



THE SHAKESPEARE OXFORD NEWSLETTER

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Oxford's Fifty-Play Canon and When It Was Written (Part II)

by Ramon Jiménez

In Part I of this paper, published in the Fall 2013 issue of this Newsletter, I described an Oxfordian canon of fifty plays that included, besides those already accepted, ten anonymous plays for which there is substantial evidence that they belong in what has traditionally been called the Shakespeare canon. Here, I propose composition dates for the entire canon, with an emphasis on the earlier half. My primary sources of evidence are the events and circumstances of the life of the author, Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford. Other sources are internal evidence from the plays and certain other items of external evidence, such as letters, dedications, etc. It is certain that almost all these plays have been revised, some slightly, some substantially, but the dates I propose are the dates of Oxford's first versions, regardless of additions or deletions that he or someone else later made.

Dating the plays in the Shakespeare canon has been a favorite exercise of scholars for many decades. The three best-known chronologies by orthodox scholars vary only slightly:

E. K. Chambers (1930)	38 plays	1590-1613
K. Wentersdorf (1951)	37 plays	1588-1613
G. B. Evans (1997)	41 plays	1589-1613 ¹

The major Oxfordian dating schemes show somewhat more variation:

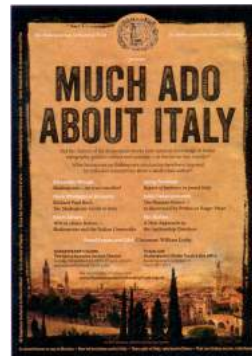
E. T. Clark (1931)	39 plays	1575-1592
D. & C. Ogburn (1952)	37 plays	1572-1603
R. Hess (2002)	38 plays	1574-1586 ²

(Continued on p. 12)

Shakespeare Authorship Trust Conference Report

by Ros Barber

[Editor's note: This report was originally published on the author's website, RosBarber.com, and appears here with her kind permission.]



"Much Ado About Italy" was the theme of this year's conference, sponsored by the Shakespearean Authorship Trust in collaboration with Brunel University. The annual conference is a one-day event aimed at a general audience. Held at the Nancy Knowles Lecture Theatre at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London on Sunday, November 24, 2013, it was again sold out.

Although many of the attendees are involved in researching the authorship question, some are simply lovers of Shakespeare who come out of curiosity. The SAT supports no individual authorship candidate and all are welcome, including those who favor William Shakespeare of Stratford as chief author. A friendly, collegial atmosphere is encouraged.

It was, therefore, slightly "off-message" to open with an entertaining but combative presentation from Alexander Waugh, whose recent article in *The Spectator* inflamed such ire. One attendee, who declared himself a "skeptical Stratfordian," later said he had attended the conference several times and it was the first time he had felt unwelcome; this was regrettable. Despite the tone of his talk, which will do nothing to soften the general air of mudslinging that unfortunately surrounds this topic, Waugh raised some excellent points about the sloppiness of Stratfordian scholarship on the subject of Shakespeare and Italy. Based on his chapter in *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?*, it was a challenging start to one of the strongest conferences in years.

Hank Whittemore gave a talk on the work of the late Richard Paul Roe, whose landmark book *The Shakespeare Guide To Italy* inspired the theme of the conference. Roe's work has been an inspiration to all

(Continued on p. 6)

From The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship President's Office:

We expect that 2014 will be a very exciting time for the Oxfordian cause. We are pleased to send this joint New Year's greeting to you, our members, in this, the first issue of the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* under the new unified organization with new editor Alex McNeil.

At this time, only a few loose ends remain in the process of completely merging the operations of our two organizations, the Shakespeare Oxford Society and the Shakespeare Fellowship, into one. The new Board of Trustees, composed of members of the Boards of the two organizations, has been working together harmoniously. We now have one website (beautifully upgraded at www.shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org), one Facebook page, and one Newsletter, but we will still provide two annual journals, *The Oxfordian* and *Brief Chronicles*, which publish all the new research that helps us unravel the authorship mystery.

Our unified organization creates a more cost-effective entity which will enable us to support more proactive work on the Shakespeare authorship mystery. In coming months we expect to announce a new SOF research grant program and to solicit applications for awards. One of our primary objectives as an Oxfordian organization is furthering research that will ultimately provide clear evidence that Edward de Vere, the 17th

Earl of Oxford, was the author of the works published under the pseudonym "William Shakespeare." We plan to do this by specifically promoting investigation in areas where there has not been much scrutiny, such as private libraries in England and the archives of northern Italian cities, such as Milan, Venice, Verona, and Mantua.

We strongly encourage you to renew your membership in the SOF, and if possible, make a donation to support the SOF's publication and public relations activities, as you have in the past. We will also be asking you for specific donations to fund our coming research grant program. New books and documentary movies will come out this year that will reveal much new, exciting information. We will be reporting on them on the SOF website, our Facebook page, and in our two journals and Newsletter.

Finally, thanks to those of you who have already renewed your memberships, with special gratitude to those of you who provided additional donations at this exciting time! While membership renewals are critical to maintaining our journals and newsletter, they are not enough. Donations are critical if we are serious about pursuing research. Your continued support will help us challenge the academic establishment with research that consistently reveals the true author of the works of Shakespeare—Edward de Vere.

John Hamill, President
Tom Regnier, First Vice President

The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

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www.ShakespeareOxfordFellowship.org.

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

The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship was formed in 2013 when the Shakespeare Oxford Society, founded in 1957, and the Shakespeare Fellowship, founded in 2001, united to form a single organization. Accordingly, the Shakespeare Oxford Society, a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization incorporated in New York State, now does business as the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship. Dues, grants and contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

Articles, essays, commentary, book reviews, letters and news items of interest to the Shakespeare Oxfordian community are welcome. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship. As provided in the bylaws, "The conferences, publications, and other educational projects of the Fellowship will be open forums for all aspects of the Oxfordian theory of authorship."

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From the Editor:

I am honored to be the editor of the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*, especially as it begins its fiftieth year of publication under this title. I hope to maintain the high standards that were set by the previous editors. In particular I want to thank my immediate predecessor, Dr. Michael Egan, who served as editor from 2010 to 2013, not only for the excellent work he has done but also for leaving me a few fine articles that he didn't have room for! Some of them appear in this issue, and some will appear in subsequent issues. Dr. Egan will continue to serve the cause as editor of *The Oxfordian*, the SOF's annual fall journal, and I hope that he'll continue to contribute to these pages as time permits. I also want to recognize Dr. Roger Stritmatter, who edited the Shakespeare Fellowship's newsletter, *Shakespeare Matters*, for several years and most recently handled the layout and design when I became its editor; Dr. Stritmatter too will continue to serve the cause as editor of the SOF's annual spring journal, *Brief Chronicles*.

Your contributions, comments and suggestions about the Newsletter are welcome. You can reach me at newsletter@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org, or by regular mail at the SOF business address: P.O. Box 66083, Auburndale MA 02466.

What better way to inaugurate the Newsletter's fiftieth year than with a sonnet? Or two? At last fall's Joint Conference in Toronto, several of us went to dinner one evening, at which Kristin Linklater, Head of Acting in the Theatre Arts Division of Columbia University, read a sonnet she'd composed and graciously gave me a copy. A few weeks later a second sonnet arrived, unsolicited, in the mail, this one from Charles Herberger, Professor Emeritus of English at Nasson College. I think you'll find this series of two sonnets well-composed and a lot easier to understand than Shakespeare's 1609 series.

Alex McNeil

Letter to the Editor:

This time my comments come after reading Robert Prechter's contribution to the Newsletter (Vol. 45, No 2, 2009) discussing the anonymous play *Nobody and Somebody*. My own reading of the play is totally in keeping with the article—in fact I stopped making notes because Mr. Prechter had comprehensively beaten me to it! Continuing my enthusiasm for the construction of a literary, and acting, life for Edward de Vere from about 1558 through to the Shakespeare days, as the best way to demolish the credibility of the Birthplace Trust stronghold, I offer more thoughts which your contributor may find stimulating, if he hasn't already got there.

No-body and Some-body, With the true Chronicle Historie of Elydure etc was probably written, either before those plays listed below or just after, during Edward de Vere's wardship at Cecil House between 1562 and 1571. Careful research is called for to learn all possible about that period. William Cecil apparently made a point of leaving his work behind when he "left the office," and relaxed at home with his wife and wards, inviting learned guests to dine. He also had a keen appreciation of all that was new and his library testifies to this fact. It is reasonable to suppose that Edward de Vere, given his high social status and reputation for learning, participated in these discussions. If it can be shown, if only by cross-references in language, style,

humor and content, initially to his poetry and letters, that de Vere wrote interludes, then plays, from as early as 1558, it may be possible to build a convincing picture of a playwright (and actor) from a young age right through to the Shakespeare days. Such an approach could undermine the foundations of the Birthplace Trust and avoid another few hundred years of resistance.

Taking the following anonymous plays, which I believe were written by de Vere in about 1566-67, we have a group with a great deal of similarity. There are parts which seem to have been written for de Vere himself to play, and the characters seem to be based on the Cecils. It is more than likely that Edward de Vere provided entertainment for the Cecils and their guests. The plays are full of mirth. If many references are to the Cecils, they are mildly amusing, rather than seriously satirical:

- *Common Conditions, An Excellent and Pleasant Comedie, etc*

- *Clymon and Clamides, the Historie of the two valiant Knights, etc*

And a year or two later:

- *Marriage of Wit and Science*

- *Marriage of Wit and Wisdom*

These plays were printed anonymously.

I made some notes on first reading these plays.

(Continued on p. 27)

Edward's Sonnet

by Kristin Linklater

When from the mists of time my name sounds forth
 Singing eternal praise for love's grand task,
 While sad grey scholars denigrate my worth
 Afraid to let their hearts' eyes pierce the mask;
 Then I despair lest truth shall ne-er be told,
 Never the verities unveil'd be clear'd;
 Then spectral miseries both worlds enfold,
 Worlds temporal and infinite uncheer'd.
 Yet sings my ghost in ears attun'd to truth
 Guiding poor mortals to their holy grail;
 They labor gainst the Shaxsper fraud in sooth,
 And my great spirit will not let them fail.
 Eternal love is fierce and knows no fear,
 Love's name is Edward Oxenford de Vere.

[Kristin Linklater is Head of Acting in the Theatre Arts
 Division of Columbia University]

For Edward de Vere Seventeenth Earl of Oxford

by Charles F. Herberger

Never was such an injustice done a name,
 Nor such a dubious cloud obscured a star,
 Or such a mockery done deserved fame,
 The world long blind to who you really are.
 Arise Great Oxford, let the world see
 Who immortal Shakespeare really was,
 Though lingered long to be or not to be.
 Now time at last has recognized your cause.
 Many long have doubted Stratford's claim,
 A man so far unfitted to the part,
 So much un-lived experience to explain
 For such a man to reach the peak of art.
 No man was ever born to shake a spear
 More to the manner born than was de Vere.

[Charles F. Herberger is Professor Emeritus
 of English at Nasson College]

What's the News?

18th Annual SARC Conference: April 11-13

The 18th Annual Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre Conference will be held on April 11-13, 2014, at Concordia University in Portland, Oregon. Although the full program has not been finalized, speakers will include actor Keir Cutler ("From Crackpot to Mainstream: The Evolution of the Authorship Question"); Prof. Michael Delahoyde ("Subliminal Chaucer in Shakespeare"); Lynne Kositsky ("Shrovetide in *The Tempest*"); Michael Morse ("A Critique of Oxfordian Cryptographic Analysis"); William Ray ("Secrets of the Droeshout Portrait"); Sam Saunders ("Conditional Probability and the Shakespeare Authorship Question"); Earl Showerman ("*A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Shakespeare's Aristophanic Comedy"); Prof. Roger Stritmatter ("This Common Shipwreck"); Prof. Emeritus Peter Sturrock (author of the recently published book *AKA Shakespeare*); and James Warren (editor of *An Index of Oxfordian Publications*). Further details and registration information may be found on the SARC website: www.authorshipstudies.org.

This year's conference will be chaired by Dr. Earl Showerman, a trustee of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship and former president of the Shakespeare Fellowship. Dr. Daniel Wright, who founded the SARC and organized its previous conferences, is no longer affiliated with Concordia University. The interim director of the SARC is Rev. Dr. David Kluth, Dean of the College of Theology, Arts & Sciences at Concordia.

Shakespeare Authorship Coalition Names Waugh, Issues Challenge

John Shahan, chairman and CEO of the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition, announced in December that Alexander Waugh has been named Honorary President; Shahan also made it clear that the adjective "Honorary" should not be taken to mean that Waugh is only a figurehead, explaining that "because his value to our movement as a scholar is so great, we have decided to relieve him of the administrative responsibilities that normally go with the office of president by giving him the title of 'Honorary President.' He . . . should be regarded as SAC president in all but name." Shahan had sought someone who possessed a rare combination of

skills for the position: ability to attract media attention; familiarity with the vast literature on the authorship issue; ability to communicate with a wide variety of audiences, including academics; debating skills; the ability to think strategically and adapt quickly to changing situations in a highly adversarial environment; and the commitment and strength of character to persevere.

“Alexander Waugh has all of these, and more,” Shahan said. Their paths crossed in July, 2012, when Waugh signed the Declaration of Reasonable Doubt. They kept in touch, and when Shahan decided to put together a book countering *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt* (Edmondson and Wells, eds.) Waugh readily agreed to write a chapter on Shakespeare’s knowledge of Italy. His chapter, “Keeping Shakespeare Out of Italy,” is widely regarded as perhaps the best chapter in a book that is full of outstanding work. He became co-editor of the book, making numerous key contributions to *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt? Exposing an Industry in Denial*.

Waugh is General Editor of the 42-volume scholarly edition of *Complete Works of Evelyn Waugh* for Oxford University Press. He is a book reviewer and author of several critically acclaimed works including *Time* (1999), *God* (2002), *Fathers and Sons* (2004) and *The House of Wittgenstein* (2008). He has presented documentaries on BBC television, was editor and founder of the award winning Travelman Short Story series and composed the music for the stage comedy *Bon Voyage!* which won the 12th Vivian Ellis Award for Best New Musical. He was recently appointed Senior Visiting Fellow, University of Leicester.

As reported elsewhere in this issue (see article, page 1), Waugh spoke at the SAT Conference in London in November, which can be seen on the SAT website and on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVpjyboXiWI>.

£40,000 donation offer to SBT

In the Shahan-Waugh book *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?* the SAC challenged the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT) to prove, in a mock trial before a neutral panel of judges, its claim that the authorship of Shakespeare’s works is “beyond doubt.” As expected, the SBT rejected the challenge, saying that it had presented the case in its recent authorship campaign, reiterated it in the Edmondson and Wells book, and had nothing to add.

On November 8, Shahan and Waugh upped the ante, sending the SBT an open letter, offering to donate £40,000 (about \$64,000) if the SBT agreed to participate in the trial and succeeded in proving the case beyond a reasonable doubt, listing the names of the forty persons who collectively pledged the £40,000 sum. (The letter and pledge list are on the SAC website, www.doubtaboutwill.org.)

Shahan stated that “we first tried to get some free media by submitting the open letter to *The Times of London*. When they ignored us, we placed two full-page ads in the *Times Literary Supplement* to run on December 6—the open letter, and an ad for our book. Four days in advance we sent a press release calling attention to the ads. Perhaps this would have gotten more attention if it weren’t for the passing of Nelson Mandela, preempting stories that the media prefer to ignore anyway. The ads got the attention of the SBT, which finally replied to our open letter, again rejecting the mock trial challenge, without mentioning the donation offer.”

Undaunted, Shahan vowed that “this won’t be the end of it. There are rules governing when it is appropriate for registered charities to decline to accept donations, and the SBT may be skating on thin ice in rejecting a £40,000 donation offer for defending something that it says is ‘beyond doubt,’ and which is a fundamental assumption underlying its existence as a charity. At least it’s likely to raise serious questions about them.

“From now on, whenever any authorship doubter is challenged, he or she will be able to reply: ‘If the evidence is as clear as they say, why doesn’t the Birthplace Trust accept the challenge of the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition to participate in a mock trial, prove its case beyond doubt, and win £40,000 simply for proving that we are the ignorant fools they claim we are?’ Perhaps even journalists will begin asking that question of the SBT whenever they attack us.”

New signatories, new notables

Shahan sees a positive effect in all this, noting an increase in the rate at which people are signing the Declaration. Over 250 people have signed in the last six months—double the previous rate. As of early January the Declaration had 2,868 signatories, including 1,017 with advanced degrees, and 490 current or former college faculty members. Notable among the new signatories are [Christopher Harris](#), M.F.A., Professor of Theatre at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, where he has taught for twenty-seven years, and [Luke Prodromou](#), Ph.D., an internationally known English language and literature teacher who is the author of over twenty books.

The SAC is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt educational charity. It welcomes donations, which may be made through its website, www.doubtaboutwill.org, or by mail to: Shakespeare Authorship Coalition, 310 North Indian Hill Blvd. #200, Claremont, CA 91711.



(SAT Conference, cont. from p. 1)

lovers of Shakespeare who have read it, and non-Stratfordians in particular, as it utterly refutes the numerous orthodox assertions that Shakespeare was utterly ignorant on the subject of Italy. Whittemore knew Dick Roe personally, and accompanied his talk with numerous photographs both of the man and of his Italian research trips, some kindly provided by Roe's daughter Hilary. [Whittemore's presentation appears elsewhere in this issue—Ed.]

Kevin Gilvary shed light on the relationship between various Shakespeare works and four categories of literary works: Roman comedy, Italian novellas, Commedia Erudita and Commedia dell'Arte. Details included how the much-cited "sailmaker from Bergamo" in *Taming of the Shrew* is not only an accurate topographical reference but a literary one: traditionally the servant in Italian comedies comes from Bergamo. Most significantly, he identified for the first time Italian literary sources for *The Tempest*, always considered Shakespeare's chief "sourceless" play. All three of the morning's talks were filmed and are available on the SAT website:

<http://www.shakespeareanauthorshiptrust.org.uk/pages/videos.htm>. They may also be found on YouTube.

Waugh's is at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVpjoyboXiWI>.

Whittemore's is at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHiEakohcx8&feature=share>.

Gilvary's is at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ms8C1S7otMs>.

After lunch, we were treated to a talk on Italian costumes and fashion from costume and stage designer Jenny Tiramani. She focused on the (relatively few) references to Italian and French dress in Shakespeare's works, and on the challenges and choices that must be faced in designing costumes for his Italian plays.

Julia Cleave of the Shakespearean Authorship Trust then presented the work of the late Roger Prior on the Bassano Fresco, and its relationship to *Othello*. Prior's work was published in 2008 in a hard-to-find Italian journal, but it provides compelling evidence that the author of *Othello* visited Bassano, and indeed, sourced the protagonist's name from that town, whose main square contained two apothecary shops, one owned by a man called "Otello" and one, operating under the sign of a Moor's head, known as "The Moor." Like Jenny Tiramani's presentation, this presentation wasn't filmed due to copyright restrictions, but an article on the Bassano Fresco which contains much of the information in Cleave's presentation can be found at <http://marlowe-shakespeare.blogspot.co.uk/2013/08/the-bassano-fresco-by-peter-farey.html>.

My own presentation, "A New Approach to the

SOF Conference Set for September

The next annual conference and business meeting of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship will take place in Madison, Wisconsin, from Thursday, September 11, through Sunday, September 14, 2014. This is the first time that a national Oxfordian organization has held a conference in Wisconsin. Further details, including a call for presentations as well as registration and accommodation information, will be announced soon on the SOF website: www.shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org.

The SOF is grateful to **Sara Tedeschi** of the University of Wisconsin and to **Eddy Nix**, who operates Driftless Books in Viroqua, WI, and who has brought many interesting books to sell at previous Oxfordian conferences, for volunteering to organize this year's event.

Authorship Question," was a plea to end the name-calling and antagonism that bedevils the authorship debate and to approach it calmly and rationally on the evidence alone. Stratfordians are no more liars and fools (as I have seen them called on internet forums) than non-Stratfordians are snobs and conspiracy theorists: each side believes they are either defending, or seeking, The Truth. This led into an introduction to Shakespeare: The Evidence, a new authorship question resource which is sponsored by the SAT. Details of the project may be found at <https://leanpub.com/shakespeare>.

After tea and the traditional SAT cake, we had brief presentations on the Italian connections of a number of key authorship candidates. This was followed by the Q&A/Forum which tackled a number of audience questions, including co-authorship and stylometry. A film of the Q&A is also available on the SAT website.

All in all, it was one of the most stimulating conferences yet, and a great tribute to the work of the late Richard Paul Roe and the late Professor Roger Prior.



Hank Whitemore Speaks at Authorship Trust Conference



This year's Shakespeare Authorship Trust Conference explored two questions: "*Did the author of the Shakespeare works have intimate knowledge of Italian topography, politics, culture and customs—or was he no true traveler? What limitations on Shakespeare scholarship have been imposed by orthodox assumptions about a landlocked author?*" The first answer is yes, of course, the author had intimate knowledge of Italy. The second answer, in brief, is that the limitations on Shakespeare scholarship have been so extensive and profound that it will take decades to recover from the damage done.

I've been involved with the authorship question for more than twenty-five years; and when I began, I couldn't find *anybody* to talk with about this. Back in those early days (the late eighties and early nineties), at the family dinner table, I would no sooner open my mouth—you know, about "maybe Shakespeare wasn't the guy we thought he was"—and all of a sudden I'm the only one sitting there. So the very fact that I'm here, with a group inspired and created by Mark Rylance, speaking to you with all these other folks, is surely a sign that things have come a long way.

I've had the privilege and pleasure of working with some of you in the past and meeting some of the most interesting people and some of the greatest minds that have labored in this field of inquiry. I've been challenged, often motivated, sometimes shocked, and on the rare occasion I've been truly inspired. Having had the privilege of knowing Richard Paul Roe for many years, I can tell you that he was indeed one of those rare sources of inspiration.

Shortly before his death on December 1, 2010, at the age of 88, Dick Roe's great labor of love, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy*, was printed privately with a limited number of copies and the subtitle *Then and Now*. Two years later it was issued for the public, with the same title but a new cover and a new subtitle: *Retracing the Bard's Unknown Travels*.

In the foreword to this book his youngest daughter, Hilary Roe Metternich, makes a simple opening statement: "One of the great satisfactions of life is to embark on a long, leisurely journey—especially an absorbing intellectual adventure filled with mystery and promise."

During the last twenty-five years of his life, Dick Roe took that journey. He was a lawyer—a seasoned lawyer, who also had deep knowledge of medieval and Renaissance history and literature. When his law practice in Los Angeles was coming to its end, he decided to investigate for himself whether Shakespeare's references to localities in Italy are filled with repeated errors and mistakes, as so many academics had maintained for so long—or whether, in fact, those references might be accurate and true.

Because of his experience in the law, Roe knew that in most cases the best source for getting to the heart of things is *tangible evidence*: "Just the facts, please." And so he set forth, across the length and breadth of Italy, on a journey that required many trips from California—holding his dog-eared copies of Shakespeare's Italian plays, with all the place names underlined, along with detailed maps and notes, acting like an archeologist excavating artifacts, inscriptions, monuments—observing geographical features and historical remnants after centuries of buried silence. Of course he was searching for the Italian Renaissance that Shakespeare—whoever he was—had brought back to his own beloved "sceptered isle."

On quite a few occasions over those two decades, I found myself in the same place as Dick Roe. One time in California there was a lunch with several others including his lovely wife, Jane; clearly he was still on the journey, filled with excitement and exuding quiet, steady confidence.

At other times I met up with him at conferences and heard him give talks about his progress. I had the feeling he just didn't want it to end—ever. *Was he writing a book?* "Well, no, I don't think so. I'm still looking, still learning and discovering." He was just having too much fun! I particularly remember the first time I saw him give a talk. It was accompanied by a slide show with photographs he had taken in Venice, with his weatherbeaten copy of *The Merchant* in hand—and at one point the whole thing became very detailed, and it seemed we were following a trail like Sherlock Holmes with his magnifying glass.

On the screen up came a series of images—including the Rialto, the financial district and for centuries the principal center of business in Venice for nobles and merchants, bankers and ship owners. There was the public square called Campo di San Giacomo di Rialto, adjacent to the Grand Canal. Shakespeare in *The*

Merchant of Venice refers to this square by name no less than five times.

After some more images of Venice here came the sight of the Jewish neighborhood, later called the Ghetto, literally an island within the city of Venice, surrounded by a complex of canals on all sides, and accessible only by two bridges with gates. Dick Roe explained that a decree of the Venetian Senate in 1516 had stated that the Jews must all live together in the ghetto, and not go out at night. The gates were opened in the morning at the ringing of the main bell at St. Mark's. Then they were locked shut again at midnight by four Christian gatekeepers (appointed and paid for by the Jews themselves); one reason for this was to protect them from being attacked.

On and on, step by step, Detective Roe retraced his footsteps for us, and he paused to recite lines from Act Two, Scene six, in the Ghetto, in front of the place where Shylock lives, when Gratiano tells Salerio that they have arrived at the "pent-house" under which Lorenzo wanted them to wait. Dick Roe found the reference to "the pent-house" a "curious detail" that cried out for an answer. The Middle English form of the word was "pentis," referring to a small structure attached to, or dependent on, another building, and Roe found a usage in 1625 about "erecting certain posts and covering them with large pentises."

Up on the screen appeared a color photograph from the vantage point of the street called the Campo del Ghetto Nuovo, and Dick Roe pointed to one of the buildings immediately next door to a four-arch arcade that was the site of Jewish loan banks frequented by Christians borrowing money. "And here," Roe said as he pointed to the screen, "is Shylock's house!" I nearly fell over ... *What? I mean, really? Is this guy kidding? Come on! He's saying this is the actual penthouse of the character Shylock, in a fictional play written in the sixteenth century?*

It would become clear soon enough that this was the same startling precision for an obscure place and thing in Italy that the author knew about, and subtly described and wove into his story.

And now Dick Roe was explaining other aspects of the Venetian ghetto's culture and way of life, and of Shakespeare's knowledge of Italy and particularly of Venice, its Jewish traditions, synagogues, neighborhoods, and its trading and banking laws.

For example, he cited in *The Merchant of Venice* how old Gobbo asks his son Launcelot about how to get to Shylock's house. What does he have to do to find it? According to Roe, the son's answer is a "classic, but comical, bit of Venetia," something a stranger might hear from a local:

"Turn upon your right hand at the next turning, but at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand; but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house."

Roe explained that Shakespeare was well aware that both father and son would know that the old man would have to get there "indirectly," using the ghetto's tangled and zigzagged streets.

He cited scholars who thought the original question, about how to get to Shylock's house, was ludicrous. But it's not, Roe said, because that's the way it was back then—for example, there were no address *numbers* on Venetian buildings, so old Gobbo would certainly *find someone in that small district who would point him directly* to Shylock's house.

And Shakespeare knew this.

Roe himself was aware that so many of the original structures of the ghetto are still there, so much is virtually

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unchanged, with only *one* penthouse in the ghetto, a single structure that Shakespeare was referring to.

Yes, and here it was—its second floor projecting from a building supported by a few columns—the *only* structure in the Ghetto of its kind—and for good measure it's immediately next door to a building with a ground floor consisting of an arcade with four arches that was the site of the loan banks mandated by the Venetian Senate. Catholics were forbidden to lend for profit, so Venetian law restricted such banks to the Jewish quarter—the Red Bank, it was called, so named for the color of its pawn tickets.

In his book Dick Roe provides countless examples of this kind of discovery. He had served in Europe during

World War II as a bomber pilot. During that time he fell in love with Italy, just as Shakespeare, whoever he was, must have fallen in love with Italy four hundred years ago.

After the war he went to the University of California at Berkeley and earned a BA in History. He picked up a law degree paid for by the GI Bill. But in 1952 at age 30, with a young family to support, he became a victim of the terrible polio epidemic that year. He spent several months in an iron lung. Dick Roe was among the more than 21,000 victims left with a mild to disabling paralysis.

Let us look at Roe's introduction to his book to find some of what he felt was most immediately important to share with us:

There is a secret Italy hidden in the plays of Shakespeare. It is an ingeniously described Italy that has neither been recognized, nor even suspected—not in four hundred years—save by a curious few. It is exact; it is detailed; and it is brilliant...

These descriptions are in challenging detail, and nearly all their locations can still be found in Italy today. It is an Italy that has never before been acknowledged because of a widely accepted dogma that negated its existence, dampening any motive to leave home and go in search of it.

Of the few things about Italy which critics admit the playwright got right, they say he must have learned them from a source right there in England, especially since the proclaimed playwright had never been in Italy—a consistently asserted fact used to explain why the author of the plays set in Italy made repeated 'mistakes' about that country.

In truth, as will be demonstrated, the precise and abundant allusions in those plays, to places and things the length of that country, are so unique to it that they attest to the playwright's PERSONAL TRAVELS THERE. By journeying in Italy today, with the Italian plays in hand, reading them as though they were books of instruction, the playwright's vast erudition about that exciting country and its civilization is revealed.

At the beginning of Chapter One ("Romeo and Juliet—Devoted Love in Verona") is a personal story, which, for many readers of *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy*, has become a kind of symbol of the entire book—a shorthand way of referring to the many startling and amazing things that Shakespeare pointed to and that Dick Roe wound up finding. It's called, simply enough, "The Sycamores":

I had not admitted to anyone why I was going to Italy this time. My friends knew that I went there whenever I could, a reputation that gave me the cover that I wanted for my fool's errand in Verona. But was it so foolish? Had I deluded myself in what I had come to suspect? Only by going back to Verona would I ever know. Of that much I was certain.

Then I arrived, and, glad I had come, conflicting emotions began to make my blood race. I was half excited with the beginning quest, and half dreading a ridiculous failure, but obsessed with the idea of discovering what no one had discovered—had even looked for—in four hundred years.

My start would be—was planned to be—absurdly simple. I would search for sycamore trees. Not anywhere in Verona but in one place alone, just outside the western wall. Native sycamore trees, remnants of a grove that had flourished in that one place for centuries.

In the first act, in the very first scene, of *Romeo and Juliet*, the trees are described; and no one has ever thought that the English genius who wrote the play could have been telling the truth: that there *were* such trees, growing exactly where he said in Verona. In that first scene, Romeo's mother, Lady Montague, encounters her nephew on the street ... Benvolio ... Romeo's best friend. She asks Benvolio where her son Romeo might be and Benvolio replies:

*Madam, an hour before the worshipped sun
Peered forth the golden window of the East,
A troubled mind drove me to walk abroad,
Where, underneath the grove of sycamore
That westward rooteth from the city's side,
So early walking did I see your son.*

Here Dick Roe goes into the matter of Shakespeare's known sources for the play and the question of which, if any, mentioned that sycamore grove:

All this evolution happened *before* the *Romeo and Juliet* of the playwright was composed. Shakespeare scholars insist that he got his material for *Romeo and Juliet* from Brooke's long poem and that the celebrated playwright had never been in Italy; therefore, he could be *expected to make mistakes* about its topographic realities. They say he *invented a peculiar Italy of his own*, with colorful nonsense about what was there.

But—and here is the inexplicable thing—alone in the playwright's *Romeo and Juliet*—there, and nowhere else, not in any other Italian or French or English version—has it been set down that at Verona, just outside its western walls, was a grove of sycamore trees.

So Roe's cab took him across the city and then to its edge on Viale Cristoforo Colombo. The cab turned south onto the Viale Colonnello Galliano and began to slow down. This was the boulevard where, long before, when Roe was rushing to get to the airport at Milan, he had gotten a glimpse of some trees—but had no idea what kind. Creeping along the Viale then coming to a halt, he writes, "the driver, with a proud sweep of his hand, exclaimed, 'Ecco, Signore! There they are! It is truly

here, outside the western wall that our sycamores grow!”

“There they were indeed,” Roe writes. “Holding my breath for fear they might be mere green tricks of the sunlight, I leapt from the car to get a closer look at the broad-lobed leaves and mottled pastel trunks, to make absolutely certain that it was true; that the playwright had known, and had told the truth. Benvolio was right. *And I was not a fool.*”

When I was first reading Roe’s book that nagging question kept floating up. Why did the author put those sycamores in there in the first place? Why put in so many little things in Italy that could only be found by being there?

I asked some of my authorship colleagues. One suggested that perhaps the playwright was doing this for the amusement of his friends—for the aristocratic young men who also went to that forbidden, dangerously alive place called Italy. But that reason didn’t impress me too much. There are just too many details in the Italian plays and I don’t think his friends back home would recognize even a tenth of them, no matter how many continental trips they had made. Another friend suggested that the great author knew his identity was going to be erased from the historical record. And he would want to send a message to us so we could realize that he actually did travel in Italy. That would be a strong clue, perhaps, to his identity—and all the little clues he put in there would survive—would pass through censorship unnoticed, unseen, unrecognized—and so *remain* there in his plays.

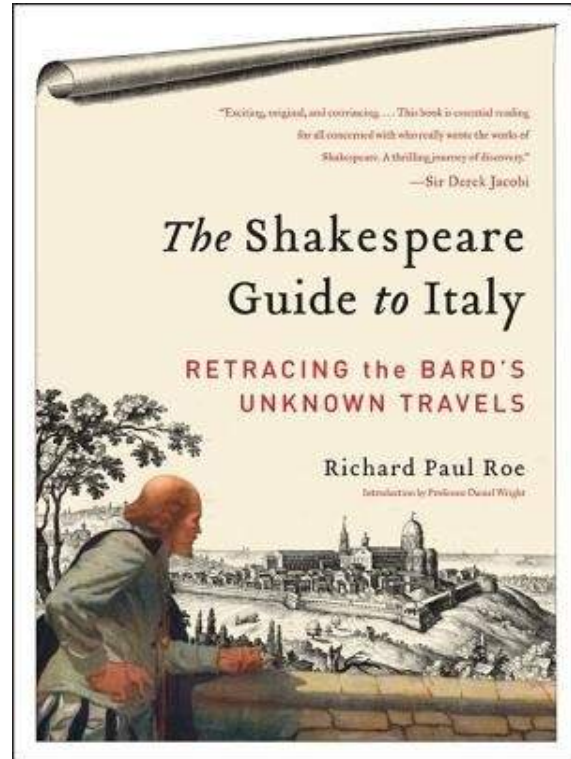
But then I thought of another reason, and I believe that even if the others might be valid, this one is probably the bottom line; let me say it first as simply as I can, from my own point of view as someone who tries to put words together: The man wrote better when he knew it was real! Or, as my friend and colleague Stephanie Hughes put it: “This author’s imagination was the sort that needs real things and real experiences to build upon.”

In the process of using the reality of his experience to write better, the author known as Shakespeare thus gave us a special gift in his Italian plays—a way to go right to the very places where he spent time and walk in his shoes on the very same streets. He left us with a map of his own experience. His love for Italy was, of course, a love for life—and of course the Italian renaissance.

Dick Roe was not alone in his convictions about this. Professor Ernesto Grillo grew up in a respected Italian family and taught Italian studies at Glasgow University. His lectures included dozens of linkages between Shakespeare and the geography, language and culture of Italy. One of his students put together his notes into a book entitled *Shakespeare and Italy*, published in 1949. It quotes Grillo’s conclusion:

Italy with its public and private life, its laws and customs, its ceremonial and other characteristics, pulsates in every line of our dramatist, while the atmosphere of many scenes is Italian in the truest

sense of the word. We cannot but wonder how Shakespeare obtained such accurate information, and we have no hesitation in affirming that on at least one occasion he must have visited Italy.



Georges Lambin, a professor at Saint-Louis College in Paris, specialized in translations of Shakespeare. His work, *The Travels of Shakespeare in France and Italy*, was published in 1962. Professor Lambin writes with passion:

The moment is near, if it has not already arrived, in which the “Shakespeare mystery” will finally escape the somewhat narrow and jealous competence of the exclusive specialist in literary studies. And when the HISTORIAN and the GEOGRAPHERS (and so on) shall wish to intensively undertake this problem, it will be definitely resolved.

Lambin writes about *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and the famous “mistake” by Shakespeare of having Valentine sail from inland Verona to inland Milan—when, of course, it was easier—and safer—to sail on the connecting waterways, rivers, and canals which contained “roads” or wide places for ships to anchor. “A vessel waits in the *road*,” he writes of *The Two Gentlemen*, “and time is pressing, because the *tide*—otherwise the *flood*—has just peaked.” Now Lambin turns sarcastic: “Here, our author surely must be exaggerating! What? Not know that Verona and Milan are not on the sea?! Well, there you go—that proves it—Shakespeare *never was in Italy!*”

But he points out that in *Two Gentlemen* the author never directly mentions the sea. “As to the flood or tide, we’re not talking about an ocean surge at Verona! Yet today, motor-less vessels still wait for the tide to assist their passage to the open sea. . . . River navigation is common on the European continent and has been for a long time. It is this flow that our voyagers have awaited for their voyage to Milan from Verona.”

Stephanie Hughes makes the point that these works would be performed for Queen Elizabeth, who was at court waiting for the witty and informative plays about places she herself would probably never see—and in fact never did—and about events on the Continent that were of continual concern in England.

One other scholar in this realm is Dr. Noemi Magri, of Mantua, who died in May of 2011. She was an extraordinary woman, an outstanding teacher of English who contributed many amazing articles about Shakespeare and Italy to the De Vere Society, which reprinted five of them in its 2004 collection of essays *Great Oxford*—an outstanding book that I recommend to anyone involved in the Shakespeare authorship question.

The cover photograph is of a Titian painting of Ovid’s story of *Venus and Adonis*. As Dr. Magri reported, Titian painted many such pictures, but this was the *only* one in which Adonis wears a bonnet or cap while trying to avoid being seduced by the goddess of love and beauty. That painting could only be seen in the sixteenth century at Titian’s home in Venice. And it is the very painting that Shakespeare describes in his narrative poem of *Venus and Adonis*. The author we call Shakespeare was in Venice and saw it, eventually using it to write:

*He sees her coming and begins to glow...
And with his bonnet hides his angry brow...
For all askance he holds her in his eye...
Now was she just before him as he sat,
And like a lowly lover down she kneels ...
O what a war of looks was then between them!*

Both Noemi Magri and Dick Roe contributed details of evidence to prove that Portia’s supposedly fictitious estate of Belmont in *The Merchant of Venice* was none other than the Villa Foscari-Malcontenta on the River Brenta. Built by 1560, it was a grand palace where, just as the author knew, trumpets sounded as each nobleman was received in its richly decorated Great Hall, and where musicians serenaded, aristocrats danced and players performed.

Shakespeare gave Portia the precisely correct information for her instruction to Nerissa to “haste away, for we must measure twenty miles today.” The round trip is ten miles to Venice and ten miles back to the Villa Foscari or Belmont. Portia says they will travel by coach to the “Tranect,” a narrow strip of land where travelers could transfer to the common ferry, which was then

pulled across the dry land by machinery to the water for the final lap to Venice.

The rendezvous at the “Tranect” was exactly five miles from Belmont to Fusina, and from there it was exactly five miles to Venice. The round trip was thus twenty miles, just as Portia, and Shakespeare, had to know firsthand. The landing place at Venice for the two women was *Il Molo*, which sits in front of the Ducal Palace and the Courts of Justice—exactly where the trial of Antonio was being held.

Here are just a few of the places and things from Shakespeare’s plays that Richard Paul Roe found in Italy:

- From *Romeo and Juliet*, the cloister at Friar Laurence’s monastery.
- From *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the Emperor’s Court and Saint Gregory’s Well in Milan.
- From *Taming of the Shrew*, the rivers and canals to Padua, and the hostelry near St. Luke’s Church.
- From *Othello*, the “Sagittary” in Venice known in Italian as the *Frezzaria*. Scholars have had many ideas about what it was, all of them wrong, but in fact it’s a narrow street where arrow-makers had their shops.
- From *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, an ancient and unchanged town near Mantua called Sabbioneta, known as “Little Athens,” with enough details to convince the most stubborn naysayer that this was indeed the real setting for Shakespeare’s *Dream*.
- From *All’s Well That Ends Well*, the St. Francis Hostelry.

Finally, I’d like to share some of Hilary Roe Metternich’s insights into the scholar and adventurer whom she called Dad. There were two points she especially wanted to make: The first might simply be called “irreverence.” Her father was a highly intelligent individual — a self-made man of simple background, who was *fundamentally irreverent*. He never accepted what the “experts” had to say about anything, at least not just because they were “experts.” He was a feisty guy. This may have stemmed from his training as a brilliant lawyer, she said, adding, “but I believe his irreverence shows through in the topic which absorbed him so profoundly at the end of his life—and which resulted in his book.”

The second point, she said, is “that my father’s outlook was also impacted by the ‘conflict’ or ‘tension’ between Appearance and Reality. How things (and people) appear are not necessarily how they actually are. For example, his mother, born in 1886, was a divorced woman—considered rather a wild thing for a woman to be at the turn of the 20th century. But he knew her only as a wonderful and warm person. How she may have appeared to others was never the reality of her to him.”

She concluded: “Irreverence and Awareness of the Difference between Appearance and Reality: I do not

believe my father embarked on his Shakespeare quest without having been affected by them.”

Dick Roe believed that the Earl of Oxford was the true author, but he left that conviction aside when it came to writing his book. His epilogue is a paragraph of simple elegance and eloquence:

As we have seen in the foregoing chapters of this book, the “imaginary” settings for the ten Italian plays of Shakespeare have presented both specific, and strikingly accurate, details about that country, as a result of dedicated sojourns within it by the playwright. The author’s journeys took him from its Alpine slopes to the toe of its peninsula, across the length and breadth of its great island of Sicily, and included sailing trips on both the adjoining Adriatic and Tyrrhenian Seas. For the last four hundred years, nearly all of the playwright’s descriptions of Italy’s places and treasures have either gone unrecognized as being true, or have been dismissed as mistaken. In researching and writing this book, it has been my goal to re-visit these orthodox beliefs, and contrast them for their accuracy with the actual words of the English playwright.

And that, I might add, is precisely what he did.



(Oxford’s Fifty-Play Canon, cont. from p. 1)

My own dating scheme begins at least ten years before any of these. If Oxford wrote fifty plays, he could not have started as late as 1590, when he was forty. Nor is it likely that he started in 1580, when he was thirty. There is good evidence that he was entertaining the court and the Queen with dramatic productions and performances as early as the 1570s. For instance, in a March 1579 letter, Gilbert Talbot wrote to his father that “before Her Majesty this Shrovetide at night” there was “a device presented by the persons of the Earl of Oxford, the Earl of Surrey, the Lords Thomas Howard and Windsor” (Ward 163-164).

We also have the testimony of Anthony Munday, who entered the service of the Earl of Oxford in 1578. In the epilogue to his novel *Zelauto*, published in 1580, Munday mentions the “devices” that are presented to entertain Elizabeth and her court by “her noble peers and lords that are about her.” Munday adds that he is “much bound to one of them in especial . . .” (Stillinger 51-52). The word “device” has several meanings; in this context, it is a type of “dramatic representation” (*OED*, devise: 11).

Furthermore, in *A Discourse of English Poetry* (1586) William Webbe praised Oxford as the “most excellent” of poets at court (Smith I, 243), and the anonymous author of *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) asserted that he

would be known as the best of the courtly poets “if their doings could be found out” (Smith II, 65).

The Timing of the *Shrews*

I contend that Oxford began writing plays even earlier, in the 1560s, and that an accurate dating of his two *Shrew* plays is the key to the chronology of the early canon. Although several recent editors of the canonical *Shrew*, which saw print only in the First Folio of 1623, claim that it preceded the anonymous *Shrew*, printed and performed in 1594, this has not always been the prevailing opinion. In fact, several early critics considered the anonymous *Shrew* to be a Shakespeare play,

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Alexander Pope calling it “the first sketch” of the canonical *Shrew* (II, 351). Although they deny that it is by Shakespeare, major critics and editors of the twentieth century—E. K. Chambers (*WS*, I, 327), G. B. Harrison (328), and Geoffrey Bullough (I, 57-58)—assert not only that the anonymous *Shrew* preceded Shakespeare’s play, but that it was his primary source. In my recent paper in *The Oxfordian* (2012), I presented the evidence that Oxford wrote both *Shrew* plays in the order in which they appeared in the record, and that the canonical *Shrew* was his major revision of the earlier play.

The anonymous *Shrew* was performed and published in 1594. Except for its framing plot, it is set in Athens and

most of the characters are Athenians. Its three-plot structure consists of a framing plot in which Christopher Sly is confronted by an anonymous Lord; a taming plot in which a wealthy bachelor courts Kate, a shrewish woman with two younger sisters; and a subplot in which two other bachelors court the shrew's sisters. In it, Aurelius, the son of a Duke, conceals his identity and instructs his servant to impersonate him in order to test the sincerity of one of the sisters.

There is no record of the canonical *Shrew* until its appearance in the First Folio in 1623. Except for its two opening scenes, it is set in Padua and its characters are Italians. It has the identical three-plot structure as the anonymous *Shrew*, with minor variations, and the main characters (except one) are the same. Throughout the play are numerous Italian phrases and details of Italian customs and geography. The dialogue has been entirely rewritten and greatly improved, but many of the same words, phrases and ideas remain in the text. The characters are more fully formed and articulate, and the play is half again as long as the anonymous *Shrew*. In the subplot, Lucentio, a gentleman student, conceals his identity, and instructs his servant to impersonate him in order to test the sincerity of one of the sisters.

It is readily apparent that the author of the anonymous *Shrew* rewrote the play after being exposed to the language, customs and geography of Italy, specifically northern Italy. Therefore, we can date the composition of the canonical *Shrew* to 1575 or later, during or soon after Oxford's residence in Italy. Oxford's composition of the anonymous *Shrew* occurred, naturally, some time before that. Fortunately, we have evidence that will help fix its date.

The subplot of both *Shrew* plays, which describes the courtship of the sister(s) of the shrew, lies in George Gascoigne's English translation of the Italian comedy *I Suppositi*, by Ludovico Ariosto, first performed in Ferrara in 1509. *I Suppositi* was staged as *Supposes* at Gray's Inn late in 1566—the first prose comedy in English. Gray's Inn, to which Oxford was admitted in February 1567, was only a mile from his home at Cecil House.

My deduction is that Oxford became familiar with *Supposes* either by attending a performance at Gray's Inn just before he became a student there or by reading Gascoigne's manuscript before or after that performance. Some scholars claim that Oxford and Gascoigne were already acquainted in the mid-1560s.³ Gascoigne was distantly related to William Cecil as a result of his marriage to Elizabeth Boyes, *née* Bacon, in 1561, and did some diplomatic work for him in the 1570s.

Another clue to the date of the anonymous *Shrew* is the fact that there are few, if any, legal terms or concepts in it, and more than two dozen in the canonical *Shrew* (Sokol 483; Sherbo 114). This supports the conclusion that Oxford wrote the anonymous *Shrew* in early 1567, before he was fully immersed in his legal studies.

Returning to the composition of the canonical *Shrew*, there is additional evidence. In November 1575, Oxford sent a short letter to Lord Burghley "by this bearer who departeth from us here in Padua this night" (Chiljan, "Letters" 21). In the opening scene of *The Shrew*, Lucentio and Tranio debark on Padua's interior canal in front of the home of Baptista Minola, father of the shrew. Richard Roe has identified the precise spot where this took place, as well as the adjacent bridge and hostelry that they spoke about, and the nearby parish church, Saint Luke's, dating from well before 1350, in which Katherina and her sister were married (94-105).

It is easy to imagine a scenario in which Oxford, during his exposure to Italy and the Italian theater, decides to make it the setting for his next few plays. And what better way to ease into his Italian period than to rewrite one of his old plays and move it to the very city where he is staying—Padua? But before traveling to Padua, he had established a household in Venice, at the time Italy's most prominent center for the manufacture and sale of books. Ariosto's *I Suppositi* was published in prose in 1523, and rewritten in verse and published in 1551—in Venice (Bond li). Since there are incidents from *I Suppositi* in the canonical *Shrew* that are not in the anonymous *Shrew*, it's quite possible that Oxford found a copy of *I Suppositi* in a Venice bookstall and used it in his rewrite of *A Shrew*.

To further pin down a composition date for *The Shrew*, it is helpful to refer to the three other "Italian" plays that Oxford wrote in the late 1570s, during and after his travels in Italy—*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Romeo and Juliet*. In a recent article in *The Oxfordian* (2011), I demonstrated that *The Merchant of Venice* was written in 1578. This agrees with other Oxfordian dating schemes: Clark and the Ogburns both date it to 1579 and Hess dates it to 1576-77.

Most scholars (including non-Stratfordians) agree that Shakespeare wrote *The Merchant of Venice* during the second phase of his writing career, and the canonical *Shrew* during the first.⁴ This allows us to date the canonical *Shrew* within a very short range—during or after Oxford's exposure to Italy and Italian drama in 1575-76, and before *The Merchant of Venice* in 1578.

The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth

Using the above composition dates for the two *Shrew* plays, we can assign the remainder of Oxford's juvenilia to the years just before and after his years at Gray's Inn. The shortest and poorest of these is *Famous Victories*, certainly his earliest surviving play. I believe that the sudden change of environment and circumstances of the young Oxford in September 1562 justifies assigning it to the year or two following his move to London. It's a reasonable guess that he turned to writing a play to assuage his shock and grief on the death of his father the previous month. And we know that he didn't lose only his

father. When he was sent to London he was also deprived of his family—his sisters, his mother, and his aunts and uncles, except Arthur Golding. He was also suddenly removed from his friends, his home, and his familiar surroundings. He was abruptly relocated to the big city and to an unfamiliar household, surrounded by people he didn't know.

It is a truism that a mental trauma or great misfortune often stimulates creative activity. The idea has been expressed succinctly by two well-known artists:

“No one has ever written, painted, sculpted, modeled, built, or invented except literally to get out of hell.” Antonin Artaud (1947).

“The artist is extremely lucky who is presented with the worst possible ordeal which will not actually kill him.” John Berryman (1976).⁵

In his new home, Oxford came into contact with the court and with the diversions of the capital, including public playhouses and, very likely, taverns and street life. Assuming that he began to write at this time, what did this bereaved young nobleman write about? *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* tells the story of a young nobleman, a prince, who, with a band of good fellows, conducts a prank robbery of the King's couriers. They retire to a tavern in Eastcheap, where they call for wine and musicians. They begin to throw their wine pots against the wall, and to fight with the other patrons. They go outside and use their swords in a “bloody fray” until the sheriff arrives and arrests them all. When the Prince's father, King Henry IV, learns of the incident, he complains that he “hath gotten a son which with grief will end his father's days!” (3.45-46), but orders them all released.⁶

Three scenes later Prince Hal meets with his father and repents of all his bad behavior, calling himself “an unworthy son for so good a father!” (6.17). His father forgives him, but two scenes later the King is on his deathbed in the Jerusalem Chamber of Westminster Palace. Prince Hal enters, finds him asleep and, thinking he is dead, takes the crown. In the next scene he is called to task by his father, and tries to explain his behavior:

. . . finding you at that time past all recovery,
and dead, to my thinking—God is my witness—and
what / should I do, but with weeping tears lament the
death of you, / my father? And after that, seeing the
crown, I took it. / . . . But, seeing you live, I most
humbly render it into / your Majesty's hands.
(8.46-52)

His father forgives him, and then dies. In the room at this moment, with the King and Prince Hal, is one of Oxford's ancestors, the eleventh Earl. The chronicles report this scene, but do not mention the presence of the eleventh Earl of Oxford (Ward 282-284).

To recapitulate *Famous Victories*, in the first eight scenes there is a recollection of happy times with friends, some bad behavior and an expiation for it, a reconciliation with a father, a renunciation of the crown, and a father's death. The remainder of the play is devoted

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to multiple examples of the young nobleman's personal success. Prince Hal becomes King of England and invades England's traditional enemy, France. Against great odds, he defeats the French army. He is named heir to the throne of France and marries Katherine, the French King's daughter. It seems that in this play Oxford is recalling his life before he was sent to London, agonizing over his behavior and his father's death, and then fantasizing about his future. *Famous Victories* is a crude effort of only 1500 lines, entirely in prose. There are too many speaking parts (37), including ten comics, for such a short play, and the action is disjointed and episodic. Nevertheless, it was a popular play, still being performed more than twenty years after its composition.

There is further evidence for the claim that Oxford wrote *Famous Victories* at thirteen or fourteen. Tutored privately from the age of four, Oxford's matriculation at Cambridge University at the age of eight suggests an extremely precocious child. In 1563 his tutor, the scholar Laurence Nowell, advised Cecil that his services “cannot much longer be required.” In 1564 Arthur Golding praised him for his interest in ancient and modern history and for communicating with “a certain pregnancy of wit and ripeness of understanding” (Anderson 23-27). Some scholars suggest that Oxford wrote the long poem “Romeus and Juliet” in 1562 and/or the play mentioned in the poem (Ogburn 449-450), and that he, not Arthur Golding, was the translator of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, printed in 1565 and 1567 (Whittemore).

We also know that Oxford was writing competent poetry before the age of sixteen, poetry that is still anthologized today (Anderson 121-123). Such precocity is unusual, but not unheard of. There are many examples of significant literary works written by teenagers. For instance, Madame de Stael wrote a comedy, *The Inconveniences of Parisian Life*, at age twelve. Both

Victor Hugo and Alfred Tennyson wrote five-act plays at age fourteen. Tennyson's play—*The Devil and the Lady*—an imitation of an Elizabethan comedy, is the same length as *Famous Victories*. When it was finally published in 1930, *The Times* reviewer called it “astonishingly mature” (Tennyson i). So it's entirely believable that Oxford could have written *Famous Victories* in his early teen years.

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Oxford's First Five Plays

I assign three other early plays to the years between *Famous Victories* in 1562-63 and the anonymous *Shrew* in 1567. In terms of plot, characterization, and language, they are inferior to the anonymous *Shrew*, and to every other play that Oxford wrote.

1562-1567:

The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth
The True Tragedy of Richard III
The Troublesome Reign of John, King of England
The Two Noble Kinsmen
The Taming of A Shrew

All these plays feature large casts of essentially one-sided characters. The verse is competent, but undistinguished and often pedestrian, with the exception of certain scenes in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Each of them is well plotted, and they all contain examples of the vivid imagery and striking language routinely found in the accepted canon.

It is in *Troublesome Reign* that the first bastard appears, reflecting a painful episode in Oxford's fourteenth year. In 1563 his half-sister Katherine and her husband petitioned to have the sixteenth Earl's marriage to Margery Golding in 1548 declared illegal on the grounds that he was already married at the time. This would have made bastards of Oxford and his younger sister Mary, and deprived him of the Oxford earldom

(Anderson 24). Although the petition was not granted, this can only have been a severe shock to a boy who had always been considered his father's legitimate heir.

In a fictional incident inserted in the plot of *Troublesome Reign*, Philip Falconbridge, eldest son of Sir Robert Falconbridge, reveals that he is the product of an adulterous liaison between his mother and King Richard I. Reveling in his bastardy, he agrees to forfeit the lands and wealth of his deceased father to his younger half-brother.⁷ Bastardy will be a recurring theme throughout the Shakespeare canon (Findlay 253-255).

The evidence is convincing that *Palamon and Arcite*, performed at Oxford in 1566, was an early version of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.⁸

Legal terms and concepts are simple and infrequent in these first five plays, but they are sophisticated and profuse in *King Leir* and in the plays immediately following, and plentiful throughout the rest of the canon, a valuable clue to which plays Oxford wrote before his exposure to the law and its language in 1567.

The following seven plays, all published anonymously, reveal a level of skill and versification superior to that in the previous five, but many similarities in dramaturgy, style and vocabulary.

1567-1571:

The True Chronicle History of King Leir
*Lochrine*⁹
Edward III
The First Part of the Contention . . . (2 Henry VI)
The True Tragedy of Richard, Duke of York
(3 Henry VI)
Arden of Faversham
Edmond Ironside

In an early scene in *Edmond Ironside*, the King expresses his concern for the well-being of his soldiers and excoriates officers who would starve their men and let them go barefoot and naked. The passage, which has no dramatic function, was probably stimulated by Oxford's first experience of military service in the Scottish campaign in 1570 (Anderson 41-43). It is likely that the common battlefield scenes of hunger, deprivation, injury, and death would have made a deep impression on a sensitive and observant twenty-year-old.

I assign seven more plays to the years before Oxford's tour of France and Italy.

1571-1575:

1 Henry VI
The Spanish Tragedy
Thomas, Lord Cromwell
Pericles
Richard III
The Comedy of Errors
Titus Andronicus

There is nothing about Italy, at least modern Italy, in any of these plays. The first two acts of *Pericles* are so much

poorer than the rest that some orthodox scholars assert a collaboration with George Wilkins. But such a collaboration is unlikely, Wilkins being Oxford's junior by thirty years; the best evidence is that Oxford wrote the play in this period, and then revised the last three acts some years later (Clark 56-74). Also in this period, he rewrote *The True Tragedy of Richard III*, and gave us the canonical *Richard III*.

Next follow the plays he wrote in Italy and in the immediate years after his return:

1576-1580:

The Taming of the Shrew
The Two Gentlemen of Verona
The Merchant of Venice
Romeo and Juliet
All's Well that Ends Well
Sir Thomas More
Thomas of Woodstock (I Richard II)

I've placed *Macbeth* in the next period on the strength of Richard Whalen's evidence in his edition of the play, although, as he says, Oxford's first version may have been as early as 1567 (207-212).

1581-1585:

Love's Labour's Lost
Richard II
Twelfth Night
A Midsummer Night's Dream
Macbeth
1 Henry IV
2 Henry IV
Henry V

In 2001, I published a paper demonstrating that *Henry V* was written in the winter of 1584-85. The Prince Hal trilogy is Oxford's revision and expansion of *Famous Victories*, twenty or so years after he first treated the subject.

1586-1590:

The Merry Wives of Windsor
Julius Caesar
Much Ado about Nothing
Troilus and Cressida
As You Like It
Hamlet

We have good evidence that a version of *Hamlet* existed in 1589 (Jolly 11-24).

It is to the years after 1590 that most scholars assign Oxford's two narrative poems and his extensive sequence of sonnets. This probably led to a reduction of his previously robust dramatic output. I have not studied all of his last plays in detail, and rely on other scholars' work.

1591-1595:

Measure for Measure
Othello
King Lear
Timon of Athens

1596-1600:

Antony and Cleopatra
Coriolanus
Cymbeline
The Winter's Tale

1601-1604:

The Tempest
Henry VIII

If Oxford wrote fifty plays, and I think he wrote even more, this arrangement is the one that best accounts for the limited facts that we have. As mentioned above, it is based primarily on events and circumstances in his life. Occasional topical references and other evidence that contradict this chronology can usually be explained as later additions by Oxford or another person. It appears that Oxford was a compulsive writer and reviser who wrote constantly, wherever he was. But he was indifferent or even hostile to the printing of his plays, and none of his personal references to them, if any, have survived. In addition, court and theater records were sketchy, and play publication scanty, during most of his career, making composition dates difficult to determine.¹⁰ A more accurate and complete dating scheme may have to wait until the coming paradigm shift, when the entire range of Shakespearean scholarship will inevitably be focused on the life and works of Edward de Vere.

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ENDNOTES:

¹Besides the thirty-six in the First Folio, Chambers includes *Pericles* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (I, 246-250). Wintersdorf includes only *Pericles*. In *The Riverside Shakespeare*, Evans and Tobin include these two and *Edward III*, *Cardenio* and the Additions to *Sir Thomas More* (78-87).

²Besides the thirty-six in the First Folio, Clark includes *Famous Victories*, *Arden of Faversham*, and *Pericles* (7-8); the Ogburns include *Pericles* (Hess II, 298-299); Hess includes *Pericles* and *Cardenio* and refers to "Origination dates" (II, 298-299). A useful compilation of various dates proposed for the Shakespeare plays is Kevin Gilvary's *Dating Shakespeare's Plays*.

³ For instance, B. M. Ward, in his introduction to *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1926), places Gascoigne in Oxford's company in 1562. See pp. 36-40 in Miller's ed. of *HSF* and pp. 15 & 27 in Ward's biography of Oxford.

⁴ This can be ascertained on the charts in the sources cited in notes 1 and 2.

⁵ Quoted in Jamison at 115 and 121.

⁶ Quotations from *Famous Victories* are from Pitcher's ed.

⁷ The relationship between the two King John plays is detailed in my paper, "*The Troublesome Raigne of John, King of England: Shakespeare's First Version of King John*" in v. 12 of *The Oxfordian*.

⁸ See Chiljan, "Oxford and Palamon and Arcite" and Anderson 32-33, 440-441.

⁹ The title page of *Lochrine* bore the phrase "Newly set forth, overseen and corrected, by W.S."

¹⁰ By 1590 Oxford had written forty plays, but none of his, and fewer than one hundred in all, had been printed (Bennett 255).

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Book Review

David P. Gontar

Hamlet Made Simple and Other Essays

Nashville, TN: New English Review Press, 2013

Reviewed by Richard M. Waugaman, M.D.

David Gontar has written a fascinating book on Shakespeare, that all Oxfordians will want to read. He has an unusual set of professional and scholarly credentials. He is now Adjunct Professor of English and Philosophy at Inner Mongolia University in China. Previously, he taught Philosophy and Humanities at Southern University. With a J.D. in addition to his Ph.D., he then practiced law. His expertise in philosophy and law come through repeatedly in his explication of several topics in Shakespeare studies.

Crucially, Gontar appreciates complexity, repeatedly emphasizing its vital place in our understanding of Shakespeare. He persuasively shows that our reading of Shakespeare will be impoverished if we continue trying to separate the author from his works. In addition to the relevance of a Shakespearean character's "backstory," Gontar notes that "it is equally impossible to form a conception of characters without reference to their future" (36). I found this original and convincing. He celebrates Juliet as the strongest character in her play, commenting, "It is precisely her mix of vulnerability and uncanny determination which makes her vivid, real, and kin to us" (62). Gontar's close reading of the text offers a superb historical and linguistic exegesis of Shakespeare's character Poin in Chapter 4. There are many places where Gontar's expertise in philosophy, like that of A.D. Nuttall, helpfully informs his reading of the text. For example, in elucidating his persuasive thesis that Prince Hal's friend Poin was a nobleman, he zeroes in on Poin's use of the phrase "How ill it follows," showing that it reflects Poin's knowledge of the principles of logic.

Gontar is also knowledgeable about psychoanalysis, as in his exploration of the psychology of the "wittol" ("a contented cuckold") in Chapter 6. It elucidates his convincing thesis that several of Shakespeare's male characters (e.g., Troilus, Collatine, Posthumous, Othello and Duke Orsino) enact unconscious wishes to be cuckolded. I found his formulation consistent with my clinical psychoanalytic experience. He cogently refutes skeptics such as John Collington, who reject this possibility out of hand. This is merely one example of Gontar's working knowledge of the role the unconscious plays in the human complexity that de Vere understood so deeply.

We can reasonably conjecture that de Vere knew this dynamic of cuckoldry firsthand. Note that the OED defines "wittol" as "a willing cuckold." The word occurs

once in Shakespeare, in *Merry Wives of Windsor*. Sir John Harrington (who hinted that he knew de Vere wrote several "Shakespeare" plays, as well as *The Arte of English Poesie*) accused de Vere of being a wittol. According to Gerard Kilroy, who published a 2009 edition of Harrington's complete epigrams, he used the name "Caius" in several of them to lampoon de Vere. Epigram 51 (*Of Caius' Increase in his Absence*) alleges that de Vere's wife got pregnant while he was "beyond the Seas." Epigram 94, titled *Of Wittoll*, casts Anne de Vere as a prostitute, and her husband as a pimp:

Cayus, none reckned of thy wife a point,
While each man might, without all let or cumber
But since a watch o're her thou didst appoint,
Of Customers she hath no little number.
Well, let them laugh hereat that list, and scoffe it,
But thou do'st find what makes most for thy profit.

The word "epigram" occurs only once in the canon, in *Much Ado about Nothing*. De Vere may have been responding to Harrington's Caius epigrams when he had Benedick say, "Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram? No" (V.iv.102).

Chapter 7 vigorously and effectively refutes the tired claim that Oxfordians are snobs, showing instead that our Stratfordian critics are projecting their own elitist views when they make this *ad hominem* accusation.

Given Gontar's sophisticated understanding of psychology, it was disconcerting to read his contrasting claim that "Psychologizing the play [*Hamlet*] is lame..." (413), as well as his statement that "As Shakespeare is a philosophical poet, psychological expositions of his characters must inevitably fall short" (117). Let me just add that a core psychoanalytic concept is the principle of multiple function, which posits that meaning is complex, and the same feeling, behavior, or symptom can simultaneously express multiple meanings.

While Oxfordians agree that Edward de Vere wrote the Shakespeare canon, we disagree on other matters, such as the Prince Tudor theory. Gontar soft-pedals his Oxfordian outlook in much of the book (he says the authorship issue is "a burning topic of contention" for "a rarified elite" [14]) Similarly, his endorsement of the Prince Tudor theory is relatively muted in much of the book, though prominent in other chapters. But it no doubt helps explain his insistence that *Hamlet* revolves around the Prince's realization that his real father is not King Hamlet, but his ostensible uncle Claudius. That is, he attributes to Hamlet the questionable paternity that one version of the Prince Tudor theory attributes to de Vere. More plausibly, because faithful to de Vere's literary sources, Gontar also highlights the likelihood that educated audience members would know of the rumor that Brutus was the illegitimate son of Julius Caesar, and thus hear Antony's words "the most *unkindest* cut of

all” (III.ii, 181) as meaning “lacking in filial affection or respect” (OED 3.b). Yet Gontar is too hard on Brutus. The historical Julius Caesar did show signs of wanting to subvert the Romans’ beloved Republic by becoming their dictator.

Gontar will lose many readers when he opines that our age is too “fearful” of “authority” (157). Whatever

Gontar risks antagonizing his Oxfordian readers when he writes in his Introduction that “the Oxfordians, anxious at every turn to reduce meaning to biography, reveal themselves as the most lackluster of expounders” (23). Biting the hand that buys his book?

one’s personal political views, it sells de Vere short to interpret any of his plays in an oversimplified way. In *Julius Caesar*, he manages to keep our sympathies in a tense balance between Caesar and Brutus. I strongly agree with Gontar that “Shakespeare is always about us, not them” (158).

Gontar risks antagonizing his Oxfordian readers when he writes in his Introduction that “the Oxfordians, anxious at every turn to reduce meaning to biography, reveal themselves as the most lackluster of expounders” (23). Biting the hand that buys his book? He also passes up opportunities to illustrate the advantages of knowing who the author is when discussing the plays. For example, he cites “the unknown god” of Acts 17:23, but fails to note that the Vulgate version of this phrase gave de Vere one of his pen names, “Ignoto.”

Gontar seems coy when he declines to speculate about Shakespeare’s religious views, considering the fact that we have de Vere’s annotated Geneva Bible. This is one of many moments when Gontar seems to be writing for a Stratfordian audience, whom he does not wish to alienate by revealing his authorship heresy. Perhaps some of the essays in this book were originally written for publications that would have censored a more openly heretical opinion. He creates a false dichotomy in his exploration of religious themes in *All’s Well That Ends*

Well, playing Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* against the Geneva Bible, when de Vere may well have translated the former, and heavily annotated the latter. And yes, *pace* Ted Hughes, de Vere also explored the myth of the Magna Mater in his plays. But Shakespeare always tolerates complexity better than we do. Gontar correctly notes the religious syncretism in Shakespeare, but dismisses the Christian element as “merely the background noise left over from the ‘big bang’ of Roman expansionism” (176). Gontar does stop short of viewing Shakespeare as a primarily secular author. He believes Shakespeare instead adheres to pagan religion, to a degree that is “inconsistent with any smug secularism” (177). Viewing de Vere as a polytheist is consistent with his corresponding perceptiveness about our multiplicity of self-states. Monotheism can be an unconscious projection of a misleading self-image as having a unitary identity. So de Vere’s paganism is indeed a crucial insight. Yet here, as elsewhere in his book, Gontar repeatedly undermines his credibility by favoring either/or dichotomies over a full appreciation of de Vere’s “infinite variety.”

Like all of us, Gontar sometimes gives in to the temptation of downplaying competing ideas while advocating for his own. At times, he acknowledges that he is merely speculating. On the other hand, he struck me as too dismissive of Greenblatt’s excellent *Hamlet in Purgatory*, and of erring when he claims “Hamlet’s angst has nothing to do with the strife of religious theories, and everything to do with who and what he is [according to Gontar’s theory, the son of Claudius]” (394).

Gontar is a master of aphorisms. “To read we must learn first to *unread*, to find the gumption to shrug off the security of adolescent omniscience” (142). Gontar has fine esthetic sensibilities that are closely attuned to Shakespeare’s genius. He appreciates the greater impact on us of Shakespeare’s subtlety—“the idea is all the more effective for its obliqueness” (148). This is probably so because Shakespeare is thus more effective in engaging both our conscious and unconscious responses to his words. Put another way, he brings together our usually disparate self-states, adding to our esthetic enjoyment, and helping to explain the observation that Shakespeare seems to know us better than we know ourselves.

If I may be permitted a digression, much of my psychoanalytic work for the past 30 years has been with patients who have dissociative identity disorder (formerly called multiple personality). I shared with one patient my fantasy that I might curatively bring her conflicting “alters” together if only I could think of a joke they would all find equally funny. What for me was mere whimsy bathetically reflects this aspect of Shakespeare’s creative genius.

It takes a certain independence of spirit to be openly Oxfordian. Gontar demonstrates his individualism in ways that will endear him to some readers, while alienating him from others. Chapter 15, “False Radicals,”

is a diatribe against Catherine Belsey, a feminist Shakespeare critic—and perhaps a diatribe against feminism in general. Many men will also be offended by Gontar’s complaint that “Women will not prosper by seeking to emasculate their counterparts, or exploit male errors to win the upper hand...” (319).

It is not only women—sorry, feminists—who come in for Gontar’s scorn. He devotes Chapter 17 to another diatribe, this one against Martin Lings, a Shakespeare scholar and an English Protestant who converted to Islam. Gontar seems to hate Islam, with some francophobe sentiment thrown in for good measure:

French scholarship has never been able to come to terms with Shakespeare; filled with envy and resentment, it is forever spinning polysyllabic theories aimed at dissolving his art in a bath of toxic noise. This neoplastic hyper-intellectualism of the French metastasizes in the hands of Gallic-Islamic acolytes... yielding an aggressive and spiritually distempered campaign to wipe out western humanism and replace it with legions of murmuring satraps (374f).

I don’t know about Western Civilization, but civilized discourse does indeed seem threatened here. Gontar seems determined to sabotage interfaith dialogue when he writes (in the context of Islam), “Shakespeare is important. He is our citadel, the bulwark shielding all that is good and genuinely sane in the west. Those who would destroy us know this by instinct, and busy themselves forging alliances with other agents of disintegration to annihilate Shakespeare once and for all” (375).

Some readers have reacted favorably to Gontar’s writing style. For example, Gary Livacari wrote of it in his Amazon review of the book: “It is hard to fully articulate his command of the English language... Some may characterize it as pedantic or stilted. By contrast, I found it to be challenging in a most engaging way... And yes, it may be best to have a dictionary nearby.”

Gontar himself criticizes writing that is “pompous” or filled with “polysyllabic jargon” (284-285). Ironically, I found myself wishing someone would take Gontar’s thesaurus away from him. He weakens his impact by being unnecessarily obscure at some times, and misusing words at others. E.g., “protreptic,” “self-diremption,” “superpuissant,” “emulous,” “peccancy” and “fedary” (yes, Shakespeare used the latter word, but the OED calls it obsolete, and editions of Shakespeare have footnotes to explain such words).

The problems with wording are partly a matter of Gontar’s seeming uncertainty about his target audience. When writing for fellow academics, it is expected that one will try to use words they will *not* understand, in order to maintain one’s scholarly bona fides. (Much to his credit, Gontar lampoons the typical scholarly article as an “autopsy report” [21]). But this book seems intended for a

general audience. At times, his stilted language combines with what strike this reviewer as mistaken ideas—e.g., “The emotive approach to Shakespeare is perhaps the least fecund of all” (13). But, having said all this, I admit that I tend to be most captious toward authors toward whom I feel most, well, *emulous*.

Book Review

William Boyle, editor:

A Poet’s Rage—Understanding Shakespeare Through Authorship Studies

Forever Press, Somerville MA, 2013

Reviewed by William Ray

Oxfordian pioneer William Boyle has published a collection of diverse essays, crossing time and methodologies, that deal with the capacity of the Prince Tudor theory to more deeply explicate the Shakespeare canon.

This is an ambitious effort because resistance to the concept—that Edward de Vere and the Virgin Queen, Elizabeth I, fathered Henry Wriothesley, the dedicatee of three major Shakespearean works—is so complex and emotionally laden that it may never get an objective hearing.

Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, being proposed as the Tudor Prince sounds like a medieval legend. Illicit royal sex and its somber results occurred throughout English history, as illustrated by Daniel Wright’s and Charles Beauclerk’s formidable essays. But since that knowledge does not flatter the history of England it is usually written out of official history, peremptorily dismissed by its scholars as having no solid evidence. By proposing Shakespeare as a pseudonym, Oxford as the author, and a mysterious “fair youth” as the putative King Henry IX, the historical gaps appear to be filled by interpreted artistic tragedy.

Beauclerk’s literary insights (taken from his book, *Shakespeare’s Lost Kingdom*) into the royal family triangle are worth those of ten modern critics (perhaps twenty-five considering the appalling lack of style from most). Wright skillfully employs his familiarity with past scholarship about the Shakespearean themes of kingship, succession, and bastardy. Once he establishes his bona fides as a member of the Guild, he defies its historical pieties, which have been frozen in place since before baseball.

When the 1571-1573 Vere-Tudor scandal reached so threatening a pitch that Cecilian rule could not tolerate it, the love affair vanished as a matter of political policy, in part by marginalizing Oxford’s literary career and thereby

clouding the meaning of the plays and poems. National history simply forbade any hint that the Virgin Queen bore a son and heir by the most brilliant courtier and author of the time, seventeen years her junior.

The State always has its reasons—reasons of state. The record of the royal family was not at all in keeping with Gloriana. Now, since a false hagiography has ensued, centered around the little town of Stratford, the Elizabethan-Jacobean past has implanted blatant falsehoods into the English-speaking culture and its educational institutions.

I

In analyzing the Prince Tudor theory and history, let us first glance at the present status quo resistances, which may help explain why Shakespeare authorship inquiries receive such a decidedly cool reception.

For one thing, the Shakespeare canon—and major control of its interpretation—falls under the entrenched assumption of a completely different author from that of the Prince Tudor hypothesis. This introduces a central socio-political issue: Who deserves to have possession of English history and by what demonstration of evidence? The status quo has never been known to relinquish hegemony because of non-empirical, illogical, or self-contradictory presumptions.

Now, since a false hagiography has ensued, centered around the little town of Stratford, the Elizabethan-Jacobean past has implanted blatant falsehoods into the English-speaking culture and its educational institutions.

There are various ways to view the self-maintenance of that ideological base. Upton Sinclair said, “It is difficult to make a man understand something when his salary depends on his not understanding it.” Thus, status and position play a role in keeping things and thoughts the same. Seneca said, “Every man prefers belief to the exercise of judgment.” In other words, mythology is more welcome to the human psyche than having to reason and stand by it against the prevailing ethos.

Knowing this, modern invested power of all kinds uses psychological means—simplification, conformity, and repetition, as well as the reservoir of accumulated authority—to maintain itself without open use of force. The disinformation campaign from the Shakespeare

Birthplace Trust regarding the authorship issue strikingly resembles mass propaganda’s repetitive, condemnatory slogans.

That set of techniques is indeed a daunting feature in the historical controversy, since the established Shakespeare industry sets the standard for public cultural thought. Declared critics are few, though their number includes minds of the first rank, e.g., Whitman, Clemens, Emerson, Hawthorne, Whittier, James, Galsworthy, Joyce, Disraeli, Palmerston, Bismarck, De Gaulle, Freud, Adler, and numerous theatrical luminaries.

The gales of laughter erupting in festivals and book-sales at the very expression that “Shakespeare” did not write “Shakespeare” are a disconcerting tribute to doctrinal success. Shakespeare has become a cultural reflex.

A third resistance to taking the Prince Tudor theory seriously owes directly to two creators of the early modern Nation-State, the Cecils, father and son, who ruled England on Elizabeth’s behalf for over fifty years. William Boyle quotes Hugh Ross Williamson, from *The Crown and the Conspirators*:

No one who has studied the Domestic State Papers can doubt that all of them went through Cecil’s hands, as soon as he became Elizabeth’s Secretary of State on Mary’s death and that he weeded them out with great thoroughness (216).

The task of the Prince Tudor advocate is to wrest the truth from history despite the twisted official record, first conscientiously achieved by the Cecils, then accepted on faith by later scholars.

Fourth, the Prince Tudor theory finds no ready welcome because a traditional psychic archetype gets displaced by it. That archetype, mainly unconscious, is the following. A prodigally talented, royal soul was hidden and lovingly brought up by surrogate parents in the distant forest. Then Destiny and Self-Advancement saw fit that he should languish no more among his bucolic and eternally loyal kinsmen, shepherds and crofters of the land. So he traversed dappled trail and open highway to the holy Capital. There he quickly gained his birthright and stood on the ramparts of the City, recognized at last as the semi-Divine conscience and exemplar of his race. This follows the Greek myth of Paris with great fidelity: the inherently and hereditary royal soul of his country fulfills his intended Princely role in Time and History. Psychologically, it is highly satisfying fare.

The Self-Advancement aspect of the Archetype has been adopted into public education with great approbation as a political homily to schoolchildren that they be ambitious if they expect to please parents and forebears. The myth of an unlettered grammar-school student who nevertheless towered over the whole world linguistically, classically, intellectually, lyrically, and rhetorically while making a lot of money projects to the innocent a

superhuman combination of artistic temperament and prudential drive. The Prince Tudor theory instead points to actual events, dismissing ahistorical fiction.

II

As Boyle amply demonstrates in the book's Appendix A, the theory's sketchy documentation troubles even the Oxfordians themselves. The hypothesis cannot stand on an armature made up of informed speculation and literary interpretation and expect to receive concessions from its conservative colleagues. Some Oxfordians make no bones about their deep skepticism regarding both the theory and the methodologies used to arm its arguments; one has opined that, if he had to pick solely between the Stratfordian and the Prince Tudor authorship models, he'd find the former "as the more credible of the two." Such a statement may vent the emotions, but it is not a persuasive argument.

With colleagues like this, enemies must patiently wait in line.

III

A Poet's Rage has work ahead of it getting accepted by either foe or faux-friend as traditional scholarship. We shall see, though, that the theory turns out to have been a remarkably fertile means of historical insight, unraveling anomalies and contradictions that the Stratfordian advocate, who relies upon circular thinking for evidence, never has occasion to face.

Several of the essays deal with that very issue, what deserves to be called evidence. For example, Alex McNeil's chapters—on Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa and on Touchstone in *AYLI*—establish that pseudonymity serves as a mask by which the Shakespeare author could both conceal and then unambiguously declare his basic identity. Punning was another self-identifying device. Touchstone's "To have is to have," is an incomprehensible tautology in English, but makes a name-pun when voiced in Italian: "avere e avere," the Vere surname.

Name- or number-puns and anagrams keyed to Oxford's name or title abound in the Shakespeare-Oxford literary canon, as well as in encomia to him and the First Folio. The recent *Polimanteia* discovery by Alexander Waugh is a ready example.

Oxfordian scholars reflexively shy from "ciphers" because the Baconian heresy foundered on hopelessly complex cipher notions, and because one of the most threatening of all academic outcomes is that of being laughed at. But although puns were rampant in Elizabethan literature, they are not considered evidence in modern scholarship. McNeil's studies show that this historiographic myopia misses important evidence.

Allegory was another Elizabethan device: to whisper one narrative while seeming to shout another. *The Phoenix and Turtle* explication by the late William P.

Fowler illustrates the form. Boyle includes it in *A Poet's Rage*.

Fowler's essay follows the traditional scholarly approach, with the almost naïve expectation that since the evidentiary argument holds together, it will be respected at large as an insight toward the truth. The intervening twenty-five years, wherein words almost wholly have been subsumed into commercial or self-interested use, has seen a consequent weakening of our sense of confidence in reason. The poem, which William Faulkner memorized simply for its tapestry of symbolism, tells all from the Prince Tudor perspective:

To this urn let those repair,
That are either true or fair
For these dead Birds, sigh a prayer.

As birds represented the released Spirit in Elizabethan symbology, whatever had been "true" (Latin: vere) or "fair" (homonym: Vere) would vanish. The prophecy remains so.

IV

The core of *A Poet's Rage* is the Sonnets discussion in Chapters 5-7. Hank Whittemore's two essays feature the Prince Tudor theory in its most cogent and compelling form.

William Boyle has advocated the Whittemore thesis, eventually published as *The Monument*, since before its 2005 release. His "Unveiling the Sonnets" (Chapter 7) was published in *Discovering Shakespeare* (2009). In sum, he argues that Whittemore solved the Sonnets by aligning them with the historical events proceeding from Southampton's first being favored by Burghley and Elizabeth followed by his involvement in the Essex Rebellion of 1601. Boyle does so by examining Sonnets 35, 87, and 120. Loaded words like *trespass*, *treason*, *ransom*, *fault*, *misprision*, *crime* and *felony* are not the language of lovey-dovey romance. They point to serious political charges, mortal danger, and deliverance from it.

Such is the Prince Tudor understanding of the Sonnets as a personal, familial, political, monarchal, as well as literary document. In my view, it was Whittemore's freedom from departmental academic study that made way for his historical and esthetic interpretation.

Though prone to single-minded interpretations of the Sonnets, *The Monument* solves T.S. Eliot's complaint that "this autobiography was written by a foreign man in a foreign tongue that can never be translated." As an historical chronicle and a literary piece of architecture, the Sonnets make sense. So then do the author and Elizabethan history. The fit is so close, historically and architectonically, that later work should fill the gaps and correct inaccuracies.

An opportunity to expand the Whittemore thesis occurred fortuitously not long ago. Lara Crowley,

Assistant Professor of English at Texas Tech University, published a heretofore unknown poem by Henry Wriothesley in the Winter 2011 issue of the journal *English Literary Renaissance*. The poem bears the same vocabulary used in the same way and with a similar tone as Shakespeare's individual Sonnets, published eight years later in 1609. Whittemore's textual analysis identified twenty-four of forty-seven Sonnets words in Southampton's/ Wriothesley's versed appeal for his life, written during the immediate aftermath of the Essex Rebellion.

Four broad categories—the crime, the grief, the prisoner, and the plea—characterize both documents. As

The myth of an unlettered grammar-school student who nevertheless towered over the whole world linguistically, classically, intellectually, lyrically, and rhetorically while making a lot of money projects to the innocent a superhuman combination of artistic temperament and prudential drive. The Prince Tudor theory instead points to actual events, dismissing ahistorical fiction.

circumstantial evidence, the literary-historical comparison is striking. But what is eerie is that the related exchange or prompting from author to prisoner is embedded in amber within Sonnet 45: "Those swift messengers returned from thee,/ Who even but now come back again assured/ Of thy fair health, recounting it to me."

It invites the inevitable speculation that only a very few persons could communicate with the Tower prisoner, care for him, and know that his health had been threatened. There is, of course, no indication that Shakespeare of Stratford was one of those few. Oxford had known Southampton since both resided at Cecil House, and also was one of the few authors in England who could speak in familiar terms to the Queen, who

eventually answered Wriothesley's plea. A hundred poems from Sonnet 45, Sonnet 145, contains the forgiving line: "Straight in her heart did mercy come."

Whittemore's other essay, "The Rival Poet," is a gem of interpretive analysis, but not at the magnitude of "Southampton's Tower Poem." The former takes its theme from Oxford's double life as Lord Great Chamberlain and high nobleman versus the private passion revising a life's work and literary testament under an invented name. In the latter vocation he led a psychological double life, as Oxford and as Shakespeare, according to this thesis. Thus the "rival poet" persona was not another writer, but his (self-created) Golem or Jonsonian monster. Actors who achieve fame experience a similar identity separation.

V

The book should be judged by the objectives it set out for itself. Boyle's first statement of purpose in the introduction is "to demonstrate that the existence of both the Prince Tudor theory and the Oxfordian theory (and, for that matter, of all theories about the Shakespeare authorship) is really one and the same, which is to understand Shakespeare's verse." It states, "The purpose here is to demonstrate the explanatory power of any theory can itself indicate that that theory may be on the right track." It cites Charlton Ogburn, Jr., who wrote: "[T]he import of demonstrating the 'royal' theory, if it can be demonstrated, is crucial to the resolution of the Shakespeare Mystery...."

It goes on to state, "[T]he question then becomes whether the Prince Tudor theory does or does not inform our understanding of the Shakespeare works."

It asserts that in a world of lies, seeking the truth is "really the essence of what the authorship debate is all about: a search for the truth of what really happened four centuries ago, and the truth about the author's own story in that distant time."

Last, it makes approving reference to Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens's admonition, "I would think that the Oxfordians really have not yet put together a concise, coherent theory that they are prepared to defend in all respects."

With these manifold objectives, a 250-page collection of essays and commentaries is over its head. There is no clear explication of the theory which unites the story, as Justice Stevens advised. For those interested in its historical outline however, there is an appendix that explicitly states: "Some of the text has drawn upon the Wikipedia entry for 'Prince Tudor,' since much basic history is recorded there (names, dates, book titles, etc.)."

The Wikipedia site is anathema to Oxfordian readers, because the Wikipedia group that commandeered the Shakespeare pages usually commits a hatchet job on anything Oxfordian. As expected, the Prince Tudor theory is outlined as a 1930s spiritualist notion that changed over

time and now seeks to be respectable scholarship but with deep divisions within its own authorship movement.

Editor William Boyle has done an invaluable service by helping to sponsor James Warren's *An Index to Oxfordian Publications*. Boyle's library project (The New England Shakespeare Oxford Library, <http://www.shakespeareoxfordlibrary.org>) is a resource to the Oxfordian movement. And some of the essays in *A Poet's Rage*, especially Whittmore's and Wright's, are new and valuable contributions to knowledge.

VI

We are left with essentially the same questions and the same documentary weaknesses as before, but with a useful reference of varied contributions to this subset of the authorship inquiry.

It is altogether unsurprising that the editing work done by the Cecils leaves much uncertain and prone to be supposed. Dead-ends, scars, and discarded scraps of history are not included in a State's exalted Annals.

Thus, even though Henry Wriothesley was the only person to whom "Shakespeare" dedicated anything, he is today of little interest. Paul E.J. Hammer, author of "Shakespeare's Richard II, the Play of 7 February 1601, and the Essex Rising" (*Shakespeare Quarterly*, Spring 2008), treated him as an afterthought and nonentity.

The flurry at court in 1593 during which he was being floated as Elizabeth's heir, a raw youth suggested for the coveted Order of the Garter, was short-lived. The initiative foundered because it appeared the young noble did not see fit to join the plan. Soon after, he refused to marry Burghley's granddaughter, though there is evidence they were close later in life. It appears his life falls under the rubric that lots of kings throw their crowns around.

Centuries later, a volume of Amyot's Plutarch with the Wriothesley holograph was part of the Henrietta Stanley legacy which sold at Sotheby's in 1948. Henrietta Stanley Wentworth was Elizabeth Vere Stanley's granddaughter. Certain other articles in that lot had been kept in the family line for more than 300 years, all relating to a studious unnamed forebear. Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, fits that profile as no one in his era could.

It is also well known and cheerfully accepted that Henry Wriothesley was close to the "other" Henry, Henry de Vere, the last earl in the original Oxford line. According to the Prince Tudor hypothesis, it was not a surprise. They were half-brothers.

There appears then to have been an uncommon connection between the Vere clan, both father and known progeny, and Henry Wriothesley. Another Vere son, Edward Veer, was half-brother to Thomas Freeman, himself intimate with the Veres and author of an encomium to "Shakespeare" who, he subtly hinted, was really Lord Oxford.

So Grosert's "unlifted shadow" that settled over Edward de Vere paralleled another biographical eclipse in official unwritten English law, reflected faithfully by the respectable academic institutions, although this person, Southampton, was the recipient of the only tributes ever bestowed by the Soule of the Age.

Southampton, like de Vere, may be counted among the losers in History. He did not have the canny stuff of a late medieval King. He rejected his chance. He survived as both a sidekick of the ambitious Essex and as the helpless beneficiary of the enigmatic Queen Elizabeth. He never displayed Kingly ambition.

Yet, unlike Hammer, neither the Tudor nor the Jacobean regimes considered him marginal. Scheduled for execution, with the crowds "minding not to be absent

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at that spectacle," he survived. Shamed and disenfranchised from his aristocratic trappings, condemned for treason, he began to be restored to favor even before James left Scotland to be crowned. Respected as a military commander and member of Parliament, as well as one of the first colonial sponsors, he was periodically imprisoned and finally done away with, along with his young heir James, by poison. This was how the Jacobean regime kept house.

The determining feature of the Wriothesley saga, his sketchy origins, we must consider highly suspicious, since prior to his birth (1) Mary Browne Wriothesley conceived in 1572, but not by her husband, the Second Earl, who was in the Tower from October 1571 to May 1573; (2) it was rumored (as noted by biographer Charlotte Stopes) that two sons were born to the household, not one; (3) Mary Browne escaped Titchfield, rumored to be with "her son" fathered by a land-manager servant, Donsame, at Dogmersfield; (4) she was known to be in serious conflict with her husband and was watched lest she try to escape; (5) Thomas Dymoke, Gentleman of

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Copies available at www.llumina.com/store/macbeth (no caps). Or at Amazon.com. Also available is the first Oxfordian edition of *Othello* (2010), edited by Ren Draya of Blackburn College and Whalen. It shows how Oxford drew on his visit to Venice and especially on the Italian farcical satire *commedia dell’arte*, which has been ignored by traditional scholarship. More Shakespeare plays in the Oxfordian Shakespeare Series, edited and annotated by university professors, are forthcoming.

the Queen's Bedchamber, obtained control of the Titchfield household; (6) the Second Earl's sister was Lady in Waiting to the Queen; (7) Dymoke received inexplicable favor in the Second Earl's precipitous will in June 1581; (8) the Second Earl died, from causes undetermined, at age 37 in October 1581 (some two months after being investigated for hiding Edmund Campion); and (9) the child Henry Wriothesley immediately became a ward of the head of Queen Elizabeth's government, William Cecil. The chronicle supports an inference that there had been a baby switch and the second child was of State importance.

Does it make acceptable historical sense, that a royal child was farmed out to a politically weak Catholic earl in danger of his life and property? Not in retrospect. Remanaging history, we could do a good deal better. And with Burghlean attention to traceable evidence, we probably aren't going to discover documentation on the case.

In general, literature inherently conveys reality's irrepressible truths, which contemporary historians then dared not voice. For instance, William Camden tacitly referred to the Cecils when he wrote of "those who think the memory of succeeding ages may be extinguished by present power." We are engaged presently in an effort to disenthral ourselves from the official fable that became, and remains, acceptable English court history.

VII

To get at the truth of the Shakespeare authorship, including the critical feature of the illicit royal family, requires the inquisitive historian to deal sensibly with two valid forms of information: documents and contemporaneous literature. If there is anything I have learned in this pursuit, it is that Oxford wished nothing more than to tell the story to still the anguish of living it. We have that story in the fricasee of Elizabethan history.

Is the canon reliable as history through a glass darkly? No, that isn't its nature. On the other hand, Art always rises from a specific social frame, if it is great Art. We aren't dealing with dilettantes and fantasy here. Every narrative has its roots, and its communicability, in its own unique social and political context, the "abstract and brief chronicles of the time." And in fact, during the past hundred years since Freud's insights, literary-biographical-historical methodologies have served all modern critical literature. History, by the same token but via a different usage, tells a Story and necessarily uses the evocative resources of language to do so, including the literary testimony of the times.

The mystery of Shakespeare is a story that will not go away. In no other episode of Western history, except perhaps Lincoln and the American Civil War, has so compelling a figure as Edward de Vere been so involved with, so formed the foundation myth for, and so

illuminated the themes and perils of the early Nation-State.

His tragic historical role as helpless bystander at his own identity burial prefigured the fates of Solzhenitsyn, Pasternak, Mandelstam, Brodsky, Pushkin and others—all eaten whole off the plate of governmental Power. But none had to be as self-effaced, then utterly eclipsed, for the good of the State.

We may extrapolate from this yet incomplete history that, just at the beginning of the modern European State, governmental influence exerted expedient and inexorable control of access to Truth, neutralizing the Artist's conflicting insight into the same historical reality. The parable in this case is made the more poignant by Oxford as Artist, or perhaps Philosopher-King, witnessing before his eyes the vanished possibility that the hinge of History might have turned in the direction of Platonic Truth, not Machiavellian (Cecilian) amorality. Unlike Plato, Oxford did not heed the dictum to hide behind a rock until the devastating storm had passed.

With such prodigious themes seething just below the surface of modern history, the Prince Tudor concept will

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continue to emerge in unexpected ways. We are dealing with a still unsettled, because repressed and coarsely rationalized, history. Extended inquiry stirs very sensitive elements of our politically contrived National Soul. *A Poet's Rage* joins that effort to encapsulate the illusive past.



*(Letter to the Editor, cont. from p. 3)***Common Conditions**

Thought to have been written c.1566 (when de Vere was still a ward with Cecil), it contains very many typical de Vere words and phrases:

bandog, silly, trudge/trudging, incontinent, chirping birds, trickling tears, woe, bewrayed, furious force within this forest, eke, hawk and hounds, i-wis, hap, gear, commodity, beguiled, dumps, annoy, poisoned pain, direful dent, boisterous blasts, cunning skill, wight, spight, feminitive, mawger, pollecy (policy), at this stay, impossible, shift, caitiff, princox, listning eare, beguiled, gozing, wayling.

Also rhyming within lines: wise...devise, twain...refrain, just...must.

Page numbers below refer to the incomplete copy in John S. Farmer's *Five Anonymous Plays* (1908) and line numbers to The Malone Society facsimile reprint (2004).

(p. 184) "My basin must tang" (Cf. *The Tempest* "For she had a tongue with a tang...")

(p. 203) "The lured hawk, whose rolling eyes are fixed on partridge fast."

(p. 205) "The silly fish that once is ta'en, must yield unto the bait."

(p. 208) "In dain." Also "Dennes of daine," Queen Cordelia (p.34).

(p. 216) "Lust favouring folly fond, did falsely forge and fain."

(p. 222) "The cock is launched." Also *Lear* IV.6.

(p. 248) "Experience shows faint hearted knights wins never fair ladies' love!"

De Vere is likely to be in this play, e.g., p. 213 "...for a little man, where I hit, I break the bone"; p. 253, "Ha! 'tis a wonder that such strength in a little man's arm should be"; l. 414, "Give the halter unto the elfe," also "little knave" and he climbs into a (stage?) tree.

(ll. 112-114) "Ecc(h)o" routine.

(ll. 655-656) Clarisia has less noble status than Lamphedon ("Anne" & "Edward" are handwritten amendments [in an apparently Elizabethan hand] at ll. 642, 754 and 909, in The Malone Society reprint).

(ll. 661-664) Repetition of "What needs..."

(l. 667) "ne" = nor

(l. 907) "O crafty cancred wight"

(ll. 975-958) Repetition of "Is"

(ll. 1304-05) "Though depe dispaire doth drive in doubt dew honor to disgrace/ Though dredful domps doth daunt the minde...."

(ll. 1474-97) Hounds/deer hunting analogy, for the pursuit and winning of ladies.

(l. 1537) "O Gods! What wight is pinched with pain...."

(l. 1856) "To feede thy filthy fond desire"
Epilogue homage to Queen Elizabeth.

Clyomon and Clamydes

Apparently written by a sixteen-year-old for purely comedic effect, the action is devised to work up to a comic climax, through the interweaving of the plot. The "shepherd" scenes are the usual clown diversions, plus those generated by Bryan Sans Foy (who dresses as Clamydes—Sc.ix), with the added amusement of disguises for Neronis (Sc.v) and Clyomon (Sc.xx). The Shift scenes are full of comedy, especially Scene ii, with the "boot/leg" joke (cf. *Doctor Faustus*), and in Scene v there is the "comedy" of Clyomon and Clamydes arguing over the stolen knighthood.

The language is typical young de Vere, with a large number of words and phrases designed to add comedic effect. In fact, there is no discernible message other than achieving pantomime style amusement—including the usual mildly bawdy jokes—for the audience.

Words and phrases noted:

(Prologue) "hugie heapes" of "care/moile"

(Sc.i) wearie wand'ring wights/And beating blowes of Billows high/blaze of bewties breeding/silly/coast (=side)

(Sc.ii) beraide/haughtie heart to heare

(Sc. iii) By flying force of flick'ring fame/caitiffe/guerdon/dinted dastards deed

(Sc.iv) fowles that hovering flie, from out the Fawcons way (falconry)

(Sc.v) mauger/princkocks/beray/toy/case

(Sc.vi) commoditie/begile/shift/policie; repetition of "Shall"

(Sc.viii) hap/eke/disdained/wofull wight/bewrayes/surging waves/ "What greater griefe can grow to gripe, the heart of greeved wight"/painfull pathes/wearie ways/repetition of "May"

(Sc.ix) "...old proverbe...that cowardly hearts, faire Ladies never win"

(Sc.x) vade/repetition of "How"/and Neronis' speech generally (these speeches are early indications of the way in which the plays developed into the recognizably Shakespearean style)

(Sc.xi) devise (=device)/deepe desire/ "daily dolours do me daunt"

(Sc.xiii) wofull hap/hugie heapes of cares/dumps of deadly dole/since salve of solace sweete, hath sorrowes all supprest/fortune fickle dame

(Sc.xiv) pelte

(Sc.xv) glozd/wit

(Sc.xviii) Neronis' speech—again typical de Vere/distilling teares/ling'ring thread/gripes of grislie griefes

(Sc.xx) cowardly caitiff/worthy wights/etc.
 (Sc.xxiii) anoy/glasing starre/cancred/repetition
 of "I"

Marriage of Wit and Science

Wit = de Vere/Will = his alter ego/Reason =
 William Cecil/Experience = Cecil's wife/Science
 = Anne Cecil.

Will says Wit's age is "seventeen or thereabout."
 Therefore written about 1567, probably as an
 entertainment at Cecil House, when plans were
 being made for de Vere to marry Anne Cecil
 (William Cecil's plan to marry Anne to Philip
 Sidney fell apart about 1568-69).

(Wit) "hath no need of wealth" (in marrying) and
 "His kindred is such he need not to seek to match
 with noble blood." (II.2)

de Vere's wardship study regime plays a large
 part (II.3, etc.).

Many de Vere words and phrases:

Hap/eke/wight/toys/shrew/pinch/sadly/I-wis/gear/
 trudging/bewail/ beguile/ beshrew/tall fellow/
 "That will not stick to marry you..." (II.2)/ "In
 time soft water drops can hollow hardest
 flint" (I)/ horse imagery (II.1)

Gerunds, e.g., cunning hand/springing time (both
 I)

Repetition of "How" (II. 2) and "This same" (V.
 1)

Alliteration: "the well of my welfare" (IV.1)/
 "Wit's will and wilful wit" (III.2)/ "hopeless
 hope" (IV.1)/ "fixed faith" (IV.1 and V.5)/ "This
 char is charr'd well now" (IV.4)/ "O heaps of
 haps" (V.1)/ "heap of happy haps" (V.6)/ "famous
 fact" (V.5).

Marriage of Wit and Wisdome

Written after *Marriage of Wit and Science* and
 less farcical. This time William Cecil = Severity;
 his wife, Mildred = Indulgence; Anne Cecil =
 Wisdom.

"wandering wits" (Prologue), worthy wife, fancy
 frames, wight, ruffler, wis and i-wis, shift,
 beguile, murrain, silly, gear (I.1), gentle as a
 falcon (I.2), I am Ipse (I.2).

(I.2) colling = blacking (collier)—"collied night"
 in *MND* and "I will make him a collier."

Also *Damon & Pithias* comedy of the collier and
Devil & His Dame with Grim the Collier of
 Croydon.

(I.2) Idleness: "I was never stained but once,
 falling out of my mother's plum tree." Cf. *2HVI*
 (II.1) Simpcox: "A fall off of a tree." Simpcox's
 wife: "A plum tree, master," etc.

(Sc. 5) Fancie: "Like as the rowling stone we se/
 Doth never gather mosse."

(I.3) "like a puttock" i.e., a kite (bird), also in
Cymbeline (I.2).

(II.2) "In faith I am Ipse, he even the very same!"

(II.4) "I ween he be a talle man"/ "Here is a
 moiling."

(II.5) "the pain doth pinch me"

(Epilogue) "upon the head the very nail is hit!"

(Doll, Sc. 7) "Thou hast kept a goodly coile,"
 and Snatch & Catch Song (p. 272), "Thus Snatch
 and Catch doth keep a coil" (cf. *TGV* "coil"; *The
 Spanish Tragedy* III; *Hamlet*)

Michael Le Gassick
 Lymington, Hampshire UK
 10 January 2014



In this issue:

Oxford's Fifty-Play Canon (Part II)	1
SAT Conference Report	1
From the President's Office	2
From the Editor	3
Letter to the Editor	3
Two New Sonnets	4
What's the News?	4
Hank Whittemore at the SAT Conference	7
Book Review: <i>Hamlet Made Simple</i>	18
Book Review: <i>A Poet's Rage</i>	20