotson's interpretation with mine:

A. "fears... prophetic soul... wide world" [= prophesy of a worldwide impending calamity, not just limited to England or to "the Tudor dynasty," and feared throughout Europe];

B. "dreaming on things to come" [= prophesies, visions; note there were no known prophesies that Queen Elizabeth would die specifically in 1603, though she often feared assassination. At age 70, her death was hardly surprising or unforeseen, but not specifically prophesized, nor really feared. The succession had been de facto set for James VI since 1601, when Secretary of State Robert Cecil (Oxford's ex-brother-in-law) had secretly succeeded the executed Earl of Essex as James' head agent in London. It had vaulted to near certainty as far back as 1589, when James gave up efforts to wed any of several Catholic princesses in favor of Protestant Anne of Denmark. And James' rights had been enshrined in ink as far back as the 1586 Treaty of Berwick, when he had accepted a £4,000 annual pension from the English Privy Purse and had his rights to succeed Elizabeth formally respected, but in return was obliged to give up hopes of shielding his mother Mary Stuart from English execution, to Mary's tremendous ire (see Hess I, 291-301

discussion of the possible linkages between James' July 1586 and Oxford's June 1586 annuities from the same account!];

C. "confin'd doom" [= defined end, a definite year of 1588 (or even a specific date of April 28, 1583 as predicted by R. Harvey), as opposed to some run-of-the-mill vague general prophesy as in Nostradamus];

D. "mortal Moone... eclipse endur'd" [= a crescent shape which was not killed or dead but merely eclipsed and *still enduring*; i.e., Spanish fleets in crescent battle formation would still keep coming, with several more Armadas by 1604, though each would be dispersed by weather before reaching the Channel. Note the importance that "endur'd" does *NOT* = "dead," thus this sonnet 107 could not have originally been intended to refer to Queen Elizabeth's death. Moreover, the Moon = Diana = Virgin Queen was an "immortal" allusion, never a "mortal" one; thus this "mortal Moone" referred to a mortal manmade artifact suffering a setback, such as the Armada did. Note too that "the mortal Moone" made a likely-deliberate poetic irony on the fleet originally dubbed "the Invincible Armada!"];

E. "sad augurs... presage" [= long-broached prophesies of doom, with the century-long prophesies about 1588 as "the Wonderful Year" fully qualifying. Harvey's prophesy qualifies here too, since Eric Miller's sources point to the conjunction in Pisces as a rare and thus significant astrological event linked to Christ's birth star];

F. "Uncertainties now crown themselves assur'd" [= Elizabeth's relatively feeble grasp on her crown pre-1588 was now "crowned assured" by post-Armada jublations elevating her to "Gloriana" and diminishing the claims that Philip II had to her throne up until then (per Hess I, 127-32, Philip's rights came through legitimate Castilian descent from John of Gaunt, vs. Tudor rights through an originally illegitimate Beaufort lineage)];

G. "...balmy time" [= more post-Armada jublations, a brief relaxation of extreme war tensions. This would have been inserted in the 1589 overwrite, since 1583 was actually a most un-balmy time, while 1603 was a time of mourning and would have had to be soothsaying to predict the 1604 Peace negotiations with Spain];

H. "My love looks fresh," [= the author's lifelong experience of his love for his country's security was now brightened; if he patriotically loved his Queen, he might have reveled in her new-found freshness and vigor in victory. This could be a relic of the 1583 origination, in which his love was his language];

I. "Death to me subscribes," [= the author was beyond his best age; today we see folks complain of "falling to pieces" at near age 30-40, and back then average life expectancy was under 45. Alternatively, as Oxford had done, the author participated in the Armada campaign and was possibly injured or left with images of the deaths of others splayed before him. Note this in no way constitutes the author's soothsaying about his own impending death, a silly notion "subscribed to" by those desperately arguing for 1603];

J. "...peace proclaims olives of endless age" [= more post-Armada jubilation. However, this is also the one line in #107 that lends itself well to post-1604 (not much helping Tudor Heir enthusiasts, you'll note), since England never got Peace until it was negotiated in mid-1604. So, unless Oxford lived in arboreal retirement to circa 1608, a possibility skillfully argued by Christopher Paul, this would be a

reasonable foresight of peace coming on the heels of the recently-revealed Spanish impotence, not a Queen's death];

K. "spite of him [Death] Ile live in this poore rhyme," [= a rendition of the "immortalized by my rhyme" theme, originated at least as early as Ovid and used very effectively by sonnets of "the poetic greats" long before W.S. latched onto it. In my Euphuist substitution, Oxford embodied Euphuist and the rhymes of Euphuists, and thus would live immortally in such "poore rhymes"];

L. "...he [Death] insults o'er dull & speechless tribes;" [= those who are so dull and speechless as to be unable to read or appreciate the English of "this poore rhyme" shall reap the insults of mortality. In a patriotic English sense, this could be a glorying in Oxford-W.S.'s Euphuism!];

M. "...thou in this shalt finde thy monument," [= Euphuism, the revitalized language is to be immortalized in those monumental lines. Alternatively, courtier friends with whom W.S. was sharing his *Sonnets* shall share in the alluded-to immortality since they can see their own experiences in those verses.]; and

N. "When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent" [= back to the foretelling of the overthrow of Empires, the doom of the age in the foretold "Wonderful Year" of 1588 (or April 28, 1583?). Hogge's (1-6) note of the hysteria in the Courts of Vienna, Paris, Rome, and Madrid about the coming of 1588 is a clincher!].

Conclusion

Although I can't expect my view to persuade those pre-committed to other interpretations, I think it's fair to point to the pragmatism that Hotson's, Eric Miller's, and Ruth Miller's views have tangible facts to back them up. And mine derive from what we know about Oxford's Euphuist circle and their predecessors, plus the facts of 1640 *Poems*. In contrast, other enthusiasts seem to be able to read enigmatic poetry, come to conclusions (i.e., biases?), and then argue backwards from the poetry to yield otherwise-insupportable biography for Oxford-W.S. As a theorist once said on the phone after I'd admitted I wasn't able to agree with his thesis for a given sonnet, "Clearly, you don't know how to read the *Sonnets*!" That may be true, but isn't it actually more important that we read the History? Only by looking under the few historical Lamp-posts available to us will we find the illumination we need to convince the world. And it sure helps that our available Lamp-posts actually help our Oxfordian cause by dating the *Sonnets* in general to an early time when Oxford was in his mid-20's to 30's, a champion at Court, renowned for his romancing, jousting, poetry, comedies, and play companies. Meanwhile, in that era, likely-illiterate Mr. Shakspeare of remote rural Stratford was but a child or teen, not at all likely to have penned such works of genius!

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THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER

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

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Letters to the Editor

Christopher Paul (Fall redux 2006) writes about Richard Whalen's article on the Prince Tudor Theory (Spring 2006) and notes that Henry Howard wrote to Essex in 1599 relating how the Countess of Southampton had told him that Henry Wriothesley, Third Earl of Southampton owed her his duty, love and reverence according to "the law of God" because he "sprang" from her and that the love binding them together derived from "nature." This, to Mr. Paul, means that she "literally gave birth" to the third earl.

Some reactions:

- (1) It's ironic that the source of this hyperbolic language is none other than Henry Howard, that master of conspiracy and venom, that wretched human being who became so "obsequious to those he hoped to make his friends," according to P. M. Handover (*The Second Cecil*, 1959, 239-40), who concludes of Howard: "Few men have been so purposelessly bent upon destroying the fellowship of man."
- (2) Irony grows in light of the insidious role Howard had played in the life of Edward de Vere, influencing his mind in 1576 about that very topic (conception & birth) in relation to Anne Cecil and the paternity of her daughter Elizabeth Vere.
- (3) Do we forget the Howard-Arundel attacks on Oxford in 1581 after he had brought their treasonable plans to light? How can we take Henry Howard at face value about anything?
- (4) In 1599 Howard attached himself to Southampton while fastening upon Essex during intense jockeying to determine the succession. While the earls were in Ireland, the self-serving Howard claimed to be "bowing my knees thrice a day to God" for the safe return of Southampton, to whom he had given secret Court information to be used against Robert Cecil (Handover) – one example of how well he was practiced in intrigue.
- (5) Why does one man write to another man and quote a third man's mother stating that her son had sprung from her by nature and the laws of God? How does such inspiring biological and spiritual language come from one who "lacked a grain of loving kindness, of nobility of mind or generosity of heart"? (Handover) Taking both character and circumstance into account, might we not suspect that Howard was reporting something of political importance?
- (6) For several years the Countess had been "waging feuds which must have been troublesome to her son," writes G. P. V. Akrigg (*Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton*, 1968, 49), who calls her "volatile and difficult" and "a tactless and stupid woman, no matter how kind her heart." As an adult Southampton "appeared to have had no great fondness for his mother," who testified in 1598 that he had "never [been] kind to me." (Akrigg, 15) In 1599, during

that dangerous time of factional power struggles, why would the devious Howard take the mother's side against a man from whom he was seeking favor?

- (7) Once Essex was executed and Southampton imprisoned for life, Howard skated over to Cecil and became the most intense (and long-winded) member of the secret correspondence with King James. No longer was he concerned about either Southampton or the Countess and whether he had "sprung" from her.

I continue to have high regard for Chris Paul and his extraordinary research, but in my view the truth depends on "interpretation" of documents such as these Howard letters, which he describes as "perhaps the most compelling evidence for Henry Wriothesley's blood relationship to the Countess of Southampton."

Perhaps so. On the other hand, perhaps not.

Best wishes,
Hank Whittemore

Dear SOS,

I am a member of the De Vere Society and live in Theydon Mount, where Hill Hall is situated. When we moved into the Bailiff's cottage thirty years ago we were informed that Hill Hall had been built by Thomas Smyth while he was keeping his head down, being a protestant, when Mary was on the throne. The village walk on a Sunday was round the grounds of Hill Hall, which were fascinating. The remnants of the rose gardens were marking the old site of the very old Mount Hall, the Manor House, where Smyth had lived with his wife Philippa. He built Hill Hall nearby, where he could supervise his masterpiece, but everyday life was not encumbered by this. His frequent visits to Cambridge would have been made easier by the fact that Theydon Mount is directly on the route from London to Cambridge, being more than a third the way there. Ankerwyke is perhaps a good holiday place, but not suitable to his way of life (i.e. spending time in London and Cambridge). I have no doubt after the humiliation of her husband's will, it was Philippa's preferred residence. Stephanie Hughes does not seem aware of the English predisposition to freely use the term "Lord of the Manor". I would understand 'my Lordes chamber' as referring to one of Smyth's personal rooms. >> I feel poor Oxford was not liked by the Cecils, especially after Robert had been ridiculed as Richard the Third, which was made even more obvious by his physical short-comings being emphasized.

Keep up the good work.
Shirley Braben.

P.S. Sir Thomas Smyth was very active in all the difficult questions of the day. Apart from trying to sort out the Irish problem, delving into the economy, using his extensive knowledge of Architecture on Hill Hall, he also tried to unify spelling! Shirley Brabem

SAVE THE DATE!

SF and SOS Announces Joint Conference

**October 4-7, 2007
in Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA**

The Shakespeare Authorship Conference, jointly sponsored by the Shakespeare Fellowship and the Shakespeare Oxford Society, will be held October 4-7, 2007 in Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA. The Pacific Repertory Theatre/Carmel Shakespeare Festival, and Artistic Director Stephen Moorer will host the conference and will be presenting A Midsummer Night's Dream and Macbeth.

Information on travel arrangements and accommodations will be in the next issue of the newsletter and on the websites of the Shakespeare Fellowship and the Shakespeare Oxford Society.

So far, the list of proposed speakers includes Roger Stritmatter, Lynne Kositsy, Richard Whalen, Dan aaWright, Rima Greenhill, Earl Showerman, Bill Farina, Gordon Cyr, Ramon Jimenez and Frank Davis. Ren Draya has agreed to host the post-play panel discussions.

If you are interested in presenting a paper at the Conference, please send a title and a one-paragraph abstract to either John Hamill (hamillx@pacbell.net) or Bonner Cutting (jcutting@houston.rr.com).

SAVE THE DATE!

From the Archives

Tarlton and Shakespeare

By Rear-Admiral H.H. Holland, C.B.

Reprinted from *The Shakespeare Fellowship News-Letter*, November, 1945

In an earlier News-Letter I suggested that the Ballads of Tarlton, supposed to have been lost, are, in fact, to be found in the plays of Shakespeare, from *Love's Labour's Lost* (1578) to *As You Like It* (1589), and that excepting the latter play, Tarlton acted himself in these plays—at first probably as a member of Sussex's Company and, after that, as a member of the Queen's Company.

In this article I suggest that there are passages in these plays directly attributable to incidents in Tarlton's life; that, conversely, there are incidents in the plays; and that there are conceits and expressions known to be used by Tarlton, which occur in the plays, on account of his connection with the Company which acted them.

Tarlton's *Jests*, unfortunately, give no idea as to chronology, so it were best to take the order of the plays as I believe them to be, in drawing attention to the various incidents.

The first incident is described as "a jest of an apple hitting Tarlton on the face," and says, "So in the play (1) Tarlton's part was to travel, who, (2) kneeling down to ask (3) his father's blessing, the fellow threw an apple at him."

How many plays are there to be likely to be, where this combination of three circumstances occurs? I know of only one, *The Merchant of Venice*, (1577) where Launcelot Goggo, about to travel with his new master, Bassanio, kneels down to ask a blessing of Old Gobbo, his father. Incidentally, this incident took place at The Bull, and it was at this same time that Gosson saw *The Jew* representing "the greediness of worldly choosers and bloody minds of usurers." When Shylock talks of one who "cannot abide a harmless, necessary cat,"

he could easily have had Tarlton in his mind, for one of the jests is headed, "How Tarlton could not abide a cat, and deceived himself."

Next there is the dancing horse in *Love's Labour's Lost*, (1.2) which is taken by orthodox students to be a reference to Bank's horse, *Morocco*. This horse is described

The clown also describes how Yorick once poured a flagon of Rhenish on his head. This according to the Jests also occurred to Tarlton when he first smoked tobacco.

in 1601, as being about 14 years old, and obviously could not have been performing in 1578, but one of Tarlton's jests describes his seeing Banks' horse, and as he [Tarlton] died in 1588, it is hard to believe that this horse was *Morocco*, who, at the most, could only have been one year old, even if the incident occurred immediately before Tarlton's death. Now for the incident as described in Tarlton's *Jests*, "There was on Banks in the time of Tarlton, who served the Earl of Essex and had a horse of strange qualities." Tarlton went to see this horse "which Banks perceiving, to make the people laugh, says, Signior to his horse, go fetch me the veriest fool in the company."

Now Banks was not an Italian, but a Scotsman; so why does he call his horse *Signior*, if its name was *Morocco*? I suggest that the dancing horse referred to in *Love's Labour's Lost* was a predecessor to *Morocco*, and was called *Signior*. Signior's career was probably 1578-92; *Morocco's* 1592-1607, when Banks probably settled down in England as a vintner. When Moth,

who talks about the dancing horse, addresses Armado as "my tough senior," he may also have *Signior* in his mind, and uses the word to give the audience an inkling as to who the dancing horse refers to.

In a Jest headed, "Tarlton's jest of a red face," we are told that Tarlton said of a gentleman with a red face, who was dining at an ordinary in White Friars, "The gentleman's salamanders face burnt like Etna for anger." In *Henry IV* Falstaff, referring to Bardolph's red face says, "I have maintained this salamander of yours with fire any time this two and thirty years."

There is an expression in *Hamlet*, used by the clown, very similar to a favorite conceit of Tarlton. The clown describes

a grave-digger as one who makes houses. Tarlton describes a spectacle-maker as an eye-maker, and a Chandler as a light-maker, and then explains why to his astonished listeners. The clown also describes how Yorick once poured a flagon of Rhenish on his head. This according to the *Jests* also occurred to Tarlton when he first smoked tobacco.

The following is wholly a surmise on my part, but is, I think, a plausible one. Bohun relates the following very curious anecdote of Tarlton and Queen Elizabeth.

"Tarlton, who was then the best comedian in England, had made a pleasant play, and when it was acting before the Queen, he pointed at Sir Walter Raleigh, and said, 'See the knave commands the Queen,' for which he was corrected by a frown by the Queen."

Now I doubt if even the Queen's clown would have dared to be quite so direct as that. I think that there must have been some room for ambiguity. There is a scene in *The*

Winter's Tale when such an incident could have occurred. It is at the sheep-shearing feast where Perdita is acting as Queen of the feast, and is obviously wearing queenly robes- "This robe of mine doth change my disposition"- while her lover is disguised as a shepherd.

Polixenes and Camillo are watching them both, and Camillo says:

"He tells her something that makes her blood look out.

Good sooth, she is the Queen of curds and cream."

I suggest that it was at this point that Tarlton, who was probably taking the part of *Autolycus*, and who, therefore, was not in the scene at that moment, pointed to Raleigh, and said, "See, the knave commands the Queen." The remark could therefore be taken as calling Raleigh's attention to the acting, or the audience's attention to Raleigh.

Coming to *Twelfth Night*, the most striking resemblance is a remark made by

Malvolio to Olivia:-

"To bed! Aye, sweetheart, and I'll come to thee"

For when Tarlton asked his hostess at Waltham which of two beds was big enough for him, she replied, "This, therefore go to bed, sweetheart, I'll come to thee."

Tarlton was, on one occasion, apprehended for being out after ten, it being then one o'clock. "Commit all such" says Tarlton, "for if it be past one o'clock, it will not be ten this eight hours." Similarly, Sir Toby Belch says:-

"To be up after midnight, and to go to bed then is early, so that to go to bed after midnight is to go to bed betimes."

When the Clown says to Aguecheek, "I shall be constrained to call thee knave," he is imitating Tarlton, one of whose jests describes "How Tarlton called a gentleman knave by craft." When the Clown dresses

up as a parson, and says, "Would I were the first that ever dissembled in such a gown," he is probably thinking of an incident in his own (Tarlton's) career, when he dressed up as a parson before Queen Elizabeth, and obtained the parsonage of Shard.

"Three merry men" was also an expression of Tarlton's, though doubtless it was also a catch-phrase of the day.

Finally, I come to *As You Like It*. I have already suggested, in *Shakespeare, Oxford and Elizabethan Times*, that the remark, "Since the little wit that Fools had silenced," was a reference to Tarlton's death, and I think it quite possible that the name *Touchstone* was derived from Tarlton. Tarlton, therefore, cannot have acted the part, but when *Touchstone* talks of the knight who swore by his honour the mustard was nought, he probably had in mind "a jest of Tarlton proving mustard to have wit."

Gordon Cyr

Dr. Gordon Cyr, composer, professor at Towson University, and patriarch of the Oxford movement in Shakespeare scholarship, died Thursday, May 10 of complications from surgery. He was eighty-one. Already saddened, Oxford scholars will miss his next project which was to be an account of the first fifty years of the Shakespeare Oxford Society.

Expect a full article on Dr. Cyr in the next newsletter.